

The Link



October 2024



Shanklin United Reformed Church www.shanklinurc.co.uk

View From Number 10



Leadership in a challenging culture

I have just returned from the Council Meeting of Evangelical Alliance, which was at High Leigh Conference Christian Centre, near Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire. It was an incredibly valuable 24 hour gathering where we focussed mainly on the challenges facing leaders in the modern world.

Gavin Calver the CEO wrote online this week:

“What a joy it has been to be together with our council these past two days. They exist to help and support us and speak into the work of the Evangelical Alliance. This amazing group of people consists of 70 evangelical leaders from all different spheres of society and places across the UK.

As we met this week, we were looking at leadership and how to do this healthily in our day. I am so grateful to all those who attended. Do pray for our council and the amazing contribution they make throughout the year.

It has been a privilege to serve among this amazing group of leaders, some of whom have grown to become true friends over the eight or more years I have been involved. There is such a breadth of experience in the room, and it is a delight to chat to people around the tables and over coffees and meals and hear what God is doing across the church in the four home nations. Council members are drawn from all manner of church streams as well as para-church organisations, charities, industry as well as politics and the media.

Shanklin URC is a member of EA – one of about 3,000 UK congregations which belong to the Alliance. It was really encouraging to hear that around 5,000 personal members have joined over the last 12 months, making some 25,000 individuals or couples in total.



Please do consider becoming a personal member – there are some leaflets in the lobby, or you can find out about what EA stands for at the website where can you join if you feel so moved. www.eauk.org

It is good to stand together with like-minded folk who share similar biblical values and have a passion to reach the lost in our nation. The greater the membership, the more influence the team have in representing believers across the UK.

Do please pray for leaders in today's church and in Christian organisations, as well as fellow believers who carry such responsibilities in the secular world. There are all kinds of new pressures developing in modern society, and the spotlight is very much on those who lead, with so many stories of bad management and abuse in the press.

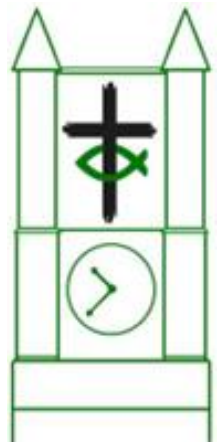
Do please pray for our leadership team as we seek to oversee the work in Shanklin and seek to serve the needs of the congregation and wider community. The Church Members elected each of the Elders and gave a promise of support when they were inducted to serve. Many issues we face are complex and challenging, and we need your love and support as we seek to do the right things at each juncture.

We plan to have a day together in early November to allow more time for reflection and team building. Please pray that this will be a good time of growing in relationship and effective leadership.

With love and very best wishes,



Making Jesus known in The Bay



Prayer



Prayer Sabbath - Friday 18th – Saturday 19th October

We are planning to have another special 24-hour prayer event with three opportunities to gather together and spend time with the Lord, beginning with some corporate worship and prayer and then allowing free time for personal devotion:

Meeting times

Friday 18:30 - 20:30

Saturday 08:30 - 10:30 - starting with breakfast

15:30 - 17:30 - concluding with communion at about 17:00

Please do try and join us for one or more of the times together.

See details of the National Week of Prayer on [page 16](#).

Tuesday Prayer at 19:30 - continues each week via Zoom using the same account as for other activities and groups :

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

Meeting ID: 324 266 5584 Password: 936536.

Text Prayer Network - a really efficient method of getting prayer needs around. So, if you have an urgent and important issue that needs immediate cover, please text Lou on **07474 273119** (or, as a back-up, Jean Cunningham on: 07854 324809) with your prayer request and she will mobilise a team of over 30 intercessors by forwarding the message to the group. Each of the team will pray and then delete the message.

If you'd like to be added to this network, please get in touch with Lou and she will brief you on the protocols.

Prayer for Israel - held each Monday at 14:30 at Roy, Melodie and Carol's home in the Old Village. Should you wish to know more about the prayer meeting, please contact Melodie or Roy on 📞 866912 or melodieroywilson@gmail.com.

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?

This month the café service will be held on
27th October and led by Brian

Café serving from 10.15

“Keep Walking!” (even after 30 years!)



“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.” (Colossians 2: 6-7, NIVUK)

On Sunday 15th September 2024 we gave thanks for the 30 years of service that Brian and Janet have given to God on the Isle of Wight! (and further afield).

We had a wonderful service of thanksgiving and prayer. Brian chose the same reading as he did in his service of ordination on 17th September 1994 and preached on how our life and ministry must be both Cross-shaped and Spirit-led. We also sang some of the songs chosen for the ordination service.

Many of the fellowship joined with Brian & Janet in prayer at the front of the church and we all shared a wonderful cake after the service (thanks Sheilagh) and Brian & Janet were presented with a card of good wishes and prayers from the fellowship and others, including our brothers and sisters from Ryde and our partner church in Kalasa, Uganda.



Brian spoke of the past 30 years fondly and thanked all who had come alongside him and Janet over the years, expressing the importance of teamwork in his ministry:

“After completing my training in Cambridge, we were then shown the profile of Shanklin. By God’s grace we had enjoyed a family holiday down here the year before and this was a very unexpected and intriguing proposal. When I was welcomed to Shanklin and ordained and inducted as your minister on 17th September 1994, I could never have imagined still being in that role in 2024.”

Lord thank you for this faithful Christian couple. We pray that they will continue to receive you as Lord of their lives afresh each day.

We ask that they may continue to live in you, to walk closely with you, rooted and grounded in your Word, strengthened in their life together and in the Truth of the gospel and that they may overflow with thanksgiving for all that the Lord Jesus has done for them. Amen

Robin



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!!**

Shared Worship in The Bay



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

6th Oct 18:30 Christ Church Sandown
Broadway, Sandown

13th Oct 18:30 Shanklin URC - Prayer Focus
High Street, Shanklin

20th Oct 18:30 St Blasius, Shanklin
Church Road, Shanklin

27th Oct 19:30 Lake Methodist Church
Sandown Road, Lake

Pray for The Bay – first Thursday of the month at Grace Mckenzie's home in Lake at 14:00 – ask Brian for details.

Harvest Appeal

At our Church Meeting in July, we agreed to support **Tearfund's** Emergency appeal for the Middle East. They are working through partner churches across the region in all the countries affected by the current conflict. Our brothers and sisters in Israel, Gaza and Lebanon urgently need more resources to help with food and medical aid as the crisis deepens.

The logo for Tearfund, featuring the word "tearfund" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background, which is itself set against a yellow background.

Pick up a leaflet with some prayer information and use the Gift Envelopes if you'd like to support this appeal. We will keep the fund open until the end of October when the gift will then be sent off.

We are also collecting items for the IoW Foodbank and these need to be in by 6th October, after which they'll be taken over to Cowes. See the list of the items most needed – on our Facebook Group page or pick up a leaflet from the lobby.



Meet the URC Wessex Synod Moderator

Sunday 6th October at 15:30 followed by tea and cake

Rev Dr Michael Hopkins is preaching at Ryde URC for their Anniversary Service celebrating 50 years in the present site – when the two congregations of Ryde and Haylands came together.

He will then join us at Shanklin for an informal meeting so we can get to know him and find out more about life across the synod and issues facing the denomination.



Michael served for many years as minister in Farnham and was also Clerk to the General Assembly until he became the Synod Moderator back in March.

Please make an effort to come along so we can build a good relationship with him and share about the things on our hearts.

Olio

I've recently come across this sharing app called Olio I wanted to let others know about.

Most supermarkets nowadays have a system whereby charities can pick up food that is going to be thrown away, because it expires that day and they are no longer able to sell it. However, there are some occasions when the charities either don't want certain items or for some reason are unable to collect that day, so rather than the food being binned, an Olio volunteer picks it up and posts it on the app for anyone to collect.

Their moto is '*Share More, Waste Less*'.

You can choose where you pick up from, I pick up from 3 addresses in the centre of Shanklin and I have had some fabulous items and all for free. They often have baguettes, rolls, pastries, various vegetables, fruit and herbs plus some things I have never heard of. I've recently been introduced to samphire! Very tasty.

As I say the food is all free, all you have to do is commit to collect it. As Christians it is so important we help reduce food waste and that we are good stewards of all God has given to us.

Joining is really easy, just go to your app store, download the Olio app, select how far you are prepared to travel to collect items and you will be notified when items become available. You request what you would like, and arrange a time of collection and as I say it is all free.

Janet Harley



Road Closure

Island Roads will be doing major work for five weeks along Landguard Road and the section by the church will be **closed for two weeks towards the end of the month.**

Christians Against Poverty

We are one of five congregations supporting the Island project which has been based at Castlehold Baptist Church for a year.

John Bastin, the Debt Centre Manager has sadly had to stand down for health reasons. We are urgently looking for someone to replace him in the two day a week volunteer role. Please be praying for the future of this project and for the nine clients who are being helped to get out of debt at the moment.

URC Appeal for Myanmar

The Elders will be suggesting to the September Church Meeting that we support an appeal from the URC to help a partner church, the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar, provide urgent aid to people in extreme poverty in their communities.

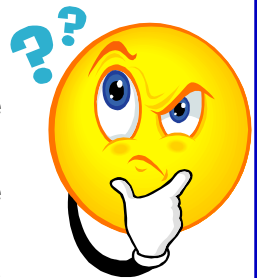
The need is great, and the local believers do not have the resources to provide sufficient.

If agreed, this would be part of our outward giving “tithe” (we seek to give away 10% of our general income to support other Christian work both here and abroad).



Connection Quiz

1. Who had a hit with ‘Is This the Way to Amarillo’?
2. Who was the pilot of Thunderbird 4?
3. Who is the only Prime Minister to have spoken Welsh as their first language?
4. Who played Nana in the British TV series ‘The Royle Family’?
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 not taken in Shanklin - or Scotland.



Answers are on [page 38](#)



CHARITY NO
1120920

FUNDRAISING
IN SUPPORT OF
**HELP for
HEROES**

**7th September
2024
BBQ**

Additionally supporting a local Isle of Wight Charity

Ability Dogs 4 Young People IoW

On the day, you raised an amazing £1,155.15, despite the weather!

On the Sunday after, our wonderful church family raised a further £210.74

Due to the generosity of two schools (thanks to Debbie T and Kt's friend Helen) another £65.68 was raised, and finally, Viv and Paul (Viv's Cooking, Sandown) raised £162.32 giving us the unbelievable total of £1,593.89 that will be given to the above charities.

Thank you so much from our family for your support and generosity and a special thanks to Kt's friend Helen and Kt's work colleagues who helped us in running the event.

Praise be to God for his amazing provision.

Malc & Miriam

Thank you all

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 **'Impossible' Hospital Survives by Prayer** - Founder tells how 'impossible' hospital came to be.

Other contributions include:

- **Witch Meets God At Halloween** - See how that turned out!
- **Scientist Shocked By 'Invisible Realm'** - Archaeologist discovers spirit world is real - and the power of Jesus over evil
- **Love Island Star's Faith** - Matilda Draper says her talks about God were cut
- **Footballer's Own Goal** - Stoke City player addicted to gambling until he met Jesus
- **Exorcist Writer Meant It For Good** - Author of the book that became the horror film wrote it to show God's power
- **Diver's Gratitude** - British Olympic diver gives glory to God in victory and defeat

Good News... for a change



National Week of Prayer 12th - 20th October 2024

Gather. Remember. Return.

‘Therefore, tell the people: This is what the Lord Almighty says: “Return to me,” declares the Lord, “and I will return to you,” says the Lord Almighty.’
Zechariah 1:3

As the body of Christ, we are gathering across the UK and beyond; to humble ourselves, repent and pray for lives to be transformed by Jesus, and to see a spiritual awakening in the nations.

Christians from across traditions, denominations and communities; joining together as one.

National Week Of Prayer (NWOP) is a moment for the UK to return to God and flourish in the identity found in Him.

- A week to remember the good things God has done, and is doing in this country, with thanksgiving, worship and praise, as we return to him.
- Whoever you are, wherever you are and wherever your influence, NWOP is an opportunity to pray for our leaders, our nation and the nations. Go to www.nationalweekofprayer.uk for more details.
- NWOP is a partnership of Christian ministries brought together by the Holy Spirit with a united vision, committing to pray for the nations and let faith rise.

Thank You

Thank you for all of you who contributed cakes, etc., or served the refreshments to make my 90th birthday afternoon tea such a success on the 31st August.

It was so lovely to see so many able to be with us. I am sure all of us felt God's love through one another, it was very special and I was so pleased we were able to have a short time of worship too.

All the glory goes to Him.

Thank you also for prayer for myself and my family as on return to Surrey my nephew John had a sudden heart attack and died three days later. So unbelievable.

God bless you all

Beryl



Change Begins...

'Your guide to the next five years of Labour government'... and so much more.

In Scripture we are urged to pray for, 'kings and all who are in positions of authority... that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all Godliness and holiness. This is good and pleases God our saviour...' 1 Timothy 2:1-3.

CARE, who publish the wonderful Prayer Diary every quarter and who also published the very helpful Election Briefing booklet before the recent general election, have now produced an excellent resource for prayer, including, 'Who are the Christians in parliament,' (sadly many of the fine Christian MPs from the previous years were not re-elected and proportionately, there are now very few Christian voices in the new parliament).

Other topics include,

- 'Who's who in the new cabinet' and
- 'What was in the Labour manifesto',
- 'Seven ways to pray for the new government'

– and many other very helpful items with insights as to where we are as a nation with this time of significant change.

CARE also publish some very helpful prayer leaflets with matters of current concern from a Christian perspective, their most recent one being, 'Seven ways to pray about assisted suicide'.

This leaflet is so helpful with guidance as to how to intercede with regard to this very delicate topic.

Both these resources are available in the church and the lobby; vital information for us to pray about and share with others.

'Devote yourself to prayer, being watchful and thankful'
Colossians 4:2 NIVUK.

Do ask me if you'd like to know more about the work of CARE and these or any other of their resources.

Blessings in Jesus' name

Jane H

Source: CARE

Christian Institute

Another very valuable Christian ministry is the Christian Institute, and during this last year they mourned the sudden loss of the Institute's founder and director, Colin Hart. To quote, "His vision was ahead of it's time. He knew that this nation would face challenges around education, Christian values and religious liberty. His humble determination to uphold the cause of Christ has left an indelible imprint on this Institute."

Just published has been the Institute's Annual Review 2024 – entitled 'Grace and Truth', with a picture of the cross on the cover. Two wonderful aspects of our faith... the Grace of God and His undeserved favour towards us, coupled with the truth of the Gospel and Jesus' declaration, 'I am the way, the truth and the life, no-one comes to the Father except through Me', John14:6.

Twin pillars of the Institute's and every true believer's foundation... **Grace and Truth**.

Do please take a copy from the back of church or read it online at www.christian.org.uk/resource/grace-and-truth/ and see the vital work the Institute has done over the past year and continues to do – and do please pray for them and other important Christian ministries who are out there 'In the market place', seeking to uphold Godly values in what is so sadly often a hostile environment for believers. Among the topics written about in the review are Religious Liberty, Sanctity of Life, Marriage and the family, Education, among many other items.

Again, may we 'devote ourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful', so that we might see this, our nation being turned around, God's Kingdom coming and His will being done and for righteousness being restored.

Do feel free to ask me if you'd like to know more about this or other ministries who are also 'on the frontline' of being watchmen for our society.

Blessings in Jesus' name

Jane H

Source: Christian Institute



"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery" (Galatians 5:1)

Our Essential Identity

Last time we considered what type of people we are. In the devotional below Neil speaks of how we have become who we are. Neil bases his Freedom in Christ course around the fact that *"In Christ, we are accepted significant and secure"* and gives below the Biblical truths to support the statement.

Robin

Our Essential Identity

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Genesis 1:26)

Adam was created physically and spiritually alive. He possessed eternal life from his first breath and enjoyed God's abiding presence in the Garden of Eden.

Furthermore, unlike the animal kingdom, which operated by divine instinct, Adam was created in the likeness of God with a mind, emotions, and will, giving him the ability to think, feel, and choose. No other created being can make that claim.

After creating Adam, God said, ***"It is not good for the man to be alone"*** (Genesis 2:18). So, He created a suitable helper for him: Eve. They both enjoyed a sense of belonging to God and each other. Not only that, but God also gave them a purpose to ***"rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth"*** (Genesis 1:26). Adam and Eve didn't have to search for significance; they had it in their relationship with God. And because God was present with them, they lived in perpetual safety and security.

Eternal life, identity, purpose, significance, security and a sense of

belonging are all attributes of mankind created in the image of God. Adam and Eve experienced these attributes in full measure, and we were destined to enjoy them too.

But when Adam sinned, he died spiritually and forfeited everything God had provided. Being separated from God, Adam's glowing attributes became glaring needs. As children of Adam, born separated from God, we come into the world with these same glaring needs. We wander through life striving to make a name for ourselves, looking for security in temporal things, and searching for significance apart from God.

Is it a hopeless quest? No! We can fulfil these needs by establishing a personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Everything Adam Enjoyed In The Garden Before He Sinned Is Now At Our Disposal.

Loving heavenly Father, thank You for sending Jesus to die for my sin so I may have eternal life. Thank You that in Christ my need for identity, significance, security and a sense of belonging can be met.

Accepted, Significant And Secure

I am Accepted...

I am God's child: ***"Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."*** (John 1:12/13)

I am Christ's friend: (John 15:15)

I have been justified: (Romans 5:1)

I am united with the Lord and I am one spirit with Him: (1 Corinthians 6:17)

I have been bought with a price; I belong to God: (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

I am a member of Christ's body: (1 Corinthians 12:27)

I am a saint, a holy one: (Ephesians 1:1)

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I have been adopted as God's child: (Ephesians 1:5)

I have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit: (Ephesians 2:18)

I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins: (Colossians 1:14)

I am complete in Christ: ***“So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.”*** (Colossians 2:10)

I am Significant...

I am the salt of the earth and the light of the world: (Matthew 5:13-14)

I am a branch of the true vine, Jesus, a channel of His life: (John 15:1, 5)

I have been chosen and appointed by God to bear fruit: ***“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.”*** (John 15:16)

I am a personal, Spirit-empowered witness of Christ: (Acts 1:8)

I am a temple of God: (1 Corinthians 3:16)

I am a minister of reconciliation for God: (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)

I am a fellow worker with God: (2 Corinthians 6:1)

I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realms: (Ephesians 2:6)

I am God's workmanship, created for good works: (Ephesians 2:10)

I may approach God with freedom and confidence: (Ephesians 3:12)

I can do all things through Christ: ***“I can do all this through him who gives me strength.”*** (Philippians 4:13)

I am Secure...

I am free from condemnation: ***“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.”*** (Romans 8:1-2)

I am assured that all things work together for good: (Romans 8:28)

I am free from any condemning charges against me: (Romans 8:31-

34)

I cannot be separated from the love of God: (Romans 8:35-39)

I have been established, anointed, sealed by God: (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

I am hidden with Christ in God: (Colossians 3:3)

I am confident that the work God has begun in me will be perfected: (Philippians 1:6)

I am a citizen of heaven: (Philippians 3:20)

I do not have a spirit of fear but of power, love and self-control: (2 Timothy 1:7)

I can find grace and mercy to help in time of need: (Hebrews 4:16)

I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me: ***“We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them.”*** (1 John 5:18)

Neil Anderson

Freedom in Christ Ministries Daily Devotionals

Used by permission

I have shown some of my favourite verses in full above (there are many more!). I urge you to look at all these verses in the month ahead ~ that's only one a day ~ and gain strength from the fact that our Lord will never forsake you!

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Deuteronomy 31:6)

Father thank you that your word is Truth, please help me to meditate upon it daily.

Robin

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Answer to Prayer...

King Charles III backs Bible Society

We are thrilled and so thankful that King Charles III has stepped into his mother's shoes and become the Bible Society's Patron.

The Society has had a Royal patron since 1943, when King George VI and Queen Elizabeth became joint patrons. Queen Elizabeth II was our sole Patron from 1952, when she acceded to the throne and since succeeding her, King Charles III has continued to donate to Bible Society from the Privy Purse. Our royal connections go back even further though, to when Queen Victoria became a member of the Society in 1838.

King Charles said he would be 'delighted to accept the patronage of Bible Society'. He has said that his faith is 'deeply rooted' in the Church of England and told faith leaders on his accession to the throne that he was 'a committed Anglican Christian', and promised at his Coronation to 'maintain the Laws of God and the true profession of the gospel'.

The King was a guest of Bible Society's president, His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos at the Coptic Orthodox Centre in Hertfordshire recently. Archbishop Angaelos introduced the King to Bible Society's Chief Executive, Paul Williams. They talked about Bible mission around the world, and the King asked especially about our work in the Middle East.

Paul said, "We're absolutely delighted with this news and very thankful. The King's patronage is a sign that the Bible is being taken seriously at the heart of our country's life, and we're so pleased that the connection with the royal family, which meant so much to us under Queen Elizabeth II, is to continue.

Please Pray

- Give thanks to the Lord that King Charles has given Bible Society his backing. Pray that this example will be noted by, and influence, many.
- Pray for the King's health, and for the health of Catherine, Princess of Wales, both of whom were diagnosed with cancer.

Pray that they will turn to Jesus for the greatest comfort there is.

- Pray for each member of the royal family, that they will treasure God's word and put their faith in Jesus.

PS How Bible a Month is supporting Christians in Cairo's Garbage Village

The people living in what is called the Garbage village of Cairo are the city's rubbish collectors. They collect rubbish from across the city and bring it back to their neighbourhood, or even their homes, to be processed. They're desperately poor, sometimes being paid as little as 30p a month per residence for collecting all of their rubbish.

Many of these people are also Christians. As we passed through the streets on our way to the Cave Church complex where they worship, we saw crosses and pictures of Jesus pinned to the walls. And their faith has been strengthened year after year thanks to your kind giving. Not only are you giving them Scriptures, but you're also enabling the training of Bible study group leaders so they can engage with God's word more deeply.

There are estimated to be about 15% of Egypt's population who are Christian (about 9.8 million souls). Life is not easy for the Christian community who face pressures of various kinds in their society.

In this environment the Bible is bringing life and hope to many.

Bible a Month is a wonderful ministry – a gift monthly will provide a Bible somewhere in the world to those who would otherwise have no access to God's word.

The current newsletter (Aug – Oct) gives a fuller picture of the amazing **Cave Churches of Egypt** – do take a copy and maybe be drawn to becoming a Bible a Month partner?

Source: Bible Society



Revive The Wight

Saturday 26th October in the Methodist Church, Quay Street, Newport

Believers from all across the Island, coming together to pray for God to help, bless, make fruitful and bring a fresh breath of his presence across the whole of the Island in all our churches, Christian organisations and outreach, our schools, colleges and institutions that have authority and influence over us, and other areas that need our prayers.

Spread over six hours, with one hour of both prayer and worship led by leaders from each area, devoted to each of the 5 regions of the Island:

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 10:00 – 11:00 – The North & East | (Wooton, Ryde, Bembridge and all villages) |
| 11:15 – 12:15 – The South & East | (Sandown, Shanklin, Ventnor, Wroxall, Godshill, Niton and all villages) |
| 12:30 – 13:30 – The South & West | (Freshwater, Totland, Yarmouth and all villages) |
| 13:45 – 14:45 – The North & West | (Cowes, East Cowes, Gurnard, and villages) |
| 15:00 – 16:00 – Central | (Newport and its surrounds) |

Come and pray for your own region for the relevant hour or
stay to pray for more.



For further details contact:
Rev Richard Buxton, email: prayer@rydeelim.org
or Rev Brian Harley, email: brianharley58@gmail.com



Can You Help Out???

Have you got 45 minutes to spare on Tuesday lunchtimes...

As you know we provide teas and coffees before Bible Bite from 13:30 to 14:00. At the moment Heather & Ken Pettinger are "serving" each week and they need a little help to lighten the load just a bit.

Hannah both sets up the counter beforehand and clears away after Bible Bite which she is happy to continue to do... so we need 2 or 3 folk prepared to come in at about 13:15 to be ready to serve from 13:30.

Currently Heather provides cakes for those attending, if you could do so that would be great, but if not, I can provide these...

Please do let me or Brian know if you are able to help out occasionally... you won't have to stay for the Bible Bite itself, but you might want to!



Robin

Safeguarding Training

Advanced training online via Zoom (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

Thought for the month

If Jesus died **because** of our sins, that would be **disgrace**.

But Jesus died **for** our sins, that is **Grace** .

Open the Book - Good Memories

Our first assembly of the new year was 'A Wife for Isaac'. Abraham's servant took his camels 'with a hump and a thump and a bump' to find Rebekah. Two children were dressed as camels and followed the plywood cutout made by Bill. Those watching were invited to simulate the action of riding a camel and join in the Makaton sign for 'happy' at relevant points. The teacher in charge said that it brought the Bible to life and made it much easier to remember than when it had been told in class.



This photo includes Jean, who comes every Wednesday morning and reads the introduction and conclusion. We take along a folding chair with arms to make things easier for her - she is 92 after all! A member of staff, Maxine, escorts Jean to and from the lift. As they were leaving, Maxine asked Jean about the assembly. Jean could

only remember 'hump' and 'bump'. In the corridor they met about 10 children from Year 2, so Maxine asked them. Not only did they remember 'thump', they recounted the whole story, confirming what the teacher had said.

Julie was asked to tell a story at the Ablaze Christian Arts Festival. In preparation, she tried recounting 'Esther' to her hairdresser. It was really difficult because so much happens. Then Julie heard a rhyming monologue on the radio. God inspired her to turn the story of Esther into a 10 minute long poem which she recited from memory at Carisbrooke Priory. This was most definitely of the Lord!



Several people asked for copies. Rather than printing it out, Melodie, Roy, Carol, Bill and others dressed in costume and turned it into a video. You can find the video on YouTube by searching for **Esther, the Epic Julie Croydon.**

Esther, the Epic Julie Croydon.

This is reminiscent of Exodus 35 where the Lord filled people 'with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding,



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with knowledge and with all kinds of skills - to make artistic designs . . . and to engage in all kinds of artistic crafts.' This was exactly what the Ablaze Festival was bringing to light. You will only discover unrealised talents by having a go.





Shoebox Appeal

Thank you so much to all those who have been giving me items for the shoeboxes, which I have passed on to Sandra (Snell) and she expresses her ongoing appreciation for all gifts received and monies toward transportation of the boxes.

There are leaflets on the table in the lobby, if you would like to assemble your own box and there are also flat-pack boxes to facilitate this, if desired. Do ask me (Jane H) if you'd like such a pack. Alternatively, you can 'assemble' a box online at www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/shoebox-online. It is so easy to do. Each shoebox gift is a tangible expression of God's love for a child in real need. You can bless a child around the world without leaving your home. Send a gift-filled shoebox packed from your computer or mobile device, using one of the options on the website, which is exactly what the editor of The Link does. By doing it this way, you also get advised in which country your shoebox ends up.

There will be a coffee morning on 12th October (see [page 9](#)) when also there will be video presentations of the dear children receiving their boxes – so moving. Do come along if you are able and support this wonderful cause. **Thank you.**

How a gift of motorbikes shows Christians in the Côte d'Ivoire they're not alone

Christians in far-flung parts of the Côte d'Ivoire can now know they're part of a wider community – thanks to a gift of motorbikes from Open Doors, meaning pastors can more easily visit these vulnerable believers.

Being part of a community of believers is vital for converts to Christianity in the Côte d'Ivoire. In the west, east and south, these believers have often left a traditional religion to follow Jesus, while in the north many Christians have converted from Islam and face growing threat of jihadist activity. What these brothers and sisters have in common is isolation.

That isolation isn't solely rejection from members of the majority religion in their region – but literal isolation. Many live in far-flung parts of the country that are hard to access. It means this crucial presence ministry can be difficult to accomplish – until now.

Thanks to gifts and prayers, Open Doors local partners were able to recently give motorcycles to seven local evangelists who serve remote churches in the Côte d'Ivoire. For many of the evangelists, this support was an answer to ongoing prayer.

Joyful motorcyclists

“I had difficulties in reaching these churches,” shares Pastor Tahe Alexis. “To even go and greet the brothers and sisters, to make a pastoral visit, was very difficult. Since our arrival in this region, it has been a prayer point which we kept asking the Lord to do something about it.”

Pastor Blé Bai Laurent agrees: “I have difficulties to move around since the believers are far away. Some are in encampments, others are in villages which are very far away from the main road, and to reach there is difficult. Sometimes I travel by bicycle and, once it rains, it's no longer possible.

“I say thanks today to the brothers and sisters who offered me a motorbike so that I can move around easily. I believe it will boost my ministry mostly in encampments and far away villages.”

“This dream became reality”

The same joy is shared by another recipient, Emmanuel Hien: “Tiredness will be less and moving will be easy now thanks to this motorbike. I really don’t know what to say: this dream became reality, thanks to my brothers and sisters. I can just say thank you; may God bless you. May God bless you abundantly.”

Because of these motorcycles, believers in especially isolated areas will be visited more often and reminded that they are never alone. This is so important. Thank you.

Much like other countries in West Africa, Côte d’Ivoire faces an escalating threat from Islamic militants. In the northern regions, the growing influence of Muslims in politics and economics is palpable. This has led to a climate where Christians increasingly feel marginalised and insecure.

While Christianity makes up 39.8% of the Côte d’Ivoire, converts from Islam or a traditional religion face pressure and persecution from their families and communities. Jihadist activity at the border regions is increasing – the Côte d’Ivoire isn’t the epicentre of the extremist violence in sub-Saharan Africa but, as this violence grows, the nation is coming under greater threat. Please keep praying.

Where is Côte d'Ivoire in the World Watch List?

Number 76 in the World Watch List 2024

How many Christians are there?

According to the 2021 census, the country has a total population of 29.4 million, of which 42.5 percent are Muslim and 39.8 percent Christian. An additional 12.6% of the population identified as irreligious, while 2.2% reported following animism (traditional African religions).

Main Persecution

The hostility facing Christians is multifaceted, with Islamic oppression and Clan oppression posing threats to all categories of Christian communities, with significant risks to converts with a background in Islam or traditional African religions (ATR). Converts living with non-Christian family members can experience severe opposition if their conversion becomes known. The region is also grappling with jihadist expansion.

Source: Open Doors

More Resources!

Release International magazine (October – December) is now available at the back of church.

Together with their Prayer Shield leaflets, this gives vital information for prayer for our brothers and sisters in the Persecuted Church. This edition features news on 'Helping the families of Christian Martyrs' among other stirring articles.

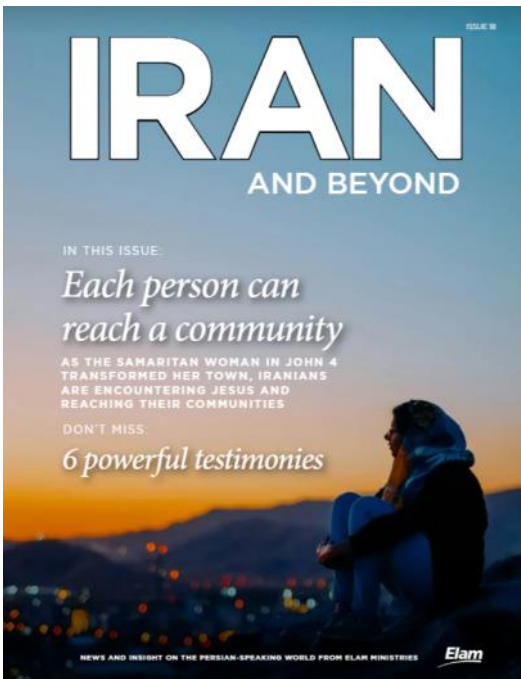
Also included is a leaflet of Alternative Gift ideas for this coming Christmas, as well as beautiful Christmas cards and inspiring books, with all the proceeds going towards the work of Release.



Also just received, the recent magazine from Elam, 'Iran and Beyond'. There are six powerful testimonies of Iranian lives transformed by God and how as they encounter Jesus, they are reaching communities. A must read – and so faith building.

These can also be found at the back of the church – be blessed as you give time to learn of the courage and faith of our brothers and sisters.

Jane H



Sources: Release International and Elam Ministries

'Has God finished with Israel?'

A personal journey through Biblical prophecy – author Rob Richards

In this book, the author seeks to discover, through his own searching the answers to probing questions, such as:

- Are Jewish people still the chosen people'?
- What does the Bible have to say about the covenants and the promised Messiah?
- What does it mean to be 'joint heirs' with Israel?
- How do events in Israel today fit it with Biblical prophecy?

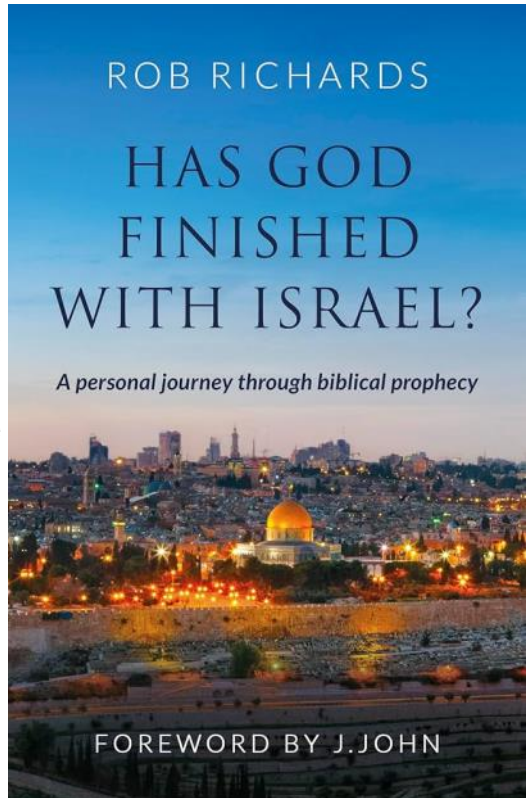
Especially at this time in history, it is vital to understand the answer to the question of, "Has God finished with Israel?"

We are living in very significant and challenging times. May we pray that we will have God's understanding and heart, both for this covenant people and for us, the church, being grafted into the Olive Tree (Israel), "One new man in Christ Jesus".

Two copies of this book have been donated through a Prayer Ministry for Israel - please ask if you'd find this to be helpful.

Blessings in the names of Yeshua (Jesus)

Jane H.



FOCUS

on our Christian Brothers and Sisters being persecuted for their faith

“God is not a God of disappointment”: ministry is bearing fruit in China

Being a Christian in China comes at great cost for every believer. The state heavily monitors religious practice, even online, and Christians can be arrested and imprisoned for running house churches. But it's even harder if you've converted from another faith.

Hollace* is a local Open Doors partner in the north west of China. His ministry is to believers from a Muslim background, who face persecution both from the Chinese authorities and from those who feel they've betrayed Islam. He witnesses very hard things, but is seeing God's goodness too. In a recent letter to Open Doors supporters, he shared praise and thanksgiving.

“I am grateful that our work is not in vain,” he writes. “Leaders I paid visits to previously were afraid of being tracked and monitored, so they laid low, and we did stop meeting each other. But God is not a God of disappointment, and everything happens according to His time.”

His presence ministry is showing fruit. Local leaders of the underground church are keen to meet with him again, receiving prayer and encouragement.

A biblical ministry against domestic violence

A particular issue in the region is domestic violence, and local believers are increasingly keen to equip themselves to speak and act against this damaging trend.

“It is commonplace for domestic violence to take place in the family. Husbands beating up their wives is seen as normal and accepted in their culture,” says Hollace. “There is a timely need to preach the biblical value based on the Word so more families can be renewed and transformed by adopting healthy and right values.”

Hollace is pleased to share that this need is being met. He says: “Three pairs of couples whom I used to visit regularly have come to me to express their interest lately! They want to be trained and equipped to serve in the family and marriage field.”

Thank you – and keep praying

“We praise God for answering prayers and for this marvellous change,” adds Yingfei*, another Open Doors partner in the region. “Thank you for the prayers from the Open Doors family and the supporters. More people are willing to rise to serve, even though the space is narrowing.

“As the Bible says, ‘For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.’ (Hebrews 4:12) The Word is sharper than any two-edged sword, and it has a living power in it.”

Yingfei adds: “Please join us in prayers that more couples in Hollace’s area can hear the Word of God and may the transforming power work inside their hearts and souls.”

Persecution survival training

In central China, meanwhile, Open Doors partners recently provided three-day persecution survival training to about 50 church leaders and church workers. While persecution of Christians is widespread in China, many believers are unaware and ill-prepared for it until they experience this persecution.

“This is very much needed in the church,” explains Guo*, the local partner who helped facilitate the training. “Many churches are experiencing different types and levels of persecution, yet they do not know how to respond.”

“Learning ways of responding to persecution resonates with me a lot and is essential to believers,” shares Zicheng*, one of the participants in this training. “It’s also crucial to learn about who God is, the position of His church, and the divine resources He has given to His children. We need to equip ourselves well with His word, so we can take up our spiritual weapons to fight the spiritual battles.”

“We need to depend on His love”

“In the midst of persecution, we particularly need to depend on His

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love to endure, persist, and forgive,” adds another participant, Yunlong*, while a believer called Weihao* says, “I was particularly reminded of the significance of watching and praying so that we will not fall into temptation.”

Open Doors partners continue to develop this training to incorporate more localised examples, so that it can relate even more closely to the experiences of Chinese believers’ everyday lives. “Pray that this set of teaching can bring impact and transformation to their lives,” asks Yingfei.

Praise God for the blessings He is pouring on His children in China, as they face such opposition, surveillance and persecution. Please join the Chinese church in asking to be daily transformed into His likeness.

**Names changed for security reasons*

Please Pray

- Praise God for what He is doing in China, and for the impact Open Doors partners are witnessing
- That more and more people would hear God’s Word and be transformed by it
- That Chinese authorities and other persecutors would be thwarted in their attempts to stifle the church.

How many Christians are there in China?

There are around 96.7 million Christians in China – a huge number, but less than seven per cent of China’s total population of around 1.5 billion.

How are Christians persecuted in China?

The most overt persecution in China often takes place in regions where Buddhism or Islam are the majority religions. Anyone who converts to Christianity is seen as a traitor to their ethnicity and family. These believers may be threatened or even harmed, all in an attempt to convince them to return to the family’s religion.

However, persecution and discrimination are slowly spreading throughout most of China. The Chinese Communist Party’s goal is to make sure churches don’t fall out of line with official viewpoints: In

the case of official churches, this means they are encouraged to praise and pledge allegiance to the Communist Party and its ideology. Churches that claim Christ as King are viewed with suspicion, especially since Christianity is seen as a primarily Western influence. It's always been true that house churches exist in a legal grey area, where they are unregistered and technically not allowed, but largely tolerated. New regulations continue to chip away at this status quo. Children under 18 continue to be forbidden from attending church. Most churches are monitored and can be shut down without warning.

Digital persecution also impacts the church in China. Restrictions passed in 2018 as part of a wide-ranging law on religion have made it harder for Christians to use the internet or social media to pursue their faith. The government's growing authoritarianism means that every Chinese citizen can be sure that none of their digital footprint is out of the state's view. Christian chat groups are routinely shut down, and the government's sophisticated surveillance system has been rolled out to target minority groups in some regions. Observers fear this technology will increasingly be used to target Christians, especially those in house churches.

Is it getting easier to be a Christian in China?

While China fell three places to number 19 on the World Watch List, the persecution score actually rose by one point. The reason that it fell is because persecution increased in other countries.

Over the last five years, the situation in China has slowly and steadily deteriorated, and the past 12 months was no exception. While violence against believers remained rare, church closures and raids continue to happen, with pressure across all parts of life steadily rising. This year, the government passed regulations requiring churches in one region to post signs that read, 'Love the Communist Party; Love the country; Love the religion'. While this law only impacts state-sanctioned churches and implementation seems uneven, house church leaders are increasingly worried about crackdowns. In one province, citizens were required to use a state-controlled smartphone app to register before they attended religious services. And the ongoing digital pressure continues to increase as China exerts its control over citizens' lives.

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



Isle of Wight
**YOUTH
FOR CHRIST**



**Our Brand new
Sponsor Programme!**

Our youth need you...

From day one we have been doing everything we can to enable young people to access our activities. Last year, again, we spent over £12,000 on subsidising key trips and events. This has meant that many more young people have been able to access really valuable opportunities like our Catalyst weekend away and summer DTI trip; many of these young people would not have been able to attend these activities without the reductions that we've been able to offer.

Due to consistent increases to our core costs we will soon not be in a position to offer these subsidies for our trips and events that we currently are.

We're looking for a hundred sponsors to sponsor young people at £10 a month. Each sponsor will be allocated a young person who accesses one of our reduced cost activities, and will be sent their first name along with a reminder to pray for them each day. You will also be able to send them a little note of encouragement (via the Youth for Christ office) if you would like to.

When the young person reaches 18 and/or moves on from our activities we will allocate you a new young person accordingly.

Can YOU help?...
please email or call the
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isleofwightyfc@gmail.com

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100 sponsors
for
100 young people



Ruth - Israel's Only Friend

“Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus, may the Lord do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me.” (Ruth 1:16)

The Deeper The Darkness - The Brighter The Light

Concerning the end of this age and the planet's transition into the Kingdom Reign, the Spirit says to Israel and to God's children, **“Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of Yahweh is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but Yahweh will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you...”** (Isaiah 60).

The Word of God offers us rich prophetic images to convey truths hidden deep in His heart. These treasures are concealed so that only the humble and the hungry could perceive and embrace them. The pictures are like doors, inviting the faithful to enter deeper into the reality of God and to share in His works. The story of Ruth is one such picture, depicting the end-time role of the true Ecclesia Church in the restoration of Israel. In this story, every detail is meaningful; every name prophetic.

This ancient story unfolds during the days of the Judges nearly a century after the twelve Tribes of Israel took possession of the Promised Land. It was a time of national and social chaos in Israel, with only temporary periods of peace when God's judges led the people. As famine plagued the land of Judah, a family from **“Bethlehem,”** meaning **“House of Bread”** in Hebrew, left home and travelled east across the Jordan Valley to sojourn in the land of Moab, the neighbouring pagan society.

Contrary to the Law of Moses, this small family of four left their inheritance to look for provisions among the Gentiles. The head of the household, **“Eli-Melech,”** which in Hebrew means **“My God is King,”** soon died. Their two sons died as well, fulfilling their own prophetic names, **“Mahlon”** and **“Chilion.”** In the Hebrew language, their names mean **“Sickness”** and **“Annihilation.”**

Sickness and annihilation were two of the curses pronounced by

Moses over the Israelites if they would leave the Land God gave them to sojourn among the pagan nations. God intended for the children of Israel to dwell in the Land He gave them, and any deviation from the plan had negative consequences.

“Naomi,” now a widowed wife and a grieving mother, is the main character of our story. Prophetically, she stands for the nation of Israel that, because of spiritual famine and drought, had left their land to sojourn among the nations. Distant from her homeland, cut off from the covering of **“Eli-Melech,”** her husband God-King, and without the promise of future generations, Naomi is left with her two Gentile daughters-in-law.

The name of the first is **“Orpah,”** meaning **“The back of one’s neck.”** The name of the second is **“Ruth,”** meaning **“A Friend.”** These two young Gentile women prophetically typify two kinds of churches that will join Naomi’s story at the end of the age.

The first one will not be able to leave her own people but will instead turn her back on Israel when she needs her the most. The second will pass the test of loyalty and become Naomi’s only friend, only to find her new life and destiny awaiting her in the fields of Bethlehem. Both of these Gentile women were married into the covenant, but only one would live up to her vows.

Test of Devotion

Good news travel fast, and word came to Naomi that the famine in Judah was over. Having no reason to stay any longer in the land of Moab, she prepared for her return to Bethlehem. It was at this juncture of the story that both her daughters-in-law were to fulfil their prophetic names.

Orpah will walk away from Naomi in her hour of need and vanish from the pages of history. Ruth will become a true friend, join the unfolding plan of God, and share in the bloodline of Messiah. Their eternal destinies were triggered by their loyalty to Naomi.

Traveling west to Judea, Naomi pleaded with them three times, saying, **“Go, return each to her mother’s house. May Yahweh deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me.”** (Ruth 1:8). Following Naomi’s third attempt to discourage them, Orpah yielded, kissed Naomi goodbye, and turned her back on her. Ruth continued on.

This part of the story is the foundation to an ancient Jewish tradition which stipulates that every Gentile who desires to follow Yahweh and join the house of Israel must be “discouraged” from doing so three times. It was done to test their commitment and devotion in order to avoid false and failed conversions.

Orpah wasn't ready to make the sacrifice and go through the social, cultural, and spiritual transformation. The Scripture says that she went back “to her people and to her Gods.” (Ruth 1:15). Ruth, on the other hand, withstood the temptation to hang on to her old life and passed the test of loyalty.

It was at this part of the story that Ruth spoke these famous words, **“Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God.”** (Ruth 1:16). Unlike Orpah who returned “to her people and to her Gods,” Ruth made a clear confession of her commitment not only to her mother-in-law and her people, but also to Naomi's God.

Their story emphasises both the promise and the risk connected to one's attitude about the people of Israel. This irrevocable principle is not because the people of Israel are better or more worthy than other people groups. Rather, it is because of God's election and purpose. Israel is the only nation on earth that carries God's name in her name, Isra-el, and anyone who desire to join the God of Israel must also embrace the (imperfect) people of Israel. It is a “package deal,” and it is a test.

This biblical analogy of Israel returning to her homeland after a long exile, widowed and grieving over her lost sons, speaks to those with eyes to see and ears to hear. As the Apostle wrote long ago, **“these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.”** (1-Corinthians 10:11).

Ruth continued her great confession, **“Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus, may the Lord do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me.”** (Ruth 1:17). Today, we often hear these beautiful words during marriage ceremonies, demonstrating the depth of devotion and commitment between husband and wife. However, these words were originally spoken between two women. One was born into the Covenant of

God; the second joined into it through marriage and friendship.

Homebound

As the two weary travellers crossed the wilderness separating Moab from Judea and arrived at Bethlehem, it was at **“the beginning of the barley harvest.”** (Ruth 1:22). The timing is significant since the natural harvest points to the spiritual harvest when Jew and Gentile, in one spirit, serve side by side during God’s final harvest of souls before the end of this age.

The status of the two women was that of refugees at the very bottom of society as both were widows and childless. Naomi’s possessions and property were long lost. Ruth was an unwelcomed Gentile, and their only livelihood consisted of gleaning at the fields of kind strangers.

The old Jewess who returned home from exile empty handed and broken-hearted changed her name from Naomi, which means **“Pleasant,”** to **“Mara,”** which in Hebrew means **“Bitter.”** Answering the puzzled women who met them in Bethlehem, Naomi said, **“Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me... Why do you call me Naomi, since the Lord has witnessed against me and the Almighty has afflicted me?”** (Ruth 1:20-21).

Though the homecoming was necessary for the rest of the story to unfold, the dire conditions and great loss overwhelmed Naomi’s soul. She now became **Mara**, an abandoned widow without God and without a future. The **only** bright light in her life was Ruth.

Redemption

The prophetic story unfolds as Ruth finds herself gleaning in the fields of a community noble named **“Boaz.”** The name Boaz is a blend of two Hebrew words, **Bo** and **Az**, meaning **“In Him there is Strength.”** Mentioned by name 13 times in our story, Boaz is the Kinsman-Redeemer who, according to the Law of Moses, was legally authorised to perform the act of redemption for Naomi’s family. In this prophetic picture, Boaz stands for Yeshua, our Great and Eternal Kinsman-Redeemer.

According to the Law of Moses, the Kinsman-Redeemer not only had to be a blood relative of the family, but to also be socially available, morally willing, and financially prepared to pay the price of

redemption. Biblically, the Kinsman-Redeemer is the only person on earth who can redeem three eternal assets which, without him, would be forever lost:

- (1) The **name** of the deceased.
- (2) The **land** of the deceased.
- (3) The **bride** of the deceased.

Being unmarried, Boaz could restore the status, the honour, and the hope of Naomi's future generations by marrying Ruth, raising seed for her future, and assuming responsibility for the family lands.

The Bible tells us that Ruth's humility and commitment to her mother-in-law was the starting point of Boaz' attraction. Recognizing her virtues, he offered Ruth preferential treatment and protection while gleaning in his fields. He said, "**All that you have done for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband has been fully reported to me...**" (Ruth 2:11). It was Ruth's kindness and commitment to old and embittered Naomi that now became her greatest asset.

The story moves on quickly and the prophetic scenario reaches its climax as Ruth captures the Redeemer's heart. The unfolding of their love reveals another prophetic mystery. The Bible says that old and bitter Naomi offered young Ruth counsel and instruction for her emerging romance with Boaz.

She told her, "**Wash yourself therefore, and anoint yourself, and put on your best clothes, and go down to the threshing floor... go and uncover his feet and lie down; then he will tell you what you shall do.**" (Ruth 3:3-4). Shattered by life and embittered by hardship, Naomi could still give godly instruction to the young bride-to-be as she approaches her beloved.

Naomi was right, and Ruth found her way into Boaz' heart. Moved and determined to fulfil his duty as Kinsman-Redeemer, Boaz had to pass his own test now. There was another relative more closely related to Naomi who was therefore "**first in line**" to redeem that which was lost.

Bringing this other relative before the elders of the city, Boaz gave him a choice, saying, "**Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land which belonged to our**

brother Eli-Melech. And I thought to inform you, saying, ‘Buy it back in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you.’ And he said, ‘I will redeem it.’”

The story could have ended right there, but Boaz continued, “**On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance.’ And the close relative said, ‘I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it.’**” (Ruth 4).

Why did the closer relative yield his option? Because Ruth was a Moabitess. Marrying a Gentile was not common nor acceptable in Israel, and the social and cultural price was too high for him to pay. The story tells us that having the **right** to redeem was not enough. The Kinsman-Redeemer must also **want** to assume these responsibilities in order to gain the benefits. He needs to be willing to pay whatever price was needed to redeem the **name**, the **land**, and the **bride**.

The story is nearing its happy end with a special wedding in Bethlehem. The Bible says that Ruth “... **became his wife, and he went into her. And the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son.**” (Ruth 4:13). The important point to realise is that Ruth’s womb was only now opened by the Lord. Remember, Ruth was not a virgin. She was a widow who had known a man before, yet bore no children.

Ruth’s womb remained strategically closed until she married the right man, the Kinsman-Redeemer of Judah, who’s seed will now produce the family’s future generations. Likewise, the true Ecclesia Church, the Ruth of the nations, will bear spiritual children only when she is intimately united with the Kinsman-Redeemer, the Lord God of Israel.

The Seed

The story ends with a newborn son, but who is he in the prophetic picture? Who was this male child of whom the community said, “**A son has been born to Naomi!**” (Ruth 4:17). And why did they say

that old and lifeless Naomi now has a son? Boaz was not Naomi's husband, nor was it her womb that carried the infant for nine months and gave birth to the boy.

Still, the prophetic language suggests that the child was Naomi's. Could it be that young and loving Ruth offered her womb so that old and lifeless Naomi could have a son one last time? A healthy son who will be able to resurrect and preserve the family's name and blood line.

The women of Bethlehem gave us the answer, saying, "**Blessed is the Lord who has not left you without a redeemer today... may he also be to you a restorer of life and a sustainer of your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.**" (Ruth 4:14-15).

The scripture continues to say that "**Naomi took the child and laid him in her lap, and became his nurse.**" (Ruth 4:16). The Hebraic thought in this verse suggests the possibility that Naomi actually began to **Nurse the Child**. By miracle, the old lifeless breasts were refreshed and empowered to give life for the newborn child.

Who was this boy in our story? What name did they give him? The community named him, and "**they called his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David...**" (Ruth 4:17). Obed means "**Worker or Servant,**" one who does the will of him who sends him.

Born of the bloodline of Judah, the tribe of the Kings of Israel, Obed was the grandfather of King David. Born to an unusual Gentile-Jewish marriage, the son of Ruth and Boaz, Obed joined the genealogy that, a thousand years later, would produce the Messiah, the Son of the Living God, the Great Kinsman-Redeemer and Saviour of the world.

From Type to Reality

There is a young and loving church that God is calling these days to serve old struggling Israel. The God of all mercy and grace is calling her to offer her heart as a birthing chamber of travail for **Naomi** who became **Mara**. Israel is too old and exhausted to bear her last son, Obed, who will labour in the fields or harvest at the end of the age. Only Ruth can help.

The son who was born to Naomi, Obed, stands for Israel's final generation. The ancient nation, the timeless Olive Tree of God, is

destined to give birth one last time at the end of this age to a generation that will gather in the final harvest in preparation for the return of the Lord to Zion.

Hear this mystery: **“We were pregnant, we writhed in labour, we gave birth, as it were, only to wind. We could not accomplish deliverance for the earth nor were the inhabitants of the world born.”** (Isaiah 26:18). This mysterious cry is Israel’s historic trauma. The nation that was called to represent God, to proclaim His deliverance to the ends of the earth, and to be a blessing to all the families of mankind, is weeping with deep frustration.

All her labours, her sacrifice, and her suffering seem to have produced absolutely nothing. The six million who perished in the holocaust (1.5 million of them being children) brought no global deliverance, and 76 years of national hardships and warfare gave birth, as it were, only to wind. As Israel’s present season of war and suffering continues on, these voices of frustration and doubt are getting louder each day.

To the undiscerning eye, Israel’s historic saga of suffering and hardship bore no fruit. And yet, Isaiah’s prophecy leads on into a victorious future, promising, **“Your dead will live; their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, for your dew is as the dew of the dawn, and the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.”** (Isaiah 26:19). The promise of national resurrection and of eternal life is anchored in God’s Word, yet Ruth has an essential part of the story to fulfil.

Be a Ruth

Pray for the Spirit to come from the four corners of the earth and revive Ezekiel’s Dry Bones. Pray for the Ecclesia Church to uphold Israel while she labours. Remember that in this prophetic story, Ruth found her Redeemer-Husband **only** when she joined herself to Naomi, to her people, to their God, and to their destiny. The bride of Messiah will unite with her Heavenly Bridegroom as she serves her Naomi, gleaning in the fields of Bethlehem.

Isaiah describes Israel’s amazement as she beholds her children miraculously gathered unto her. **“Then you will say in your heart, ‘Who has begotten these for me, since I have been bereaved of my children, and am barren, an exile and a wanderer? And who has reared these? Behold, I was left alone; from where did**

these come?” (Isaiah 49:21). Israel is in need of a loving, life-giving young “womb” to birth her children. Will the end-time Ecclesia Church be an “**Orpah**” or a “**Ruth?**” A “**leaver**” or a “**cleaver?**”

The line of demarcation is being drawn as the days go darker for Israel and for God’s elect. Global institutions, media, and godless governments are becoming more hostile by the day, and great wars are on the horizon. The stakes are high and the consequences are eternal.

Naomi is returning back home, leaning on Ruth’s arm. The fields are white and ready for harvest while Boaz and his angels are working in the heat. Soon, Jew and Gentile, united in spirit and purposes, will give birth to Obed, the **One New Man** that will see the closing of this age. The greatest gift you can offer the partially blind people of Israel (see Romans 11:25) during these difficult times is acceptance and friendship. Be a **Ruth** wherever you can.

Thank you for upholding our people, our family, and our work in your prayers. We are grateful for those who are able to share in our labours during this season of war and of harvest. The needs in Israel are substantial, as are the opportunities to serve God’s purposes. To learn how you can partner with our work and help provide for Israel’s security, humanitarian, and spiritual needs, or join our mailing list, e-mail us at reuvendoron@gmail.com.

Thank you.

Reuven & Mary Lou Doron

Connection Quiz Answers

1. **Tony** Christie.
2. **Gordon** Tracy.
3. **David** Lloyd-George
4. **Liz** Smith.
5. Connection: they are **the first names of four 21st century UK Prime ministers.**
6. This issue's cover photo was of the [Samarobriva Pipes and Drums](#) on Arromanches beach, Normandie, as part of the 80th anniversary celebrations of D-Day (© C Sparks).





Dates For Your Diary

| Day | Date | Time | Details |
|-----------|---|----------------|--|
| Sat | 5 th Oct | 15:30 | Messy Church - Harvest Special |
| Sun | 6 th Oct | 15:30 18:30 | Tea event to meet the new Synod Moderator Shared Worship at Christ Church, Sandown |
| Fri | 11 th Oct | 19:00 | Elders' Prayers |
| Sat | 12 th Oct | 10:00 | Coffee Morning – with Shoebox Appeal focus |
| Sun | 13 th Oct | 10:30 18:30 | Guest speaker: Grace McKenzie from Christ Church Shared Worship at SURC - Prayer Focus |
| Fri - Sat | 18 th - 19 th Oct | | Sabbath of Prayer - see page 4 |
| Sun | 20 th Oct | 18:30 | Shared Worship - venue TBC |
| Sat | 26 th Oct | | Revive the Wight - see page 26 |
| Sun | 27 th Oct | 10:30 18:30 | Encounter Café Service Shared Worship at Lake Methodist Church Remember the clocks go back! |
| Thu | 31 st Oct | 17:00 | Light Party – a happy alternative to Halloween |
| Sat | 16 th Nov | TBC | Tearfund Big Quiz at SURC |
| Thu | 28 th Nov | 19:30 | Church Meeting |
| Sat | 7 th Dec | 19:30 | STBB Christmas Concert |

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: hard!!

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

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 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 | | | | |

Last month's Sudoku - how did you do?

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

Across

- 1 2nd largest French wine region (8)
- 7 Type of whale (6)
- 8 She had a party in the 1977 Mike Leigh play (7)
- 10 Not off (2)
- 11 Spanish sparkling wine (4)
- 14 Town in West Norfolk (5'1 4)
- 19 Him, en français (3)
- 20 Black fossil fuel (3)
- 21 - *in the Wood*, a panto (5)
- 22 Not in (3)
- 23 Angle between 90^o & 180^o (6)
- 24 Vehicle with a total weight over 3,500 kg *initials* (3)
- 25 Sparkling Italian white wine (4)
- 26 Polynesian garland (3)
- 27 Archaic form of often (3)

- 29 Large city on the Loire (6)
- 31 Not tight (5)
- 32 Used to make an omelette (3)
- 33 Was in Straits (4)
- 34 Bag, en français (3)
- 35 Japanese delicacy (5)

Down

- 1 Lancashire seaside resort with a famous tower (9)
- 2 Canine pet, e.g. Ruby (3)
- 3 Male friend, en français (3)
- 4 Lion's home (3)
- 5 Sainsbury's clothing range or French for 'you' (singular) (2)
- 6 Birthplace of William I (7)
- 7 Capital of West Germany, but not Germany (4)
- 9 Put down gently (3)
- 12 3 strokes under par in golf (9)
- 13 View, en français (3)
- 15 Not anything (7)
- 16 US Soldier *initials* (2)
- 17 European country, capital Ljubljana (8)
- 18 High levels of anxiety (7)
- 21 The 'Fab Four' (7)
- 28 - Moore, US actress (4)
- 30 Mr Sheeran, singer (2)
- 32 He phoned home in 1982 *initials* (2)

Can You Guess The Year?

- Eden Project opens to the public near St Austell, Cornwall
- Liverpool win the FA Cup Final, beating Arsenal
- Jeffrey Archer is sentenced to four years in prison.
- Gateshead Millennium Bridge opens to the public .
- And UK No. 1s included:
 - Atomic Kitten with '*Whole Again*'
 - Emma Bunton with '*What Took You So Long*'
 - So Solid Crew with '*21 Seconds*'
 - Club 7 with '*Have You Ever*'

Answer next issue

This Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Questions

1. Who won the men's FIFA World Cup in 1998?
2. Who is the Secretary-General of the United Nations?
3. What's the capital of Provence, France?
4. Who was the first Tudor monarch?
5. What was the Austrian currency before the Euro?
6. What is the motto of the BBC?
7. In which year was the RAF's Red Arrows formed?
8. Who wrote the book '*A Good Year*'?
9. On the periodic table, which element is W?
10. How long has Larry the Cat been at Number 10 Downing Street?

Answers next issue

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

Sunday 20th October

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 1996
- Last issue's crossword ↓

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

Last Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Answers

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Michael Schumacher | 6. Who Dares Wins |
| 2. Marianne | 7. Bae Hawk |
| 3. Rennes | 8. Peter Mayle |
| 4. Richard III | 9. Argon |
| 5. Guilder | 10. Larry the Cat |

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 (see [page 5](#))

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 Toddler Group**

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

- [inside the church](#)
- [on our Facebook page](#)
- [and on our website](#)

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Day off: Monday

Secretary: Robin Wightman



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