

The Link

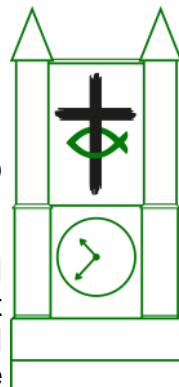


July 2025

Shanklin United Reformed Church www.shanklinurc.co.uk



View From the High Street



The View From Number 6: Why do Christians struggle with change?

I have been reflecting on the Healing Service we had recently and have found myself wondering why it is that Christians are seemingly averse to change. There had been a good deal of negativity in the lead-up to the service from various quarters, as well as intense spiritual warfare. In the wee hours of the mornings, I'd found myself wrestling with whether I'd heard correctly from the Lord, or not, or if I wasn't listening properly in the first place. To cut a long story short, on the Sunday morning, I had received two words from the Lord, which in both cases, confirmed I was heading in the right direction!

Why do we, as Christians particularly, not like change? After all, it's a constant in life - unpredictable, sometimes unsettling, and often met with resistance. All people, regardless of background, may find change difficult, to one degree or another but there seems to be a particular reluctance within the Christian community when we are faced with notable changes to tradition, belief, or practice.

As Christians, we hold a deep reverence for tradition. Within our churches, we value continuity and draw upon centuries-old liturgies, creeds, and practices. This rootedness is not something random but reflects our desire to remain anchored in what is believed to be revealed truth.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:15, Paul writes, *"So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter."* This call to "hold fast" to teachings, highlights the importance of stability and the transmission of faith from one generation to the next. So then, many Christians might perceive change as a threat to the integrity of the faith itself.

Furthermore, the idea of being *"rooted and built up in Him"* (Colossians 2:7) suggests to us that steadfastness is a virtue and that this spiritual grounding and being rooted in Christ, can foster a suspicion of any change, especially when it appears to challenge the theological or moral foundations upon which Christian

life is built.

Linked to the reverence for tradition, is the fear that change might dilute or erase Christian identity. Biblical accounts are filled with calls for God's people to remain distinct or separate, from the world— *“Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind”* (Romans 12:2). This admonition may lead Christians to be wary of changes that seem to arise from broader cultural pressures rather than from scriptural reflection.

This caution is partly due to a desire to preserve a unique identity as the people of God. For example, in the Old Testament, the Israelites are repeatedly warned against adopting the customs of surrounding nations (Leviticus 18:3).

For many Christians, maintaining faithfulness can mean holding firm against perceived intrusions of modernity, secularism, or even belief in Christ expressed by a community that doesn't meet 'our' ways of how things 'ought to be done,' and such resistance appears as an aversion to change.

Another reason Christians might resist change comes from theological conceptions of God Himself. In Malachi 3:6, God declares, *“For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed.”* Our God never changes—this is His nature and is foundational to our Christian theology. Hebrews 13:8 echoes this confidence: *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”*

Christian faith centres around a changeless God, thus stability and predictability are not just comforting—they are sacred. In the orderliness of worship and doctrine we discover the very character of the divine being reflected. This, in some way, explains why any significant shift in congregational life, church teaching, or moral standards can be experienced as profoundly unsettling.

Christianity is fundamentally communal and is shaped by the collective memory of God's acts in history: creation, covenant, redemption, and resurrection. Such rituals as communion – *“Do this in remembrance of me”* (Luke 22:19) – and the celebration of Christian holidays, reinforce our sense of continuity with the past and with the church universal. So, when change is proposed, whether in worship style, church governance, or even social engagement, it can feel like a rupture in the shared memory of the church. There is a

very real concern that the community may lose touch with its spiritual ancestors and with the lessons gleaned from centuries of faithful living.

While resistance to change is understandable, we need to remember that throughout Scripture, God often called individuals and communities to step into the unknown. Abraham was told to leave his country (Genesis 12:1), the Israelites wandered through the wilderness (Exodus), and Jesus' ministry upended expectations about the Messiah and the Kingdom of God. The interesting thing is that even though these moments of change were radical, there is still a thread of continuity: God's faithfulness remains constant. And He is still the same today. He still calls people and communities out into the unknown and He is forever faithful. The call to "*sing to the Lord a new song*" (Psalm 96:1) reminds believers that God is always doing something fresh, inviting His people to participate in creative renewal while remaining anchored in His unchanging love.

Our challenge is not to reject change outright, but to discern when change is consistent with God's purposes. This was a dilemma faced by the early church-in Acts 15, for instance, when the Jerusalem Council had to decide whether Gentile converts should be required to follow Jewish law. The decision to welcome Gentiles without imposing the full weight of the Law of Moses was a huge change, but it was guided by prayerful discernment and grounded in the conviction that the Holy Spirit was at work (Acts 15:28).

Scripture encourages believers to "*test everything; hold fast to what is good*" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). This wisdom implies that not all change is bad; but rather, we are called to weigh such changes carefully, seeking the guidance of Scripture and the Holy Spirit.

To an extent, human psychology also plays a role. Change often brings with it, a sense of loss, uncertainty, and discomfort, which we don't like. Congregations may find comfort in familiar hymns, rituals, and social patterns. The prospect of the unknown can provoke anxiety, especially in times where the world around us is in great upheaval. We must recognise however, that the resistance to change is not *always* spiritual stubbornness; sometimes, it is a very human response to a world that is already moving too quickly.

The Bible offers both reassurance and challenge. In Isaiah 43:19, God proclaims, "*See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do*

you not perceive it?" Here, we understand that there is a sense of both excitement and apprehension which often accompanies the divine plan. As Christians, we are called to trust that God's purposes are ultimately for our good, even when the path forward is unfamiliar.

Philippians 3:13-14 urges believers to *"forget what lies behind and strain forward to what lies ahead,"* pressing on toward God's calling. We are not being asked to discard the past, but rather to remain open to where God is leading next, rooted in faith, yet willing to be transformed.

Scripture challenges us to discern when change is necessary for renewal and greater faithfulness. As believers, our journey is one of both holding fast and letting go, trusting that God, who is eternally unchanging, is always at work making all things new.

May we, as believers move forward with humility, courage, and wisdom, ever praying, as the Psalmist does, *"Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth"* (Psalm 86:11). Amen.

In Christ's love,

Sheilagh

Minister's Sabbatical

Brian and Rachel arrived back safely from their trip to Africa (see [pages 25 - 27](#) for more details and some photos).

Brian will spend the first few days of July at a Christian Retreat Centre in Sussex and will begin his family holiday towards the end of July. In August, he will be "crossing the pond" for a PRMI board meeting.

Brian will be back on duty on **Tuesday 2nd September**.

He is away from all duties for these three months, although he will be around at home for much of the time, please don't contact him **but refer matters to ME or one of the elders ...**

Rev Mark Evans from Newport Congregational Church is available as a back-up - phone: 522187 or email: revmarkevans@yahoo.co.uk

Robin

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

Meeting ID: 324 266 5584 Password: 936536.

Text Prayer Network

This has proved 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 **07514 766798** (or, as a back-up - Jean Cunningham on: 07854 324809) with your prayer request and she will mobilise a team of intercessors by forwarding the message to the group. Each of the team will pray and then delete the message.

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

Pray for The Bay

Grace Mckenzie from Christ Church hosts this gathering, normally on the first Thursday of each month, at her home in Lake. **Next meeting: 3rd July @ 14:00**

Let us Pray for Shanklin: June to September

Please do join with us as we plan to spend the summer months individually walking and praying for our community and coming together as a fellowship on Saturday 6th September to pray for Shanklin. Prayer guides are now available in the church

SURC July Prayer Diary

We have included this month a prayer diary for you to use daily throughout July, covering a wide range of topics to be prayed for as the Spirit leads you.

Happy praying

Tue 1	Jonathan Snell and his Bible Bite series	Thu 17	Church Treasurer, Colin
Wed 2	All those who come to The Well	Fri 18	Elders' Meeting
Thu 3	YMCA Mother & Baby Unit	Sat 19	Messy Church
Fri 4	USA	Sun 20	Noma Ncube speaking
Sat 5	Men's Breakfast	Mon 21	St Mary's Hospital & IoW Ambulance Service
Sun 6	Grace McKenzie speaking	Tue 22	Nigel Cox at Bible Bite, which then takes a summer break
Mon 7	IoW Foodbank	Wed 23	Ventnor Fringe ' <i>I don't Adam & Eve it</i> '
Tue 8	Mountbatten Hospice	Thu 24	Church Meeting
Wed 9	East Wight youth ministry	Fri 25	CatURpillars' Teddy Bears Picnic
Thu 10	Brian & Janet Harley (sabbatical)	Sat 26	Local care homes and their staff
Fri 11	Our children/young people	Sun 27	Encounter Service
Sat 12	Ladies' breakfast	Mon 28	Churches Working Together in the Bay
Sun 13	Bob White and Suzanne leading the service	Tue 29	Schools as they break up for summer
Mon 14	Church Secretary, Robin	Wed 30	Teachers taking a refreshing summer break
Tue 15	Christians Against Poverty (CAP)	Thu 31	Holidaymakers on the Island
Wed 16	Local churches		

Gems to Share

Our Daily Bread Ministries print many excellent booklets that address issues of life, aspects of the Scriptures and much else. These booklets are provided free and are an excellent resource addressing the many questions of life and giving inspiration for praying.

Recent titles that we have received have included the following:

- A series called 'He Hears' on

- **God's Faithfulness**
- **Prayers for my family**
- **Prayers for peace** (much needed)
- **Prayers of the broken-hearted**

- Another one – a prayer journal:

- **Finding peace today**

- Topics from the scriptures

- **Prophets of the Bible**
- **Prayers of the Bible**
- **Finding Hope in the Psalms**

Another of their publications is the quarterly reading notes entitled, '**Our Daily Bread**' which helps to connect one with God every day. If you do not have regular Bible reading notes, then why not try these? Do ask if you would like to receive them, again free of charge and I will arrange it.

Our Daily Bread Ministries has a website, www.odbm.org/en-gb where not only can you read the daily devotional, you can also listen to it as well, and you can, "Deepen your connection with God." and subscribe to daily e-mails from ODBM.

There are, of course, other resources available to encourage us in our walk with The Lord and to give to others. On the shelf as you enter the lobby are a series of little cards for all kinds of circumstances and occasions – a blessing to be shared, a little encouragement to be given, as well as personally.

And, of course, our Church magazine, The Link, provides us monthly with teaching, encouragement and 'fuel' for prayers, along with much else of interest.

Copies of the Evangelical Alliance magazine are also regularly available – in the stand opposite the church office – recent ones being on Prayer and Being at Rest.

Lots to feed us spiritually – do take and be blessed!

Blessings in Jesus' Name,

Jane H

Church Meeting

24th July 2025 @ 19:30

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

Refreshments from 19:00

Don't just go to church – be the church!

Connection Quiz

1. In which film does Brad Pitt play “the Grim Reaper” ?
2. Which 1977 ELO hit contains the lyrics, “Hey you with the pretty face, welcome to the human race”?
3. For which 1982 Falklands War battle was Colonel H Jones posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross?
4. Who, together with Wat Tyler, led the Peasants Revolt in 1381?
5. Which TV sports presenter is the daughter of a former international footballer and the wife of an ex-international Rugby player?
6. So, what is the **connection** between the answers to questions 1 - 5?
7. And bonus question... where was the cover photo taken? Hint, it's by a famous bridge over the Caen Canal in Normandy.



Answers are on [page 47](#)

ENCOUNTER

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 – do bring a friend along

**The next café service will be on the 27th July, entitled
'Power to the People', and led by Yvonne and Malc**

a great day to invite friends along

– café serving from 10:15

Thought for the month

Humility isn't thinking less of ourself,
it's thinking of ourselves **less**.



CHARITY NO
1120920

FUNDRAISING IN SUPPORT OF **HELP** *for* **BBQ** **HEROES**

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

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

When: 16th August 2025

Time 15:00 - 18:00 (Food from 16:00)

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

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

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

A suggested price list will be available for food.

All proceeds go directly to the above charities



Sunday Evening Worship & Prayer @ SURC



As Open-Air Worship in Rylstone Gardens (see opposite) will only take place on the last Sunday of the month over the summer, Lou and Jane will lead a time of worship and prayer at 18:30 here at the URC on the other Sundays in the month.

If you are happy to help with this, please speak to Lou or Jane...

All are welcome to come along and join in with Christians from around the Bay and those visiting our beautiful Island!

Bible Bite



In the coming weeks, Jonathan Snell will continue giving a series of talks based on the Parables of Jesus from the Gospel of Matthew:

- 1st July The Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids
- 8th July The Eleventh Hour Labourers
- 15th July The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price

Nigel Cox will round off the current season on 22nd July with his final reflection on our relationship with God through the Psalms with Psalm 140 ~ "God's Blessings"

Bible Bite will resume after the summer break on Tuesday 9th September.

CHRISTIANS WORKING TOGETHER IN THE BAY
warmly invite you to join us for

Worship in the Open Air



**Last Sunday of the
month at 19:30
in Rylstone Gardens**
(turn left just past
the Old Village)



**An informal service for everyone led
from the bandstand by local Churches**
Being held on 29th June, 27th July & 31st Aug

Ephesians Chapter 4:17 – 5:7

(some thoughts on Brian's Bible Bite exposition)

Paul begins this passage by shouting at the Ephesians (and us) ~ ***“So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord”***... (in other words ~ “Listen Up”!)

We are no longer to live as our old selves did, and this radical change must be visible to those around us. Paul is referring to his previous words in which he tells us all to be “like Christ”, and he now builds on what that should look like.

It is good to note that Ephesian culture was predominantly Greek and Roman, and these early Christians were surrounded by the ‘futile thinking’ of those who have ‘hardened hearts’ (those who are spiritually bereft). This is not so very different to the situation we find ourselves in today!

We Are To Be Decisive, To Set Aside The Old And Put On The New ~ Truth

Walking With God At All Times, Every Day

“...to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (4:23&24)

As John says, ***“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.”*** (1 John 3: 2&3)

In the meantime, Paul gives some practical advice on what our new self should be:

- Honesty, speaking truth, not falsehood
- Controlling anger, showing gentleness
- Not stealing but giving generously

We must not let our guard down, but let self-control take hold through the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 1:15&16 tells us, ***“But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am***

holy.”

We Must Ask Ourselves “How Much Of The Old Self Is Hanging On?” Let’s Be Sure That Day By Day We Are Becoming More Like Jesus

The final three verses of Chapter 4 present us with a significant challenge:

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”

We Are Called To Follow The Example Of God, Living Lives Of Love

Chapter 5 begins with stark warnings about what will result if we persist in “old ways”, in particular, in loose talk, sexual immorality and idolatry. Such as these will NOT inherit the Kingdom!

“Your ways are in full view of the Lord, and he examines all your paths” (Proverbs 5:21)

But We Are Saints, Holy Ones, Standing Out, Shining Like Stars

Paul speaks of this better way in his letter to the Romans:

“The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh” (Romans 13: 12-14)

If you missed any of Brian’s talks on Ephesians, they are still available on the church’s YouTube channel:

www.youtube.com/@shanklinunitedreformedchur8970

Go to the ‘Playlists section, click on ‘Bible Bite - Ephesians’ and they are all there ready to view.



**FREEDOM
IN CHRIST**

***“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)***

My Father God (Part Two)

The Freedom In Christ course examines some of the common deceptive thoughts that Christians who have not experienced Freedom in Christ may be led to entertain. At times, we all suffer these attacks of Satan, and I thought it would be good for us all to look at these and check that we are following the Truth. This is Part 2 of 2 articles in which Neil guides us... (see page 16 of last month's The Link for Part 1).

I renounce the lie that You, Father God, have been mean, cruel or abusive to me. Your word says: *“The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold” (Psalm 18:2) and “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30)*

I choose to believe the truth that You, Father God, are loving, gentle and protective. It's Satan who is mean, cruel and abusive.

I renounce the lie that You, Father God, are denying me the pleasures of life. Your word says:

“Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” (Lamentations 3:22-23) and “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires”. (Galatians 5:22-24)

I choose to believe the truth that You, Father God, are the author of life and will lead me into love, joy and peace when I choose to

be filled with Your Spirit.

I renounce the lie that You, Father God, are trying to control and manipulate me. Your word says:

“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) and “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to feel sympathy for our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need” (Hebrews 4:15-16)

I choose to believe the truth that You, Father God, have set me free, and You give me the freedom to make choices and grow in Your grace.

I renounce the lie that You, Father God, have condemned me and no longer forgive me. Your Word says: *“The days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them’, declares the LORD.*

‘This is the covenant that I will make with the people of Israel after that time,’ declares the LORD. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbour, or say to one another, “Know the LORD, because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,’ declares the LORD. ‘For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more” (Jeremiah 31:31-34) and “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1)

I choose to believe the truth that You, Father God, have forgiven all my sins and will never use them against me in the future.

I renounce the lie that You, Father God, reject me when I fail to live a perfect and sinless life. Your word says: *“For though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again, but the wicked stumble when calamity strikes” (Proverbs 24:16) and “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we*

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confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 1:7- 2:2)

I choose to believe the truth that You, Father God, are patient towards me and cleanse me when I fall.

Neil Anderson

Freedom in Christ Ministries

Daily Devotionals

Used by permission

When Satan seeks to deceive us, the Bible leads us in all Truth. When we are weighed down, prayer lifts us up. Use these statements of truth to combat Satan's deceptions ~ our sure and certain defence against him is in knowing God's Word, regularly turning to it and in praying to our Lord, and as the Apostle Paul tells us:

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.” (Colossians 3:12-14)

Father God, thank You that You love and care for us at all times and in all circumstances. Thank You that Your compassions never fail, they are new every morning.

Help us to be ever more aware of Your presence daily and to walk the way that Your son, our Lord Jesus Christ, has shown us. Help us to declare Your praises, with Your Word fixed in our hearts.

Robin

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Support our brothers and sisters

Open Doors World Watch List and (separate) Prayer Map are excellent resources to help us pray for Christians in many parts of the world who are being persecuted for their faith. It gives an oversight of the top 50 countries where the persecution is the greatest. Perhaps you could take one country a week (half a page) and pray the suggested prayers – how great if we could embrace this as a church and how God would use that. We have new supplies – do take if you haven't yet done so - or go to www.opendoorsuk.org/products/product/wwl25-top-50/ to order a copy of both for yourself.

Other resources to inform our prayers and our understanding of what is happening to our brothers and sisters are as follows, with the new ones being available now:

- **Open Doors magazine & prayer diary (July – August)** or online at www.opendoorsuk.org/magazine/ and www.opendoorsuk.org/resources/prayer/
- **Release International Magazine and prayer leaflet (July – September)** or online at releaseinternational.org/magazines/ and releaseinternational.org/pray/

Please pray for the underground church in **Iran** (No. 9 in the current World Watch List and one labelled as '**Extreme**' in persecution of believers) - go to www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/world-watch-list/iran/.to read its World Watch List profile.

The number of those coming to faith in Jesus is amazing – please pray for a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit, bringing many more into His Kingdom at this especially dangerous time for our brothers and sisters, may they know God's Hand upon them, protecting them from even greater persecution.

Thank you for praying – our family of God worldwide suffering for their faith so appreciate our support, love in the Lord for them and our intercessions.

With love in Jesus' Name

Jane H

Source: Open Doors

Tears of joy as secret believers from North Korea are baptised

For secret believers worldwide, hidden faith also means hidden baptism, but this doesn't detract from the joy of such an occasion – and that was certainly the case for some secret believers from North Korea who were recently baptised.

There were tears of joy as a group of women who had fled North Korea braved huge dangers to get baptised in a secret location outside the country.

The ceremony was part of a project run by Open Doors fieldworkers that provides practical and pastoral care, together with Bible study, for women who have defected from the country. Many were trafficked and forced into marriages.

“We prayed and went forward in faith”

Even though the baptisms took place outside of North Korea, the occasion was not without risk – in fact, they nearly didn't happen.

Security had intensified in the area where the baptisms were due to happen, with reports of increased police checkpoints and undercover officers. “When I travelled there, I saw more police on the road than I imagined,” says a fieldworker. “Some were in plain clothes. We had to move with caution and say little. But we prayed and went forward in faith.”

“When we all gathered for worship, the tears began to flow”

Secret believer

Once inside the safehouse and before getting baptised, the women received some final teaching. “They were nervous, but determined,” says the fieldworker. “We prepared the Communion elements in the kitchen while they studied the meaning of baptism. When we all gathered for worship, the tears began to flow.”

One by one, the women were baptised in a moving service filled with singing, prayer and silent cries. Afterwards, they celebrated with a shared meal and received gifts, with each one given a cross and a traditional, colourful Korean dress (hanbok). “One of them told me, ‘This is the first time I've worn a hanbok since I left North Korea.’ She cried when she put it on.”

No longer alone

The next day, the group moved to another secret location to receive some training. “They brought us mushrooms and dried greens as gifts,” says the fieldworker. “It was incredibly humbling. These women have so little, but they give with their whole hearts.”

It was there that one woman shared her story. “After I believed in the Father, everything started to change,” she said. “I’m not alone anymore.”

The women then returned to their respective foreign families. Some are treated well, while others are abused. However, many of the women say that their life is better now than when they lived in their home country.

“Especially now, with the current currency devaluation. Life is even more difficult back home,” shared one of the women.

Those like the women helped by our fieldworkers often try to save some money and send it to their relatives in North Korea to help them survive the awful conditions. “Sometimes supporting their family is the only reason they still want to live,” says Brother X, Open Doors’ North Korea coordinator.

Faith overcomes fear

“We walk in fear sometimes. But more than that, we walk in faith”

Fieldworker

“Our women’s project shows them that they are not alone,” he continues. “Working with them is not easy, but we see many positive changes. Some can become leaders and start their own Bible study groups for North Korean women. They learn about baptism during those studies, but being baptised is very dangerous, even outside the country. That’s why we are so grateful that we could have the ceremony.”

Such ceremonies, and the transformed lives they celebrate, couldn’t take place without your faithful prayers and gifts. Thank you! You’re helping them take bold steps of faith in secret – but with great joy.

“We walk in fear sometimes,” adds the fieldworker. “But more than that, we walk in faith. And God meets us every time.”

Source: [Open Doors](#)

The YMCA Mother & Baby Facility
would like to extend a huge thank you for
all the ongoing support and donations
that have been gratefully received for
The Lodge.

Donations have included:

- Commercial washing machine and dryer,
- Sofa & Chairs,
- Table cloths,
- Dinning Chairs,
- Books for Lodge Library,
- Blankets & Bedding,
- Microwave & Toaster,
- Range oven,
- Chest of drawers
- And a cupboard to store resources safely in the communal area, while helping to create a homely environment.

Current items that would be gratefully accepted are:

- Chest of Drawers/Tallboys,
- Parasol for garden,
- Garden bench! (residents keep asking for one!),
- Tall larder style fridge,
- Possibly sofas.

**Your ongoing support is hugely appreciated by
staff & residents.**

THANK you

YMCA

YMCA FAIRTHORNE GROUP

15/5/2025

To: Shanklin United Reform Church

On behalf of all the young mums living at The Lodge, we would like to pass on our gratitude for all the kindness and generosity you have shown them, and showing them that the community cares about them.

Your support means so much to them.

From: Sarah, Fundraising Team

Shanklin United
Reform Church

£605.50 Donation
Received 9/5/25

Shanklin United Reformed Church

Men's Breakfast

Saturday 5th July
08:45 for 09:00 start

At:
Viv's Cooking
9 High Street,
Sandown,
PO36 8DA

Full English with unlimited
toast and drinks @ £10



Shanklin United Reformed Church

Ladies' Breakfast

Saturday 12th July
09:45 for 10:00 start

At:
Viv's Cooking
9 High Street,
Sandown,
PO36 8DA

Full English with unlimited
toast and drinks @ £10



Brian's visit to Uganda *(photos on next two pages)*

As part of his sabbatical, our minister Brian recently travelled to Uganda with his daughter Rachel and spent a day at Kalasa Reformed Presbyterian Church, a village to the northwest of Kampala. We have supported the ministry there every year since Martin and Gertrude Sebbugo visited Shanklin in 1996 through the Romans One Eleven Trust (a charity to foster links with Africa that was formed by the former chair of GEAR – Rev Dr John Hall). Brian has visited three times before but not since November 2006. The Sebbugos did come to Shanklin again in May 2011 and had a wonderful couple of days with us and with Ryde URC.

Brian preached at the service on 1st June and Rachel joined in with the ladies dancing. They presented a banner that Meryl had made to celebrate our partnership of nearly 30 years, along with some other gifts including some old football shirts from Shanklin FC which Rachel had acquired through a friend at work.. They were then shown around the school site, where Brian saw Shanklin block 2 for the first time. A traditional Ugandan lunch followed with the church leaders comprising chicken, goat, rice, ground nut sauce, matoke (green mashed banana), casava, potato and avocado.. with gorgeous fruit to follow – the freshest mango and pineapple.

Please pray for the ministry as a new school has just been built by another group right next door to the church site. It isn't clear what effect this may have on the church school and they are seeking to be gracious about it and press on with the Lord's work (theirs is an unashamedly Christian school).

Brian and Rachel also dropped in to Luwafu RPCU on the Monday and Brian led an impromptu school assembly before spending some time around Kampala and enjoying a meal at Martin and Gertrude's home, where their daughter Doreen and grandson Titus (pictured) live, along with their foster daughter Jovia (20, who they brought up from a baby). They usually spend 6 nights a week up at Kalasa & are rarely at home.

Brian and Rachel then enjoyed an amazing three-day safari up to Murchison Falls, after which they flew on to Madagascar to spend a week of holiday with Sarah who has been there for a year with Mercy Ships. She returns to her NHS job in Nottingham in mid-July and would value prayers for the massive readjustment.

Rev Jon Sermon ,who now leads Romans 1.11, will be taking a team out to Uganda again in August and visiting various congregations.





Hosanna to the Son of David



On Palm Sunday, Jesus was recognised as ‘the Son of David’, so ‘Open the Book’ thought it would be good to do a series of stories about David. We showed the children this banner and asked whether anyone knew what it was. The hand of a tiny lad shot up – ‘It’s the Star of David’. The child has an uncommon name from the Old Testament, so may be Jewish himself.

We then told how the people demanded a king so that they would be like everyone else. Saul was chosen, but later stopped listening to Samuel or obeying God. So God sent Samuel to Bethlehem.



Jesse’s strapping sons all looked promising, but, while man looks on the outside, God looks on the heart. God chose the youngest son, David the shepherd boy.



The following week, we showed David playing the harp to calm Saul down. But even music could not assuage Saul’s fear when Goliath demanded a champion to fight him. You may be surprised by the colour of Goliath’s hair (blue)

and beard (green). This was done so the tiny children in the front row would not be too scared.





David, who had taken bread and cheese to the battlefield for his soldier brothers, offered to fight 'this loudmouth'. With God's help, David defeated the Giant and became best friends with Jonathan, the son of King Saul.

Jonathan gave David his sword, and David

moved into the palace, but Saul was so jealous that he threw a spear at David when Jonathan was not there.

Jonathan couldn't believe that his father wanted to kill David so



David said he would stay away from the festival and see how Saul reacted. When Jonathan said he had given David permission to celebrate the festival with his family in Bethlehem, Saul threw a spear at his own son! Jonathan had arranged how to let David know whether it was safe to return to the palace. In the morning, Jonathan went for archery practice in a field. David was hiding in the long grass.

When Jonathan's servant went to fetch the arrow, Jonathan told the child to "Hurry, go quickly, don't stop" so that David knew he must leave. The last assembly in this series will show King David setting up his capital in Jerusalem.



The 14th July is known in this country as 'Bastille Day', but
Did You Know...

...that the French national anthem was originally titled "Chant de guerre pour l'Armée du Rhin"?

The song acquired its current name after being sung in Paris by volunteer soldiers from Marseille marching to the capital in 1792.

The French National Convention adopted it as the First Republic's anthem in 1795.

**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



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 for people to read - and then share with others!!



This month's edition (available to read online at www.goodnews-paper.org.uk/viewlatesteditionspage.htm) has several great articles, including the headline article, 'Tough Guys Prove Faith isn't a Crutch' - Ex-power lifter and bouncer see Gospel change lives.

Other contributions include:

- **Hope for the Euros** - England striker Lauren James trusts in God's plan
- **Alison Hammond on Faith** - TV presenter says she leans on God
- **Marcus Mumford** - Mumford & Sons lead singer hints at journey back to faith
- **YouTube Star Says 'Jesus Is King'** - YouTuber tells 24 million followers about Jesus
- **Power to Change** - Christian rehab centre sees God's power transform lives
- **Set Free** - Shoplifter and drug addict gets clean and finds hope for the future

Good News... for a change

Rylstone Gardens July 2025

As well as Open Air Worship taking place on 27th July, the following concerts will also be taking place on the bandstand in Rylstone Gardens, weather permitting of course.

Date	Time	Band
Tue 1 st July		Abbey Brass Band
Wed 2 nd July		Sandown & Shanklin Military Band
Thu 3 rd July		Vectis Brass Band
Sun 6th July		Shanklin Town Brass Band
Mon 7 th July		Cowes Concert Band
Tue 8 th July		Bob Howarth Big Band
Wed 9 th July		Sandown & Shanklin Military Band
Thu 10 th July		Vectis Brass Band
Sun 13 th July		Vectis Brass Band
Wed 16 th July		Sandown & Shanklin Military Band
Thu 17 th July		Vectis Brass Band
Sun 20 th July		Bob Howarth Big Band
Mon 21 st July		Cowes Concert Band
Tue 22 nd July		Bob Howarth Big Band
Wed 23 rd July		Sandown & Shanklin Military Band
Thu 24 th July		Vectis Brass Band
Sun 27th July		Shanklin Town Community/Youth Brass Bands
Mon 28 th July		Cowes Concert Band
Tue 29 th July		IoW Symphony Orchestra Brass
Wed 30 st July		Sandown & Shanklin Military Band
Thu 31 st July		Vectis Brass Band

There is a set of posters in the lobby detailing all the concerts that are planned to take place this summer.

Opportunities for fellowship and prayer, worship & teaching

During our summer months we are having a time of fellowship on Sunday evenings when there will be no Rylstone Gardens Open Air Services (these are on Sundays 29th June, 27th July and 31st August at 19:30).

On every other Sunday, except on the dates above, we will continue to meet at 18:30 for a time of sharing, worship and prayer at Shanklin URC, together with friends from other churches across The Bay.

These have been encouraging times, as we seek the Lord together for a fresh out-pouring of His Holy Spirit amongst us, in The Bay, on our Island and nation.

Another opportunity for prayer is on a Sunday morning, at 10:00 in the prayer room (in the lobby). Two of our church members, Richard and Letitia, having come from a church on the mainland where such a time was held to prepare the ground for the Lord to move during the services, they felt the Holy Spirit prompting to ask that we might have such a time. The prayer that had been taking place at the front of the church will now be part of this – do join us as we seek the Lord together, praying for Him to be glorified in our worship and for our lives to be ever more transformed into His likeness.

On the 8th June – Pentecost Sunday, another 'Free the Wight' Prayer Day was held with many of our church family joining in praying on Shanklin Esplanade and other places in unity with believers all round the Island and on high places asking for God to move on our lovely Island with its motto, 'All this beauty is of God'. See also [page 36](#).

May His name be honoured and many lives touched for His Kingdom as a result of these beloved times.

Also to flag up Bible Bite – every Tuesday, with the last one before a summer break being on the 22nd July with Rev Nigel Cox, concluding his excellent series on the Psalms, which have been such a blessing. From Tuesday 24th June up to and including Tuesday 15th July another good friend of our church, Pastor Jonathan Snell, will be taking a series on 'the parables of Jesus' – these look to be very

helpful.

The next three talks will be as follows:

- 1st July - Parable of the 10 Bridesmaids
- 8th July - The Eleventh-Hour Labourers
- 15th July - The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price

Just to say that Bible Bite is livestreamed on YouTube at 14:00, as are our Sunday morning services at 10:30, so one can always catch up if unable to attend.

Blessings in Jesus' Name

Jane H

Pastors facing fiery trials

Christianity may have gained a certain level of acceptance in the popular South-East Asian tourist destination of Laos, but scratch beneath the surface and you will find deep hostility and discrimination.

Following the killing of a pastor last year, writes James Fraser, I wanted to find out what life was really like for Christians, especially church leaders.

What was notable was their attitude to suffering for the gospel. At a conference organised by Release International partners we were told the pastors thought it strange that we wanted to hear their stories of persecution: for them suffering was not unusual - it was a normal part of following Jesus!

One pastor we met, X, has dedicated his life to reaching a minority people group in rural Laos. X's work has not gone unnoticed by the authorities. He has been arrested, interrogated and has faced repeated harassment. The authorities have threatened to discredit him with false accusations.

X is worried that his life is genuinely at risk. Sometimes he wonders if he and his wife should leave the area. But they remain committed to the work. 'Deep down I feel like I am being used by God and will leave a good legacy among the people I am serving,' he said.

Source: Release International.

Good News IoW - Issue 1

I am writing after the experience on Pentecost Sunday where hundreds participated in 'Free the Wight 2' - the joint prayer all over the Island. I have included the exciting and encouraging feedback in the first issue of 'Good News IoW'. Thank you so much to all who participated in this significant spiritual event.

We are aware of so much that the Lord is doing in many different ways, in Christian work and outreach all over the Island. It is so encouraging for the whole church on the Island when they hear these good news stories and realise just how optimistic and uplifted the church should be with the knowledge of how lives are being impacted by Jesus.

Every blessing,

Rev Richard Buxton

If you want to read the Good News IoW in full please see Robin or Christopher .

Good News IoW

On Pentecost Sunday, 8th July, hundreds of followers of Jesus went to every part of the Island joining in unison to pray and make Biblical declarations in over 40 different locations on the Island .

Some met in large groups, others in smaller groups. The less mobile met in their churches or homes. They came from every compass point of the Island, drawn from a dozen or more different church streams and denominations.

In our previous Island-wide prayer gatherings, either in person or during the 24 hour zoom prayer meeting, we have followed free flowing prayers for the Island.

But on this occasion the purpose was to surround the Island's coastal areas, plus being present at the inland high places often used for ungodly purposes, and to all make the same declarations and prayers at the same time during that hour.

The feedback has been so encouraging and positive and a real sense that the church is overcoming in spiritual warfare. We were even told that in one prayer group they had a live video link to an overseas country where believers there were also joining in the

prayers and declarations.

Thank you to all who participated. God knows the spiritual impact on the Island In this edition are reports from some of the many locations visited

Richard & Rajinder Buxton

Some of the Location Highlights

Appley Tower: “Just wanted to inform you that the prayer event went well at Appley Tower. It was great to be in fellowship with the rest of the groups spread across the Island at the given time table”.

Boniface and Ventnor Downs: “We had an encouraging time praying. We had 17 there, including people from St. Catherine's Ventnor, True Vine, Deeper Life , the United Reformed Church Shanklin and Altitude. It was powerful reading out the declarations together.”

Culver Down: Last year on Pentecost Sunday for our first “Free the Wight Island-wide hour of prayer all across the Island, a number prayed, as they did again this year, at Culver Down. This, tragically, is a well-known hotspot for suicides. It is sad to see the number of makeshift memorials at the cliff edge for those who have lost their lives. However, good news from the dog-walkers of Culver Down who say that there hasn't been a single successful suicide in this past year.

Godshill: “It was great... really gained momentum as we prayed, sensed a breakthrough as we persisted... in fact, at the end of the hour I didn't want to stop! It was a great view of the island up on the monument so we could direct our prayers visually to the appropriate places. The Isle of Wight shall be saved!”

St Helen's, Duver “There were five of us gathered on St Helen's Duver praising God, giving him our thanks and praying for the Isle of Wight. It was very windy and we were gathered in one place - which was a timely reminder of that first Pentecost!”

Shanklin: “We at Shanklin found it very powerful. We had 16 on the beach and 15 scattered high and in houses - 31 altogether. It was a very awesome experience and a very blessed time.”

More location highlights, including photos, can be found in the full version of 'Good News IoW Issue 1'

Bible Society - Mission Update

There's no stopping an Iranian Bible worker despite her being unable to visit her home country

Mission possible: A million Bibles for Iran

Iran is one of the toughest places on earth to follow Jesus, but the underground church movement is vibrant and growing. Bible worker Nahid Sepehrifard is aiming to get a million Bibles into Iran over the coming years, and she needs your prayerful support to achieve this.

Nahid is Iranian but can't go to Iran because Bible Society was expelled in 1990, so she works wherever in the world she and her laptop happen to be.

Historically, the population of Iran is overwhelmingly Islamic, but things got very difficult for Christians when the pro-Western monarchy was replaced with a clerical dictatorship in 1979. Bible Society in Iran, then led by Nahid's father, struggled through the 1980s.

'My father wanted to print Bibles in Iran,' Nahid says. 'He was not allowed. The new authorities were offended by the claim that Jesus is the Son of God. They wanted that removed. My father would not allow that. He fought and he won. He was able to print Bibles in Iran until February 1990, when everything stopped.'

Pressure increased on churches that held services in Farsi, Iran's main language. 'One by one, the pastors were killed,' Nahid says.

Despite this, there are now hundreds of thousands of Christians in Iran, and some estimate a million or more. 'Even the Government admits that Christianity is growing. Persecution has made the Church stronger. When life is good, you can forget God. But pain draws you to God. Many young Iranians want to know Jesus.'

Nahid dreams of returning to Iran to give out one million Bibles freely. 'It won't be soon, but we know it will happen. We've got to be ready.'

For now, Nahid and her small team have a thriving ministry among Iranians who live outside of Iran, and have a livestream on social media that takes prayer requests.

One lady, an Iranian in Europe, told her, 'I don't know your God. I

just found your page on Instagram and I need prayer for dizziness.'

'We prayed,' says Nahid, 'and three days later she was better. She'd been seeing a doctor for years with this problem! The lady then told us, "Your God is worthy to be known."

Then there was an atheist who was depressed, so the team introduced her to their counselling service. She'd suffered sexual abuse as a child. She asked for a Bible. 'Last December, she was baptised by my husband,' says Nahid.

Nahid thanks Bible Society supporters for their regular giving and support of her ministry.

'I have been given a free Bible in Farsi,' said one Iranian migrant. 'My favourite verse is 1 John 4.16. God is love. Jesus said forgive your enemies. He sacrificed himself. I used to chant, "Death to America," but now I pray for peace.'

'When life is good, you can forget God. But pain draws you to God. Many young Iranians want to know Jesus.'

Please Pray

- Pray for the underground churches in Iran, that the eyes of the authorities will not see them, and that they will continue to flourish.
- Ask God to encourage Nahid and her team through the ups and the downs as they strive to get a million Bibles into Iran in the coming years.
- Pray for Iranians who have fled Iran. As refugees they're extremely vulnerable and could be returned to Iran at any time. Pray that exile is an opportunity for them, both to build a new life and to find God.

Source: [Bible Society](#)



Focus

on our Christian Brothers and Sisters being persecuted for their faith

“This is horror. This is terror” – more devastating attacks in Nigeria

There have been yet more deadly attacks in Nigeria, with Christians among more than 100 killed and thousands displaced. Please pray.

More than 100 have been killed and around 5,000 displaced in a series of attacks by Islamist militants in Nigeria, many of which are believed to be ‘revenge’ against a local bishop who testified to the US Congress about the ongoing violence in the region.

Bishop threatened

On Saturday 24 May, there were a series of shootings by Fulani militants in the villages of Tse-Ubiam and Tyolaha in Benue State, killing ten people. The following day, 20 were killed in shootings in Aondona and Ahume, and in a further attack on Yelewata village. On Monday, gunmen returned to two of the villages, taking aim and shooting survivors on sight. By Tuesday, the local government chairman confirmed over 40 had been killed.

“You cannot imagine the reality we live in here”

Fr Oliver Ortese

The attacks happened in Gwer West, part of the Makurdi Diocese – the very diocese led by Bishop Wilfred Anagbe, who testified to US Congress. “This is horror. This is terror,” said Fr Oliver Ortese. “You cannot imagine the reality we live in here.”

The bishop’s comments about the mass killing of Christians ‘drew threats from both some Islamic groups and the government’, according to Fr. Moses Aondover Iorapuu of Makurdi Diocese. “It took support from the US government for Bishop Anagbe to return to Nigeria without detention, but we suspected there would be an aftermath.”

Stop the violence, start the healing – sign the Arise Africa petition

today

Mourners attacked at graveside

There were further attacks some 400km away in Taraba State. Also on Saturday 24th May, an armed motorcycle convoy stormed homes, killing 42 people, including 24 members of a local Methodist church. "We didn't know where to run to," said Soja Emmanuel, a survivor. "They came around 02:00, shooting sporadically. People jumped out of their homes into the bush. Some didn't make it."

"We counted 42 corpses before noon on Saturday," a soldier told national newspapers. "This is beyond anything we've seen before." The exact death toll in Taraba remains uncertain.

Meanwhile, in Bokkos County in Plateau State, details are still emerging of a series of attacks by Fulani militants that begun on Sunday 25 May, with nine people reported dead so far. It's understood that a mass burial of those killed in Kopmur village came under fire when gunmen returned to attack mourners at the graveside. Dozens of Christians are said to be trapped in forests and mountain hideouts, unable to escape as the militants continue to roam through the villages.

At the time of writing, terror alerts are in force across Plateau State. It is not clear whether security agencies have quelled the violence.

Failure of state and security

The scale of bloodshed and the multiple failures of security are fuelling mounting criticism of state governors, who appear powerless to protect communities.

"Many don't feel safe anymore, only because they identify as Christian"

John Samuel

"When the very diocese whose bishop courageously testified suddenly finds itself burying scores of its people – including from his own village – serious questions are raised," says John Samuel*, Open Doors legal expert for sub-Saharan Africa. "Many don't feel safe anymore, only because they identify as Christian."

"Christian persecution in Nigeria has reached such levels that observers struggle to fully document each atrocity before the next begins."

The Link - July 2025

“Accountability remains scarce for these grave violations of the fundamental rights to life, liberty and freedom. The Nigerian government is failing to protect Christians who are killed in indiscriminate attacks. We call on the Nigerian government to do everything in its power to protect vulnerable Christian communities.

“We call on believers worldwide to lift up in urgent prayer those struck down in this unimaginable suffering.”

**Name changed for security reasons*

Please Pray

- That all those affected by these attacks will be consoled by God’s unfailing comfort
- For much greater protection and justice for vulnerable communities in Nigeria
- For militants to encounter Jesus and turn from their wicked ways..

Nigeria is number 7 in the Open Doors Worl Watch List Top 50

Why are Christians persecuted in Nigeria?

Nigeria has greater religious freedom than other countries in the World Watch List top 10, but the biggest threat is from Islamic militants who seek to destroy Christianity and Christians in the region.

Christians living in the Sharia (Islamic law) states of northern Nigeria can also face discrimination and oppression as second-class citizens. Converts from Islam often experience rejection from their own families and pressure to renounce their new faith. They often have to flee their homes for fear of being killed.

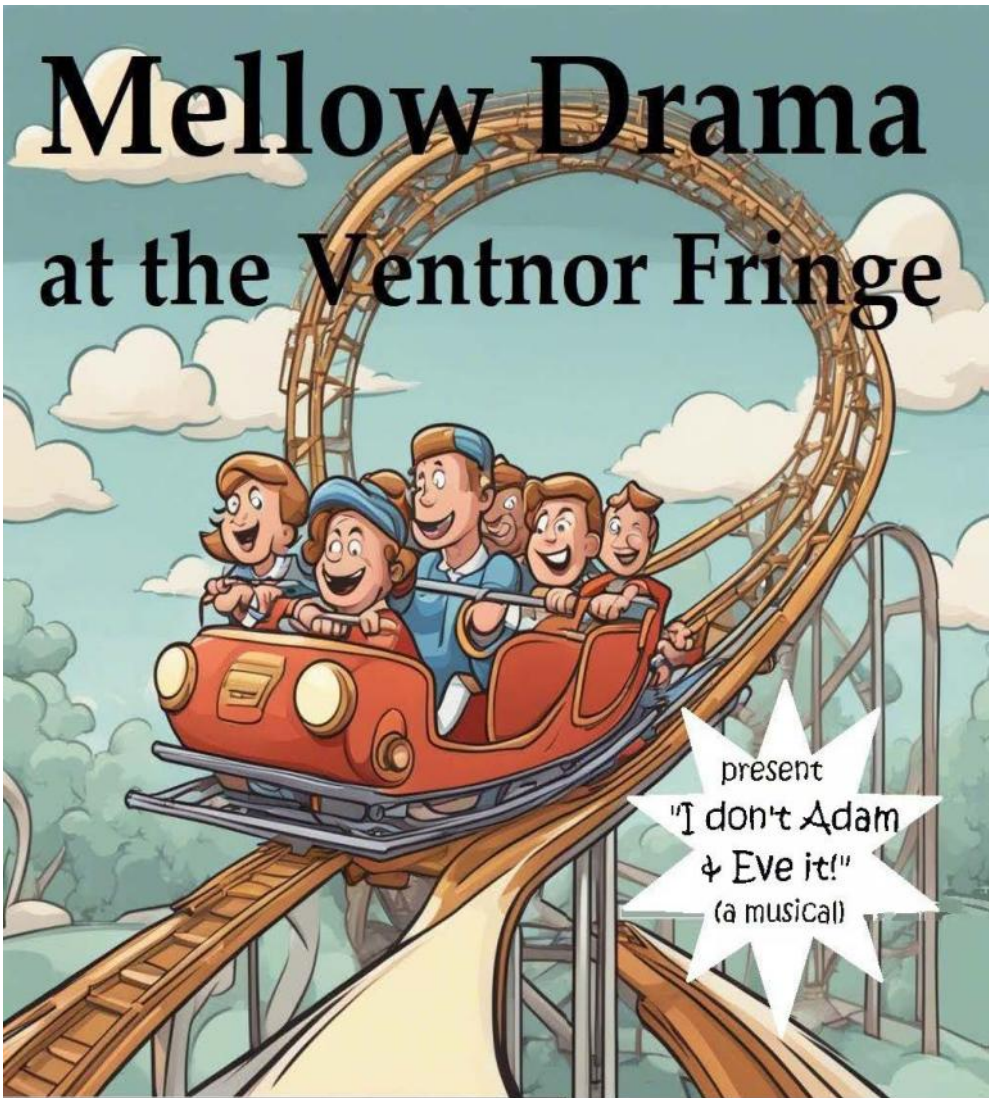
What has changed in Nigeria in the past year?

There were hopes that Bola Tinubu’s 2023 election as president would cause a positive shift towards recognising and intervening against human rights violations affecting Christians, but this has not yet materialised.

Unfortunately, very little has changed in Nigeria this year. Christians living in parts of the country continue to endure extreme violence and danger for their faith.

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

Mellow Drama at the Ventnor Fringe



present
"I don't Adam
& Eve it!"
(a musical)

Tuesday 22nd & Wednesday 23rd July

18:30 at the Pier Street Playhouse

Tickets £6 Available from the Box Office on 01983
716767 or online: bit.ly/4IKwQTz

Good day Readers

Ann and I (Rod) welcome you to our new article and a new Island Heritage Trust Charity we are helping.

If after reading this article you feel you would like to get involved or just go to view the Bembridge Fort to see for yourself what Tim, Ash and David have taken on and the amazing progress they have achieved so far. Strangely enough, many people do not even know that private tours can be arranged to view the turrets, the tunnels and the rooms. In war time, it was a very strategic point, not only for the Isle of Wight but also for shipping to the major ports. In our opinion, this is a very worthwhile project to view and when possible to support the Heritage Trusts on the Isle of Wight and hope you feel the same way. Please read the article below. We have included a picture where a group of us from the Island went along for a very interesting and amazing morning and of course a get together fellowship lunch to share our thoughts.

Bembridge Fort – Reopened!

You may recognise some familiar faces from the attached photograph – we were pleased and really surprised by what we discovered as part of a special tour of the recently partly reopened Bembridge Fort - high up on Culver Down. Despite very blustery weather we joined a great fort tour for the Mercedes Car Club on Saturday 24th along with a trip to the forts second-hand book shop and a great retreat to the Culver Haven for a splendid lunch.

Bembridge Fort was completed in 1867 as one of 22 Victorian ‘Palmerston Forts’ around the Island (including the four Solent Forts) as defensive lines against a perceived threat of a French invasion by Napoleon III after 1859. The fort was used during both the First and Second World Wars. During WW2 the Fort became one of the most secret places in the country, with all three armed services located within the reactivated and now well protected fort. It was critical for the defence of the Island, with many advanced systems developed there.

For over 165 years the doors have been locked due to military use and for the last 50 years it has been a private commercial engineering works, so it has always remained something of a

mystery, but now all that is changing!

The National Trust have owned the fort since 1965 but in October 2024 Bembridge Fort was transferred to the Bembridge Fort Trust (BFT) who have taken on the huge task of the operation, management and restoration of the entire fort. BFT have ambitious plans that will see the whole fort brought back into varied and exciting community use while restoring and preserving the fort and interpreting the fort's role in wartime. The plan is to not only save Bembridge Fort as a building, but also create something that will leave a lasting legacy for future generations.

Bembridge Fort Trust can be reached via info@bembridgefort.org. Many thanks all and especially our volunteer guides Tim, Ash and David.





Dates For Your Diary

Day	Date	Time	Details
Sun	29 rd Jun	10:30 19:30	"Escape to Reality" Encounter Café with Peter Wells Monthly Worship in the Open Air at Rylstone Gardens
Sat	5 th Jul	09:00	Men's Breakfast at Viv's Cooking in Sandown
Sun	6 th Jul	10:30 15:30 18:30	Grace McKenzie will be speaking at our Communion Service STBB in concert at Rylstone Gardens Worship & Prayer at SURC
Sat	12 th Jul	10:30	Ladies' Breakfast at Viv's Cooking
Sun	13 th Jul	10:30 18:30	Our service will have a Street Pastor focus, led by Bob White and Suzanne Worship & Prayer at SURC
Sat	19 th Jul	15:30	Messy Church
Sun	20 th Jul	10:30 15:30	Noma Ncube will be speaking Worship & Prayer at SURC
Tue	22 nd Jul	14:00	Nigel Cox speaking at Bible Bite - last one until 9 th September
Thu	24th Jul	19:30	Church Meeting
Sun	27 th Jul	10:30 15:00 19:30	Encounter Café with Yvonne & Malc Shanklin Community/Youth Bands in concert at Rylstone Gardens Open Air Worship at Rylstone Gardens

Please note that on the Sunday evenings when there is no worship at Rylstone, there will be a service of Worship & Prayer @ 18.30 at SURC



Saturday 19th July
15:30 - 17:30

**Free fun for all the
family**

- no unaccompanied children please

Come and explore Noah's Ark through a Messy Church experience at Shanklin URC - 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 some delicious food.

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

For more information, please speak to Yvonne Sparks or Janet Harley

And please let Yvonne know if you can help in any way – even with clearing up!

Pick up an invite to encourage people you know.

Connection Quiz Answers

1. Meet Joe **Black**
2. Mr **Blue** Sky
3. **Goose** Green
4. Jack **Straw**
5. Gabby **Logan**.
6. Connection: they are all **types of berry**.
7. This issue's cover photo is of: Café Gondrée, by Pegasus Bridge, Bénouville, Normandie. It was the first house to be liberated on D-Day in 1944 (photo © C P Sparks 2024).



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.

A medium one this month.

Enjoy!

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

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	

Last month's Sudoku - how did you do?

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

Across

- 1 Host City of 1992 Olympics (9)
 4 Spanish car manufacturer (4)
 6 3.142 (2)
 7 Not down (2)
 8 Won most women's FA Cups (7)
 10 Glass jam container (3)
 11 Australian flightless bird (3)
 12 Either (2)
 14 Overdrawn *abbr* (2)
 15 - Lynn, WW2 singer (4)
 16 Small battery size (3)
 17 Earn or win, en français (6)
 18 Male offspring (3)
 20 Known or talked about; fame (6)
 21 Medicinal potion (6)
 24 Median or mean value (7)
 26 Its Roman name was Verulamium (2 6)

- 29 Singer, Mr Stewart (3)
 30 IoM Tourist Trophy *initials* (2)
 32 Unhappy (3)
 33 Location of famous tapestry depicting a 1066 battle (6)
 34 The, en français *m* (2)

Down

- 1 Northern French port in the Pas-de-Calais département (8)
 2 First Winter Olympics venue - in 1924 (8)
 3 City on the Loire, 6th largest in France (6)
 4 Spanish for yes (2)
 5 Bank of England street (12)
 6 Used in polite requests (6)
 9 Not polite (4)
 10 Maid of Orleans - a French saint (4 2 3)
 13 Egyptian god of the sun (2)
 19 Not off (2)
 22 Abraham's nephew in OT; an auction item (3)
 23 Used to hang wallpaper (5)
 25 Not stay (2)
 26 . . . - - - . . . *initials* (3)
 27 & (3)
 28 A messy baby will use one when eating (3)
 31 French for 'you' - singular - or Sainsbury's clothing range (2)

Can You Guess The Year?

- Value-added tax was increased to 20% from 17.5% .
- The film The King's Speech, was released in the UK
- A census was conducted in the UK.
- Manchester City won the men's FA Cup, beating Stoke City 1-0.
- And UK No. 1s included:
 - Bruno Mars with '*The Lazy Song*'
 - The Wanted with '*Glad You Came*'
 - Pixie Lott with '*All About Tonight*'
 - Military Wives with '*Wherever You Are*'

Answer next issue

This Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Questions

1. Who was the English monarch after Harold II?
2. What is the currency in Kenya?
3. In what year did the Battle of Marston Moor take place?
4. Who was the Supreme Allied Commander for D-Day?
5. In what year did Brotherhood of Man win Eurovision?
6. When was the EEC formed?
7. What was Cliff Richard's first hit single?
8. Who composed the '*Marriage of Figaro*'?
9. In what year was the Adventures of Tintin first published?
10. In which English county is Truro?

Answers next issue

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

Sunday 20th July

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 2000
- Last issue's crossword ↓

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

Last Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Answers	
1. Harold II	6. 1997
2. Shilling	7. Windy Miller
3. 1346	8. Johann Strauss I
4. Air Chief Marshall Sir Arthur Tedder	9. 1959 (as cartoon) & 1961 (as a book)
5. 1974	10. Wiltshire

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

Tuesday 14:00 Bible Bite ministry in church (until 22nd July)
(Refreshments from 13:30)
Broadcast live on YouTube

19:30 Prayer Meeting on Zoom (see [page 6](#))

Wednesday 11:00 The Well

Friday 10:00 CatURpillars Toddler Group

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

➔ **inside the church**

➔ **on our Facebook page**

➔ **and on our website**

Minister: Rev Brian Harley
Brian is currently on sabbatical
- until 2nd September

Secretary: Robin Wightman
 robinwightman@aol.com

Shanklin URC is a member of the Evangelical Alliance

www.shanklinurc.co.uk

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