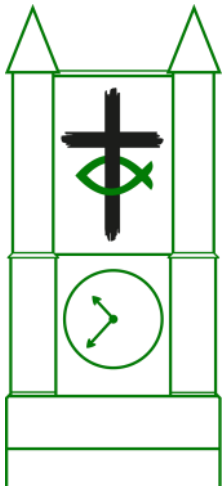
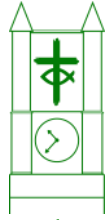


The Link

Special Edition



SURC
AGM
2024

Annual
Reports

Shanklin United Reformed Church www.shanklinurc.co.uk

View From Number 10



Minister's Report

There is a short summary of Achievements and Performance incorporated in the Annual Accounts to comply with charity law. Please do read that brief overview of the key issues in our church life but here are my more personal reflections on the last year.

I do think we've had a pretty good year all round and have seen some good things happening among the flock. The most significant development in 2023 is surely the Wednesday morning drop-in warm space known as 'The Well'. This began tentatively in December 2022 but soon burst into life and has become a real hub of activity. We are grateful to God for all he has done, and I am so thrilled that this has all happened with little involvement from me. The partnership with The Living Well and Early Help Service run by Aspire in Ryde has proved to be really fruitful and it has been great to have Clive's help and experience every fortnight.



I am also delighted that Carol Turner has become the first free church Anna Chaplain on the Island under a licence we now have with BRF who oversee this ministry which reaches out to the older generation. We trust that this will help in supporting people in the local community, including some of our senior members who don't get out much.

I am very grateful for the team of elders who share the leadership responsibilities with me. There were no changes at the AGM, so the group has consolidated well over this second year as we have worked together. We are sorry to be losing Jan Moore who is

moving to the mainland with her husband Martin and also Dave White has felt it right not to stand for re-election after the tough year he has had. We are thankful that he will continue to serve as our Safeguarding Coordinator.

The weekly worship service is central to our life as a faith community, and it has been great to see the Spirit moving and people growing in their walk with the Lord. Numbers have gone up a little after the long interruption caused by Covid and the knock-on effects. It's been good to welcome several new people over the year including a couple of families. This has enabled the children's work to be more consistent. We resumed our Encounter Café Services after Easter and had a packed house with a child dedication with many friends from the Brass Band. These have gone pretty well and at Christmas we had 17 children and young people sharing in the festive special.

I am grateful to God for the brilliant and gifted team of people who help lead worship and those who speak when I am at Ryde or away. I get good feedback and it is clear that the congregation really appreciate all that goes into our services. We are so thankful for Pete, Malc and Christopher who facilitate the livestreaming every Sunday and Tuesday enabling quite a few people to tune in from home and some from afar. They, along with Colin and Terry who look after the sound desk, are a vital part of the worship team.

A lot of people put in masses of time and effort behind the scenes to keep everything running and the generous giving from everyone ensures that we can pay our bills and continue to bless others as we support various good work locally and across the world.

We continue to play a significant part in the wider work of God's church on the Island as we seek to be a witness to Jesus in The Bay area and beyond. May we continue to work alongside our fellow believers in other congregations and avoid any sense of competition as we serve the Lord together. Let's be generous and prayerful in our attitudes.

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We lost some dear friends during the year – Adrian, Richard and Rita. We give thanks to God for all they meant to us, and our prayers continue to be with those who miss them most.

I will have been your minister for 30 years come September. I never intended to stick around this long, but it seems to be God's purpose. Much has changed over the years and there are only four people left who were members in 1994 when I was welcomed here. We continue to look to the Lord to lead us onward as we work and worship together and as we reach out in Christ's name. I look forward to what God is going to do in the coming months and beyond. For information and forward notice, I am planning to take a three-month sabbatical in the summer of 2025. I hope we'll all enjoy a bit of change and that we'll see more gifts emerge from among the congregation!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

2023 Finance Report

The accounts for the Church for the year ending 31 December 2023 have now been completed and are currently with the auditor to be checked. A copy of the accounts will be available prior to the Church Meeting.

The General Fund is used for the day to day running of the Church and associate activities and the accounts show the offertory income (and the tax reclaimed on it) totalled £64,881 this year, which is £3,926 up on last year (£60,955). We also received a legacy of £3,000, a donation from the bookshop of £920 and £2,380 of other income. The day to day running expenses have also risen this year to £71,632 from £69,968 last year. Which means that the General Fund has a cash balance at the year-end of £19,202 (last year £20,881).

The Youth Worker Fund stands at £9,274 at the year end, the same as last year. We are still considering the best way to move forward

with the youth work.

The Maintenance Fund stands at £484 at the year end. (last year £4,286). We installed secondary window glazing and undertook further work on the PA and AV systems to assist with the live streaming of services and other meetings. We had a gift day for this which raised £7,649 and we also received grants towards this work of £8,753. The total cost for the glazing was £15,928 and £2,576 was spent on the PA and AV Work. We are hoping to do some additional work on the PA and AV systems in the coming year for which further grants are available.

We are continuing to transfer £200 per month from the General Fund to the Maintenance Fund as a provision towards the ongoing maintenance of the Church.

For some time, it has been the Church's policy that, funds permitting, we would make donations of at least 10% of the Offertory given to the General Fund (including any Tax Reclaimed). These donations would be made to other charities or individuals as agreed by the Church Meeting. This year the donations were £588 short of this target and we will be aiming to make this up during 2024.

Fund-raising and donations for specific charities have been well supported again this year. The following gifts were made during 2023, £292 for Kalasa, £110 for Tear Fund, £967 for the Mother and Baby facility at the local YMCA and £510 for the Christmas Appeal which, this year, was for Release International and their work in Egypt.

I would like to thank everyone for their generosity in supporting the work of the Church over the past year and I would also ask that you:

- Pray for the church's finances and regularly review your own giving, perhaps yearly and when your circumstances change.
- If you are a taxpayer, seriously consider Gift Aiding the payments that you make to the Church if you are not already doing so. This could add 25% to any gift you make at no cost to you and last year we claimed £10,825 in this way.

Colin Tamcken

The Prayer Life of the Church

Prayer is vital and central to the life of our Church family, whether it be through the prayers of individual members or the many opportunities afforded us throughout the week/year, to engage together in seeking the Lord and discerning His calling for us as people of God and in the work of his Kingdom at Shanklin United Reformed Church and beyond.



Taking an overview of each week, there are many times for prayer together, beginning on a Sunday when we gather for worship and in the afternoon at Shared Worship in the Bay Area; prayer being a very important part of these services.

Israel Prayer: Each Monday we are blessed as we come together before the Lord to intercede for Israel – and it seems that we have been coming together with extra passion and commitment since Oct 7th. Our prayers are comprised of a transient group – with a number of folk from elsewhere on the island – if everyone could come every week, we would not be able to fit everyone into our lounge. But the Lord seems to bring just the right number of people each time, and we are amazed at how unified and transparent the people coming to the prayer times are. We believe we can sense the Lord’s Presence so much because His People (Israel) are so much on His Heart, especially as we prepare for His Return, which can only happen when the people of Israel are saying “Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord” (Matthew 23:39 and Psalm 118:26)

On Tuesdays, there is prayer at **Bible Bite**, both of thanksgiving and praise and for those in our church family and beyond, and any situations of concern, nationally and worldwide, as well as prayer in response to the message. In the evenings, there is **Prayer on Zoom**, which is led by our Minister, Brian or other members of the Fellowship. This always begins with the focus being on the Lord and worship of Him, sometimes with a worship song and then a time of intercession for the needs of the Church, the local community, the Island, and sometimes beyond. Although small in numbers Zooming in, these are very important times at which it would be good to

welcome more of our church family to join in.

The various Church Housegroups that meet during the week will include times of prayer, as well as at Elders and Church meetings and during the course of the year, other special extended times being set aside, sometimes with specific areas of the Church Ministry to pray into. Such a time of prayer took place in October and February, when there was a **Sabbath of Prayer** over 24 hours, encompassing three set times of prayer at the Church, including ending with the Breaking of Bread on the Saturday.

Prayer is encouraged, with '**Topics for Prayer**' listed each week on the Church Notice Sheet and of people in which also lists the various prayer facilities available for any immediate needs, i.e. the **Text Prayer Chain** for mobile contact and also the **Prayer Breakfasts** and **Midsummer Prayer Walk**. These are very important in keeping abreast of urgent situations, either of our church family or those known to us.

Prayer Ministry Team: The regular offer of prayer after our Sunday services resumed after a long break with Covid and ongoing concerns about being close up with people. Initially, 16 people were involved in the team - 8 women and 8 men, and many of these had served before. Several new people joined the team and were trained to work under our agreed guidelines. Sue Wightman felt a strong call to step up and organise the team and it has been great to see her develop in this new role.

One or two folk have now stepped down and we are prayerfully exploring who else might be suitable for this important work. We encourage everyone to make use of this provision of supportive prayer which is available week by week for those who need it. Do please respect the privacy of those receiving prayer and allow them the space they need.

In summary, prayer, that His Will might be done, and His Kingdom come - may we as a Church never lose sight of that and continue to be a Church where prayer is at its very heart.

Safeguarding Report for 2024 AGM

The Safeguarding (SG) team remains as last year – myself and Janet Harley.

Since the last AGM we have had two reports of concern to deal with. One is recent and currently not finalised. Neither has needed referral to any statutory authorities. For one, we made Synod aware. The Elders are updated, in general terms, during the year.

We have continued to follow Synod guidance on “Safely Recruiting” people into new roles (as outlined last year when first introduced). There have been five new appointees during the year.

DBS checks have been obtained/renewed where needed, and my thanks go to Debbie Tamcken and Yvonne Sparks for continuing to do the document checks as required.

Synod continue to make training available both in person and online. A number of people have taken advantage of basic SG training and First Aid/Mental Health First Aid training. (Elders are aware that there is a recommended number of First Aiders for church activities, and we do our best to comply.) I am due to be checking with Synod how often refresher SG training is appropriate.

At the time of writing this report, the Elders are due to do the annual review of our SG policy as required by Synod, ready for endorsement by the membership at the AGM itself. There is now a revised SG Guidance Document (Good Practice 6) and we will amend our policy in due course if needed, in light of it, but this won't be in time for the AGM; so, I anticipate that our present review will not lead to any changes at the moment.

If anybody has any questions or needs advice on SG please do contact me.

Dave White

Children and Youth Report 2023

*'Children are a gift from the Lord, they are a reward from him' –
Psalm 127: 3*

I would like to start by saying a huge thank you to the whole Church family as I know through speaking to many of you, that you regularly pray for our children, young people and families, those children we have and that we may be blessed with more families into our congregation. We have had new families in our Church, but also said good bye to a family who moved abroad.

Over the last year we have seen a slight increase in our numbers, we generally have between 4 - 8 children ranging from 4 up to 14, so we cover a large age range, which in itself means we have to be very aware of how we gauge our lessons.

We continue to offer a children's group each week apart from All Age Service/Encounter Service and although small in number the children we have enjoy their time downstairs.

In the last year we have been following a series of Bible lessons from Trueway Kids, which are free bible lessons that can be downloaded from the internet. It includes a story each week, which the children can then take home to re-read or talk over with their parents, an activity, games and a snack. Some of the activities are sent home with the child to compete at home, again this can then be talked about with parents. They have now introduced all age inclusive lessons which has been easier when have a wide age range of children.

It has been great to see the children join in with the songs at the beginning of the service and making use of the instruments and flags. It was so good to see them being part of the Christmas Eve Encounter service.

I have to say a great thank you to Hannah who has come downstairs with me each week. The relationships we are stating to build with the children has been great.

Messy Church continues to be a great outreach to many people, we are now holding a messy church 5 times a year, which includes the Light Alternative. Last year we held Messy Church, Easter, July,

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Harvest, October and Christmas. We have 6 craft tables and the children move round to each table completing a craft relating to our theme for that afternoon. We have a short story and worship time led by Brian and Janet. A hot meal and pudding is offered to the children. Parents are offered a hot drink and a snack. Although numbers have been slightly lower in the last year, generally around 30 – 35 children, those that have attended have feedback that they have enjoyed themselves and we have had some families come that are not known to the church in any other capacity.

The helpers that come each time have had a great time as well, if you feel this could be your calling please speak to me, extra help at the craft tables is always great, all the crafts are cut out ready so it's just helping the children. We have had some great conversations with the children and parents alike.

I have to say a big thank you to everyone who helps with Messy Church as without these people it would not happen and a great community outreach would be lost. A special thank you to Brian and Janet who help with all the organising and running the group as well as Debbie for her brilliant ideas for different crafts,

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6

I would like to finish with a prayer that I feel we can all say, both about the children in our congregation and those in our lives.

‘Thank you for filling the world with children to bring joy and excitement to the world, as well as to remind us of what it was like to have faith without over-thinking everything. Lord, I lift up the kids in my life, both related to me and those who I know through church and through friends. Bless them with wisdom as they grow. Keep them safe from harm. If there is a way that I can be a blessing to the kids in my life, please reveal it to me. Show me how to be a good example for them and send them other adults to be godly lights in their lives. Guide them in the way they should go, and reveal to them Your purposes for their lives in Your timing.’

If anyone is interested in helping with Junior Church or Messy Church, please speak to me, I can talk about our children and the work we do for many hours. Being the Youth and Children Elder is both a privilege and a pleasure.

Anna Chaplaincy

Initially the referrals were slow to come and I only visited 3 people. These were people that were already known to me or people from church. Slowly the numbers have increased and I am now involved with 9 individuals and sometimes partners or relatives and 3 care homes.

I generally allow Monday as my visiting day, however I am flexible and happy to respond to the needs and times people prefer visits.

I have taken folk to hospital appointments and assisted with practical tasks in peoples homes.

The time I stay with people varies greatly, depending upon the need on the occasion and what people can tolerate.

Our conversations are general, however in many cases prayer is involved and discussion around plans for the future and concerns about family and friends.

Some people have dementia, so I try to find out as much information about them as I can so that I can trigger some discussion with them.

Everyone has been very welcoming and I believe that the number of people will grow over time, however I am aware that I do not want to over stretch myself.

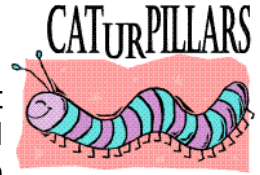
I have met several of the other Anna Chaplains on the Island, the number has grown over the year, from 1 to 10 and increasing.

I have been asked to give a short talk about Anna Chaplaincy at the 'True Celebration of the Island' event at the True Vine church in Newport on 2nd February.

Carol



Annual Report 2023/24



CatURpillars continues to be such a joy to be part of and to be able to serve God in this way is a real privilege. The team that make it happen are so dependable and every person's role is as vital as the next person's.

These are the teams that make CatURpillars happen.

- Those who set the tables and chairs up after Bible Bites and The Well, and particularly Alan who goes in on Thursday to move the furniture around ready for the toys to go out.
- Alan, Julie and Ian who put the toys out on Thursday afternoon.
- All those who help at the Friday session in various capacities. Melanie, Alan, Linda, Liz (who is our treasurer), Robert and more recently Dave W, plus Ann F who has stepped in quite a few times recently.
- Terry Ockendon and Sarah Waddell who come in specially to help pack away.

There is always a danger of listing people and missing someone out. Hopefully I haven't but if I have then sorry and thank you too! As you can see it is quite a military operation to make CatURpillars work but it is so worth it.

We generally have around 40 children each week, recently we have been getting nearly 50, plus their parents, carers and grandparents, so there is always such a buzz about the place, particularly on the weeks we get the banging toys out!! We have over 220 children on our list now; thankfully they don't all come at the same time! It is such a privilege to be able to serve these families and they often open up and share with us the difficulties they are facing in their lives. It is so good they feel there is always a listening ear if they need it. It is lovely to see so many of them coming to Messy Church too which gives more opportunities to talk about the reason we run CatURpillars, about Jesus and God's love for all people.

There are a few things that happen throughout the year, other than the all the playing with toys that goes on. We mark each child's birthday by singing Happy Birthday to them, letting them blow the candles out on



our everlasting birthday cake and we give them a birthday card which wishes God's blessing on them. We also have a singing time at the end of each session. Children learn so much through music including their alphabet, counting, days of the week, months of the year, what traffic lights mean, different parts of their bodies and sounds that animals make to name just a few.



At the end of the summer term, we held our popular Teddy Bear's Picnic where we celebrate with those who are graduating to big school. This year the weather was kind to us, so we were able to hold it up at Rylstone Gardens where the children enjoyed a nature treasure hunt, a lovely craft activity and all the fun of being outdoors. In October a photographer came to take portraits of the children which many used as Christmas presents and throughout the year we raised money for Mountbatten Hospice by wearing something yellow and for Children In Need by decorating Pudsey Bear biscuits. In December the children came to Messy Church and told the Nativity story using the songs they had learnt at CatURpillars the previous weeks. At the end of term we had a lovely Christmas party and each child received a book telling the nativity story, as a present.



We are going to survey our parents to ask their opinion of what they like about CatURpillars and if they have any suggestions as to how we can improve it, so we may be able to share some of the comments with you at Church Meeting. In the past when we have done this it has been a really helpful process and we have had some lovely encouraging comments back.

It is a privilege to be part of this ministry of our church and again I say there is no way it would be so successful without the amazing team I have around me to run it. The Bible says we are part of a body and each part has a really important contribution to make, no one is more important than another. So, again.....

Thank You Team!

Janet Harley

Fabric Report

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

(1 Peter 4:10 NIVUK)

It's that time of year when we look back over the past year, thanking God that we have been able to continue His work in Shanklin and surrounding areas. Various little jobs have been completed, almost on a weekly basis, it's surprising the number of things that need attention but praise God we have managed to maintain the building in good order so that it can be used in so many ways. We are greatly blessed with God given skills, willing people, finance and materials to maintain His building for His Glory.

It's a good time to remember and thank those who have worked quietly in the background doing all those little and not so little jobs and their support and commitment to our church family. I would like to mention a few of our hardworking 'elves' Graham, Terry Ockenden, Terry Ogier, Mike, Rob, Alan, Bill and Pete, with Andy & Irina clearing up all our mess on a weekly basis, all working together we have a clean, flexible, comfortable and safe place to worship. It's great that God has given us all skills and abilities and it's great to see them used for God's glory.

God has once again provided all the resources needed to complete a number of the larger outstanding projects this includes work to repair the various roof and gutter problems that seem to come up frequently. Most of the decorating has now been completed but further work is needed adjacent to and in the organ store as we had a considerable ingress of water a few months back, hopefully drying out now ready for decoration. I would also like to thank those who help sort out the chairs etc. for all the different services and events. The front garden always looks good, so thanks to those that faithfully look after it.

We are able to continue to provide the services on YouTube for those unable to attend the church in person and also those who perhaps are watching for the first time. We have had much positive feedback on the Live Streamed services from as far away as Uganda and Australia. Work has continued on upgrading the Sound

and Projection systems. Probably the most noticeable is the installation of a large screen TV instead of a very aging projector (this was finally removed recently after many years faithful service!), lots of positive feedback on the clarity of the visuals. Some of our older equipment is showing its age and will be updated in the coming year, we still have some money from a grant towards the cost of this work, so hopefully this will be done soon. Thanks to Pete, Colin, Terry Ockenden & Christopher as we help operate the equipment faithfully for each service/event. Budding operators are always welcome and full support/training will be available.

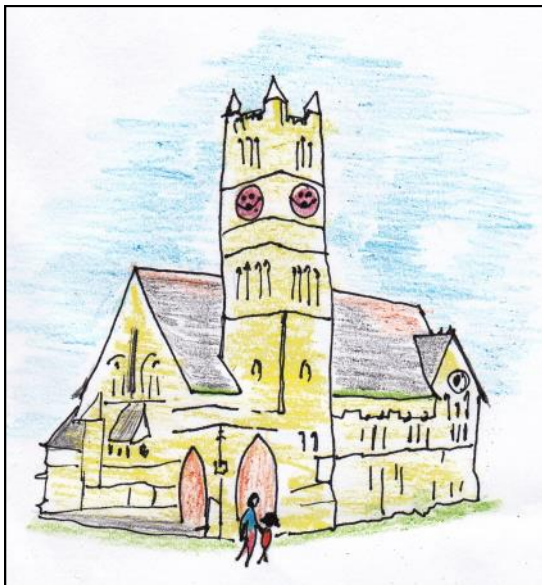
The majority of the lighting throughout the building has upgraded to LED lights, a couple still left to do. We have also had the 5 Year Electrical Installation test on the building (Passed) with only a few non-urgent minor upgrades needed. Myself and Terry Ogier hope to do this during the summer holiday period. We have had to replace the fridge in the upstairs kitchen and the cooker in the basement kitchen, both showing their age and not working correctly.

We are blessed to have the secondary glazing to the large windows to the left and right of the stage and the window in the balcony now installed, hopefully reducing heat loss out of the building.

Finally, during the Easter period we hope to replace the lock on the Landguard Road door, this has been playing up over the last few months. When we have a date set, new keys will be issued to those that require them about a week beforehand.

Finally, we can praise God that He has not only provided financial resources but has also given us skills, abilities and willingness to carry out the work for His Glory.

Malc



The Well

Around October 2022, I approached Brian with a vision I believed was from God. The vision was for us to make the church available to the local Shanklin community during the week and the focus was to be on mental health and providing warm drinks and a variety of snacks and treats. I also felt that we might be able to have various events and thus make it more interesting. This was really about as much as I knew. Brian agreed and we felt it would be a great way to make ourselves (as a church) more available to our community and hopefully bridge the gap between the church and 'out there,' and that our community would learn that as Christians, we were also human, thus breaking down barriers and hopefully, righting some wrongly preconceived notions. At the same time, the country was in the grip of the cost of living crisis, it was winter and so it was decided that The Well would be a 'warm space.' We also chose to not charge for the refreshments but would welcome donations, if people wanted to do so.

'The Well,' was to be about *Living Well Together in the Community* and come mid November 2022, we opened our doors for the first time. By then, Carole Smith and Yvonne and Christopher Sparks had come on board too. We welcomed a handful of people – from the church but nobody else. After a few weeks (and trying not to become disheartened but serve in faith, anyway) our numbers began to grow and suddenly, we had a surge of people, not only from our church but other churches too, and people from our community started drifting in too. To date, on average, we are joined by 20-30 people every week-sometimes a few more but never too many less, although in recent weeks, we appear to be bursting at the seams! Holidaymakers who visited us at the outset, have returned to us, when they come on holiday to the island again.

We were delighted to welcome Clive Bishop from the Living Well and Early Help Service. Clive works out of Aspire in Ryde and he attends fortnightly. Clive helps set up and pack away, the short mat bowling, which some people enjoy, as well as doing any other

heavy lifting needed! He also provides assistance in signposting people to various local authority departments, when they need help getting the assistance they need, including helping people fill out forms! I understand from the feedback that Clive's assistance in this area has been invaluable. Clive has also arranged visits by different interest groups, for example, the Wildlife Trust, who gave an informative talk to interested parties. We've had a couple of other groups visiting but have put this on hold for the time being, due to practicalities.

Another Wednesday regular, is Ellen Robinson's Healthy Half Hour which starts at 10:30 and finishes at 11:00, when The Well opens. Ellen offers a half hour exercise class, which has blossomed and has been beneficial to the participants.

We held a Christmas party for our 'Well' supporters at the end of 2023. We were booked out and enjoyed a fabulous time! All the hard work was done by Carole, Yvonne and Christopher and I am deeply thankful for everything they did.

Last Wednesday, we saw the beginning of Lent. As Tuesday had been Shrove Tuesday, Yvonne suggested we have a 'pancake day' on the Wednesday. Suffice to say, this went down well. We are hoping to have more such events in the future. As well as this, we have some other plans in the pipeline and hope that folks will enjoy them. More on this at the right time.

The primary focus of The Well is mental health. We have found that there is a massive need for ministry in this area and it appears that these needs are being met to some extent. New friendships are being formed, heartfelt conversations are being had and those that need more help in the area of mental health are being supported. This is not to say that we have all the answers but we are in a position to gently guide people where necessary to get the help they need and then follow up with support if need be. Some of us went on a two day training course run by Peter Larkum of MHFA England and we are now recognised as MHFA First Aiders. This has been beneficial in

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underpinning our abilities to serve people in the area of mental health.

Our demographic has changed somewhat in that we are now seeing an increase in community involvement, where folks from the surrounding area are coming through the doors and taking time to sit down with us and chat over a cuppa. Often, this is all that is needed in order for someone to get perspective in life. To send someone out, knowing they're leaving a little lighter than when they arrived, is a precious thing and trust is being built up in the process.

The Well is also a drop off point for the Mother and Baby Unit at Winchester House. This has proved successful and Rod and Ann Foster have undertaken to transport whatever is left with us, to the unit. We are very grateful to them for their faithful service.

We also have a space for unwanted warm clothing. This is available for anyone who is in need of something warm to wear. We have had mixed success with this.

Without intending to, we have also found space for prayer. It is not unusual to discover a group of folks praying for someone as the need arises. This is only done with their permission and it's a great witness to anyone watching. As well as that, informal bible teaching takes place sometimes and again, this is purely when people start to ask questions.

I am deeply grateful to those that have chosen to volunteer in this ministry and have given of their time: Alan Hutton, Ann Burnell, Yvonne and Christopher Sparks, Carole Smith, Hannah Jupe and Graham and Sue Bedwell. You are valuable and appreciated and we couldn't do it without you! At the same time, we remember Adrian who went to be with the Lord last year. He was faithful in turning up every Wednesday - bringing smiles and sunshine to us all. We miss him very much.

Thanks to Brian, for coming alongside to support The Well and agreeing to give it a go. Thank you also, to the Elders, for all your

support, advice and encouragement along the way and to our church family as a whole, for your unwavering support.

And finally, thanks to our Heavenly Father for the inspiration for this project and for His blessings on it; for expanding and adding to our numbers. May He be glorified and honoured through it all.

The Well has been going now for a year and three months. Who would have thought it would have blossomed as it has?! Please keep praying for us and the way forward and for continued growth and provision; that we continue to listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit and keep stepping out in faith to ensure His will is done in this ministry.

Blessings

Sheilagh Courtnage

Text Prayer Network Update

Where it began!

Carole S had a prompting about a mobile text prayer network I felt it was right to lead it with Carole's blessing. TPN was started and it has been found to be vital in people's needs . it is a safe place to bring those sensitive and urgent prayers and to know your covered in prayer gives you peace. It's been a place of encouragement with feedback testimonies. Hallelujah

It has been such a crucial network with our family in hospital in critical conditions! I hope this encourages the URC family and all those that have been prayed for in the past and the future.

What Happens

We have a team of 21 prayer warriors and there is room for more!! I would like to thank every single one of our team for their faithfulness throughout the last several months. If you feel you would like to be part of the network please come and speak to me, Lou. What happens is you will receive a text and then just pray it's that simple - praise be to God and all Glory To The Lord Jesus Christ

Church Bookshop Report for 2023

During 2023 the bookshop continued to be open most weeks on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 to 13:00 and also often on Fridays for a shorter time.

As always a huge 'Thank You' is due to the bookshop teamAnn F, George P, David W, and Sue W who have enabled the bookshop to be open regularly each week.

At the end of 2023 George P 'retired' from the bookshop team - we appreciate all the time he has given to the bookshop since he joined the team in 2022.

During the summer of 2023 we were pleased to welcome a new member to the team, Ruth W from St Catherine's in Ventnor. She joined Graham B in providing much appreciated back-up cover. An extra 'thank you' is due to David W who continues to provide background banking/accounting services in addition to his regular weekly session in the bookshop.

We are pleased to report that the bookshop had a busier year than in 2022 and at the end of the year the bookshop was able to transfer £920 to church funds.

During the year the bookshop has placed a few orders with the Leprosy Mission for stock items, such as gift books and Christmas cards. Some greetings cards were also ordered from the Leprosy Mission in addition to cards produced by Leonard Smith.

The bookshop has continued to sell previously owned books (in good condition) donated to the bookshop. Towards the end of the year some space had been freed up due to sales of previously owned books so donations of small amounts of books could be accommodated again.

During 2023 the proportion of bookshop income from sales in different categories was as follows:

- New books 29%
- Greetings cards 22%
- Christmas & Easter items 15%

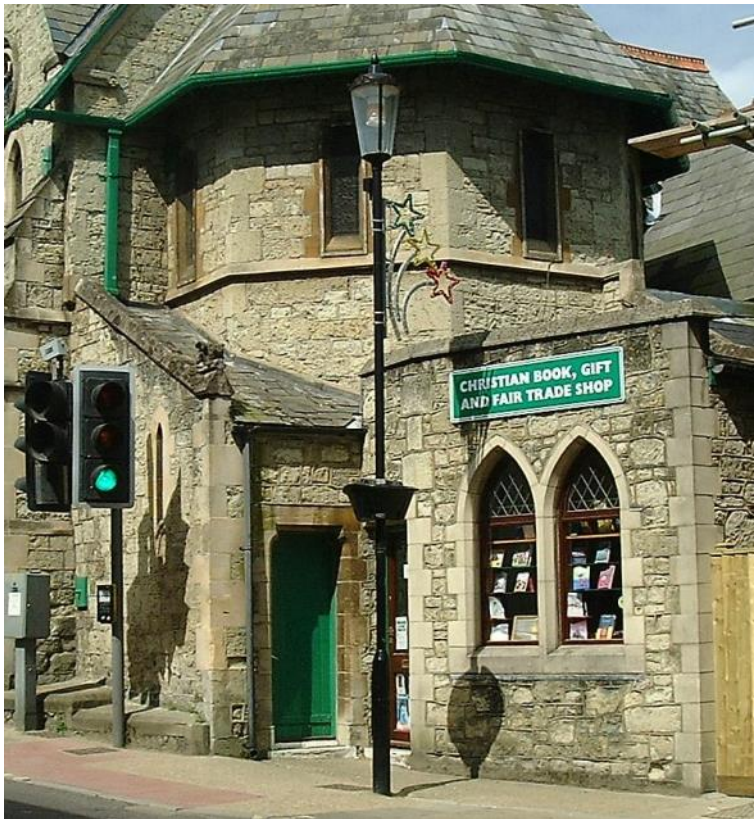
- Miscellaneous items 14%
- Previously owned books 20%

We hope that the bookshop will continue to be a blessing to all who choose to visit and that the books available will faithfully promote the Gospel of Jesus and support people in their Christian faith. Our volunteers do tell us of interesting conversations with visitors to the bookshop.

Once again we take this opportunity to thank everyone who serves on the bookshop team and helps to maintain this aspect of the church ministry.

If anyone is interested in joining the bookshop team please contact us. Our email address is johndfrend@aol.com. At the moment not all Tuesday mornings are covered.

John & Joan Dunkley



Open the Book – The Bay Team: at St Blasius



The Croydon's initiated contact with the school, leading us on first time we went into St Blasius Academy to introduce ourselves to the school, at the end of the 2023 school year. We presented the 'Blind Man' as an introduction. If ever we are desperate for help in the future, Bill and Julie will be available storytellers, but they have enough on their plates so we are a team on our own now. We are building up a supply of costumes and props, but we also have their wonderful collection at our disposal, if we need to borrow anything more.

We are now scheduled to go into St Blasius regularly – once each half term. We have done two presentations, one in October 2023 and another in November 2023 as a small team of 4. We are very grateful for the commitment and resourcefulness of each team member. Of note has been Christine's assistance in procuring materials and props from the charity shop she works at.

Our programme is as follows, using the core values that are being taught in the school this year:

Wisdom: Through our core value of Wisdom, we recognise that God's Wisdom helps us to make the right choices, and when we show His Love to others, God lives in us

Endurance (Perseverance, Resilience, Patience): Through our core value of Endurance, we recognise that, because Jesus showed endurance by giving His Life for us, we must have the courage to stand up for God's values and show endurance in our own lives.

Friendship: Through our core value of Friendship, we recognise that the Holy Spirit fills our hearts with hope when we live through faith in God and in each other.

Autumn 1	Wisdom	17 th October 23	- 53. John the Baptist
Autumn 2	Endurance	28 th November 23	- 46. Zechariah
Spring 1	Friendship	20 th February 24	- 1. Creation
Spring 2	Wisdom	tbc	- 2. Rebellion
Summer 1	Endurance	tbc	- 55. Calling Disciples
Summer 2	Friendship	tbc	- 56. Four Good Friends

At our John the Baptist presentation on 17th October, 'Zachariah' introduced our story and had the children participating with gusto, viz: "Today I'd like your help with telling the story.

- When you hear me say, 'He wore a camel hair coat', everyone say, 'Hump!'
- 'He held it tight with a leather belt', everyone pretend to tighten your belt and say, 'Too tight!'
- 'And he lunched on wild honey', everyone say, 'Mmmmm!'
- 'And crunched on wild locusts', everyone say, 'Yuck!'"

They loved it. Children also participated as tax collectors, a soldier etc, listening to John the Baptist.

Having presented the story of John's baptising Jesus the previous time, and having introduced the children to John's father, Zechariah, in the 28th November presentation we jumped back in time to present the events around John's birth (which was also a good introduction to advent). We instructed the children, as the narrator read each name and held up the respective name card, that they call out either 'Zechariah' or 'John' on cue. We also had 8 children dressed in costumes, sitting on the floor around a low table for "God's people were waiting. They were waiting for the 'special' one God had promised to send them." And then the boys were the crowd witnessing Zechariah coming out from the temple, dumb, and the girls gathered round Elizabeth, querying her decision to call her baby 'John'.

This year we are happy to have a 5th team member join us. On 20th February we jump right back to the beginning of the Bible, with Creation, and we will have a number of children representing or carrying birds, fish and animals; the sun and the moon; while our team manages the various props to show the rest of creation and personify Adam and Eve. This will be followed by Rebellion (Adam and Eve eating of the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden) in the second half of the spring term which, conveniently, follows the themes set by the school.

Please do let us know if you are interested in being part of our Open the Book team.

Melodie

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





Your Church Needs YOU!

Volunteers are needed to help with operating the PA and the Projection Systems.

Don't worry if this sounds daunting, it isn't, and full training will be given.

If you are interested , please see Pete Dawson or Malc Stevens

Team Leaders & Responsibilities At SURC - March 2024

Secretary	Robin Wightman
Treasurer	Colin Tamcken
Assistant Treasurer	
Database and Directory	Christopher Sparks
Church Meeting Minutes	Yvonne Sparks
Property Team/Health & Safety Officer	Malcolm Stevens
Premises Coordinator/Bookings Diary	Pete Dawson
Cleaners	Andy and Irina Goodall
Garden	Terry Ockenden
Technical Team	Pete Dawson/ Malcolm Stevens
Bookshop Team	John and Joan Dunkley
Elder Responsible for Children and Youth Work	Yvonne Sparks
Children and Youth Team	Yvonne Sparks
CatURpillars	Janet Harley
Safeguarding Coordinator Deputy DBS Coordinator Additional DBS Verifiers	Dave White Janet Harley Dave White Yvonne Sparks, Debbie Tamcken
Prayer Ministry Team	Sue Wightman
Text Prayer Network	Lou Jupe/Jean Cunningham
Worship Music Team	
Reading Rota	Sheilagh Courtnage
Christian Copyright Licence	Christopher Sparks
Weekly News Sheet	Robin Wightman
The Link Editor	Christopher Sparks

Press Officer	
Website	Christopher Sparks
Responsible Authorised Person – for Weddings	Jean Cunningham
Sunday Welcome Team	
Catering Team/Kitchens	Miriam Stevens
Coffee Rota	Debbie Tamcken
The Well	Sheilagh Courtnage, Carole Smith, Yvonne Sparks
Flowers	Sue Bedwell
Pastoral Care Group Leaders	Under Review
Open the Book - Shanklin Team	Melodie Wilson
Anna Chaplaincy	Carole Turner
Football	Steve Jones

Representatives

Christians Working Together in The Bay	Jane Hancock
YMCA Project	Road and Ann Foster
Bible Society	Jane Hancock
Synod	Sheilagh Courtnage
Persecuted Church	Jane Hancock
Foodbank	Alan Hutton
Evangelical Alliance	
Tearfund	
Street Pastors	

Sunday Service

Morning 10:30 Morning Worship in church
Broadcast live on YouTube

- **Holy Communion** on 1st Sunday of each month
- **All Age service** on last Sunday of each month

Weekday Activities

Monday 10:00 **Prayer for Israel** on the Church Zoom

Tuesday 14:00 **Bible Bite** ministry in church
Broadcast live on YouTube
19:30 **Prayer Meeting** on Zoom

Wednesday 11:00 **Living Well Together**, aka 'The Well'

Friday 10:00 **CatURpillars**

Saturday 10:30 **Coffee Morning** on Zoom
– a chance to catch up and have a chat

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

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

Minister: Rev Brian Harley



10 Dracaena Gardens, Shanklin PO37 7JQ



01983 862485



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 Registered Charity No. 1130459