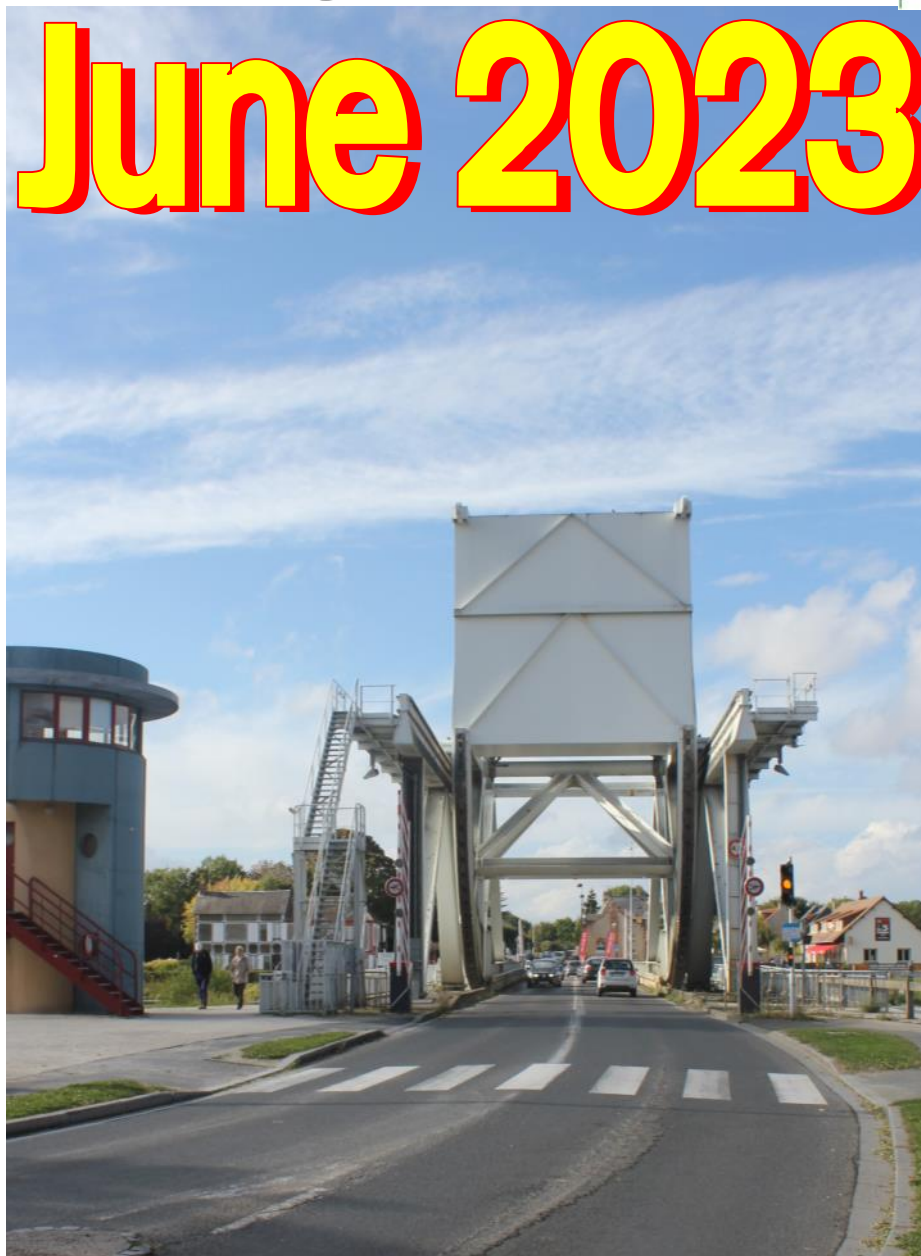


# The Link



# June 2023



Shanklin United Reformed Church [www.shanklinurc.co.uk](http://www.shanklinurc.co.uk)

# View From Number 10



## Watch and pray...

In Prayer Ministry, we are encouraged to keep our eyes open, so we don't miss what God is doing as we minister to others in Jesus' name. This isn't always easy as we tend to close our eyes so as to concentrate and focus on God. It can also be good to foster the art of praying on the move - with our eyes open as we go about the community; to engage with God as we walk or drive... and being prompted to pray for different situations, places and people.

This month, the Elders want to encourage those who are able to discover the joys of prayer walking. We have received a fantastic resource from Evangelical Alliance and Robin has created our own brochure which follows the various themes. This can be used very flexibly over a period of time, but we do ask that you give some priority to this during the midsummer period... make use of the light evenings to watch and pray! Let's really bless our community.

For a good many years, we have had a Prayer Walk at the end of June, going out around the town and praying for our neighbourhood – but this has often been very poorly supported. I really believe it is a very significant thing to do, so we are holding another one this year on the evening of Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June at 19:30.

Do please come and support this – either going out in small groups or staying in the building and praying from there. In the meantime, we would encourage you to get some practice and try to work something in each week in the month of June and explore praying though the various themes in the booklet. Let us pray... and watch!

With love and best wishes ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brian'.



## Rob Westall - June Island Tour

See [page 31](#) for details of a special worship event we are hosting in June in the lead up to the Lionheart Festival.

Rob is here from Wales doing various events around the Island for a week. As well as the Friday evening (9<sup>th</sup>), he will also join us at Rylstone Gardens on the 11<sup>th</sup> June.

# ENCOUNTER

**...is back!**

**The last Sunday of each month at 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?**

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

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

Meeting ID: 324 266 5584 Password: 936536.

**Prayer Chain - end of an era...** Hazel doesn't any longer feel able to take messages clearly and pass out information, so has decided to step back from coordinating this work of prayer. We are deeply grateful for her leadership and faithful commitment in this area of ministry over many years. With her agreement, it now seems right to cease the telephone chain as it has more or less been superseded...

**Text Prayer Network** – this has proved a more efficient method of getting prayer needs around. So, if you have an urgent and important issue that need immediate cover, please text Lou on the number below with your prayer request and she will mobilise a team of intercessors by forwarding the message to the group. Each of the team will pray and then delete the message.

**Lou Jupe - 07474 273119** - or, as a back up -  
**Jean Cunningham - 07854 324809**

If you'd like to be added to this chain, please get in touch with Lou and she will brief you on the protocols (for info, Hazel will still be receiving the prayer information).

**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](mailto:melodieroywilson@gmail.com) or ☎ 866912

**Midsummer Prayer Walk** around the local community on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June from 19:30 - 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 do so need our prayers

CHRISTIANS WORKING TOGETHER IN THE BAY

warmly invite you to join us for

# *Worship in the Open Air*



Each Sunday 19:30  
at Rylstone Gardens  
(turn left just past the Old Village)

An informal service for everyone led  
from the bandstand by local Churches

From 28<sup>th</sup> May until 27<sup>th</sup> August

## **Gift Day - Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> June**

### **For our Maintenance Fund**

As was agreed at recent Church Meetings, we are asking the whole church family to pray about whether they can make a special one-off gift as a thank-offering to God for all he has done among us here - in order to help fund further improvements to our facilities.

We have been blessed with 50% grants from URC Wessex Synod for both secondary glazing to the remaining larger windows in the building and for upgrades to our a/v equipment, some of which is getting rather tired. We still have to find the other half, which amounts to around £13,000 - if we proceed with all the technical improvements. We currently have around £4,000 in the maintenance fund so we would like to raise the balance, or else we'll see our general funds rather depleted. Brian wrote in the April magazine:

*Many of those who have been part of the church for a number of years have given generously to help make the building what it is today, for which we are so thankful to God. Some of you have joined in recent years and enjoyed the benefits! People who attended the recent music night were so positive about the facilities we have - they are such a blessing, and the glory belongs to the Lord!*

*The Elders ask everyone to give careful consideration as to whether they have spare resources that can be released to help with the work. Not everyone will be able to give, but many of us may well be able to assist in raising some extra funds to help make these much-needed improvements to the place we call our spiritual home.*

*Gifts will be to the Maintenance Fund in general, so that if there was any surplus it can be used for other necessary work.*

**Do please consider making a special gift on or around 4<sup>th</sup> June so we know what resources are available as we go forward with the various works. Over £500 has already come in.**

**With thanks.**

# 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**





**FREEDOM  
IN CHRIST**

## Let's Go Sailing!

This month Neil Anderson looks at what it means to **Be in Christ** and to **Walk in the Strength of the Lord...**

\*\*\*

### Being In Christ

**“Jesus replied, ‘Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again’ John 3:3**

Being in Christ, and all that it means to Christian maturity and freedom is the overwhelming theme of the New Testament. For example, in the six chapters of the Book of Ephesians alone there are 40 references to being in Christ and having Christ in you. For every reference to Christ being in you, there are 10 to you being in Christ. Being in Christ is the most critical element of our identity.

But we weren't born in Christ. We were born in sin, thanks to the first Adam. What is God's plan for transforming us from being in Adam to being in Christ? We must be born again (John 3:3). Physical birth only gains us physical life. Spiritual life, the eternal life Christ promises to those who come to Him, is only gained through spiritual birth ~

**“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them” (John 3:36).**

What does it mean to be spiritually alive in Christ? The moment you were born again your soul came into union with God in the same way Adam was in union with God before the Fall. Your spiritual union with God is complete and eternal because it is provided by Christ, the last Adam. As long as Christ remains alive spiritually, you will remain alive spiritually - and that's for eternity!



Contrary to what many Christians believe, eternal life is not something you get when you die. You are spiritually alive in Christ right now. That's how you got to be in union with God, by being born again spiritually. You'll never be more spiritually alive than you are right now. The only thing that will change when you die physically is that you will exchange your old earthbound body for a new one. But your spiritual life in Christ, which began when you personally trusted Him, will merely continue on.

Salvation is not a future addition; it's a present transformation. And that transformation occurs at spiritual birth, not physical death. God's Word promises ~

**“Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.” (1 John 5:12).**

Eternal life is something you possess right now because you're in Christ. Believe it. Rejoice in it.

**Thank You, Lord, that my eternal salvation is a present day reality. I rejoice in this wonderful security and assurance.**

\*\*\*

### **Put Up The Sail!**

What does it take to be the selfless, loving Christian we desire to be? What is needed to move us beyond our inconsequential selfish, fleshly pursuits to deeds of loving service to God and others?

First, it requires a firm grasp of your identity in Christ. You can't love like Jesus loved until you accept the reality that, since you are in Christ, His divine nature is united with your spirit.

Second, you must begin to crucify daily the old sin-trained flesh and walk in accordance with who you are: a child of God whose spirit is filled with God's Spirit.

The fact that the Holy Spirit resides in us and that we can live according to His leading is an awesome but elusive concept to many. The problem is not new. Nicodemus was a learned man, but he couldn't comprehend life in the Spirit ~

**“How can someone be born when they are old?’ Nicodemus asked. ‘Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!’**

**Jesus answered, ‘Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, “You must be born again.”**

**The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So, it is with everyone born of the Spirit.’” (John 3: 5-8)**

Trying to reduce life in the Spirit to a formula is like trying to capture the wind.

Someone reflecting on the mysteries of walking by the Spirit said, "I think we need to pull in the oars and put up the sail!" I like that. When we walk by the Spirit, we stop striving. We are no longer driven; we are led.

**"For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God" (Romans 8:14).**

When we come to the end of our resources, we discover His!

**Father, help me to quickly set aside human resources today so I may walk in the strength and adequacy of Your Spirit.**

*Neil Anderson*

*Freedom in Christ Ministries*

*Used by permission*

**We live in a very busy world that is full of distractions. It is very easy to be blown off course, but Jesus tells us ~**

**“Do not worry, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear?” For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need**

them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (Matthew 6:31-34)

Let us both see ourselves as and also be known as, Kingdom Seekers!

Heavenly Father, thank You that by Your Grace alone we have been granted your indwelling Spirit. Help us daily to be kingdom seekers, bringing glory to Your name.

We ask this in the name of Your Son, our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Robin*

*All Bible verses quoted are from the NIVUK (UK): Holy Bible, New International Version® Anglicised, NIVUK® Copyright © 1979, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.®. Used by permission.*

*All rights reserved worldwide*

### **Numerical Connection Quiz**

1. Which Thunderbird was green?
2. How many little pigs were there?
3. How many notes in an octave?
4. In the 'Fastest Milkman in the West', at what house number did the widow, Sue, live at?
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's a famous D-Day site in Normandy, France)



*Answers are on [page 35](#)*

## **Blessed are the Risk Takers**

Blessed are the risk takers.

Those who risk everything to follow Jesus:

*Blessed are the grieving and the broken,  
Blessed are the brave and the outspoken.*

*Blessed are the hidden and the disguised,  
Who watch their words,  
Guard their footsteps,  
And fear for their lives.*

*Blessed are those in prison for their faith,  
Blessed are those who are spied on by the state.*

*Blessed are the lied about and cheated,  
The unjustly accused, the abused, the mistreated.*

*Blessed are those who flee when they want to stay,  
Blessed are those who remain, when they could run away.*

*Blessed are the refugee and the displaced,  
The exiled and excluded, the shamed and disgraced.*

*Blessed are those who worship in secret,  
Who whisper their songs,  
Hide their Bibles,  
Forgive those who do them wrong.*

*Blessed are those who are scared,  
But choose to follow just the same.  
Blessed are those who are persecuted in Jesus' name.*

*Blessed are those who have nothing but prayer,  
For God is always with them,  
And the Kingdom is theirs.*

### **Are we ready to be risk takers for Jesus?**

We have been greatly blessed to live in a country where we have been free to worship and fellowship together and have Bibles in

abundance. **Could this ever be taken from us?** Already in our country believers have been discriminated against, in their workplace, in parliament, schools, universities and more.

Our brothers and sisters in the **Top 50 Countries** where they **risk everything** for Jesus are going through **'trials of various kinds'**.

May we stand with them in prayer and support, and keep informed to aid us in this.

**Please take a copy of the Open Doors World Watch List 2023** if you have not got one yet.

The World Watch List can also be accessed online at [www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/world-watch-list/](http://www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/world-watch-list/)

You will be encouraged as you read the stories of believers in some of these 50 countries and to see how God is building **His Church** – 'and the gates of hell will not prevail against it'.

And as we read, may we ask that the Lord would build us up in our walk with Him, to be those who are ready to be **Risk Takers for Jesus**.

Please do ask if you'd like to know more about the Persecuted Church – and do help yourself to the wonderful resources at Church and in our magazine 'The Link' with our editor's **'Focus'** entry each month.

Blessings in Jesus' Name

Jane H



*Source: Open Doors*

## Thoughts from the Front Line

The **Summer 2023 Bible Society 'Bible a Month' update** shares news of:

- Ukraine,
- China
- and Togo.



**God's Word** is so very precious in countries where due to poverty, war, hostile regimes and other restrictions, countless Christians have not yet got a copy of the Scripture in their own language.

**Victoria**, a 13 year old girl from **Togo** longed to have a Bible, but poverty meant she could never buy one herself, but she prayed to have one and thanks to **Bible a Month Club**, she now has her own copy.

She says, "I am overjoyed! It's such a precious gift that will help me grow in my knowledge of the Word of God."

Wherever the Bible Society is working in the world, they are bringing this precious Good News and seeing lives transformed by God's Spirit.

Particularly will you pray for Bible Society staff in Ukraine at this time and the vital work they are doing, to quote:

***It's more than a year since the war in Ukraine began. With your prayerful support, our colleagues have been working tirelessly to bring the hope of the Bible, along with basic food and medical aid, to stricken communities.***

*Living close to death has led many Ukrainians (in what is a largely Christian country) to read the Bible. Since the start of the war, our colleagues have distributed more than half a million copies of the Bible across the country. Your regular giving through Bible a Month has made this massive outreach possible.*

*The Bible Society team in Ukraine spends much of their time on the front line handing out Bibles and leading impromptu services*

*as artillery fire goes off all around them. Our colleagues also work with churches to support Bible summer camps where children who have lost loved ones are comforted through trauma healing programmes.*

*Scriptures in Ukrainian and Russian have not only been distributed in Ukraine itself but also to refugees, including here in the UK, where churches have warmly welcomed Ukrainian families.*

## **Prayers for Ukraine**

*Heavenly Father, I pray for the people of Ukraine – those who are still living there and their families in foreign countries. Please give them your grace to cope and a welcoming spirit to host families. In Jesus' name, Amen. (Janet, Somerset)*

*Everlasting, loving God, we pray for peace in Ukraine, healing for the wounded, comfort for the bereaved, that families who have fled leaving behind loved ones will be reunited. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. (Allen, Derbyshire).*

*Those are two of more than a thousand prayers on our Ukraine Prayer Tree, which you can find here [www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/prayer-tree/prayer-tree-ukraine/](http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/prayer-tree/prayer-tree-ukraine/).*

If you'd like to know more about the amazing ministry of '**Bible a Month**' do ask. Several folk in our Church family belong to this and it's a wonderful way to give thanks for our Bibles and to help others to receive this most precious of all gifts.

You can find more information online if you want, at [www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/bible-a-month/](http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/bible-a-month/) and join a community of people who are changing lives by putting the Bible in someone's hands every month. You can also download the latest issue of Bible a Month.

Blessings in Jesus' Name

Jane H

*Source: Bible Society*



## 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](mailto: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](http://www.goodnews-paper.org.uk/viewlatesteditionspage.htm)) has several great articles, including the headline article 'Living His Best Life' - which is about **England's Strongest Man** and why a muscleman's best day was when he broke his leg.

Other contributions include:

- **Dennis Quaid** - Hollywood actor plays a Christian in his new film - and shares the man's faith
- **Shane Lynch** - Boyzone star tells why God is the lynch-pin of his life
- **UK Diving Champion** - Andrea Spendolini-Sirieix finds peace from the Bible
- **Self-Harm No More** - Teenager tells how Jesus healed her
- **Divine Inspiration** - Four artists whose faith is central to their art and life
- **Only Fans Star Quits** - Blac Chyna leaves X-rated career and gets baptised

## Good News... for a change

## **CARE for What You Believe**

Many of us will be familiar with the work of **CARE** and especially the **Prayer Diary** we receive as a Church, which is such a blessing.

This year is a special anniversary for them and news from a recent letter shares some of their plans for the future, to quote Ross, their CEO:

*This year is CARE's 40th anniversary. That's approximately 14,600 days over which CARE's sought to bring a distinct, biblical and persuasive perspective into the corridors of power. We'll be marking this incredible anniversary with a thanksgiving service later this year. It'll be a chance to give all the glory to God. He put in the hearts of great leaders like our Chairman, Lyndon Bowring, and Charlie Colchester and others to launch this unique ministry.*

*An anniversary year is both an opportunity to reflect and also to look forward. The last 12 months have been incredibly exciting for us. Our team has grown with new faces joining our mission. New colleagues always bring fresh energy and enthusiasm. Add that to some of our longer serving members of staff and it's a powerful combination.*

*The truth is, as thankful as I am for the last 12 months, I'm very aware that this next year is an even greater challenge. We have an ambitious agenda to increase our impact, both in the parliaments and assemblies of the UK, across the UK church and through our highly respected Leadership Programme, I thought I'd share some of our plans in each area, to give you a taste, God willing, of what's to come.*

*Proverbs 31 says we should speak up for the vulnerable. This is entirely consistent with the second of the great commands: we must love our neighbour as ourself. One of the ways CARE seeks to obey this command is by working to ensure we have laws that support and uphold the unique, God-given dignity of every person.*

*In the Bible, we see God's special heart for the vulnerable. In particular, He calls His people to be on the side of the widow, the foreigner, the poor and the orphan. We've been discerning and thinking through who those groups are in our society and, crucially,*

*how can CARE effectively advocate for them? From pre-born babies, all the way through to older people, our aim and ambition is to continue being a voice for the voiceless.*

*We want to put people first and to remember that all our advocacy work is for God's glory and to tell a better story for some of the most marginalized in our society. Your generosity means we can continue to invest in our advocacy and policy work, creating headline making reports and research that will genuinely be used to influence the political debate. Our Advocacy and Policy Team have an ambitious agenda to increase our effectiveness and help shape debates going forward.*

Other areas of their work that are expanding are in their **Church Engagement Team** and their **Leadership Programme**.

Ross closes his letter with the following:

*It seems providential that my letter arrives around the time of Pentecost; when the Spirit was poured out onto the Church to proclaim the Gospel in power to the ends of the earth. Many of the ambitions we have at CARE are ridiculous in the world's eyes. But we do so in the power of the Holy Spirit that equips us as it did the early Church that first Pentecost. 1 Peter 4:10-11 tells us that God has given us gifts to serve one another so that 'in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.'*

*I hope you'll continue to partner with us over the next year. Please pray with us that God will bless our work and keep us humbly dependent upon Him.*

**CARE** would welcome new members, as the more they have on their database, the greater their influence can be in the corridors of power. Please help them to continue to be salt and light in society – by **praying** for their vital ministry, **signing up**, using their **Prayer Diary** ([care.org.uk/prayer](http://care.org.uk/prayer)) and if so prompted, any **donations**, however small will be wisely used by **CARE** for the glory of God's Name and very gratefully received by them.

Blessings in Jesus' Name

Jane H

Source CARE

## Coronation 'Open the Book'



A special Coronation assembly, during which we prayed for King Charles III, told the story of David being crowned. Having made Jerusalem, his capital, David realised that something was missing – the Ark of the Covenant.



As well as containing the 10 Commandments, the Ark symbolised God's presence. A huge procession set out from Kiriath Jearim. David got so excited, he threw off the royal regalia and danced before the Lord.



The last Hayland's assembly of May actually fell on ascension day, so what subject could be more apt. Melodie rehearsed throwing a duvet over 'Jesus', whilst Roy, as Peter, looked on.

The disciples returned from the Mount of Olives to wait, as Jesus had told them. So many people crowded into Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost that the disciples could hardly hear each other pray. They decided to hold a quiet prayer breakfast, but God had a better idea. The sound of

rushing wind heralded the coming of the Holy Spirit.



The children were so excited by the descent of the flames, we had to wait for them to settle before continuing.

Following Peter's preaching, Christine was just one of those who were baptised.



\*\*\*

## **Kings and Queens and Precious Objects**

During the week leading up to the Coronation of Charles III, the children of Godshill, Dover Park and Haylands schools were presented with the story of David finally becoming King. Just like Charles, David had to wait many years. At least Charles has suitable palaces, unlike Victoria who hated her uncle's favourite residence, Brighton Pavilion. Not only was it ridiculously ostentatious, it was so near the public thoroughfare that passers-by could peer through the windows. No wonder Albert built his Italianate villa deep inside the beautiful grounds of Osborne House. As for David, archaeologists have discovered the water tunnel through which Joab led his soldiers so that Jerusalem could become the capital city.

David then brought the Ark of the Covenant 10.5 miles from Kiriath Jearim to Jerusalem, that's 8 times longer than the route between Buckingham Palace and Westminster Abbey.

Inside the Ark of the Covenant were the tablets containing the 10 Commandments, Aaron's rod and a pot of manna, all reminding the Hebrews of the exodus from Egypt and 40 years spent wandering in the wilderness. David assembled a great procession of 30,000 men: priests, soldiers, musicians, officials and dignitaries. After a false start, the procession finally approached Jerusalem. David was so delighted that he threw off his royal robes and began dancing. Far from being amused, David's Queen was horrified, and 'despised him in her heart'. When David returned to the palace, she made fun of David's actions, but David didn't care if some thought it was undignified, David just wanted to praise God.

After the presentation, the children are invited to reflect on the story - Isn't it a shame that David's wife criticised him and made fun of him for being so excited and happy? It's very easy to make other people feel bad by making fun of them. Can you think of a time when you have made someone else sad by laughing at them in a mean way? Think about how you could put that right and what you might do differently next time. The assembly ends with this prayer:

Dear God, thank you that David was so excited that he danced all the way to Jerusalem even when his wife laughed at him. Please help us to do the right thing even when people laugh at us. Help me to make choices that will please you. Also, help King Charles III in his reign, and give him wisdom in all that he does. Amen.



# FOCUS

**on our Christian Brothers and Sisters  
being persecuted for their faith**

\*\*\*

***Christians killed and churches burned down in  
violence in Manipur, India***

***World Watch ranking: 11***

Response to a peaceful protest turned violent in Manipur, India, and Christians have been especially singled out for persecution. At least 70 believers have been killed, and large numbers remain homeless.



*A screenshot from footage of violence in Manipur, where  
Christians have been particularly targeted*

At least 70 Christians have been killed, and hundreds of churches and other Christian buildings destroyed, in ethno-religious violence between ethnic groups in Manipur State in north east India. More than 15,000 people, including many Christians from different ethnicities, have been forced to flee their homes and are living in



rescue camps. Some footage of the violence and arson has been shared via Open Doors local contacts.

## **Christians evicted from their land**

The violence first flared up Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May, following a peaceful protest by the largely Christian minority tribes in the region.

“For two, three days, it was just anarchy,” says Vishnu\*, another local Open Doors partner. “And especially the Christians were targeted. Almost all the churches have been burned down and reduced to ashes.”

As Vishnu explains, “The fundamental reason for the escalation of violence was that the tribals, who are predominantly Christian, are being evicted [by the local government] from the forest land where they’ve resided for hundreds of years.” Their concerns have been exacerbated by signs that the Government is preparing to grant the Meitei majority ‘scheduled tribe’ status. This has been granted to minority tribes in the region and has helped to counter the power imbalance between the Meitei and other tribes – and would make it harder for the Christian community to get jobs and other benefits.

## **Protest met with violence**

“The Christian community was making a peaceful protest, but it was met with a violent response from the majority community,” says Vishnu. The majority he refers to are Hindus from the Meitei community; Christian demonstrators and onlookers complain that the police failed to intervene and protect them during the worst of the attack. Among the destroyed buildings are churches, Christian homes and a theological seminary. While the violence hasn’t exclusively targeted Christians, they are bearing the worst of the persecution.

“Meitei Christians have been affected more during the riot,” says Viren\*, a Meitei Christian. “Our believer brothers have stood strong even though we are facing this ongoing situation. Many churches were burned in front of us, and it has been very difficult to see this unfold before us. We want to be strong. Pray that God helps us.”

The initial situation was eventually brought under control by

paramilitary troops on Friday morning – in Vishnu’s view, because there was little left to destroy. Though the situation is currently calm, there are fears that it could reignite and escalate.

Thousands of Christians - including local Open Doors partners - are among those who are currently finding safety in camps protected by the army. “People are taking shelter, afraid to return home,” says Neha. “That is, if their home hasn’t already been destroyed.”

## **Christians pressured to convert**

Christians from both the Meitei and Kuki groups have been affected, with many facing extreme pressure to renounce their faith and accept Hinduism by the Hindu extremist group Arambai Tenggol. Even two weeks after the burning of churches, Open Doors local partners report that the Arambai Hindu extremist group is actively searching for Christian leaders and pastors. Local believers say the Arambai Tenggol are seeking to kill the leaders.

Many Christians from the majority Hindu Meitei group are being forced to reconvert to Hinduism. Though some of the Kuki have been able to return to their tribal land, the believers among the Meitei are still facing attacks.

“It is very hard to explain the situation of our land. I believe God is protecting us and will protect,” says Kuber\*, a Kuki Christian. “Most believers are in trauma. We need churches’ prayers. Please pray for us. Pray for the situation and pray for believers here.”

## **How you can pray**

Vishnu asks you to join the local community in prayer. He says: “Please, please keep praying for the Christians. They have had to abandon their houses and run to safe places. Most of them are in the area which is protected by the army, or some of them are secretly hiding in their friend's house who belongs to majority community. We don't know when they will come by, so please pray for them. There are children, women, old people – their lives are uncertain, and they're deprived of basic facilities and amenities and deeply traumatised. So kindly remember them.”

*\*Names changed for security reasons*

## Please Pray

- For the tribal Christian refugees who are taking shelter in the refugee camp as their houses are burned and destroyed
- For the Christian families whose members have been killed in the violence
- For peace in the affected areas as the clashes are turning into religious persecution.

## How many Christians are there in India?

There are a large number of Christians in India – 69.5 million – but it’s still only five per cent of the country’s Hindu-majority population.

## Main Threats

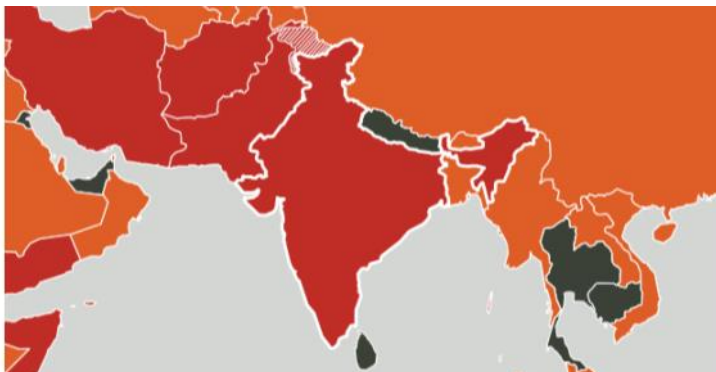
- Religious nationalism
- Dictatorial paranoia

\*\*\*

## World Watch List Top 50

You can take a copy from church, which is a very good prayer aid, or alternatively you can order a free *World Watch List Top 50* booklet from [www.opendoorsuk.org/products/product/wwl23-top-50](http://www.opendoorsuk.org/products/product/wwl23-top-50), to get detailed information about India and the other 50 countries, inspiring testimonies and stories from the persecuted church, and prayers to help you stand with your risk-taking church family.

Source: [Open Doors](#) - used by permission



## **“You are my King, O God; Command victories and deliverance for Jacob (Israel)”. Psalm 44:4 AMP**

What a beautiful verse for our ‘Isaiah 62’ 21-day (7<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> May) Prayer Fast!

Recently, Brian gave a great message on Psalm 44 in Bible Bites, which we listened to on YouTube. However, it seems that the Church so easily glosses over the mention of ‘Jacob’, ‘Israel’, ‘Judah’, ‘Jerusalem’ and ‘Zion’ when we read so much of them in the Psalms (or anywhere else in the Bible for that matter). The Church tends to skim over their primary literal application to those Israeli identities and only sees them as applying to ourselves, spiritually. The thing that has struck us during our current prayer and fasting for Israel, is the emphasis we have received from the Lord to look away from ourselves and away from our own personal gain to what God’s Passion (by the way, it’s expressed all through His Word!) actually is:

- that His people come back to His Land so that the land is ‘married’ (Isaiah 62:4): The ingathering to Israel of the Jews from all the nations of the world (aliya), is one of the most frequently predictive prophecies in the Bible. Some prophecies also highlight that **after** they are all gathered in, they will come to know the Lord (Jeremiah 31:33);
- that “all Israel will be saved” (Romans 11:26), discovering His “New Covenant” made “**with the house of Israel and the house of Judah**” (Jeremiah 31:31): We recently discussed in our Israel Revealed group the fact that, “the Old Testament emphasizes the community, the New Testament emphasises the individual” (page 39) – this connects Romans 11:26 with Jeremiah 31:31, explaining the magnitude of what God wants to do among the Jewish people, which will, in turn, impact the nations (Romans 11:15);
- and that we Gentile (and Arab see [www.godreports.com/2023/04/jesus-the-only-way-to-middle-east-peace/](http://www.godreports.com/2023/04/jesus-the-only-way-to-middle-east-peace/)) believers in Jesus, will find our spiritual place **among them and with them (the Jewish believers in Yeshua)** (Romans 11:17), becoming genuinely the

‘One New Man’ (Ephesians 2:15): “We must not miss the full sense of what follows. With them, the nations became partakers of the Root... In keeping with the essential character of the ‘One New Man;’ it makes sense that the fullness of what was given to Israel cannot be partaken of outside of being in relationship with the ‘natural branches’” (IR page 38). May we all be truly unified in every respect as the One New Man (John 17).

The following quote from May 19 2023 ‘Arrows from Zion’ prayer requests (from Israeli Messianic Jewish and Christian Arab Ministries) may explain this focus of prayer :

“Jennifer Guetta of ‘Plant Hope, Israel’ has a superb take on “The Key to Evangelism in the Nations,” taking an account told by Reinhard Bonnke of when the **Lord** spoke to him to pray for Israel, even though Bonnke was called to Africa, not to Israel. “For many Christians it is our deepest desire to see revival and we want to see people get saved. We long to see more miracles, more movements of the Holy Spirit. We are praying for the global harvest. For people to have an authentic encounter with Jesus. We are seeking more of the Holy Spirit and the presence of God in our countries. However, when I ask people to pray for Israel they sigh deeply as if it is a bother. They try to avoid the subject because it is too controversial and they don’t want to go into the discussion. They complain that they are tired of praying for Israel, because Israel hasn’t done anything back, or because talking about Israel causes too much division in the church, so they avoid the subject. “Israel tiredness” seems to be a new term among charismatics, who want to avoid controversy. Somehow, they have forgotten that the Father is the God of Israel and Jesus Himself is very Jewish. Israel is His heart and there are hundreds of Bible verses which show God’s love for Israel. It is strange. In the Bible, praying for Israel is the key to receiving blessings from God and yet it has somehow been disconnected from evangelism. In the Bible it says in Genesis 12:2 - 3: “I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” (Please note that Genesis 12:3 in Hebrew more accurately reads “He that **lightly esteems** you I will

curse” – there are two different words in Hebrew – only the second word in this verse is actually ‘curse/bitterly curse’!)

As Arni Klein wrote in his recent email: “Do we really think Father needs to be reminded about what He has spoken? Does He really need for us to ask Him to complete what He has set out to do? **Perhaps the purpose of our praying is more to get us in line with Father’s heart and mind, even for the sake of our relationship with Him.** The matter of Israel is central in His heart. If we don’t get it, if we don’t see, if we are not moved as He is, how close can we actually be with Him? How intimate can we really be?”

**Think about it!**

Roy & Melodie Wilson

## **Pentecost and Beyond**

**Bible Society** invites us to join them in celebrating Pentecost with short video reflections – to quote from their newsletter:

**Join us to celebrate Pentecost**

***Did you know that you are gifted by the Holy Spirit?***

*Join us for the great celebration of Pentecost and enjoy a journey unpacking how the Holy Spirit gifts each one of us with the tools we need to live out the Christian life in this world.*

*On each of the days of The Pentecost Reflection 2023 you will receive a short video reflection in which one of our amazing speakers will explore one of the seven major gifts of the Holy Spirit and apply what the Bible says about it to our lives today. Each day concludes with an invitation to pray and a short prayer to help you.*

*You will become more familiar with these wonderful gifts and how to use them in your day-to-day life and, most importantly, you’ll come to know the great Giver of Gifts all the more deeply.*

*Sign up now online at [biblesociety.org.uk/pentecost](https://biblesociety.org.uk/pentecost) to receive your free daily devotional from Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> May to Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> June and grow in the gifts you need to walk more closely with Jesus*

*Source: Bible a Month Prayer Letter Summer 2023*

FRI  
09  
JUNE



SHANKLIN UNITED REFORMED CHURCH  
PRESENTS

# Heart & SOUL

MUSIC NIGHT



HIGH STREET  
SHANKLIN  
PO37 6LA

7.30PM START



*Songs & stories, cakes & drinks  
with UK Christian chart-topping songwriter:*

# ROB WESTALL

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:





**14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**County Show Ground, Northwood**

Tickets are now available via the website

<https://lionheartfestival.co.uk>

**Some latest news** - Much planning and connecting has been going on. We have been chatting with bands that came last year that expressed a desire to come back and we have been meeting up with new Worship Leaders (new to Lionheart, not new to worshipping!). We have been so blessed with how many would like to worship at Lionheart. As well as our bands we have three speakers coming to bring the Word.

**ACTION POINTERS** for how you and your church or fellowship can be more involved, and we really do want and pray for your involvement. Lionheart is all about uniting churches and being one body:

- **Prayer** – prayers to prepare the way, prayers for those who do not yet know the Lord yet, prayers for protection for the Team and Trustees, prayers for the bands and worship leaders to bring anointed worship, prayers for finances, plans and preparation of the site, prayers to soften hearts, prayers for revelation, prayers for wisdom and prayers for whatever God is putting on your heart for Lionheart
- **Financial Support** – we need to raise in the region of £70k, God was so faithful last year however His faithful working



through us, our time, our resources. If you or any members of your congregations would like to make a small regular gift then please contact us. Sow a seed and watch it grow.

- **Social Media** – like and share, like and share! Our social media content is coming out thick and fast, please do share it as much as your possibly can. We fight algorithms which tend to not favour Christian material (we have been officially told this) so we need you all to like and share as much as possible.
- **Bookmarks** – we have great Lionheart bookmarks with a QR reader on them that takes people straight to the Lionheart website, if you would like some or have run out please contact us on [info@lionheartfestival.co.uk](mailto:info@lionheartfestival.co.uk) and we will get some to you
- **Volunteer** – be God’s Hands and Feet, come and volunteer. There was something very special that went on behind the scenes last year that we so hope to grow. The connection of believers working with secular trades and businesses. Also volunteering gives everyone a chance to serve as our Lord directs us to.
- **Church Rep** – we would love to have a rep from each church that we can liaise with, take suggestions from, feed updates through. If you would like to be or know someone in your congregation or fellowship that would like to be the dedicated Lionheart Rep within your church, once again, message us on [info@lionheartfestival.co.uk](mailto:info@lionheartfestival.co.uk)

Please check our website for the line-up we have announced so far.... There is more to come...

Message from Joseph Shurmer, Joe feels this year’s Lionheart is about Hope, and we know from many scriptures our Hope comes from the Lord, and is in the Lord.

Our hope is that you will unite with us in the Lord, and for the Lord.

Blessings

The Lionheart Team and Trustees

# Stepwise

## Faith Filled Life

On Zoom

19:00 – 21:00

Introductory session – 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2023

8 further sessions:

July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>

August 14<sup>th</sup>

September 4<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>

October 16<sup>th</sup>

November 6<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>

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

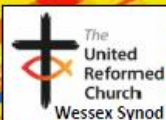
[www.urcwessex.org.uk/discipleship](http://www.urcwessex.org.uk/discipleship)

Please book before 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023

Contact: Ruth Heine

[bookings@urcwessex.org.uk](mailto:bookings@urcwessex.org.uk)

Tel: 023 8067 4513



## Thanks

A big thank you to everyone who sponsored our lad with Walk The Wight recently - it was a real encouragement to him. He walked the 14 mile stretch from Carisbrooke to Alum Bay with our daughter Rachel, a school friend and her mum. They had a great time, and he has raised over £250 for Mountbatten.

Brian and Janet



## Shanklin Town Brass Band - Summer Concerts

STBB, the band your editor is a part of, will be appearing at Rylstone Gardens on the following dates (weather permitting!!):

- 11<sup>th</sup> June
- 25<sup>th</sup> June
- 23<sup>rd</sup> July
- 10<sup>th</sup> September



Plus the Community/Youth Bands will be in concert on 9<sup>th</sup> July

All concerts will be at 15:00

## Connection Quiz Answers

1. 2.
2. 3.
3. 8.
4. 22.
5. Connection: They're all **Southern Vectis bus routes in The Bay.**
6. This issue's cover photo is of... **Pegasus Bridge in Normandy, France. In the early action of D-Day, the first house on French soil was liberated**



# 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!

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

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													

## Last month's Sudoku - how did you do?

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

### Across

- 1 Miss Piggy's love (6)  
 4 'Come On -' 1982 song by Dexy's Midnight Runners (6)  
 7 Paul Simon said you could call him this in 1986 (2)  
 8 Branch of medicine concerned with the brain (9)  
 9 Roman number after III (2)  
 10 Wrench of ankle's ligaments (6)  
 11 Used to sweep the floor with (5)  
 13 Mr Blair, former PM (4)  
 15 Unit of electrical resistance (3)  
 17 German river that goes into the North Sea NW of Hamburg (4)  
 18 Not out (2)  
 19 French home to a **very** famous

- tapestry about 1066 (6)  
 22 A celebration (5)  
 24 NE Scottish 'granite' city (8)  
 27 Morning is not PM *initials* (2)  
 29 En français, c'est nous (2)  
 30 Normandy seaside town (11)

### Down

- 1 Upon Thames, upon Hull and capital of Jamaica (8)  
 2 All she wants for Christmas is you (6)  
 3 Has Britain actually got this? (6)  
 4 Cambridgeshire city, has got a famous cathedral (3)  
 5 Not a winner (5)  
 6 The 11<sup>th</sup> month of the year (8)  
 7 Once more (5)  
 12 Lubricant (3)  
 14 44<sup>th</sup> US president (5)  
 16 Daily -, a newspaper (6)  
 17 OT Book of the Bible (6)  
 20 Adam's mate (3)  
 21 Morning moisture (3)  
 22 The Princess had one in her bed, according to HCA (3)  
 23 Tropical edible starchy tuber (3)  
 25 French maker of ballpoint pens, razors, lighters (3)  
 26 Not old (3)  
 28 Mother (2)

## Can You Guess The Year?

- Princess Eugenie of York, is born.
- Aldi opens its first store in the UK (in Birmingham).
- Stephen Hendry is the youngest ever world snooker champion
- And UK No. 1s included:
  - Beautiful South with 'A Little Time'
  - Steve Miller Band with 'The Joker'
  - Elton John with 'Sacrifice'
  - Cliff Richard with 'Saviour's Day'

*Answer next issue*

## This Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Questions

1. Who was St Wilgefortis?
2. When did the original Live Aid concerts take place?
3. What is the capital of Latvia?
4. What was 'Operation Overlord' in WW2?
5. Who was Queen Anne's husband?
6. What ship was featured in the 1976 BBC documentary 'Sailor'?
7. Who wrote the play 'Flare Path', set in WW2?
8. When was the 'Spinnaker Tower' in Portsmouth opened?
9. On the periodic table, which element is Fe?
10. When was the Channel Tunnel opened?

*Answers next issue*

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

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> June**

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

[surc.thelink@btinternet.com](mailto:surc.thelink@btinternet.com)

# Last Issue's Solutions

- Guess the year: it was **1984**

- Last issue's crossword ↓

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

## Last Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Answers

- |                              |                                    |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Giuseppe Farina (in 1950) | 7. Dylan Thomas                    |
| 2. 1883                      | 8. April 2004                      |
| 3. Tallinn                   | 9. Protactinium                    |
| 4. The Dambuster Raid (1943) | 10. 8 <sup>th</sup> September 1966 |
| 5. She didn't have a husband |                                    |
| 6. HMS Beagle                |                                    |

## Sunday Service

- Morning**    **10:30 Morning Worship** in church  
*Broadcast live on YouTube*
- **Holy Communion** on 1<sup>st</sup> 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**



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01983 862485



[brianharley58@gmail.com](mailto:brianharley58@gmail.com)

*Day off: Monday*

**Secretary:**    **Robin Wightman**



[robinwightman@aol.com](mailto:robinwightman@aol.com)

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

[www.shanklinurc.co.uk](http://www.shanklinurc.co.uk)

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