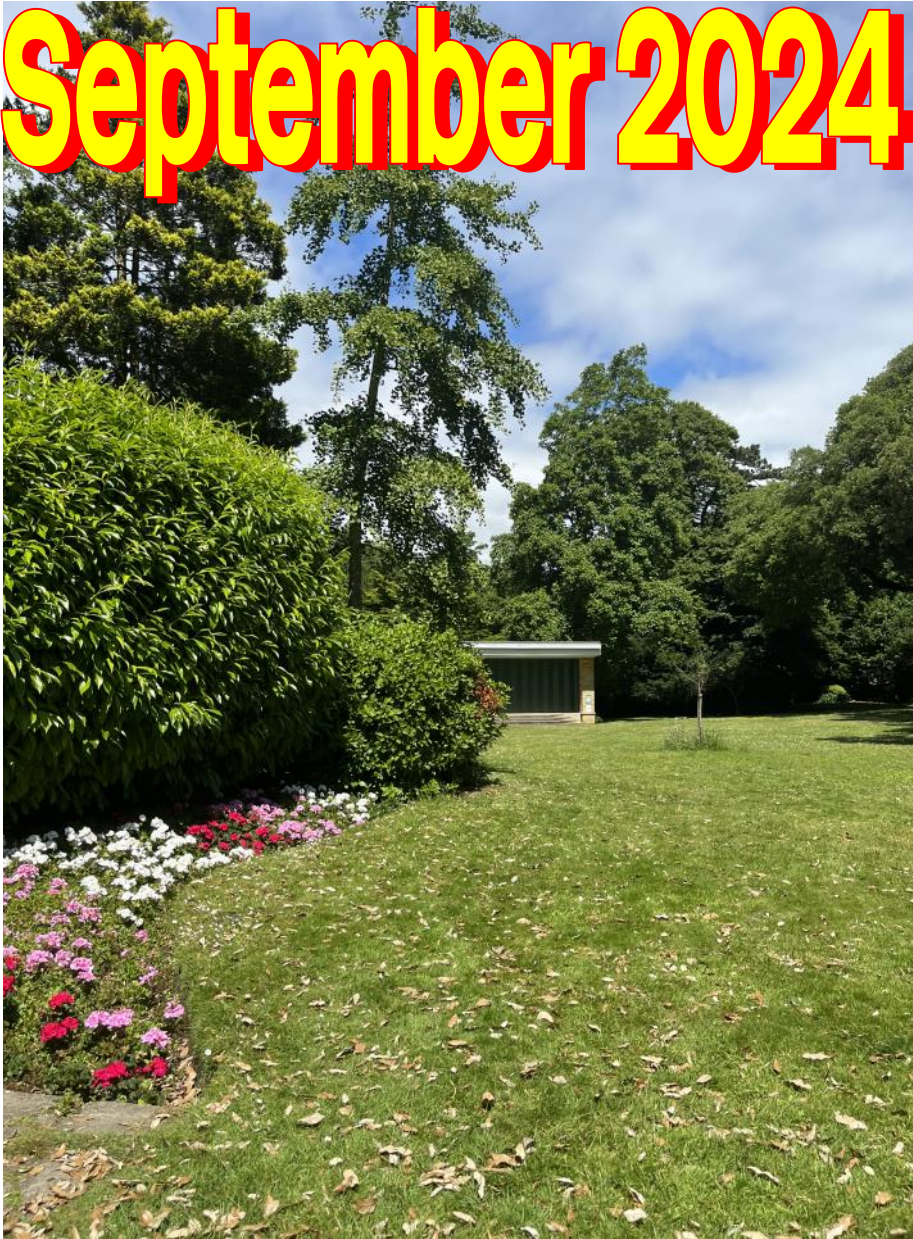


The Link



September 2024



Shanklin United Reformed Church www.shanklinurc.co.uk

View From Number 10



30 Years and counting...?

When I was welcomed to Shanklin and ordained and inducted as your minister on 17 September 1994, I could never have imagined still being in that role in 2024!

I had worked in The City as an insurance underwriter and slowly grown in leadership in church life. Janet had joined the City Temple URC in Holborn and after we were married in 1983 I became part of that fellowship. We both grew in our faith over those years and a call to ministry became clear after prophetic words spoken over us.

We moved to Cambridge, and I spent four years in training at Westminster College which included a 9-month placement in a local church for four days a week during my third year, with a couple of days in college. During my last year we began to look ahead...

After being asked to explore a possible church in South London we were then shown the profile of Shanklin. By God's grace we had enjoyed a family holiday down here that very summer and this was a very unexpected and intriguing proposal. Though the information was quite brief, it oozed with life! We had to come and look, which we did over the New Year weekend – and were then invited back to formally “preach with a view”. The rest, they say, is his-story.

I landed here as a 35-year-old with three young children – aged 7, 5 and 4. We started off in the old manse at Chelsfield Avenue which had been put on the market with the aim of finding a more suitable family home a bit closer to town. An offer came in the day before my Ordination and Induction Service – God's timing was beautiful.

After the Saturday afternoon worship, we had tea across the road in what was then the Liberal Club.



September
1994

*All set and
ready for the
service – spot
the changes!*

*May Downie is
checking the
flowers*



We had identified Dracaena Gardens as a possible option and it all soon fell into place. We moved at the end of November and a small extension was added a year later - all part of the plan, thanks to those who gave so generously to make it possible.

We very quickly felt at home and were so warmly received by the congregation. Only four of the 60 church members from that time are still around – Cecilia, Ann H, Pauline and Jean C. The place began to flourish and a number of new people including some families felt drawn to us, which was really encouraging.

It has been an incredible time serving the Lord here alongside so many amazing people. Janet and I want to thank you all for your encouragement and support; for honest sharing and grappling with hard issues and working through inevitable differences. Many of you have walked with us for a good part of the time and have been such faithful servants and friends to us.

May the good Lord lead on onwards together as we look ahead.

With love and very best wishes,

Bian



ENCOUNTER

Usually on 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?

The next café service will be held on
29th September
- a Harvest Celebration for all ages

Café serving from 10.15



FUNDRAISING IN SUPPORT OF HELP *for* BBQ HEROES

CHARITY NO
1120920

We are holding another BBQ on the date below. Please come and support our armed forces and a local charity, thank you.

Also new this year, we will be additionally supporting a local Isle of Wight Charity - Ability Dogs 4 Young People IoW

When: 7th September 2023

Time 16:00 - 19:00 (Food from 17:00)

**Venue: 93 Lushington Hill, Wootton Bridge, PO33 4NR
(next to Wootton Bridge Car Boot Field)**

Huge variety of homemade cakes for sale, crafts for sale, children's lucky dip, sweets stall, guess the weight of the cake, tombola, etc.

RSVP (for catering): Miriam or Malc: 07891 935221 or 883811

A suggested price list will be available for food.

All proceeds go directly to the above charities



Safeguarding training

Online training via Zoom:

- Refresher 12th and 19th September at 18:30.
- Advanced (for people doing a role which involves regular contact with those at risk of harm) 17th and 24th October 18:30.

In person Foundation courses will be taking place in November at mainland venues.

If anybody wants to know more please contact me.

Thank you.

Dave W

Church Meeting

26th September 2024 @ 19:30

All members and regular worshippers are encouraged to come along & be involved in our church family business.

[Don't just go to church – be the church!](#)

Connection Quiz

1. Who, according to legend, robbed from the rich to give to the poor?
2. In the British TV series, who was the pilot/ astronaut of Thunderbird 3?
3. Which US TV comedy, which ran 2000 - 2006, follows a dysfunctional family and starred Frankie Muniz in the title role?
4. Who played Lily in the American TV series 'The Munsters'?
5. So, what is the **connection** between the answers to questions 1 - 4?
6. And do you know where the cover photo was taken? Hint, it was taken in Shanklin..



Answers are on [page 38](#)

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.

This such a great resource to read and then share with others!!

This month's edition (available in church and to read online at www.goodnews-paper.org.uk/viewlatesteditionpage.htm) has several great articles, including the headline article '**Famous Atheist Finds God** - Former friend of Richard Dawkins finds God is real'.

Other contributions include:

- **Where Harvest Is About Survival** - How God has helped Christians in Malawi to feed the hungry
- **Farm Worker's Life Of Faith** - Trevor Dickerson explains why he has no regrets about life
- **Set Free Behind Bars** - Life of crime, drug abuse and schizophrenia turned around by Jesus
- **Will Smith Turns To Gospel** - Why the actor and rapper's latest music is gospel
- **Dimond Of Crystal Palace** - Kristian Dimond played for Palace but found an even better life
- **Romans Knew About Solomon** - Pompeii art shows Romans knew Bible story of King Solomon

Good News... for a change



Shared Worship in The Bay



Share Sunday evenings with friends from various local congregations across The Bay

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------|---|
| 1 st Sep | 17:00 | Bring & Share Tea & Chat
Shanklin URC
High Street |
| 8 th Sep | 18:30 | Church of the Sacred Heart
Atherley Road, Shanklin |
| 15 th Sep | 19:00 | Ablaze Celebration, Aspire
Dover Street, Ryde |
| 22 nd Sep | 18:30 | St Blasius Church
Church Road, Shanklin |
| 29 th Sep | 18:30 | Sandown Baptist Church
Station Avenue, Sandown |

Come to 'The Well'

a place for

Living Well Together

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

Wednesdays 11:00 – 13:00

Free refreshments and craft activities

Just drop in at any point



Church Coffee Morning

12th October

10:00 - 12:00

With

- Refreshments
Drinks, Cake,
etc...



- Learn more
about Operation
Shoebox



**Come and see some of the
knitted items that have been
made for the appeal
- and get some ideas!!**

Ablaze Arts Festival

This will be taking place on the **14th and 15th September 2024** at two venues: **The Priory in Carisbrooke and Aspire in Ryde.**



I believe it is significant for this time as The Spirit moves through His Church in power and direction. This will be a free ticketed event so be sure to put it into your diaries.

It was last held at Aspire in 2019, a celebration of the creativity that Father God has given His children, one that overflows with His love, ability and mercy for all.

Now we have another great opportunity, to offer Him praise through what we create, whether it be poetry, prayer, painting, drama, sewing, cooking or music. The list is endless. Put simply, whatever creative gift we have received from The Lord and would like to share with others.

This event will be a great opportunity to both demonstrate these gifts and to discover new ones. It is also an invitation from the Church family on the Isle of Wight to everyone in the community. It will be free of charge in every way.

There will be living workshops to help rediscover any hidden talents that have been buried by life's difficult journey and a chance to participate and to grow and become the people we were designed to be.

We believe that our Heavenly Father is passionate about reaching out to us all, bringing healing and transformation through the Arts.

Our prayer is that you will join us on these exciting two days and see that this is an invitation to participate by sharing your gifts, and also to receive the blessings by experiencing the light of His presence, newfound freedom and healing through the Arts. Jesus encourages us to let our lights shine and not keep them hidden.

"In the same way let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father" **Matthew 5:16 NLT**

“The only letter of recommendation we need is you yourselves. Your lives are a letter written in our hearts; everyone can read it and recognise our good work among you” 2 Corinthians 3:2.

If you feel and know that you are able to contribute through your gifting then please speak to your church leaders or connect with me on suezi@mail.com. Let's set the Island Ablaze with His Glory!

The weekend will end with a united service at Aspire on Sunday 15th at 19:00. All are welcome to come along.

Blessing and love in Jesus Name,

Suzi Anderson & the Ablaze Team

Coming soon...

A Harvest Special...



Saturday 5th October

15:30 – 17:30

Free fun for all the family

- no unaccompanied children please

Please let Yvonne know if you can help.

Brian & Janet

On Tuesday 17th September, Brian and Janet will be celebrating 30 years of their ministry to Shanklin URC. On Sunday 15th there will be a time of thanksgiving and prayer in our service...

...and there will be cake afterwards!

Ann Foster is organising a card for the occasion for the fellowship to include their own messages to Brian and Janet. Please do look her out and sign the card.



Thanks

Robin

Christians Against Poverty

We support the Island project based at Castlehold Baptist Church, Newport.

Tim Barry has reminded us of the need for an additional Debt Coach to work alongside John Bastin. This would bring much needed support and capacity, as well as helping to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the centre.

The next Zoom training is in November and the deadline for applications is 27th September, so there is time for someone to apply for this role.

Speak to Brian if you'd like to explore what is involved





Harvest Supper

Update



Friday 20th September from 18:00

Once again, we have arranged for Paramount Café to supply us with a "fish & chip" supper as part of our harvest celebrations.

Dave W and Sue W will put up a sign-up sheet on Sunday 1st September and coordinate our food order from Paramount. This will consist of 4/5 options (as last year). Unfortunately, Paramount cannot provide a gluten-free option, but please come and join us and "bring your own". Refreshments will be provided.

We would like to see as many faces as possible, please consider inviting a friend(s) along. If cost is an issue, please still sign up to come and speak to Brian or Robin who will make the necessary arrangements.

All monies will be collected on the day ~ please hand these to Dave/Sue, thanks.

It would be good to have some "cakes" after the meal ~ if you can provide some of these please mark this on the sign-up sheet or speak to Dave or Sue.

Doors will open at 18:00 and we will be collecting the food from Paramount around 18:15 and should be ready to eat soon after 18:30... **enjoy!**

Robin

Thought for the month

One SUN gives heat and light to all people on earth.

One SON gives heat light and eternal life to all people on earth.

Answer to prayer for Susanna Koh as report released about husband's abduction

It's been more than seven years since Pastor Raymond Koh was abducted in broad daylight in Malaysia. Since he disappeared on 13th February 2017, his family – led by his wife, Susanna – have tirelessly sought answers. Susanna Koh filed a lawsuit against the Malaysian Government for negligence in the case, and the trial continues, with Susanna was cross-examined, after previously giving evidence.

Many Open Doors supporters have prayed for years for Susanna Koh and her family – the wife and children of Pastor Raymond Koh, who was kidnapped in broad daylight on 13th February 2017. Susanna Koh has tirelessly sought to find out what happened to him, and filed a lawsuit against the Malaysian Government for negligence in the case. The court case continues.

In an update from Susanna in May, she asked Open Doors supporters to pray for the release of a special task force report written about the incident – which had been classified as secret by the government.

“I believe that there is no threat to national security if it is released to me and to the court in order to arrive at a fair decision,” said Susanna at the time, adding that she had applied for its release. She asked: “Pray for a positive outcome.”

God heard those prayers – and answered them! The court decided that there was no evidence provided that the report is an official secret, and that it could have a bearing on the case into Raymond Koh's disappearance. As such, the court decreed the special task force report must be 'limitlessly disclosed' to Susanna Koh within three working days.

“God answered our prayers! Thank you for your partnership in prayers and support.”

Susanna Koh

Susanna Koh is happy that finally the report will be available to her after years of waiting – which is hoped will reveal more about the defendants' involvement with the abduction and the investigation. This is one step closer to the truth being revealed.

“Dear friends,” writes Susanna, to Open Doors supporters, “thank God for the favourable decision by the judge to release the special task force report to us without restrictions. God answered our prayers! Thank you for your partnership in prayers and support.”

Please continue to pray for the next court hearing, for the lawyers and also the witness who will be giving their statements

Monday 27 May: “I want to thank God”

On this day, Susanna was cross-examined. She is not on trial herself but, as a witness for the prosecution, must also answer questions posed by the Senior Federal Counsel. Her family shared that she was very anxious as she entered the courtroom, but was able to answer every question presented to her carefully, calmly and truthfully.

“I want to thank God for being able to answer the questions without much fumbling and without many mistakes,” she shared, outside the courtroom. “My lawyer was able to correct any misunderstandings or wrong answers, so that was good.”

Still, the process was demanding and very tiring. “[By the end of the day] Susanna was so exhausted she couldn’t even read text she was asked to read,” stated a local source. “So, at 16:40, the court adjourned for the day.”

Outside the courtroom, Susanna thanked everyone who has supported and encouraged her family, including Open Doors supporters: “Thank you for all your prayers, God bless.”

She asked for continued prayers, as the family is seeking access to read a special task force report written about the incident. “This application has just been submitted to the high court. So, pray for a positive outcome,” she says in the video, above.

Please continue to pray for this case and every person involved. Pray for justice. Susanna Koh and others involved in the case believe it is likely to be a very long time before the court decides its outcome, and your prayers can help sustain Susanna and her family as they go through this emotionally and physically draining process.

For the full account go to www.opendoorsuk.org/news/latest-news/susanna-koh-trial/

Source: Open Doors - Used by permission .

Open the Book - Update

On August 11th, a team from Open the Book took the sermon slot during the morning service of The Church of the Good Shepherd in Lake. Tony had warned that the congregation was small, so we took fewer costumes than normal and then ran out!

This lady was the first to volunteer, along with the gentleman on the sound desk.



Even the vicar wanted to join in. Thankfully there were sufficient headdresses, and his cassock looked biblical.



A young Ukrainian girl was delighted to take part – it was her first time coming to church. She will be starting at The Bay Secondary School in September. It was lovely to be able to give her a copy of 'It's Your Move'. This 80 page publication is from Scripture Union and is designed for children leaving Primary School. St James' Church in Lind Street gave a gift that enabled the Ryde team to buy sufficient for every child in Year 6 of both Dover Street and Haylands.

Bible a Month Club

By regularly giving £10 or more, you can put the Bible in someone's hands every month. Your support brings the Bible to more people and it is an easy way for you to be changing lives by the power of God's word.

Go to www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/bible-a-month/

Revealing God's heart...

... for Israel. For many, the fact that God has special place in His Heart for a People, and a Land and a City despite those People's struggles with accepting Him, is an uncomfortable statement. Yes, He loves every human being and every tribe and tongue, all of whom will one day be praising Him around His Throne. But in His bountiful Wisdom, He has a special work to do in all of our hearts, both Jew (despite their slowness at recognising their Messiah), and Gentile (who, according to Romans 11:11, are saved in order to make Israel jealous) – we both have to lay down our pride so that we can be a fulfilment of the mystery of the One New Man (Ephesians 2).

Recently, we completed another 21 weeks of Israel Revealed, which helped 12 of us (7 of whom came from other parts of the island) understand why God is passionate about His People and His Land – and that He also wants us to have this passion – we are to take no rest and give Him no rest until He makes Jerusalem a praise in all the earth (Isaiah 62)!

This was our 5th experience of going through the course. Somehow, the fellowship and connection we have with each other on this journey, is always very meaningful and precious. We walk in the sense that the Father is smiling on us as He calls us gentile Christians to be involved with Him in His end-time purposes for His People and His Land. The questions, the amazing insights and discoveries are always fresh in each group, as we discuss God's Word along this journey.

Here is a comment from one of the participants, Claire:

“What a blessing Israel Revealed was! Five months' worth of weekly meetings, centred around our book study and Melodie's wonderful soups! We made such wonderful friends and had such special times together! We travelled together from



being a people who understood the significance of the **cross**, to being a people who now also understand the significance of **Israel**, and how the two together are so important! Thank you so much to Roy and Melodie for hosting us, and leading us, and to all of the people who shared the journey and have become such special friends!

I hope that next, a group of us from this course can use the same material to lead a course in our church in Newport and share this great treasure that we have found!"

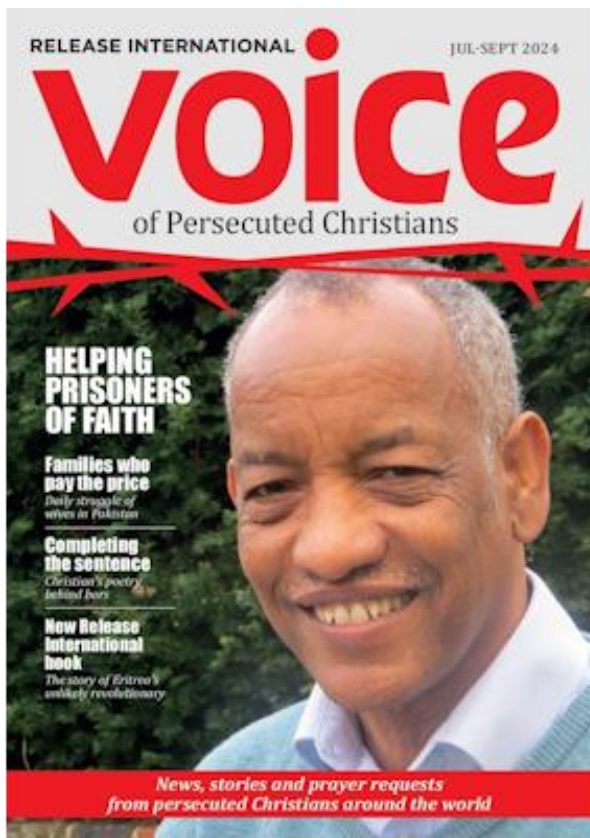
Latest *Voice* Magazine now available from Release International

Keep up to date with news about the persecution of Christians all around the world.

See what important work Release International is doing to help our brothers and sisters, as well as finding important issues to pray about.

To sign up to receive more information from Release International, and including their **free** quarterly *Voice* magazine, delivered by post to your home as soon as the next edition is published, simply go to:

releaseinternational.org/magazines/.





What type of person are you?

We all come from different starting points as we approach our God, but, as Christians, we instinctively know what is right in His eyes (if we listen to His Spirit at work within us). Of course, this is not always easy, and we sometimes struggle to do the right thing, but we must try to remain focused on our Hope and our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul describes three types of people:

- The Natural Person (someone who is not yet a Christian)
- The Spiritual Person (the normal state for a Christian), and,
- The Fleishy Person (spiritually alive but following worldly ways)

“The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.

The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, for, ‘Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?’

But we have the mind of Christ.

Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly – mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarrelling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans?” (1 Corinthians 2:14-3:3)

In his daily devotionals, Neil Anderson speaks of these types of people and here is what he has to say: -

The Natural Person

“As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.” (Ephesians 2:1-2)

Ephesians 2:1-3 contains a concise description of the natural person Paul identified in 1 Corinthians 2:14. This person is spiritually dead, separated from God. Living independently from God, the natural person sins as a matter of course. The natural person has a soul in that he can think, feel, and choose. But his mind - and subsequently his emotions and his will - is directed by his flesh, which acts completely apart from the God who created him.

The natural person may think he is free to choose his behaviour. But since he lives in the flesh, he invariably walks according to the flesh and his choices reflect the "deeds of the flesh" listed in Galatians 5:19-21. The natural person's actions, reactions, habits, memories, and responses are all governed by the natural world. The natural person will struggle with feelings of inferiority, insecurity, inadequacy, guilt, worry and doubt. The natural person lives independently of God and His purposes and does not respond to life in harmony with God's plan for him.

Living in a stressful age with no spiritual base for coping with life or making positive choices, the natural person is even more subject to physical ailments. Doctors agree that many physical problems are psychosomatic. Possessing peace of mind and the calm assurance of God's presence in our lives positively affects our physical health, since the Spirit gives life to the body (Romans 8:11).

Lord, thank You for redeeming me from my former life governed by sin and Satan and giving me peace of mind and calm assurance.

The Spiritual Person

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” (Galatians 5: 22-23)

The spiritual person also has a body, soul, and spirit. Yet this individual has been remarkably transformed from the natural person he was before spiritual birth. At conversion, his spirit became united with God’s Spirit. The spiritual life which resulted from this union is characterized by forgiveness of sin, acceptance in God’s family, and the realization of personal worth. The soul of the spiritual person also reflects a change generated by spiritual birth. He can now receive his impetus from the Spirit, not just from the flesh. His mind is being renewed and transformed. His emotions are characterized by peace and joy instead of turmoil.

It is our responsibility to choose not to walk according to the flesh, but to walk according to the Spirit. As the spiritual person exercises his choice to live in the Spirit, his life bears the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23). As a spiritual person, your body is the dwelling place of God. We should offer our bodies as a living sacrifice of worship and service to Him. The flesh, conditioned to live independently from God under the old self, is still present in the spiritual person. But he responsibly crucifies the flesh and its desires daily as he considers himself dead to sin.

"That all looks and sounds great," you may say. "But I’m a Christian and I still have some problems. I know I’m spiritually alive, but sometimes my mind dwells on the wrong kinds of thoughts. Sometimes I give in to the deeds of the flesh. Sometimes I entertain the desires of the flesh instead of crucifying them."

The description of the spiritual person is the ideal. It’s the model of maturity toward which we are all growing. God has made every provision for you to experience personally the description of the spiritual person in His Word (2 Peter 1:3). You will grow as a spiritual person and glorify God in your body as you learn to crucify the flesh and be filled by the spirit.

Loving Lord, it is liberating to know that Your Spirit dwells in me. I choose to walk as a spiritual person today.

The Fleshy Person

“In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. (Hebrews 5:12-14)

The spirit of the fleshly person is identical to that of the spiritual person. The fleshly person is a Christian, spiritually alive in Christ and declared righteous by God. But that's where the similarity ends. Instead of being directed by the Spirit, this believer chooses to follow the impulses of his flesh. As a result, his mind is occupied by carnal thoughts and his emotions are plagued by negative feelings. And though he is free to choose to walk after the Spirit and produce the fruit of the Spirit, he continues to involve himself in sinful activity by wilfully walking after the flesh.

His physical body is a temple of God, but he is using it as an instrument of unrighteousness. He has the same troubling physical symptoms experienced by the natural person because he is not operating in the manner God created him to operate. He is not presenting his body to God as a living sacrifice. Since he yields to the flesh instead of crucifying it, the fleshly man is also subject to feelings of inferiority, insecurity, inadequacy, guilt, worry, and doubt.

Several years ago, I did some research to discover how many Christians are still the victims of their flesh. I asked the same question to 50 consecutive Christians who came to me to talk about problems in their lives: "How many of the following characteristics describe your life: inferiority, insecurity, inadequacy, guilt, worry, and doubt:" Every one of the 50 answered, "All six." Here were 50 born-again, righteous children of God who were so bogged down by the flesh that they struggled with the same problems of self-doubt, which inundate unbelievers who only live in the flesh.

If I asked you the same question, how would you answer? I imagine that many of you would admit that some or all of these six traits describe you. It is evident to me that a staggering number of believers are still confused about their spiritual identity in Christ and its implications for their daily lives. We are struggling with the behaviour aspect of our growth because we are still struggling with

the belief aspect of our growth - who we are in Christ.

Father help me live above my fleshly desires today by exercising my spiritual inheritance at every temptation.

Neil Anderson
Freedom in Christ Ministries
Daily Devotionals
Used by permission

I know that I have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, however, there have been (and perhaps will be again) times in my Christian life when I would have had to say “yes” to some or all of Neil’s list of characteristics above.

The truth is that our walk with Christ is a learning “climb” and sometimes it’s quite steep! Always remember that we are children of God, loved beyond measure, and hold onto biblical truth when life gets tough:

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.” (Colossians 3:1-4)

Neil’s Freedom in Christ course centres around the fact that

In Christ we are Accepted, Significant and Secure

Next time we’ll look at some Biblical truths that back up this statement.

Lord, thank you that when life is difficult and we turn away from you, you will never turn away from us. Help us to look to you and to walk each day more closely in your footsteps.

Robin

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FOCUS

on our Christian Brothers and Sisters being persecuted for their faith

Rising number of converts targeted as political unrest engulfs Bangladesh

Your urgent prayers are needed for our family in Bangladesh, with converts targeted amidst an escalating national crisis that's led to the resignation of its Prime Minister.

A rising number of Christian converts in Bangladesh are being targeted by radical groups in the wake of political unrest that's led to the resignation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Following weeks of anti-government protests, Sheikh Hasina left her post on Monday 5 August and fled the country. She had been in power for more than two decades. Professor Muhammad Yunus, a Nobel Laureate, was sworn in as head of the interim government on Friday (9th August). New elections will be called.

Why is Bangladesh in crisis?

The protests broke out last month over a quota system for government jobs, leading to clashes with government forces. The unrest then escalated, with law and order breaking down.

Many police stations have been looted and destroyed, with some officers killed in the chaos. It's left police stations almost empty, with minimal police around to protect people. Officers are refusing to return to duty unless nine demands are met, including compensation for the families of deceased officers and ensuring that at least one family member is appointed to an equivalent position.

"Others live in fear and hiding, seeking security for their lives."

Open Doors local partner

In the absence of law enforcement, residents have taken to patrolling the streets, whilst students are controlling traffic. Whilst the

violence has subsided since early last week, thefts and burglaries are commonplace, with many perpetrators armed with pistols and other tools used as weapons.

Meanwhile, banks have been instructed to limit transactions to less than 1 lakh (£670) per account, per day, which is hindering daily operations and making it challenging for businesses to run effectively.

Converts fearful and in hiding

Opportunistic criminals and radical groups are exploiting the situation, leading to widespread violence and vandalism against minority communities. They are 'taking revenge' on them because of the protection they feel was given to them by the previous government.

Converts from Islam to Christianity are among those targeted. At least seven incidents have been reported across Bangladesh. In one incident, a man nearly died when a man approached him with a knife. His home was also ransacked (see picture). Other homes have been attacked and looted, and churches have been illegally occupied. Many openly professing converts are in hiding, seeking safety because of threats from local radical leaders. The lack of police protection is adding to their vulnerability.

"We spent a sleepless night praying to our Lord for the protection of all our believers," shares a local partner from northern Bangladesh. "In many areas, radical groups are compiling lists of converts to attack their houses. Some homes have already been attacked, while others live in fear and hiding, seeking security for their lives."

Local partners are staying at home and limiting their movement to keep safe, but they are working tirelessly to get in contact with as many believers as they can. "We are finding ways to reach them so that they can survive and overcome the emergency," says the partner. "No one is secure, especially the minority groups. They are very vulnerable and easy targets for the perpetrators."

This is an unprecedented crisis for Bangladesh and the path forward is unclear. Given the ongoing instability and unrest, there is huge concern over the potential for yet more damage and suffering. "Please pray for us as we don't know what is going to happen next," asks the partner.

Please Pray

- That God will intervene to bring peace and stability in Bangladesh, safety for all people, and an end to violence and vandalism
- For wisdom, guidance and courage for the interim government, and that they will seek the welfare of all Bangladeshis
- For the safety of all minority groups facing attacks, and that believers will feel upheld by God's love.

How many Christians are there in Bangladesh?

Bangladesh has 169.5 million people. The number of Christians is 950,000, meaning they comprise just 0.6% of the country's Muslim-majority population.

How are Christians persecuted in Bangladesh?

Converts to Christianity face the brunt of persecution through severe restrictions, discrimination and attacks.

Since religious beliefs – be that Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or animist/tribal – are tied to the identity of the community, choosing to follow Jesus can lead to accusations of betrayal. It means Bangladeshi converts often gather in small house churches due to the risk of attack.

Tribal Christians face an increasing double vulnerability since they belong to both an ethnic and religious minority. These believers struggle with people taking their land and face violence. The killings of eight tribal Christians in April 2023 in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region (south east Bangladesh) reflect this danger.

Any churches that actively evangelise among the Muslim majority face persecution – but even historical denominations like the Roman Catholic Church are increasingly targeted by death threats and attacks.

Christians among the Muslim-majority Rohingya, who fled Myanmar to Bangladesh, face harassment and strong pressure from their community. Believers who live in the Rohingya refugee camps can encounter persecution even as they live in displacement camps.

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

If you missed Andy Hough's play at Ventnor Fringe...

MELLOW DRAMA

presents

TO TIMOTHY

the last testament of St Paul - a "Miracle" Play

Tuesday 17th September 19:30

**at Bembridge Methodist
Fore land Road**



Entrance by program only

*Programs £1 in advance from Bembridge
library Friday morning 6th & 13th September
or from "Indies Bazaar" High Street Shanklin*

Contact 07729 680735



Dates For Your Diary

Day	Date	Time	Details
Sun	1 st Sep	17:00	Bay Churches bring-and-share tea at URC
Fri	6 th Sep	19:00	Elders Meeting
Sat	7 th Sep	16:00	Charity BBQ in Malc and Miriam's garden
Sun	8 th Sep	10:30 18:30	Lou Hall from Sandown Baptist speaking Shared Worship resumes – see page 9
Fri	13 th Sep	14:00	Property Team
Sun	15 th Sep	10:30	Celebrating Brian's 30 years
Fri	20 th Sep	18:00	Fish and Chip Supper
Sat	21 st Sep	12:00	Lorenne and Dave's Wedding
Thu	26 th Sep	19:30	Church Meeting
Sun	30 th Sep	10:30	Encounter Café Service
Sat	5 th Oct	15:30	Messy Church - Harvest Special
Sun	6 th Oct	15:30	Tea event to meet the new Synod Moderator
Sat	12 th Oct	10:00	Coffee morning for Shoebox Appeal
Fri - Sat	18 th -19 th Oct		Sabbath Day of Prayer - see page 4

Connection Quiz Answers

1. **Robin** Hood.
2. **Alan** Tracy.
3. **Malcolm** in the Middle
4. **Yvonne** de Carlo.
5. Connection: they are **the first names of four SURC Elders.**
6. This issue's cover photo was of: **Rylstone Gardens, Shanklin.**



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!

Difficulty level: medium

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

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?

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

35 Parisian art museum (6)

36 Did this come before the chicken (3)

Down

1 Richard 1 nickname, en français (5 2 4)

2 Having natural creative skill (8)

3 1924 Olympic city (5)

4 Don't stay (2)

5 - the Duck, 1980s BBC star (3)

6 - - -, 1964 Beach Boys song (3)

7 What a golf ball rests on (3)

10 Universal Serial Bus *initials* (3)

11 What you hear with (3)

12 Military clergyman (5)

14 Of the d'urbervilles (4)

15 Luxury camping (8)

18 Ordained minister ranking below that of priest (6)

21 Help (3)

22 Drink once given to sailors daily (3)

23 Guide a vehicle (5)

25 Doctor, for short (2)

28 Scottish Island in Inner Hebrides (4)

30 Black fossil fuel (3)

31 French high speed train *initials* (3)

32 Fish eggs, or a deer (3)

Across

1 French bubbly wine region (9)

6 At the bottom of people's legs (4)

8 All of (6)

9 Scottish city with a cake (6)

13 ECHR City (10)

16 BBC programme '*Line of -*' (4)

17 James the - engine (3)

19 North, Irish, for example (3)

20 Team game using a ball and a stick with a net (8)

24 Mr Sheeran, singer (2)

26 2 in Roman numerals (2)

27 The red planet (4)

29 Measures distance travelled by a wheeled vehicle (8)

33 Ornamental carp (3)

34 Science that deals with the earth's physical structure (7)

Can You Guess The Year?

- Legoland Windsor opened
- Dolly the 'Cloned' Sheep is born
- Ford launches the Ka in the UK
- Damon Hill wins the F1 Driver's Championship.
- And UK No. 1s included:
 - Oasis with '*Look Back in Anger*'
 - Gina G with '*Ooh Aah... Just a Little Bit*'
 - Gary Barlow with '*Forever Love*'
 - Dunblane with '*Knocking on Heaven's Door*'

Answer next issue

This Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Questions

1. Who won the F1 Driver's Championship in 2000?
2. Who is the national personification of the French Republic?
3. What's the capital of Brittany, France?
4. Who was the last Plantagenet monarch?
5. What was the Dutch currency before the Euro?
6. What is the motto of the SAS?
7. Which aeroplane is flown by the Red Arrows?
8. Who wrote the book '*A Year in Provence*'?
9. On the periodic table, which element is Ar?
10. Who is the 'Chief Mouser to the Cabinet Office'?

Answers next issue

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

Sunday 22nd September

However, 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 **1987**

- Last issue's crossword ↓

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

Last Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Answers

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Tottenham Hotspur (in 1981) | 6. Per Ardua Ad Astra |
| 2. Will Your Anchor Hold | 7. Louis Bleriot |
| 3. Rouen | 8. Paul Brickhill |
| 4. Henry II | 9. Antimony |
| 5. Drachma | 10. Spain (beating England) |

Sunday Service

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

Weekday Activities

- Monday** 14:30 **Prayer for Israel** (see [page 4](#))
- Tuesday** 14:00 **Bible Bite** ministry in church
Broadcast live on YouTube
Refreshments from 13:30
- 19:30 **Prayer Meeting** on Zoom (see [page 4](#))
- Wednesday** 11:00 **Living Well Together** (aka 'The Well')
- 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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Day off: Monday

Secretary: Robin Wightman



robinwightman@aol.com

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

www.shanklinurc.co.uk

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