

The Link



November 2024



Shanklin United Reformed Church www.shanklinurc.co.uk

***They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them***

View From Number 10



Shining as Stars

Over recent weeks we have been treated to a super moon or two as well as a glimpse of the aurora borealis, even down here in the deep south. Soon it will be fireworks lighting up the sky!

We are exhorted by scripture to shine as lights in the darkness – Jesus claimed to be **The Light of the World** (John 8:12) but also told his listeners – **“You are the light of the world”** (Matthew 5:14). God’s people must not hide their good deeds but let them be a shining witness to the world of God’s transforming love.



Paul says in Philippians 2 – *“you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life.”* but the context is, as always, very important. The sentence begins – *“Do everything without grumbling or arguing... so that you may become blameless and pure... then you will shine...”* Our behaviour and our life together as a congregation matters. Too many Christians and fellowships are sadly known for their grumbings or for things that divide them. We need to be good-news people in a bad-news world.

As Christians we must demonstrate the difference that the presence of Jesus and his Spirit makes in our lives. New life should ooze out of us – we should be a sweet fragrance amidst some of the rotten stuff that festers in the world around. In 2 Corinthians 2:14, Paul speaks of how God uses us *“to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere.”* Back in that passage in Philippians 2, he draws on Deuteronomy 32:5 to speak of being blameless children of God in a warped and crooked generation. We ought to stand out - and shine.



The *ekklesia* (generally translated as church) is those who are called out from one place to another. As a gathered people we should be different from the culture around us – in a good way, of course.

Jesus’ famous words in John 8 are both a declaration and an invitation – *‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’* (v12).

As I left a meeting the other night, I had to reach for my phone to light up a pitch-black unmade car park. We are fortunate to have such gizmos to hand in our pockets these days. How much better that we have the Lord's presence to light up our way through the dangers and challenges we face in the world. God's Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Psalm 119:105).

As disciples of Jesus, we are to *"walk in the light, as he is in the light"* (1 John 1:7). May it be our earnest desire to come out of the shadows and have our path properly illuminated.

Let's walk together as a community of faith and reflect the light of Christ to the people around us. Christmas lights will soon come and then go – but he's the eternal source of light and hope for the world. May we his people be faithful to his calling and boldly shine as stars in the surrounding gloom.

With love and very best wishes, .

Bian

Church Meeting

Thursday 28th November



At 19:30

– Coffees etc from 19:00

or join on the Zoom link

All members and regular worshippers are encouraged to join us as we discuss the business and plans of the church family.

Prayer



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>

Meeting ID: 324 266 5584 Password: 936536.

Text Prayer Network

This has proved to be 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

This is 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?

The next café service will be held on
24th November and will be exploring the theme
relevant to all ages

Café serving from 10.15

Shanklin URC Bookshop

At the Harvest Encounter café service at the end of September, the chosen charity for Harvest gifts was the Tearfund Emergency appeal for the Middle East. Donations were also invited for the IoW Foodbank.

The bookshop now has Christmas card packs in stock most of which support Tearfund. There is also a small number of Christmas card packs that support The Trussell Trust which runs foodbanks.

Tearfund (www.tearfund.org/) is a Christian charity that partners with churches in more than 50 of the world's poorest countries promoting sustainable development, responding to disasters and challenging injustice.

The Trussell Trust (www.trussell.org.uk/) is a charity based on and guided by Christian principles to help reduce and alleviate poverty.

Also, the bookshop has Christmas card packs that support The Leprosy Mission and a small number of Christmas card packs that support Premier Lifeline.

The Leprosy Mission (www.leprosymission.org.uk/) is a global Christian charity that works to support those suffering from Leprosy, which results in both disability and discrimination, and also works to end transmission of the disease.

Premier Lifeline (www.premierlifeline.org.uk/) is part of the Premier Christian Media Trust (www.premier.org.uk/) and provides a confidential telephone helpline (0300 111 0101 Monday - Friday, 09:00 - 17:00, excluding public holidays) offering a listening ear for emotional and spiritual support from a Christian perspective to help with problems and anxiety and also offers prayer.

All of the cards include a scripture verse. Each pack of Christmas cards contains 10 cards and envelopes and is priced at £5.00 (except 2 priced at £4.75).

The bookshop's current opening hours are Wednesday and Thursday of each week, 10:00 to 13:00. Additionally, 10:00 to 13:00 on the second Tuesday of the month and 10:30 to 13:30 on the fourth Tuesday of the month.

Beauty For Ashes

When I think how good the Lord has been to me, for I was shapen in iniquity,

I was storing up treasures, I wanted wealth, lived a life all for myself.

For people then I did not care, deep inside I was in despair,

I was going down a very broad road, carrying such a heavy load.

I came to the crossroads in a state of confusion, then I saw it was all an illusion.

Then I called out to the Lord, and He came into my life, and He took away from me all my sorrow and strife.

He pulled me out of the miry clay, gave me beauty for ashes,

The oil of joy for mourning, and made me a way.

I will walk with Him all of my days, always wearing a garment of praise.

Isaiah 61

Mary F

Christians Against Poverty

We are one of five congregations supporting the Island project which has been based at Castlehold Baptist Church for a year. Here is an update from news last month...

Two people have now come forward and have begun training for the roles of Debt Centre Manager and Debt Coach and we are now exploring ways of funding the main post – the previous person was a volunteer. Do please pray for guidance as the project takes fresh shape in the New Year, and for the clients currently being supported.

Look out for an update at the Church Meeting where we may be asked to consider further support.



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



Shanklin United Reformed Church

In the High Street - at the heart of the town



On a dark evening, why not try...



A Light Alternative

17:00 - 19:00

Thursday 31 October

Open house

Free fun for all ages in a warm safe space - just drop in at any time for:

Games

Crafts

Snacks

Drinks

Chat

No Halloween gear please - under 18s must be accompanied by a responsible adult

Shared Worship in The Bay



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

3rd Nov 17:00 Sandown Baptist Church
Station Road, Sandown

10th Nov 17:00 Sacred Heart Church
Atherley Road, Shanklin

17th Nov 17:00 Church of the Good Shepherd
Sandown Road, Lake

Guest Rev Imtiaz Trask - Focus on Pakistan

27th Oct 19:30 Christ Church Sandown
Broadway, Sandown
- **Prayer Focus**

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 '**Miracles Change Welsh Girl's Life**' - Abused girl's life transformed by God's interventions.

Other contributions include:

- **Cold-Pray?** - Coldplay's hit 'We Pray' raises questions about faith
- **Sterling Decision** - Arsenal winger Raheem Sterling gets baptised
- **Defender's Anchor** - Crystal Palace captain says God has been his anchor in life
- **Praying Astronauts** - Astronauts on Space Station attend church online
- **Dawkins' Disciple No Longer** - Josh Timonen, once mentored by Richard Dawkins, accepts Jesus
- **First World War Hero** - The faith and courage of an army chaplain



Assisted Dying Bill

Hot news from CARE...



I write to you about very serious and fast-moving developments on assisted suicide. Kim Leadbeater MP introduced her bill to legalise assisted suicide to the Commons. It will have its Second Reading on 29th November. At this point, MPs will have a chance to debate the issue of assisted suicide, and it is possible that a vote will take place.

Throughout history, the Church has strongly opposed assisted suicide and euthanasia. God's word teaches us that human beings, made in God's image, are to be protected and cherished. This is especially true for those who are vulnerable, broken, and powerless.

The UK is a world leader in palliative medicine, following the pioneering work of Christians like Dame Cicely Saunders. The beauty of palliative care is it offers total care, addressing the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs of the patient. This support – not state-assisted suicide – is what governments need to invest in for years to come.

Make your voice heard

With huge pressure in the media and politics, we face the worst ever threat of assisted suicide becoming law. I urge you, please, to write to politicians to share your concerns. We have set up a simple web page to help you contact your MP. To find out how you contact your MP, visit the Write To Them website at www.writetothem.com/.

You can amend the template emails we've provided at care.org.uk/takeaction/write-to-your-mp-about-assisted-suicide, add your name, and hit send. Perhaps you could also forward this information to a friend and ask them to write too? If an MP replies, please let us know by e-mailing mail@care.org.uk or phoning our office on 020 7233 0455. To find more resources on assisted suicide, you can visit our cause page (care.org.uk/cause/assisted-suicide/).

Tell your story...

In past debates, parliamentarians have read out correspondence from constituents, including testimonies of families' experiences caring for loved ones at the end of life, concerns about how

vulnerable or disabled loved ones could be endangered by assisted suicide, and powerful stories of people who have lived well beyond their prognosis.

Can I encourage you to share your personal stories as you write to politicians? I cannot emphasise enough how powerful this can be for those you are writing to. If you would prefer to share a testimony of this kind with us, which we may share anonymously with our friends working on this issue in parliament, then please do so.

I trust that you'll join us in prayer about this issue, asking for God's mercy and powerful intervention. With Him all things are possible.

Ross Hendry CEO of CARE

Carisbrooke Priory Christmas Fair

Saturday 16th November

10:00 - 14:00



Craft stalls, cards, bric-a-brac, etc

Tea room open for refreshments



Connection Quiz

1. What is the primary colour of Ferrari F! cars?
2. What is it in a Grand Slam tennis tournament that men play the best of three and women the best of two?
3. What is the shipping forecast area that is named after a famous 1805 sea battle?
4. Where is the NatWest Bank in Newport IoW?
5. So, what is the **connection** between the answers to questions 1 - 4?



Answers are on [page 43](#)



"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)

A Decision to Make

Back in January, Neil expressed his thoughts on a godly approach to decisions with which we are faced. In our walk with Christ, we often encounter "bumps" in the road and have to discern the correct way to overcome them. It is good to be able to refer back to the 10 "questions" that Neil suggests we must ask ourselves ...

Robin

Facing A Decision

"Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths" (Psalm 25:4)

I would like to share with you 10 questions you'll want to ask yourself and pray about when you're faced with a decision. The first five represent moral issues and godly wisdom that are normative for all times.

1. **Have you prayed about it?** Prayer was never intended to be a fourth-down punting situation in which we ask God to bail us out of our hasty decisions. It was intended to be a first-down huddle. We aren't supposed to ask God to bless our plans; we're supposed to ask God for His plans.
2. **Is it consistent with the Word of God?** In our culture, ignorance of God's Word is no excuse since resources abound. I believe that every home should have at least a concordance, a Bible dictionary, a topical Bible, a good commentary, and a study Bible with notes. Most pastors would love to share what God has to say about a given matter. If they wouldn't, you have called the wrong pastor!

3. **Can I do it and be a positive Christian witness?** A seminary student stopped by my office and told me about a job he had been offered. It would take care of his financial needs, but he had some reservations concerning the sales pitch he was required to use. I asked him if he could use the sales technique and be a positive witness for Christ. He didn't take the job.
4. **Will the Lord be glorified?** Can I do this and give glory to God? In doing it, would I be glorifying God in my body? Am I seeking the glory of man or the glory of God? Am I doing this to be noticed by man or am I seeking to please the Lord?
5. **Am I acting responsibly?** God doesn't bail us out of our irresponsibility. But when we are faithful in little things, He will put us in charge of greater things. Don't get ahead of God's timing or you will be over your head in responsibilities. Seek to develop your life and message, and God will expand your ministry.

Dear Lord, help me take a good, hard look at these questions and then avoid at all costs any compromise with Your will in my life today.

Changing Directions

“Guide me in Your truth and teach me, for You are God my Saviour, and my hope is in You all day long” (Psalm 25:5)

The next five questions to ask yourself regarding God's will are to help you when facing a change in direction.

1. **Is it reasonable?** God expects us to think. His guidance may transcend human reasoning, but it never excludes it. God doesn't bypass our mind; He operates through it: ***“Brothers and sisters, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults”*** (1 Corinthians 14:20). We are warned in Scripture not to put our mind in neutral. We are to think and practice what we know to be true ***“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you***

have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4:8,9)

2. **Does a realistic opportunity exist?** Closed doors are not meant to be knocked down. If you have a hopeless scheme, let it go. If it isn't God's timing, wait. If a realistic opportunity exists, and all the other factors are in agreement, then take the plunge. God may open a window of opportunity, but it will close if not taken advantage of. The faithless man asks, "What do I stand to lose if I do?" The faithful man asks, "What do I risk losing if I don't?"
3. **Are unbiased, spiritually sensitive associates in agreement?** Be careful not to consult only those who will agree with you. Permit your advisors to ask hard questions. Don't be afraid of 'no' answers. If it isn't God's will, don't you want to know before you make the mistake of acting impulsively?
4. **Do I have a sanctified desire?** Don't think that being in the will of God must always be an unpleasant task. The joy of the Lord should be our strength. I find my greatest joy in serving God and being in His will. But don't get the idea that if everything is wonderful, you must be in the will of God. Is this a desire to satisfy a lust of the flesh or a Spirit-filled desire to see God's kingdom established and people helped?
5. **Do I have peace about it?** This is an inner peace. Is the peace of God guarding your heart and mind?

If you have been able to answer yes to all 10 of these deciding factors, what are you waiting for?

Thank You, Lord, that I can trust You with the details and direction of my life today.

Neil Anderson

Freedom in Christ Ministries Daily Devotionals

Used by permission

I have had a number of decisions to make this year and our Lord has been my Rock and my Guide throughout. I have found these questions to be a very useful base to start from. I hope that they can help you too!

“I will always show you where to go. I’ll give you a full life in the emptiest of places ~ firm muscles, strong bones. You’ll be like a well-watered garden, a gurgling spring that never runs dry.”

(Isaiah 58:11, The Message)

Abba Father, lead us into Your ways and give us hearts that respond to Your promptings.

Robin

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Reverend Ashley Trask (Imtiaz)

He will be visiting Shanklin URC over the weekend of 16-18th November. He will be speaking at several events, as follows:

Saturday 16th ~ Men’s Breakfast @ Viv’s Cooking from 09:00 ~ Imtiaz will be sharing testimony ~ please sign up on the list at the back of the church.

Sunday 17th ~ Preaching @ SURC Morning Worship (10:30).

Sunday 17th ~ Speaking at The Bay Evening Shared Worship @ The Good Shepherd Church, Sandown (17:00).

Monday 18th ~ sharing details of his work in Pakistan over the past year @ SURC (10:30).



Mother & Baby Care Unit

Greetings to all reading this update on the Shanklin Mother & Baby Care Unit

Our apologies for this overdue update to our church supporters and sponsors on the continuing needs of items and/or donations required for the Unit to continue to provide the accommodation and facilities and services they currently offer.

Below is their list of current needs - of course if you would like further information or if you have any possible item of donation please call Rodney on 07394 044614 or Ann on 07481 596958 or e-mail them on gbsintl@gmail.com

Firstly though we would like to welcome back Tessa who has been on maternity leave but is now back on duty and things are in full swing at the unit again.

Secondly, a special thanks as always to Pam Dana from St Blasius Church for her enthusiasm and generosity and thank you also for all the help and donations received from the congregation at St Blasius Church, Shanklin.

A very special thank you and appreciation from Jo and Tessa and all at the Unit to Sue Wightman for her generous donation and support. Lastly, but by no means least - Our heartfelt thanks to everyone at URC Shanklin for your ongoing support and generosity - please pray for any further items and donations for this amazing and very worthy Shanklin refuge.

Oh and by the way - They are in desperate need of a good professional carpenter, if you know of anyone please can you pass their contact details on to either Ann or Rodney - Thank You!

Wishing you all a truly blessed month of November and we pray for healing, peace and travelling mercies for everyone. In Jesus' Holy name.

Blessings

Rodney and Ann

List of Needs

- Small dining room table (One metre square or one metre

across if a round table) and 3-4 chairs - for Lodge Flat

- Two-seater sofa plus armchair- for Lodge Flat (with fire safety label still attached)
- DVD player
- Lightweight or handheld vacuum cleaner
- Two small (adult) tub chairs for resident's meeting room
- Good condition, clean cushions
- Single fitted sheets
- Cot or cot bed
- 4 slice toaster
- Plastic storage boxes (residents could use to stack and store belongings conveniently in rooms)
- Chest of drawers (always take good quality ones though not urgent currently)
- Leather/Wipeable sofas with fire safety label still attached! Two for Lodge living room

May we please ask that donations are in good/new condition so that we are complying with health & safety requirements.

Thank You!!



Sabbath of Prayer - Feedback

During the second session of the Prayer Sabbath, we were encouraged to remember God's goodness to us in the past. Each person present meditated individually, seated alone in different areas of the church. The sacred silence reminded me of the day I attended a Quaker service on the mainland.

Before it started, one woman told me that everything they believed was based purely on one's own personal experience, that everybody's belief was equally valid, and nobody ever commented on or questioned what was said. On the centre table was a book, called 'Advices and Queries' from which one man read a brief passage. There was not a Bible in sight and Jesus was never mentioned even though, "The Religious Society of Friends is rooted in Christianity and has always found inspiration in the life and teachings of Jesus."

In contrast, each of the Prayer Sabbath sessions began with songs of worship and Bible-rooted prayers which we read out together. The difference was striking. It made me so thankful that we have a solid foundation in God's Word and that Jesus is at the centre.

It's fantastic that the Island Quakers have given a gift of £50,000 to support 'No Limits', a Youth Work project in West Wight. It aims to help young people know their worth and empower them to reach their full potential.

We pray for Christian Youth Workers and School Pastors so that young people will come to know that God sent Jesus to die for them – that is how much He thinks they are worth - and that they will be empowered by God's Holy Spirit.

Every blessing

Julie



**Saturday 21st
December**

15:30 - 17:30

Free fun for all the family

- no unaccompanied children please

Do come along and explore the story of Christmas through a Messy Church experience at Shanklin URC. This is a fun way of learning for all ages - in a hands-on way. There will be several craft activities to choose from followed by a short celebration with songs, prayers and then some delicious food all together.

Come as a family; bring the grandchildren along - any combination is fine! Enjoy it together.

For more information - speak to Yvonne Sparks or Brian and Janet Harley



Moderator's Visit

Following on from our Moderator's visit to Ryde and Shanklin in October, we have received a card of thanks and encouragement from Michael, which is transcribed below:



Dear Robin,

It was lovely to meet more folk from Shanklin URC yesterday afternoon and to hear about your ministries and mission work.

It really is very impressive and very evident how God is at work among you.

I shall continue to pray for you all.

With best wishes
Michael Hopkins

Thought for the month

We see a mountain, God sees a molehill.

We see a problem, God sees an opportunity .



Hundreds of churches

Thousands of people.

One big quiz.

16th November at 19:00 @ SURC

Every pound raised at the *Big Quiz Night* will help transform the lives of people living in poverty.



IoW Street Pastors Update



IoW Street Pastors needs you

We are desperately short of volunteers for the work we are doing now, and we are in great demand. In fact, currently I am having to turn work down for Street Pastor patrols due to not having enough volunteers.

In the last twelve months the need for us has grown massively. We have been asked to carry out patrols in Sandown and Cowes, but this cannot currently happen.

We also launched a Safe Space at Newport Bus Station in July in partnership with Hampshire & IoW Police and Southern Vectis, which we can currently only open two nights a month, but this really needs to be open more regularly. I would love to be able to open it every weekend, but this cannot currently happen without more volunteers. The Safe Space is open between 21:30 - 01:15.

The safe space is a place where people can wait for friends, get help with getting home, receive first aid, get advice and support or report Anti-Social Behaviour or any other concerns they have around feeling unsafe on a night out.

A few of the things we have done so far in the Safe Space are:

- Find a police reported missing child and keep them safe until mum arrived to collect him,
- Help keep safe a vulnerable female who had been threatened by her boyfriend that he was going to beat her up (police were looking for him) and get her home
- Kept a vulnerable couple safe, fed and watered until their bus came after they had spent most of the day/evening at St Mary's maternity unit due to complications with the female's pregnancy (eight months pregnant) as their car had broken down.

Our patrols in Newport and Ryde are proving to reduce anti-social

behaviour, less intoxicated people ending up at St Mary's Hospital and looking after the wellbeing of the public and all the staff working in the night time economy. Whilst on patrol in Ryde on the 19th October I had a female door staff telling myself about her rough week as her best mate had been found by his parents deceased, which was not expected and her daughter-in-law was currently thirty six weeks pregnant but had been rushed to hospital with suspected appendicitis, which was causing the baby to become distressed. She is not a Christian but asked us to pray for her, her friend's family and her son and daughter-in-law.

We work very closely with the door staff who we know well, and part of our job is to check on them, but they also look out for us whilst we are patrolling and we know that if we ever needed help, they would be there in an instant.

If you are unable to patrol on foot around the towns, then the safe space is the place for you. It is based in the Southern Vectis Travel Shop so there is no walking around and you can sit as much as you need to.

Street Pastors care about their community on the Island and want to make it as safe as possible for everyone. We work alongside the police, council, Southern Vectis, door staff and venues. In the summer we cover events such as the IoW Festival (free weekend ticket for volunteers), Cowes Week, pride, scooter rally weekend and carnivals, as well as other events we have stands at.

Street Pastor minimum requirements:

- Be over 18 years old
- Be part of a church
- Concerned about society and the community they live in
- Can commit to at least one night a month.

If you think you can help either on the foot patrols or in the Safe Space, then please get in touch with me.

Suzanne (suzanne@iowstreetpastors.org.uk)

07511 163632

Open the Book Opens a Door

As assembly finished, the teacher in charge of Year 2 approached Julie and invited her to take a lesson in his class at a time to be agreed. He was doing a series about 'sacred books' and asked her to talk about the Bible. Julie was determined to make it interesting, and Brian lent her his a special 'bible', which displays blank pages, monochrome or coloured pictures depending on how it is flipped.



To help the children understand that the Bible is actually 66 books, she and Bill created a 'library Bible'.



This gave the opportunity, together with pointing to the day's date on the whiteboard, of saying that everything changed with the coming of Jesus.

A Good News Bible (Family Edition) was donated to the school library. But, so that Year 2 could have their very own Bible, every

child was given a different colouring page illustrating stories from Creation to Revelation. When finished, the teacher will put them in the beautiful Open the Book folder.



During the lesson, children were invited to take a prop out of a bag. It was thrilling to hear them suggest from which Bible story the prop came. One child assigned the fish to Jesus walking on the water – a story which had been presented in February 2023!

Julie explained that there are two types of stories in the Bible. A clip of David and Goliath was shown, an account of something that really happened. The other type of story is a parable told by Jesus to help us understand – this was illustrated by a video of The Lost Coin. This started with Jesus being criticised for making friends with tax collectors and sinners, and ended with angels dancing. When the teacher asked Julie her favourite Bible story, she was able to incorporate the Gospel message into her answer of 'The Crucifixion and Resurrection'



Other visual aids included a Hebrew scroll, which neither she, Bill, the teacher nor his assistants could read, in contrast to a Good News Bible, children's edition. The teacher kept the cartoon pictures of Bible characters and the 'I helped Open the Book' stickers to give out at the end of the day. He said that that was the only way of ensuring they would reach home.

The day after the lesson, Julie happened to meet another teacher from Dover Park, who started talking about OtB assemblies. The teacher said she appreciated how much



effort is put into them, and that it is well worth it. She said she often heard the children 'chattering' about the Bible stories during break, and acting them out in the playground.

Sadly, the team had to disappoint the 400 children of Haylands one Thursday because a member was feeling unwell. He saw the doctor on Wednesday, was sent immediately to St Mary's and had a pacemaker fitted at the time when he would have been taking assembly. This happened shortly before the two-week half term and he hopes to be back (as King Ahab watching the contest on Mount Carmel) as soon as school resumes. Praise God for such a timely intervention.

This again underlines the need for more storytellers, especially for 'The Bay' team who are still unable to accept the invitation from Broadlea. They have missed seeing

Jacob's spotted and striped sheep which Laban had taken out of his herd, but which were born to his white sheep. At Harvest they missed hearing about Ruth gleaning, marrying Boaz so becoming the great grandmother of David and an ancestor of Jesus.

Do you know anyone who might be willing to give up one morning a month to bring the Word of God to children who might otherwise only know the name 'Jesus' as a swear word?



Resources for Prayer

1. Care Prayer Diary & Prayer Leaflets

The current Prayer Diary (20th October 2024 to 18th January 2025) is now available at church and online at care.org.uk/prayer-diary.

Items covered are:

- Caring for Children
- Living and Dying
- World Stability and Peace
- Respecting Others
- Providing Homes
- Fatherhood
- Care for the Poor
- Justice and Fairness
- National Health Service
- Gospel Hope
- Restoring our World
- Overcoming Addictions
- The Written Word

Together with these valuable resources, CARE publish prayer leaflets, available at care.org.uk/seven-ways-to-pray, on different matters of concern to pray about in our nation. The most recent one is entitled 'Seven Ways to Pray About Assisted Suicide'.

This is exceedingly helpful, as this very matter is being debated in our parliament on 29th November. Copies of this, together with the Prayer Diary can be found online, using the links above, and on the tables in the church in the lobby.

Please contact our MP if you have concerns about what would be a critical change in our nation's life. Reports have suggested that No. 10 is willing to ease the tracks for this bill to be progressed swiftly through the House of Commons.

CARE have given guidelines on how to write to an MP. Do ask if you'd like to know more or see [page 12](#).

2. The Christian Institute whose vital ministry is to defend Christian values in our nation at this time have published their Autumn Newsletter, available to download at www.christian.org.uk/resource/newsletter-autumn-2024/, with news of recent campaigns to uphold Godly principles and support and Christians who are being victimised because of their faith in the workplace or elsewhere.

To pray into such matters, the Christian Institute have their Autumn Week of Prayer and invite us to join them in prayer from 27th October to 2nd November. The Week of Prayer leaflet is available at www.christian.org.uk/resource/week-of-prayer-autumn-2024/.

Matters covered are:

- Those in Authority
- Free Speech
- 'Conversion Therapy' Laws
- Sanctity of Life
- Transgender Ideology
- Schools
- The Christian Institute

Do please take copies of these valuable leaflets to keep informed of issues facing the church and our nation at this time.

3. Open Doors Magazine and Prayer Diary

Do please look out for the November/December copies of Open Doors valuable resources with stories of our brothers and sisters, who although greatly suffering for their faith are being upheld by the Lord. They are so grateful for our prayers.

Do please take copies of these resources or go online at www.opendoorsuk.org/magazine/ and <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/resources/prayer/> - and if you have any queries about them, I would be very happy to speak with you.

Blessings in Jesus' Name

Jane H

Samaritan's Purse – Shoebox Appeal

A big 'Thank You' to those who supported the coffee morning recently in aid of the above and to Yvonne for hosting this occasion.

Sandra (Snell), who has one of the local collection points for the shoeboxes, was very grateful for the money raised at the coffee morning - **£193.50**



This will bless so many dear children.

Sandra will be holding two evening events with a three-course meal, all in aid of the shoeboxes. Do please ask if you'd like to know more.

Also, if you have items for the shoeboxes, could you let me have them by 2nd November – or if you'd like a flatpack shoebox to pack your own. There are so many great items you can pack in a shoebox gift and a few things to avoid.

If you want to know what can be included, go to samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/how-to-pack-a-shoebox for more details.

But, please do not include the following items:

- Toothpaste
- Sweets
- Lotions and liquids
- Used or damaged items
- War-related items (e.g. toy guns, model soldiers, military vehicles etc.);
- Seeds
- Gum
- Chocolate or food items
- Religious or political literature

- Medicines
- Aerosol cans
- Knives
- Sharp or fragile items.

Any items packed from the above list will be removed from shoeboxes.

Completed shoeboxes, which can't be sealed, just put a rubber band around the box, can be brought to church by 11th – 18th November when they are due to be collected from Sandra), or you can take them to The Entertainer in Newport between those dates. Yvonne has very kindly offered to get any boxes to Sandra for these dates.

Alternatively, you can complete a shoebox online at www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/shoebox-online and the great thing about doing it that way is that you get to find out which country your shoebox ends up in. Last Christmas, the shoebox your editor did online ended up in Romania. New for this year is as well as the classic theme, you can also select either a unicorn or dinosaur themed box.

For children around the world, a shoebox is often their very first gift. Given together with the Good News of Jesus Christ, it communicates God's love to a boy or girl in need. So, it is important to make sure that you pray for the child that will receive your gift and that it is::

- Fun - include a special item and other quality toys
- Full - packed to the brim with school supplies and non-liquid personal care items
- Personalised - prayed over and contains a note and photo, which are quite often the child's favourite items

Thank you for your help – several videos of dear children receiving boxes can be found online at www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child-videos and they are so moving to watch.

Blessings in Jesus' Name

Jane H

Source: Samaritan's Purse

FOCUS

on our Christian Brothers and Sisters being persecuted for their faith

“We haven’t stopped praying to God”: how aid is coming to Sudanese IDP camps

Sudan: No. 8 on 2024 World Watch List

Alia is one of six million people who’ve been displaced by the civil war in Sudan – which has been labelled the world’s largest displacement crisis. But thanks to your prayers and support, local Open Doors partners have been able to deliver much needed aid.

“It is the war that forced us to come here,” says Alia*, a mother of two, who fled with her family to a camp for internally displaced people (IDP) in southern Sudan. “We arrived on 22 April 2023 and, up to now, we are going through hardship. The hardship includes war itself because we lost a lot of things. We lost some of our children and our houses. We lack everything because we lost all things in Khartoum.”

Alia is one of millions of Sudanese people who have been displaced since the start of the war that started in 2023. The crisis stems from a power struggle between the National Army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF); more than 9,000 people have been killed and nearly six million displaced. It has been labelled the world’s largest displacement crisis.

“We are really hungry”

“As we speak now, we are really hungry,” says Alia. “We need food. All these children here, they are all hungry. It’s hunger that brought them here.” The situation is dire, and with any outsider that comes to visit the camp, there is a desperate hope that the visitors have brought food.

“Since the establishment of this camp, there has never been adequate food,” Alia explains. “They bring little, and people don’t get satisfied at all. As we are in these tough times, we are praying that God will bring His goodness and also help you so that you will be

able to help us.”

The desperation is such that stealing from local farms becomes a temptation. “Sometimes the food on the farms around here tempt us, and if the farmer would find you, it would be an added challenge,” Alia admits.

Being caught between the hungry cries of your children and possible beatings if you are caught stealing is a difficult place to be for any parent. It’s even more difficult if, like Alia, you are a believer hoping and trusting that God will somehow make a way so you can feed your children without having to steal.

Many needs

As with many IDP camps Open Doors teams have visited in the past year, sickness is widespread. “There are many diseases, we fall sick, we need medicine to cure us and our children,” Alia says. “We also need schools for our children. We have so many challenges and pray that, what I say, God will hear and see my tears due to this situation and war. We need water. We also need to be helped to have latrines, so that every house would have a pit latrine.”

Like so many parents in IDP camps, Alia wants a better life for her children. She wants them to go to school, to live peaceable lives and freely worship God. “The coming generation should not be the same as this generation. There should be positive changes. These children need to be taught to be good citizens. The school will instil in them education as well as discipline – this will help them in their future. They will be organised in their lives.”

“God is with us day and night”

Despite the hardship and suffering, Alia still puts her hope in God. “Without patience, one would not endure, but we thank God we are still alive,” she says. “We are enduring, and we have put God first to help us. We have not forgotten about God because He is with us always, day and night.”

“We haven’t stopped asking and praying to God,” she continues. “And we know the challenges are heavy. I don’t have much, and I couldn’t have been able to say much without God. Without God, we will do nothing. We’ve put everything to God, the Creator of heaven and earth. We are hopeful that God will bring blessings. We also pray for you, that God may use you to help us, because we are

defeated, and our hearts are broken.”

More than 3,000 families receive aid

Delivering relief aid to those who have fled the war has been nearly impossible. In many parts of Sudan, intense fighting, general insecurity and restrictions on humanitarian agencies have prevented the delivery of relief aid.

But we serve a God with Whom all things are possible. Earlier this year – thanks to your support – Open Doors local church partners were able to deliver life-saving relief aid to 3,000 families made up of 20,640 individual believers, including Alia and her family. Each household received 5kg of sorghum, 1kg of salt, two bars of washing soap, two litres of cooking oil and a small amount of financial support.

To Alia, prayer is also vital. “I am still crying out, on behalf of my brethren. We pray that God will bring us peace. May God bring peace and console those who lost their loved ones.”

Stop the violence. Start the healing.

When Open Doors partners spoke to Alia, the camp where she and her family are staying was home to 20,000 registered IDPs. But her situation isn’t limited to Sudan. A displacement crisis is occurring across sub-Saharan Africa, with over 16.2 million Christians displaced by violence and conflict.

Through the Arise Africa campaign, you can stand with Alia and your African church family to help stop the violence and start the healing.

**Name changed for security reasons*

Please Pray

- For Alia and all displaced believers in Sudan, that God will provide for their needs
- That God will make a way for humanitarian and medical aid to reach displaced people
- For an end to the war, and that both sides will lay their differences aside to enter peace talks.

Leader

Lieutenant-General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan

Main threat

- Islamic oppression
- Dictatorial paranoia

How many Christians are there in Sudan?

There are more than two million Christians in Sudan, from a population of over 47 million people (4.3%).

How are Christians persecuted in ?

The devastating conflict that broke out in April 2023 is threatening to further undermine the positive steps made towards religious freedom following the ousting of Omar al-Bashir in 2019.

The crisis stems from a power struggle between the National Army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). More than 9,000 people have been killed and nearly six million displaced. At least 165 churches have been closed and others have been destroyed. Churches have also reported human rights violations such as rape, kidnap and looting, with a recent spike in the abduction and killing of Christian men by radical groups. It's a tactic designed to debilitate a family financially.

There are long-term concerns that the conflict will give Islamic extremists a renewed foothold in the country, undoing the reforms made by the transitional civilian government which gave more freedom to Christians, including abolishing the apostasy law and removing Islam as the state religion.

Is it getting harder to be a Christian in Sudan?

A few years ago, Sudan was a good news story on the World Watch List. Apostasy was no longer illegal, and more leniency around freedom of religion was brought in by the transitional government – there was still a long way to go, but there were signs of hope. Sadly, this year Sudan rose several places on the World Watch List.

The main reason for Sudan's increase in ranking is greater violence against Christians – particularly since believers became more vulnerable after the eruption of civil war in April 2023.

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

Shanklin Town Brass Band



Christmas Concert

*A variety of melodies performed by
the town's brass band and also featuring*

**Shanklin Town Youth &
Community Brass Bands**

Saturday 7th December
19:30

Shanklin United Reformed Church

Admission Free

Retiring Collection



Dates For Your Diary

Day	Date	Time	Details
Sat	2 th Nov	10:00	Elders' Retreat at Ryde
Sun	3 rd Nov	18:30	Shared Worship at Sacred Heart
Fri	8 th Nov	19:00	Elders' Meeting
Sun	10 th Nov	10:30 18:30	Remembrance Service Shared Worship at Sandown Baptist Church
Sat	16 th Nov	09:00 19:00	Men's Breakfast at Viv's Cooking Big Quiz in aid of Tearfund
Sun	17 th Nov	10:30 18:30	Guest speaker Rev Ashley Trask (aka Imtiaz) Shared Worship - Church of Good Shepherd
Sun	24 th Nov	10:30 18:30	Encounter Café Service Shared Worship at Christ Church
Thu	28 th Nov	19:30	Church Meeting
Sat	7 th Dec	19:30	STBB Christmas Concert

Connection Quiz Answers

1. Red
2. Sets.
3. Trafalgar.
4. St James' Street
5. Connection: they are **all squares**, i.e. Red Square (Moscow), a Set Square - used in geometry, Trafalgar Square and St James' Square (Newport).



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!!

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

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

Last month's Sudoku - how did you do?

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

Across

- 1 Long, narrow French loaves (9)
- 6 1971 song by Bread (2)
- 9 Astérix the Gaul's best friend (6)
- 10 RAF aerobatic team (3 6)
- 12 He phoned home *initials* (2)
- 14 Country Kalasa is in (6)
- 17 Small cage bird (6)
- 18 After Extra Time *initials* (3)
- 19 Normandy seaside resort with annual American film festival (9)
- 22 Short for mother (2)
- 24 'O Come All - Faithful' (2)
- 25 Badger, Ratty, Mole and... (4)
- 27 Land planted with fruit trees (7)
- 30 City where National Railway Museum is (4)
- 31 'Much - About Nothing' (3)
- 32 What a footballer scores (4)

- 34 A lyric poem (3)
- 35 Bible has an old & a new one (9)
- 36 What a watch tells you (4)

Down

- 1 French region Chablis and Beaujolais comes from (8)
- 2 Our Father (3)
- 3 What you listen with (3)
- 4 Short sound on a horn (4)
- 5 Mayday, or... *initials* (3)
- 6 Id Est *initials* (2)
- 7 Projecting flat rim (6)
- 8 Barr from one's country (5)
- 11 Chris -, 'Auberge' singer (3)
- 13 C'est 'mais', en français (3)
- 15 - Lovelace, 19th century mathematician (3)
- 16 Kent port (5)
- 17 Dark red round vegetable (8)
- 18 Paul Simon said you could call him it (2)
- 20 Pooh's donkey friend (6)
- 21 'The', en français *f* (2)
- 23 Clement -, former PM (6)
- 26 Over drawn *initials* (2)
- 27 Okay *initials* (2)
- 28 Rabbit's cousin (4)
- 29 Anno Domini *initials* (2)
- 32 '- Back' 1969 Beatles' song
- 33 Not Applicable *initials* (2)

Can You Guess The Year?

- Amazon was founded
- Sir Matt Busby dies aged 84
- Winter Olympics took place in Lillehammer, Norway.
- The Channel Tunnel is officially opened .
- And UK No. 1s included:
 - Mariah Carey with '*Without You*'
 - Take That with '*Everything Changes*'
 - Whigfield with '*Saturday Night*'
 - Stiltskin with '*Inside*'

Answer next issue

This Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Questions

1. Who won the F1 Driver's Championship in 1993?
2. Who was the previous Secretary-General of the United Nations?
3. What's the capital of Moldova?
4. Who was the last Tudor monarch?
5. What was the Maltese currency before the Euro?
6. What is the motto of the UN?
7. In which year was the Thames flood barrier opened?
8. Who wrote the book '*The Vintage Caper*'?
9. On the periodic table, which element is Mc?
10. Who was the first PM to use Number 10 Downing Street?

Answers next issue

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

Sunday 17th November

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 **2001**

- Last issue's crossword ↓

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

Last Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Answers

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. France | 6. Nation Shall Speak Peace Unto Nation |
| 2. António Guterres | 7. 1964 |
| 3. Marseille | 8. Peter Mayle |
| 4. Henry VII | 9. Tungsten |
| 5. Schilling | 10. 13 years |

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** (*term time only*)

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

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

Minister: **Rev Brian Harley**



10 Dracaena Gardens, Shanklin PO37 7JQ



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brianharley58@gmail.com

Day off: Monday

Secretary: **Robin Wightman**



robinwightman@aol.com

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

www.shanklinurc.co.uk

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