

The Link



May 2023



Shanklin United Reformed Church www.shanklinurc.co.uk

View From Number 10



Praying for our friends and neighbours

I have been reminded over recent months that as a church we need to be more outward-looking and actively seeking to build relationships with those around us in the community. On 23rd April, Phil Knox spoke of the importance of building friendships - well worth a listen if you missed it; an inspirational guy!

After an extended and very strange period of isolation and great caution, it has been great that that things have opened up again and we have been able to welcome others in – both local folks and holiday visitors. The drop-in sessions at The Well on Wednesday mornings have been developing gradually and we pray that we'll be able to support and encourage many more over the coming months.

In all this. we must try to always maintain a Kingdom mindset. I was reminded as I prepared to speak from Romans 14 recently that everything we do is for God and must be done in way that pleases him. We can get so bogged down in the details that often we can't see the wood for the trees. May our eyes be opened to the opportunities that the Lord brings across our path and might we seize them gladly and boldly as the Spirit leads!

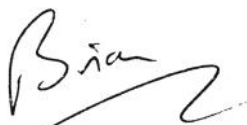
As we move from the Easter season into May, we are once again invited to share in the initiative Thy Kingdom Come. This is an international 10-day focus on praying for people we know to come to faith. It runs each year from Ascension Day, which is on 18th May this year, to The Feast of Pentecost - on 28th. We remember how the disciples met in expectant prayer over that 10-day period as they waited for the promised Holy Spirit, in order that they might be empowered to be witnesses for Jesus (Acts 1:8 and 14). See more in Robin's article on [page 4](#).



Let's ask the Lord to lay upon our hearts five people that we could pray for every day during that period. Perhaps we might start sooner, as our next café service will in fact be on Pentecost Sunday, and that would be a great time to invite people along as we celebrate the birth of the church as the Holy Spirit came... it might even be a bit of a party? We need to start praying now!

Let's welcome the Holy Spirit to come and guide us in our friendships, our mission and service as we seek for God's kingdom to come and his will to be done here on the Isle of Wight – as in heaven.

Love and best wishes,



ENCOUNTER

...is back!

Sunday 28th May from 10:30

A Café style meeting place to drop in and enjoy some refreshments



...a relaxed time of Friendship, Fun, Food and exploring Faith...

with craft, songs, challenges, prayers...

EVERYONE is welcome – why not bring a friend?

Thy Kingdom Come... Pentecost 2022

Day 11, Saturday 5th June 2022

This is the last devotional associated with Thy Kingdom Come 2022 ~ a global initiative that invited Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus. This will be repeated this year, please see details at the end ...

The overall purpose is to ask God to empower us to become effective witnesses for Jesus each day and as we approach Thy Kingdom Come 2023, between Ascension Day (18th May) and Pentecost Sunday (28th May), let us reflect on the coming of the Holy Spirit...

These reflections were delivered through a voice recording, try to imagine as you read them that you are listening and responding ...

P, pausing to be still ...

R, rejoicing with a Psalm and reflecting on the early church ...

A, asking God to help us and others ...

Y, yielding to His will in our lives, come what may...

Pentecost (Carla Harding)

Today, on this special day of rest, we remember the moment the Spirit was poured out on the Church and welcome God's presence afresh into our hearts and homes. As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly, to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Creator God, who formed humanity from dust, breathe in me again. Revive me and sanctify me by the power of Your Spirit. Set my heart on fire with the good news of Your gospel.

I choose to rejoice in God's presence today, joining with the ancient praises of all God's people in the words of Psalm 104:

***"Praise the LORD, my soul.
LORD my God, you are very great;
you are clothed with splendour and majesty.***

*The LORD wraps himself in light as with a garment;
He stretches out the heavens like a tent
and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters.
He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind.
He makes winds his messengers, flames of fire his servants.”
(Psalm 104:1-4)*

Today I reflect on the story of Pentecost when the promised Holy Spirit fell on the disciples...:

“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” (Acts 2:1-4)

I often long for an encounter with God as dramatic as this Pentecost moment, but it's easy to forget what happened before the Spirit came. The first believers were all together in one place because they had been persistently praying for ten days. Jesus had promised that God would send the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5), so, in prayer, they obediently waited and prepared themselves to receive ...

**Thank You, Father, that the same Spirit that fell on these first believers is with me now. On this very special day, at the culmination of ten days of Thy Kingdom Come prayer, I cry ~
Come Holy Spirit**

Empowered by the Spirit, the first followers of Jesus were propelled out from their place of prayer to tell thousands about Jesus.

God, we need Your Spirit to empower us for mission today! I name my church and the churches in my area - send us Your Spirit and give us courage to share the good news of Jesus with our neighbours.

In preparation, I think of the five people who don't know Jesus that I will be praying for during Thy Kingdom Come...

Father, I ask You to empower me to be Your witness to them at this time. I name each person before You and ask You to draw

them to Your Son...

I reflect on the next part of the Pentecost story. I notice the response of the crowds who witnessed the Spirit-filled followers of Jesus bursting out onto the streets of Jerusalem...

“Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: ‘Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?’... ‘Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, ‘What does this mean?’”
(Acts 2:5-8 & 12)

The confusion on the streets of Jerusalem reminds me of the story of the Tower of Babel. In Genesis 11 we read about a community of people who tried to make a name for themselves by building a tower, but they were scattered in confusion as God turned one language into many. At Pentecost, a community of people, acting in the name of Jesus, miraculously spoke many languages - making the good news understandable and accessible to all.

And so, as Your people gather around the world today, I thank You, Lord, for Your beautiful, multicultural, intergenerational family. Revive us, sanctify us and unite us once again I pray. Forgive our many sins and make us holy. Set our hearts on fire again with the good news of Your gospel.

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says in Acts:

“you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
(Acts 1:8)

A Sabbath Blessing for Pentecost by Pete Greig:

May this day bring Sabbath rest to my heart and my home.

May God’s image in me be restored, and my imagination in God be re-storied.

May the gravity of material things be lightened, and the relativity of time slow down.

May I know grace to embrace my own finite smallness in the arms of God's infinite greatness.

May God's Word feed me and his Spirit lead me into the week and into the life to come.

Amen

Used by permission of [Thy Kingdom Come](#)

Thy Kingdom Come 2023...

"In praying 'Thy Kingdom Come' we all commit to playing our part in the renewal of the nations and the transformation of communities."

Archbishop Justin Welby



During the 11 days of Thy Kingdom Come, it is hoped that everyone taking part will:

- Deepen their own relationship with Jesus Christ*
- Pray for 5 friends or family to come to faith in Jesus*
- Pray for the empowerment of the Spirit that we would be effective in our witness*

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We are praying that the Spirit will inspire and equip us to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with our friends and families, our communities and our networks. It is our prayer that those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and his love for the world will hear it for themselves and respond and follow Him.

Specifically, we again invite each and every Christian across the globe to pray that God's Spirit might work in the lives of 5 friends who have not responded with their 'Yes' to God's call.

(taken from the TKC website)

As part of TKC 2023, both a Prayer Guide and Novena have been produced. Copies of these will be available in the church nearer the time or you can access them now at:

www.thykingdomcome.global/new-2023

Please do join in with this global initiative when Christians around the world will be praying for people they know to come to Christ.

Robin

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CHRISTIANS WORKING TOGETHER IN THE BAY

Shared Afternoon Worship each Sunday is now moving towards the summer programme hosted by various churches. The venues for May are as follows:

**7 May 19:00 Coronation Songs of Praise
at Rylstone Gardens**

14 May 18:30 at the Church of the Sacred Heart

21 May 18:30 at the URC

**28 May 19:30 Pentecost United Celebration
at Rylstone Gardens**

The God Bus

God bless you all (*addressed to Shanklin folk*).

Just to let you know what is going on with the bus ministry. At the moment due to age, we are at present out 3 nights the other 2 nights at present have been taken away from us. **In The Lords Hands**, our hope is to resume as soon as possible the Lord willing of course.

Thank you for your kindness, prayers and support throughout the years. May we all enjoy the harvest of the Lord to His Glory

Much love always in the dear Lord

Mick Hunter † 



Dear Friends and Supporters,

You may have been wondering whether the bus outreach is still active in our towns as our newsletters have not included our itinerary. I wish to confirm that we are continuing the outreach as follows:

Tuesday Moa Place Car Park Freshwater from 19:00

Wednesday Car Park Wroxall from 19:00

Thursday Co-Op Car Park Shanklin from 19:00

Thank you for your prayer and financial support which we greatly value.

Every blessing

Roy Moul,
Acting Chairman



Prayer



Tuesday Prayer at 19:30 - this is still being held via Zoom using the same account as for other activities and groups :

[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/3242665584?
pwd=ZTIXZzBLWnkrWTNBY2JBK1o0K2ZXdz09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/3242665584?pwd=ZTIXZzBLWnkrWTNBY2JBK1o0K2ZXdz09)

Meeting ID: 324 266 5584 Password: 936536.

Prayer Chain - please make use of this for urgent and important issues that need prayer. Phone Hazel on 865181 – or Jean on 863850 - do consider joining this if you are mostly around at home.

Text Prayer Network – this has supplemented our telephone chain and gets prayer needs around quickly . Please text Lou on:

07474 273119

with your prayer request and she will mobilise a team of intercessors. Again, this is for urgent and important issues that need immediate cover:

Prayer for Israel – is held each Monday from 10:00-11:00 on the church Zoom. Please contact Roy & Melodie if you are interested in joining: melodieroywilson@gmail.com or ☎ 866912

Sabbath of Prayer – many of our members enjoyed taking part in our recent Sabbath period set aside for prayer. The Elders are suggesting that this might be repeated in October and maybe then become a pattern each February and October. Your thoughts on future prayer plans are most welcome.

We plan to have another **Midsummer Prayer Walk** around the local community on Friday 23rd June from 19:30 - maybe with the church also open as a quiet space for those who'd prefer to pray there. Please note the date and look out for details. The people of Shanklin and local businesses and services so need our prayers

The Well – Wednesdays from 11:00 – 13:00

Special Events

During our 'Well' sessions this month, we will be having special guests along ...

- **Wednesday 3rd May at 11:30** - Steve Reed from Isle of Wight Defibrillators will be speaking about their use. Please see [page 14](#).
- **Wednesday 10th May at 11:30** - Clive from the **Living Well and Early Help Service** will be giving a short talk explaining to us how they are helping us reach our community and those in need, before they reach crisis point and how we can become involved in the initiative.

We are also looking to have an in-person First Aid course as soon as possible (and perhaps one on Mental Health First Aid) - see Carole's article on [page 13](#) ~ please do let Carole or Yvonne know if you would be interested in attending either of these.

Thanks

The Christian Institute

How important it is to keep abreast of what is happening in our nation in matters that affect the Church and Christians in daily life.



We have copies of the **Spring 2023 Newsletter** at the back of the Church from the Institute. Do pray for and support if possible their work, as they seek to be watchmen for the spiritual life of our nation and where our Judeo-Christian heritage continues to be eroded.

Do take a copy - It is so helpful in keeping us as believers informed and able to pray into the very concerning issues facing our national life in these days.

Do ask if you'd like more information about this vital work.

Blessings,
Jane H

Stepwise

Faith Filled Life

On Zoom

19:00 – 21:00

Introductory session – 12th June, 2023

8 further sessions:

July 3rd, 24th

August 14th

September 4th, 25th

October 16th

November 6th, 27th

Please do not be put off joining if you cannot attend every session.
You will receive a zoom link by email before the introductory session.

Complete a participant form available on the Synod website

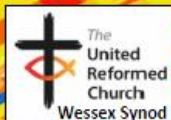
www.urcwessex.org.uk/discipleship

Please book before 22nd May 2023

Contact: Ruth Heine

bookings@urcwessex.org.uk

Tel: 023 8067 4513



Training!

Hebrews 12:1 tells us to run with perseverance.

However, I am seeking those who are interested in **first aid training** to assist should there ever be a need in a service, home group, bookshop, life, etc.. We also have a defibrillator outside the church and the use of that will be included.



There is no cost to you. It will be held on the island; most likely at the church.

I need numbers confirmed before a date can be agreed so, if you would like to take part, please let me know – Carole Smith nelliebelle@hotmail.co.uk 07971 934326 by the end of May. Showing your interest will not commit you to anything at this stage.

Dave White, Yvonne Sparks and I have completed a Mental Health First Aid course through the church. There is a possibility of us being able to offer this course, or similar, at some point. Please let me know if this is something you would be interested in.

Please ask if you have any questions.

Carole Smith

Connection Quiz

1. Who was the 45th President of the USA?
2. Which planet was downgraded to a 'dwarf planet'?
3. Which common garden plant's Latin name is '*Bellis Perennis*'?
4. Who was the drummer with '*The Monkees*'?
5. So, what is the **connection** between the answers to questions 1 - 4?
6. And bonus question... where was the cover photo taken? (Hint, it was in Shanklin - and was taken this year)



Answers are on [page 43](#)



As you know, a defibrillator was fitted to the church wall on the High Street during March this year

Steve Read from **Isle of Wight Defibrillators** will be providing training on it's use together with some basic training on CPR during our '**The Well**' session on **Wednesday 3rd May** beginning at 11:30

This will comprise of a short video from the British Heart Foundation, a talk through the use of the defibrillator and some hands-on training, lasting about an hour overall.

All are welcome to come along to this session and do bring friends...

It could be life saving!

Robin & Sheilagh

You are welcome to

Living Well

Together

**A safe place for friendship, support and
refreshing – here at Shanklin URC:**

Wednesdays 11:00 – 13:00

Free refreshments and craft activities

Just drop in at any point



Acts:

Paul Travels To And Finally Preaches In Rome

In Acts 26 we left Paul about to embark on his final journey (to Rome). In the last two chapters of the Book of Acts we hear of a dramatic journey (and rescue) together with Paul preaching in Rome “*explaining about the kingdom of God, and from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets he tried to persuade them about Jesus*” (Acts 28:23). This brings to fruition what the Lord had told Paul ~ “*The Lord stood near Paul and said, ‘Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome.’*” (Acts 23:11).

For reference, I have reproduced a map of this journey at the end (by permission). Unfortunately, we are not allowed to include this in the online version but you can see the journey on the back cover of the Church Bibles. I do have a copy of the publication which you are welcome to view at any time.

Acts 27: 1-12 Paul sails for Rome

We are about to hear a first-hand account from Luke of an incredible journey. Paul, together with the crew, soldiers, other prisoners and perhaps other passengers are sailing for Rome. This is a more detailed description of maritime practices than can be found in any other ancient text!

After stopping at Sidon on the Phoenician coast, they sail to the north of Cyprus along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia before landing at Myra in Lycia. Here they board an Alexandrian ship bound for Italy but make slow progress due to unfavourable winds and they are forced to travel to the south of Crete, reaching the port of Fair Havens during November (after the Day of Atonement). Although this harbour was not best suited to “over-wintering”, it was unusual and certainly dangerous to undertake sea voyages between November and March and Paul advises the Centurion in charge to wait for more clement weather. However, the majority feel it best to try to reach the port of Phoenix and winter there.

The Jewish people were not known to be sailors, and most lived in fear of the sea however Paul was an experienced sailor having journeyed more than 3500 miles on his travels and we know from his letters that he had already been shipwrecked three times before! However, his advice is ignored and they sail on... God has purposed that Paul will testify in Rome and Satan is opposing this once again!

Acts 27: 13-26 The Storm

A gentle south wind encourages the ship to weigh anchor but instead of reaching Pheonix, the “*Beast from the North East*” drives them south and west. They take what measures they can but are unable to halt this headlong dash and “*When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved*” (v 20) but God has other plans...

Paul is visited at night by an Angel and told “*Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you*” (v24). Paul responds by telling his fellow travellers of his absolute faith in God ~ that they should take courage and that all of them will be saved!

Acts 27: 27-44 The Shipwreck

After 2 weeks the crew begin to sense landfall but are concerned that they will be dashed on the rocks and so try to launch the lifeboats but Paul steps in and tells the Centurion that only those who remain with the ship (and Paul) will be saved... and remarkably, Paul has the foresight to advise them all to eat before facing this final ordeal... there are 276 men on board and Paul tells them “*not one of you will lose a single hair from his head*” (v34) and “*After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat. They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves*” (v35&36).

At daybreak, they see a sandy beach and decide to run the ship aground and although the soldiers planned to kill the prisoners rather than let them escape, the Centurion thwarts their plan. The ship

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breaks up but *“everyone reached land safely” (v44).*

What can we take from this?

God Is There In The Midst Of Chaos

He Makes His Presence Felt When We Need It Most

And when we need Him most what should we do?

Trust In God!

John Stott has commented that this story reminds us of what a remarkable person Paul was ~ *“a man of God and of action... a man of the Spirit and of common sense”.*

Let Us Be Women And Men Of God And The Spirit And Be Women And Men Of Action And Common Sense

Acts 28: 1-16 Paul ashore on Malta & Paul’s arrival in Rome

Paul’s life has been preserved through thick and thin and God’s promises have been kept to all and they are now safe on the island of Malta ~ on which they are shown great kindness. We are reminded here that kindness (a fruit of the Spirit) costs nothing and yet is the most precious gift you can give.

We are given a strange story of how Paul is bitten by a snake but suffers no ill effects and the people of Malta imagine he must be a god! Paul then heals the chief official's father, after first praying to the Lord.

It Is Good For Us To Focus Our Eyes On God In Prayer Before Acting

Following this, many came to Paul and were healed. It is interesting to note that, although Paul had not been able to minister in this way for some time, he is nevertheless ready! After three months on Malta, they board another Alexandrian ship and leave for Rome.

Luke gives us details of the journey via Syracuse in Sicily, Rhegium and Puteoli, from where they travel on foot to Rome (100 miles). The brothers and sisters in Rome had received Paul’s letter some 2

years previously and they travel 40 miles south to greet him!

Paul is both encouraged and thankful for this reception; he has an attitude of gratitude. Rather than being imprisoned, Paul is allowed to live by himself, under guard.

When We Suffer The Storms Of Life Are We Still Ready To Serve God?

Are We A Thankful People?

Acts 28: 17-31 Paul preaches at Rome under guard

In this final section of the Book of Acts, Paul once more seeks to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to the Jews in Rome.

(Emperor Claudius had expelled them from Rome however Nero, his successor, cancelled the order)

Although the Jews had had no reports of Paul, they have heard people speaking against this “sect” (i.e. People of the Way). They seem keen to hear what Paul has to say:

“They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. He witnessed to them from morning till evening, explaining about the kingdom of God, and from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets he tried to persuade them about Jesus” (v23)

As we have seen before, some believe but others disagree and Paul tells them: *“The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to your ancestors when he said through Isaiah the prophet:*

“Go to this people and say, ‘You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.’

For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.”

Therefore I want you to know that God’s salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!” (v25-29).

The final two verses of Acts tell us that Paul persevered and God was with him to the end:

“For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ – with all boldness and without hindrance!” (v30&31).

Belief is a choice: either we are for god or against him

Boldness is a central theme running throughout the book of Acts

During these two years, it is believed that Paul wrote his epistles to the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians and to Philemon. Perhaps he was inspired by the Roman soldier chained to him when writing of the armour of God!

We are perhaps surprised that Luke ends here and doesn't go on to speak about what happened to Paul or how he testified to Caesar. We do not know why this might be but we know that it is the will of God. In many ways, the next chapter of Acts is the story of God's people from then right up to the present day. So what does this mean for us?

Are We Carrying On Paul's Work By Proclaiming Kingdom Values?

This May Be Seen As Upsetting, Challenging Or Even Subversive

But We Must Remain Truthful To God's Word

We Have Freedom To Proclaim As Paul Did ~ Do We Have His Boldness?

Can We Be A People Who Begin To Open Eyes, Ears And Hearts To Bring About A Turning To God, Who Himself Tells Us

“And I would heal them”

The image overleaf is taken from the Rose Publishing booklet “Then and Now Bible Maps Insert” (ISBN 978-159636-293-2) and is used with permission of Tynedale House Publishers

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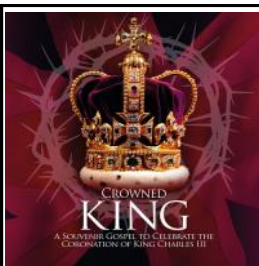
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What a wonderful journey it has been through the Book of Acts and what a precious time of fellowship and learning more from God's Word we have during Bible Bite. Over the coming weeks Brian will be reflecting on the Psalms, beginning with Psalm 42...

Why Not Come Along and Join In!!!

Robin (thanks Brian)



Crowned King

We now have copies of a special Coronation Souvenir Edition of Matthew's Gospel to give out over the coming month. Do please pray about who you might give one to...

CHRISTIANS WORKING TOGETHER IN THE BAY

Coronation

Songs of Praise

A special community event to celebrate
the Coronation of King Charles III
- rounding off a day of events

Sunday 7 May

19:00 at The Bandstand
Rylstone Gardens
(near Shanklin Old Village)



Open air meetings at 7.30pm follow
each Sunday at Rylstone from 28
May to the end of August led by
various local churches



The Wight Church Network
invites you to

Pray the Wight

Friday 19 May 2023

19:30 at

True Vine Church

26a High Street, Newport, PO30 1SS
(Above the Slug and Lettuce)



After a number of online prayer gatherings,
we are back in person to seek God together...

...following up on the focus of the recent worship event

Helping discover fresh confidence in the Gospel as we
go forward in God's mission together as one people...

hope
23-24

Join the united
year of mission



www.hope2324.com

Info - Rev Brian Harley 862485 brianharley58@gmail.com

www.wightchurch.net



Refresher Safeguarding Training

Part 1 - 19 October 2023

Part 2 - 2 November 2023

Part 3 - 16 November 2023

Virtual sessions on Zoom
19:00 - 21:00

A full day's training for all individuals working with children, young people and adults at risk. Also important for Ministers and Elders of the Church. The course covers:

- **Policy and Programme**
- **Premises** (risk assessments, security, accidents and first aid, fire safety, Transport)
- **People** (recruitment, working together culture, communication online & phones)
- **Protecting Children and Adults at Risk** (forms of abuse, recognising signs of abuse, responding to concern or disclosures, reporting structures)
- **Paper Trails** (forms, records, registers,)
- **Safer Church Culture**

Certificates are presented to those completing this training course.

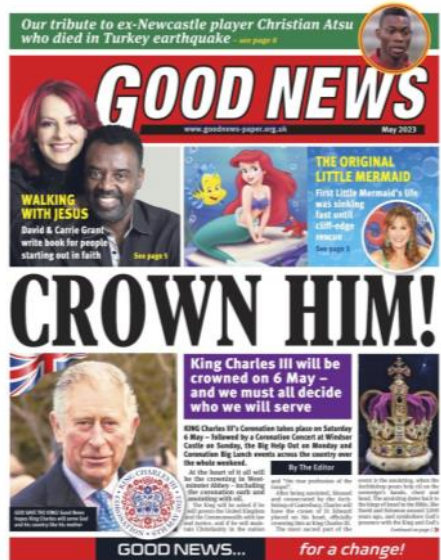
Trainers - Phil Ray and Ruth White, Children's & Youth Development Officers

For more information and to book your place please contact:
bookings@urcwessex.org.uk / 023 8067 4513

Good News for All!

'Good News' is a contemporary outreach newspaper used by churches and missions to take the good news about Jesus Christ into communities across the UK.

Every month, Good News reaches thousands of readers with true stories of how God is changing the lives of those who put their trust in his Son, Jesus. Using jargon-free language, it also explains how everyone can find a personal relationship with Jesus.



Copies are available at the back of church - and is such a great resource for people to read and then pass on to others!!

This month's edition (also available to read online at www.goodnews-paper.org.uk/viewlatesteditionspage.htm) has several great articles, including the headline article '**Crown Him!**' - is about King Charles III's Coronation and why we need King Jesus in our lives.

Other contributions include:

- **'Frasier' Star Finds Peace** - Kelsey Grammer plays a pastor and says Jesus has changed his life
- **Original 'Little Mermaid'** - Voice of Ariel in first Little Mermaid movie says God spoke to her
- **Carrie & David Grant** - TV's voice coaches launch book to help people 'walk with Jesus'
- **Astronaut's Faith** - Former NASA astronaut says science reveals God's creation
- **East Ender Gambles On God** - Engineer finds God after a card game
- **Ex-Newcastle Winger** - Our tribute to Christian Atsu, who lived up to his first name

Good News... for a change

Easter



Good Friday began with a solemn service followed by a Procession of Witness. Stern Roman soldiers escorted the person carrying the cross as, to the dead beat of a drum, we wound through Shanklin from St Blasius to St Paul's. At each church, including St Saviour's, the URC and the Methodist, part of the crucifixion account was read, with different people voicing the parts.

As we processed through the heart of the town, many people stopped to watch and take photos.

Articles were published in The Island Echo and Observer. Mocking online comments re-enacted the actual crucifixion: 'Those who passed by hurled insults at him... In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.'



We know, from the Gospels, that the followers of Jesus ran away in fear of their lives. They were, truly, at the bottom of Hope road.

And that's where we were at 06:15 on Sunday morning, waiting for the sunrise.

Around 40 worshippers celebrated the resurrection with jubilant prayers and songs. This was followed by warming drinks and bacon



butties in the South East Beach Café, which opened specially for us.

As Brian said : "It was great to see members from a number of local congregations joining together as a witness to our faith in Jesus - our crucified and risen Lord. A glorious morning in so many ways! "



CARE Prayer Diary (April 23rd - July 22nd 2023)

The new prayer diary is now available at the back of the Church.

If you have not encountered this valuable resource before, do take a copy – The prayer needs covered in this edition are as follows:

- Child Abuse
- Christian Heritage
- Sport
- The Gift of Hospitality
- Global Gospel
- Frail and Elderly People
- Protecting the Environment
- Sexual and Gender Identity
- Immigration
- Integrity of the Media
- Women and Girl's Welfare
- Money Matters
- Police and Security Services

Under the heading of '**Our Christian Heritage**' is a prayer for King Charles III and Camilla, Queen Consort

“Lord God, You provide for Your people by Your power, and rule over them in love. Grant to Your servant our King, Charles III, the Spirit of wisdom and discernment, that being devoted to You with his whole heart, he may so wisely govern, that in his time we may live in safety and in peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen” (*Prayer of the Australian Anglican Church*).

We have been **so** blessed by our late Queen and how she was so clear about her faith, declaring that, “Throughout my life, the message and teachings of Christ have been my guide, and in them I find hope.”

We are urged in scripture to pray for those in authority - may we be faithful in praying for the new King and Queen, in the very challenging task of following the long reign of Queen Elizabeth II, who served us her people, so faithfully, fulfilling her vow to do so, “However long or short my life might be.” Prayer and regular worship were such an integral part of her life, from which she received strength for the great responsibilities of being our Sovereign.

The **so** helpful aspect of the prayer diary is that it covers, with a short prayer for each day, aspects of our nation's life that give deeper insights as to how to pray with understanding.

On the inside cover of the booklet there is always a message, and in this edition shares a thought and prayer about the lovely county of Cornwall.

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watch full and thankful,
Colossians 4:2

Cornwall's coastline is the longest in England and 30% of the county is designated as an Area of Outstanding Beauty. 570,000 people live here, 40% in rural areas and the rest in about 30 towns. This unique and stunning place has a rich Christian history. Cornwall has over 400 ancient crosses and many places are named after Celtic missionaries who came 1,500 years ago. Centuries later, dramatic revivals began when John Wesley and others preached, often in the open fields.

A Prayer for Cornwall (written by a church leader there)

Father, like the rising and falling off the sea, so it has been with Gospel work and witness in Cornwall over the centuries. Today, many churches are finding it hard in Covid's aftermath, as well as other pressures. Lord, we long for the tide to turn and for fresh streams of blessing to flow once more, as Your Spirit moved in power in the past. We pray for more of Cornwall's people to turn to You and experience your wonderful salvation, grace and love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

May we echo this prayer - not only for Cornwall, but also for our nation, that we would again be one in which our Sovereign God is worshipped 'in spirit and in truth' and that we might see again a mighty move of God in our midst, turning the hearts of men and women, boys and girls, to Him.

"This is what the Lord says: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls." Jeremiah 6:16 (NIV)

Source: 'CARE'

Open Doors World Watch List 2023 – Top 50 – The Countries where Christians risk everything for Christ

Open Doors have been compiling the **World Watch List** for 30 years.

In the 2023 edition the following questions about the list were answered:

What inspired the first Open Doors World Watch list in 1993?

The fall of the Soviet Union in 1989, which reduced the need for Bible smuggling in the region, released funds and resources for use elsewhere. In 1991, a team were tasked with researching the countries where Open Doors was active and where the work could expand to. Two years later, the first list was produced.

How did the list change in the 1990s?

Initially, the list was not made public. It was primarily used by Open Doors to direct their work. But towards the end of the decade it was made public, to provide people with an overall picture of persecution to inspire support and prayers.

How has the list changed our understanding of persecution?

It's revealed the complexity of persecution. This includes how multiple factors can drive hostility, how persecution affects believers in different ways, and how persecution can be subtle as well as violent.

What are some of the key trends over the past 30 years?

Persecution has grown and intensified in Africa, mainly due to the rise of jihadism. The latest list bears this out, with violence against Christians hitting new heights. Opposition has also intensified in many Asian countries owing to a rise in authoritarianism and Islamic expression.

Blessed are the ‘troublemakers’

In Acts 17, believers in Thessalonica were dragged before the authorities by furious locals who claimed, “These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here...” (17:6). In the eyes of many, the early believers were ‘troublemakers’ and ‘disturbers of the peace’ - the very accusations increasingly facing many Christians today.

The early church took huge risks to carry the Gospel to the places where they were scattered. Their extraordinary legacy lives on to this day - not only in the way they began spreading the gospel to all nations, but in their example of courageous faith that our persecuted family are seeking to follow today, regardless of the risks involved.

Please continue to pray for our brothers and sisters who are facing ‘trials of various kinds’, as they seek to follow Jesus and live Godly lives in so often extremely dangerous circumstances.

Do look out for the excellent resources - new editions of **Open Doors Magazine and Prayer Diary** and **Release International’s April - June magazine**- all available at the back of the church.

And do take a copy of the new **Open Doors World Watch List for 2023** (or you can read it online at www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/) - listing the top 50 countries where there is severe persecution with more than more than 360 million Christians worldwide suffering persecution and discrimination for their faith - **a staggering one in seven believers.**

In 1993, at the start of the World Watch list, Christians faced high to extreme levels of persecution in 40 countries. This number has nearly doubled to 76 countries in 2023. In the top 50 alone, 312 million Christians now face very high or extreme levels.



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These sobering statistics must provoke a response from us. “If one part suffers, every part suffers with it,” the Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:26. Your prayers and support will help enable our brothers and sisters to keep following Jesus, no matter the risks.

It is such an informative booklet, encouraging us to pray and providing stories of believers, their faith and prayers for the Persecuted Church. They are **so** grateful for our prayers and our gifts, no matter how small.

Do ask if you'd like to know more.

Hopefully you will find the following prayer from the booklet helpful for our brothers and sisters.

Lord Jesus,

Be with all your disciples who are under suspicion, all your followers who are being followed, whose lives are lived against a background hum of fear.

Give comfort and courage to the watched and the whispered about, the spied upon and the shadowed, those who have to hide their beliefs, disguise their actions, and watch their steps.

Refresh and renew those exhausted from the need for constant vigilance.

Protect all those who gather in secret.

Strengthen the underground networks of believers around the world.

Give wisdom to their leaders, so that they know whom to trust, when to speak and when to stay silent.

Thank You for their faith and perseverance, and for the courage of those who, despite the penalties for being caught, still try to share Your truth and love.

Amen.

Blessings in Jesus Name,

Jane H

Source: [Open Doors World Watch list 2023](#)

United Reformed Church 50th Anniversary.

Around 1,200 people attended the rail strike-postponed celebrations at Methodist Central Hall Westminster, the same place that English Congregationalists and Presbyterians gathered on 5th October 1972 to vote the URC into being.



Decorations created by members of the URC hung around the hall, a sounding trumpet heralded the beginning of the service, as in 1972, celebration of communion, and artwork from across the denomination was displayed in colourful presentation.

Led by the Rev John Bradbury, General Secretary of the URC, and the Moderator and Moderator-Elect of the URC General Assembly, the Rev Fiona Bennett and Rev Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson, the service reflected the denomination's past, present and future, as well as its place in the world Church.

The Rev Richard Church, former Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship) who four years ago helped to start conversations about

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how to celebrate the URC's 50th anniversary said: "It's great to be here and it's great to see that it's actually happened and I'm massively admiring of the people who have gone through two false starts to get us to this point, but then the URC is a church that's used to false starts.

"We thought we were being set up for the unity of the wider Christian body in the country and it hasn't quite worked out that way. So, this is a good 50th birthday party."



Rev Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson,
Rev Dr John Bradbury,
and Rev Fiona Bennett.

Former General Secretary the Rev Dr David Cornick, URC and Council for World Mission (CWM) scholar Victoria Turner, and the Rev Professor Jooseop Keum, CWM's General Secretary, each delivered a sermon, and a specially formed Jubilee Choir sang 'Always trust the star that guides us on the way', Neil Thorogood's winning poem in the 50th Anniversary Worship Resources Competition, in a setting by Scott Stroman.

Other music in the service also included Colin Thompson's competition-winning hymn, 'God of the Pilgrim Way'.

The range of those leading worship reflected all generations within the URC, both lay and ordained, including Church Related Community Workers and leaders of the URC Youth Assembly.

Lundie Memorial Award winner Poppy Thorpe and trainee minister

Joe Amoah read from scripture, while Karen Campbell, URC Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries, performed her own poetic cry of welcome – ‘A table for all’.

The Rev Margaret Ali, Minister of Islington and Rectory Road URCs, said: “It’s a pleasure to be here. I think I am adding colour to the URC because it’s a diverse church and I represent diversity. That’s what I am here for and praising God, and I’m able to do ministry wonderfully.”

Two hundred and forty people also toured Church House, the URC’s London office and Lumen URC to experience the wide-ranging life of the URC, represented by different ministries, exhibitions, and creative and learning opportunities for all ages.

Philippa Osei, URC Youth Moderator 2023-2024 said: “It was brilliant. It was really nice to see different facets of Church in one place.”

Heather Moore, URC Youth Moderator-Elect 2023-2024, added: “There was so much more there than I thought there was going to be and so much more that I didn’t realise happened at Church House; you have Greenbelt, Trussell Trust, Commitment for Life, It was really good to see all of that at one time in one space.”



Open Church House



Transformation (2)

Following on from the April magazine, here are Neil's views on our transformed nature ...

Salvation Is Regeneration

“His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires” (2 Peter 1:3&4)

What does the Bible specifically say about our nature? The Greek word for nature is used in this way only twice in the New Testament. The first, in Ephesians, describes the nature we all shared before we came to Christ:

“you were dead in your transgressions and sins ... and were by nature deserving of wrath” (Ephesians 2:1-3)

What was your basic nature before you were born again spiritually? You and every other Christian were by nature children of wrath, dead in sin, subject to Satan's power, living completely to fulfil sinful lusts and desires. This is the condition of every unbeliever today.

The second occurrence of the word is in 2 Peter 1:4 (above) describing our nature after we came to Christ. When you came into spiritual union with God through your new birth, you didn't add a new, divine nature to your old, sinful nature. You exchanged natures. Salvation isn't just a matter of God forgiving your sins and issuing you a pass to heaven when you die. Salvation is regeneration.

God changed you from darkness to light, from sinner to saint. There is a newness about you that wasn't there before. If God hadn't changed your identity at salvation, you would be stuck with your old identity until you died. How could you expect to grow to maturity if you didn't start as a transformed child of God? Becoming a partaker of God's nature is fundamental to a Christian's identity and maturity.

We are no longer in Adam, we are in Christ. We can still choose to walk according to the flesh, but why should we want to?

“You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ” (Romans 8:9)

Lord may my understanding of who I am in Christ grow today so that I may walk in the victorious life You secured for me.

An Entirely New Self

“You were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light” (Ephesians 5:8)

Ephesians 5:8 describes the essential change of nature which occurs at salvation. It doesn't say you were in darkness; it says you were darkness. Darkness was your nature, your very essence, as an unbeliever. Nor does it say you are now in the light; it says you are light. God changed your basic nature from darkness to light. The issue in this passage is not improving your nature. Your new nature is already determined. The issue is learning to walk in harmony with your new nature.

Why do you need the nature of Christ within you? So you can be like Christ, not just act like Him. God has not given us the power to imitate Him. He has made us partakers of His nature so that we can actually **be** like Him.

You don't become a Christian by acting like one. We are not on a performance basis with God. He doesn't say, "Here are My standards, now you measure up." He knows you can't solve the

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problem of an old sinful self by simply improving your behaviour. He must change your nature, give you an entirely new self, the life of Christ in you which is the grace you need to measure up to His standards. That was the point of Jesus' message in the Sermon on the Mount: **"For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:20)**

The scribes and Pharisees were the religious perfectionists of their day. They had external behaviour down to a science, but their hearts were like the insides of a tomb, reeking of death. Jesus is only interested in creating new persons from the inside out by infusing in them a brand-new nature and creating in them a new self. Only after He changes your identity and makes you a partaker of His nature will you be able to change your behaviour.

Dear Jesus, thank You for rescuing me from the kingdom of darkness and transferring me into Your marvellous light. I choose to walk as a child of light today.

Neil Anderson

Freedom in Christ Ministries

Used by permission

Just before Jesus speaks of righteousness in the Sermon on the Mount he tells us that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world ...

Heavenly Father, help us to be both salt and light to a world which so desperately needs You today.

Robin

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Westbrook 75th Anniversary



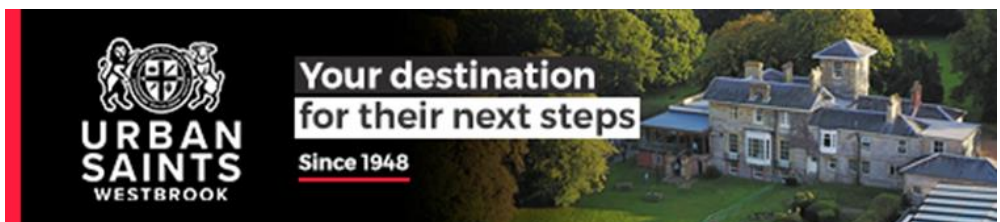
On Pentecost Sunday, 28 May, Brian has been invited to preach at a celebration service at Westbrook near Ryde. See the plan below inviting people to bring a picnic after morning services - then the worship will follow in a marquee at 14:00. You are very welcome to share in the celebration of this wonderful local ministry centre.

Pentecost Celebration at Westbrook - Sunday 28th May 2023

This year's great festival of Pentecost coincides with the exact 75-year anniversary of the dedication of the Westbrook Crusader Centre (now Urban Saints Westbrook) to the "Glory of God". On the 29th May 1948 a service of thanks and dedication was held in which Lady Laing (wife of the building magnate and evangelical Christian Sir John Laing) performed the official opening of the Centre. Over the 75 years existence as a Christian Residential Centre Westbrook has seen many thousands of young people encounter and deepen their relationship with Jesus. It is so encouraging to hear of the many testimonies in which God has used Westbrook in the transformation and discipleship of young people.

Come and celebrate Pentecost at Westbrook on Sunday 28th May and take part in a service of Celebration, Thanksgiving and Renewal as we seek God's will, power and vision for the Christian purpose of the Centre and its reintegration into the Island's Christian mission and life. From mid-day onwards there will be free activities appropriate for all ages, bring a picnic lunch to enjoy in the grounds and participate in the worship service which will begin at 14:00.

Phil Dixon at pdixon@urbansaints.org or call 07794 233325.



FOCUS

on our Christian Brothers and Sisters being persecuted for their faith

Joy in Bangladesh as new pool already used to baptise 49 new Christians!

Pastor Habib leads a rapidly growing church where new believers were unable to get baptised. But that's all changed recently – helped by Open Doors supporters!

Baptisms are such joyous and precious occasions, but what if they cannot be held because of persecution?

That was the issue facing Pastor Habib's growing church in south west Bangladesh. Around 500 believers are spread out among 23 house groups. But being in a predominantly Muslim context, it's very difficult for new believers – many of whom are young – to get baptised.

There are no public places where they can conduct baptisms without risk. If these baptisms of new believers are discovered, locals will likely respond aggressively. Baptisms can be done secretly, but if this involves many people then a pool is needed – and small churches cannot afford this.

“We had been praying for a long time and had requested many people to pray about a baptism pool for us,” shares Pastor Habib. “It was very important and necessary for our church.”

Their prayers were soon answered when, on hearing of the need, Open Doors local partners helped build a small baptism pool in the church premises – and it's already being put to very good use.

Joy replaces fear

“We are very thankful to the partners,” says the pastor. “They have

given us this as part of our prayer and request. Now we can baptise our new believing brothers and sisters freely and without any fear or panic. We can do the baptism ceremony with joy and peace, singing worship songs. No one will keep us from baptising new believers.”

“We have already baptised 49 newly converted brothers and sisters,” continues Pastor Habib, who could not stop smiling as he thanked the partners, such is his overwhelming joy. “We now do our baptism ceremony without any trouble. We sing songs and conduct our ceremony without hindrances from Muslims. This really is a great experience and a joyful time.

“Before, I used to baptise people with fear,” he adds. “I always thought of persecution in my mind. I thought someone might see our baptism ceremony and the mob might resist us. I know how difficult it is to baptise a newly converted believer in the open place.”

The pool will continue to bring enormous blessing to the church – a blessing Pastor Habib is keen to share with other churches. “I would like to share this provision from the Lord with many other Christian brothers and sisters,” he says.

Please Pray

- Give thanks for this good news, and pray that the new believers will grow in their faith and witness
- That Pastor Habib’s church will continue to see more people added to its number
- For Open Doors local partners in Bangladesh, that their ministries will continue to bear much fruit as they seek to strengthen and equip Christians at risk of persecution for their faith.

Christians are a tiny minority in Bangladesh – in the country’s population of 168 million, just 938,000 are believers (0.5%).

Bangladesh is number 30 on the World Watch List 2023 - visit www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/world-watch-list/bangladesh/ to find out why.

Source: [Open Doors](http://www.opendoorsuk.org/) - used by permission

Did you find 30 books of the Bible in the following paragraph?

This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends...One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo, Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or a scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph. During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new record. The local paper, The Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, "The books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus. There really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found. God Bless.

Note: Osee appears in the King James Version translation (often listed as KJV) of Romans 9:25 as a variant spelling of Hosea.

George Port

Public domain - author unknown

LIONHEART FESTIVAL

14th to 16th July 2023

County Show Ground, Northwood

The Lionheart Team are pleased to announce that, following the success of the 2022 Festival and the massive encouragement we have received, we shall gather again in 2023 with a wonderful line-up of worship bands and speakers to be announced in due course.

Tickets are now available via the website:

lionheartfestival.co.uk

Are you able to volunteer in some way to help with the event...?

Connection Quiz Answers

1. Donald J Trump.
2. Pluto.
3. Daisy.
4. Micky Dolenz.
5. Connection: They are all **Disney cartoon characters**.
6. This issue's cover photo is of:

The daffodils that were in bloom in Rylstone Gardens,
Shanklin - in March.



Isaiah 62 Global 21 days prayer for Israel

We believe these days Gentile believers are being raised up with an Esther call “for such a time as this” to pray for Israel. It is very significant that Christians from around the world are feeling this burden and will be joining in the prayer initiative below.

We have signed up to be a ‘hub’ and will be making our home available for prayer 16:00-17:00 each day 7th – 28th May. We would like to extend this invitation to anyone interested.

Please contact either one of us personally or email: melodieroywilson@gmail.com

Carol Williams or Roy and Melodie Wilson

The Isaiah 62 Global 21-Days of Prayer and Fasting for Israel (7 - 28 May 2023)

Join several million believers who will engage in prayer for Israel for at least **1 hour a day for 21 days** (7th – 28th May), for the increase of God’s salvation promises and plans for Jerusalem and Israel. Some will pray alone and others will pray with 2 or more (Matthew 18:20) - virtually or in-person - in their home, office, or at their church, etc.

A collaboration of several thousand ministries mobilised **1 million believers** to participate in a **global solemn assembly** (7th – 28th May) to fast in various ways and to pray for the God’s purposes for Israel and to ask Him to raise up 100 million intercessors for Israel as promised in Isaiah 62:6 - to “appoint” intercessors who will not be silent until Jesus turns - thus, they are born in the generation He returns!

On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen; all day and all night they will never keep silent. You [intercessors] who remind the LORD [of His promises], take no rest for yourselves; And give Him no rest until He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth [which occurs at Jesus’ return]. (Isaiah 62:6-7, NAS)

In the first 3 weeks of announcing this fast on 7th March, over **1 million** are set to participate in various ways.

By 7th May, far more than **1 million** will engage in this 21 day fast in various ways (some will fast on water, some on vegetables, or juices, or one meal a day, or just “fasting media”) in praying for the release of His glory (Exodus 33:18).

The **IHOPKC** (International House of Prayer of Kansas City) prayer room is committed to worship and pray non-stop 24/7 for 3 weeks (7th – 28th May) for Israel.

Over 300 on the IHOPKC full-time ministry staff have personally committed to be in our prayer room for **6-12 hours a day for all 21 days**. The IHOPKC prayer room is only one of **many HUBs** engaging in this.

Isaiah62Fast.com does not address any **eschatological positions** but calls believers from all positions to participate.

Why 100 million?

Over many years, the Lord has given various people the number **100 million intercessors** for Israel in various ways. Eric Watt, Jason Hubbard (IPC - International Prayer Connect) and team have visited IHOPKC a number of times over recent years. They represent and communicate regularly with leaders that oversee **5,000+ prayer networks that collectively include 130 million believers**. In their recent visit (Dec 2022), they shared that the leaders of these 5,000+ prayer networks and the 130 million intercessors connected to them will stand together *to pray for the same area of the earth 4 times in 2023* in a global mission initiative called **110cities.com**. This is the **first time in history** that over 100 million believers will pray for the same geographical area together on the same day 4 times in one year (see John 17:21-23).

These 100 million prayed for **China** on 22nd January 2023. They will pray for the **Middle East** on 17th April, for **Israel on 28 May**, and for **India** on 31st October. These 100 million believers are deeply committed to Jesus and to the Great Commission, but many of them are *not yet connected to the Lord’s biblical purpose for Israel*. But for

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one day (28th May) these 100 million will pray for Israel as they did for China on 22nd January. But for 21 days leading up to 28th May, **1 million+** intercessors will fast and pray asking the “*Holy Spirit to ambush*” them by marking the hearts of these 100 million for His purposes for Israel.

Why Do We So Value Praying for Jerusalem and Israel?

Israel’s national repentance (Act 3:19) and confession that Jesus is Messiah (Matthew 23:39) is deeply connected to Jesus’ second coming, the Great Commission, and “*life from the dead*” for the whole earth (Romans 11:15). Jesus will not return until the leaders in Jerusalem acknowledge Him as Messiah according to Psalm 118:26.

“O Jerusalem... you shall see Me no more [a reference to Jesus’ return] till you say, ‘Blessed is He [Jesus] who comes in the name of the LORD [thus, acknowledging Him as Messiah - Psalm 118:26].’” (Matthew 23:37-39)

Repent therefore and be converted, that your [Israel’s] sins may be blotted out, so that... He may send Jesus Christ... whom heaven must receive [keep or retain at the Father’s right hand] until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by...all His holy prophets. (Acts 3:19-21)

Paul taught that God will use Gentile believers to provoke the nation of Israel to embrace Jesus in the end times....***to provoke them [Israel] to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles... I magnify my ministry, if by any means I may provoke [Israel] to jealousy... If their [Israel’s] being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead [blessing for the whole earth]? (Romans 11:11-15)***

We believe that this 21-day **global Isaiah 62 Fast** will be catalytic in sparking an acceleration of a biblical conversation about Israel in the body of Christ across the nations in this hour. This fast will end on Pentecost Sunday, 28th May. On this day, 100 million believers will be praying for Israel together in response to God’s call through Jason Hubbard, Eric Watt, and the “**110 Cities**” team to mobilise them this way 4 times in 2023.

See [110 Cities.com](http://110Cities.com) - on 17th April, these same 100 million believers will pray for the entire Middle East. This will be the **first time in history** that far more than 1 million will continue 24 hours a day for 21 days in praying for God's promises for Israel. The uniqueness of this prayer initiative is itself a sign of the times and an acceleration of God's **"set time for a generation yet to be created"** to engage together in His purposes for Israel.

You will...have mercy on Zion [Jerusalem]; the time to favour her, Yes, the set time, has come... This will be written for the generation to come, that a people yet to be created may praise the LORD. (Psalm 102:13-18)

This 21-day fast is a **"global Esther moment"** (Esther 4:14-16) that will be a significant down payment for the final ultimate global Esther moment when millions of believers will engage in prayer, speak out boldly for God's purposes for Israel (as seen in Scripture), and stand with Israel as anti-Semitism increases until Jesus returns (Zechariah 14:1-5). This fast is also important for today as Israel faces several very significant conflicts.

"For if you remain silent [unresponsive] at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place...who knows if you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai: "Go, gather all the Jews... and fast for me..." (Esther 4:14-16)

In this fast we exalt the supremacy of Jesus and focus on the connection of God's blessing on Jerusalem to fulfilling the Great Commission. We can do so much more together in the "spirit of John 17:21-23" unity.

Download a free digital book the **Moravian Miracle** by Jason Hubbard that tells the remarkable story of **Count Zinzendorf** who combined 24/7 prayer (that continued for 100 years) with the first Protestant missions movement in history. Find this PDF book at Isaiah62Fast.com

The Puzzle Pages

Sudoku

A numerical placement puzzle!

To solve it you need to fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3 x 3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Enjoy!

1						7		
				2		6		
8	5		9	1				
4				3	1	9		
	9						2	
		5	4	6				8
				7	6		9	5
	7		8					
		8						7

1			2		3		4				5	6	
									7				
8							9		10				
11	12		13	14		15			16				
			17										
18						19	20						21
					22						23		
24		25		26		27		28					
			29			30					31		
		32	33			34							
35											36		

Last month's Sudoku - how did you do?

2	8	5	4	7	6	1	3	9
7	3	4	1	2	9	5	8	6
6	1	9	5	8	3	2	4	7
4	6	8	9	5	2	3	7	1
9	7	1	3	6	4	8	5	2
3	5	2	7	1	8	9	6	4
8	9	6	2	3	7	4	1	5
5	2	3	6	4	1	7	9	8
1	4	7	8	9	5	6	2	3

Across

- 1 Last book of the Bible (10)
 5 '*Much - About Nothing*' (3)
 8 Requiring immediate attention (6)
 9 Chemical element O (7)
 11 French region where D-Day landings took place (8)
 16 Not before (5)
 17 US hospital drama (2)
 18 Not end (5)
 19 '*You're so -*' 1972 song (4)
 22 Honey making insect (3)
 23 You listen with it (3)
 24 - Moore, Bond actor (5)
 27 6th book of NT (6)
 29 Not off (2)

- 30 Not applicable *initials* (2)
 31 Lays eggs for our breakfast (3)
 32 Not liquid or solid (3)
 35 Not today or tomorrow (9)
 36 Not a prisoner - or sang '*Alright Now*' in 1970 (4)

Down

- 1 Capital of 11 across (5)
 2 Adam's partner (3)
 3 Station on Watercress Line (5)
 4 C'est *Ivoire*, en français (5)
 6 Jesus rode on one on Palm Sunday (6)
 7 Exempli Gratia *initials* (2)
 10 Longs for (5)
 12 Not in (2)
 13 French for 'sea' (3)
 14 Sculpture, paintings, etc (3)
 15 Kent port (5)
 18 County in SE England (6)
 20 Indefinite and very long period of time (4)
 21 Country that held first Winter Olympics in 1924 (6)
 23 Sandown Park Racecourse is here (5)
 25 Jokes (4)
 26 Thorny flower (4)
 28 Queen after Henry VIII (4)
 33 @ (2)
 34 Mr Sheeran, singer (2)

Can You Guess The Year?

- The 1/2p was demonetised and withdrawn from circulation .
- ‘*Spitting Image*’ made its debut on UK television.
- Torvill and Dean won gold at the Winter Olympics.
- And UK No. 1s included:
 - Paul McCartney with ‘*Pipes of Peace*’
 - Nena with ‘*99 Red Balloons*’
 - Lionel Richie with ‘*Hello*’
 - Band Aid with ‘*Do They Know It’s Christmas*’

Answer next issue

This Issue’s ‘Pot Luck’ Quiz Questions

1. Who won the inaugural F1 Drivers Championship in 1950?
2. When was our present church building opened?
3. What is the capital of Estonia?
4. What was ‘Operation Chastise’ in WW2?
5. Who was Queen Elizabeth I’s husband?
6. What was the ship that carried Charles Darwin around the world?
7. Who wrote the play ‘*Under Milk Wood*’ ?
8. When was the ‘Gherkin’ in London opened?
9. On the periodic table, which element is Pa?
10. When was the first Severn Road Bridge opened?

Answers next issue

Please note that the **deadline** for contributions for the next magazine is:

Sunday 21st May

Contributions can be emailed at anytime up to the deadline day to the editor at:

surc.thelink@btinternet.com

Last Issue's Solutions

- Guess the year: it was 2002

- Last issue's crossword ↓

N	O	R	M	A	N	D	Y		E	L	V	I	S	
I			A			I		A	T		A		T	
T	R	O	U	P	E	R		N		S	T	A	R	
R		U	N	O		E	N	D		P			A	
O			D				O		P	I	T		I	
G	R	E	Y	H	O	U	N	D		T	A	R	T	
E					R				U		F		S	
N	A	I	R	O	B	I			N	E	I	G	H	
						L			K		R		U	
B	I	G			F	A	L	A	I	S	E		N	O
O		U			I				R				C	
B	A	Y	E	U	X				K	N	I	G	H	T

Last Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Answers

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Southampton | 7. Oscar Wilde |
| 2. 1245 | 8. 1982 |
| 3. Sofia | 9. Helium |
| 4. Firenze | 10. 4 th March 1890 |
| 5. Queen Caroline of Brunswick | |
| 6. HMS Endeavour | |

Sunday Service

- Morning** **10:30 Morning Worship** in church
Broadcast live on YouTube
- **Holy Communion** on 1st Sunday of each month
- **Encounter service** on last Sunday of each month

Weekday Activities

- Monday** 10:00 **Prayer for Israel** on the Church Zoom
- Tuesday** 14:00 **Bible Bite** ministry in church
- refreshments and fellowship from 13:30
Broadcast live on YouTube
- 19:30 **Prayer Meeting** on Zoom
- Wednesday** 11:00 **Living Well Together**
- Friday** 10:00 **CatURpillars**
- Saturday** 10:30 **Coffee Morning** on Zoom
- a chance to catch up and have a chat

Details of any other services/activities that we hold will be posted:

- **inside the church**
- **on our Facebook page**
- **and on our website**

Minister: **Rev Brian Harley**



10 Dracaena Gardens, Shanklin PO37 7JQ



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brianharley58@gmail.com

Day off: Monday

Secretary: **Robin Wightman**



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Shanklin URC is a member of the **Evangelical Alliance**

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