

The Link



October 2025



Shanklin United Reformed Church www.shanklinurc.co.uk

View From Number 10



A Missional Moment

The above was the title/theme of the recent meeting of the Evangelical Alliance Council at High Leigh in Hertfordshire which was a truly uplifting and encouraging gathering to be part of. I have been privileged to serve on this group for about 9 years, supporting this wider Gospel work across Britain.

Many of you will have picked up news of the “quiet revival” identified in a survey published by The Bible Society earlier this year. This has been questioned in the media, but people shared from across the four nations of the UK that the tide really has changed and there is now a much greater openness to the Gospel. We are in a missional moment!



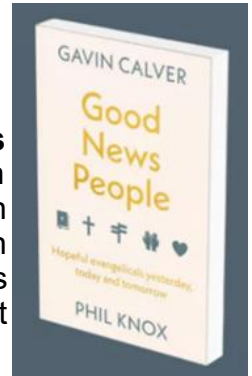
The keynote speaker was Justin Brierley who for many years hosted the Premier Radio “Unbelievable” debates engaging with thinkers with opposing views on Christian faith. He is married to my colleague Rev Lucy Brierley who leads the thriving URC congregation in Woking. He had noticed a shift in the atmosphere over recent years and published a book a couple of years ago -

'The Surprising Rebirth of Belief in God: Why new atheism grew old and secular thinkers are considering Christianity again'

A snappy title, don't you think?

What he saw happening among many of the great thinkers seems to have now spilled over into the wider community where people are seeking after some real answers to life's questions which the “new atheism” of Richard Dawkins and co was not delivering. Justin set the tone for the rest of the meeting as we went on exploring how we might seize the moment and help those seeking the Lord to find a home in the church. It was all so inspiring and heartening. I shared about this with the Wight Church Team and we all want to pray this into being on the Island.

Gavin Calver and Phil Knox (who spoke at Shanklin last year)



launched a new book at the meeting - **Good News People**. This looks at what it means to be an evangelical (good news person!) in the UK, with stories from up and down the land about faith coming alive today. The title has different overtones across the pond! It was written before the recent shift in the tide and looks like a really great read.

These seem to be exciting times to be a Christian in Britain – but it was also noted that we must challenge the way that some have used Christianity to back the new surge of nationalism that has hit the headlines. Many Christian symbols and Bible texts were evident at the recent rally organised by Tommy Robinson, but this movement seems so far removed from Gospel values. I'm sure many of you have read various critiques of it and we should be concerned that this does not tarnish the reputation of true believers who follow the sacrificial way of Christ and his generous love.

In my talk on Invitation and Welcome on 21st September I asked how we might seize the moment and become more courageous in reaching out to friends and neighbours and inviting them to explore the faith. Twenty of us recently spent a Saturday together at Ryde exploring how we might move forward positively as a church and see kingdom growth in our church life and community. The Elders will be meeting for a day retreat (or advance?) on 25th October to seek the Lord and take things forward. We can all join in praying further on 7th - 8th November when we hold another Sabbath of Prayer.

Let's grow closer to Jesus and in relationship to one another as we explore what God wants for us in this new missional moment...

With very best wishes,

Brian

Prayer



Monday Prayer – a new weekly meeting begins on 13th October at 13:00 at church. This is especially to pray about our priorities for us as God's people going forward and seeking kingdom growth.

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 Sabbath of Prayer

Coming up next month on

Friday 7th November – Saturday 8th November.

Look out for details of this dedicated 24-hours of prayer with three gatherings at the church, as we have done on previous occasions over recent years. It will give us a special opportunity to seek God together as we discern his priorities as we consider the challenges and creative ideas from ***Leading Your Church into Growth***.

SURC October Prayer Diary

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

Happy praying

Wed 1	The Well - volunteers, regulars and visitors	Sat 18	Harvest Chip Supper
Thu 2	Brian and Janet Harley	Sun 19	Church tech team - and for the tech used
Fri 3	The Elders	Mon 20	Teachers and students at the start of half-term
Sat 4	Today's Messy Church	Tue 21	The Persecuted Church
Sun 5	Today's Communion service	Wed 22	Organisations supporting the Persecuted Church
Mon 6	Work of the Evangelical Alliance	Thu 23	Christian youth work in The Bay
Tue 7	Bible Bite	Fri 24	Work of CARE
Wed 8	Applications for Youth Ministry Worker	Sat 25	Elders' Autumn Retreat
Thu 9	Churches in The Bay	Sun 26	Today's Encounter café service
Fri 10	CatURpillars Toddler Group	Mon 27	The text prayer network, and for Lou who organises it
Sat 11	Shanklin Town Council	Tue 28	Our Prayer Zoom meeting
Sun 12	Isle of Wight Council	Wed 29	Work of the Mountbatten Hospice
Mon13	UK Government	Thu 30	Those who aren't well enough to get to church
Tue 14	European Union	Fri 31	Light Alternative in church
Wed 15	United Nations		
Thu 16	World peace		
Fri 17	IoW Youth for Christ		

A Message for September 2025

28 August 2025

Dear friends,

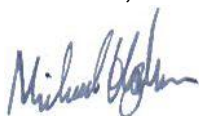
September has always felt more like the true beginning of the year to me than January ever does. In church life we walk our way through the life of Jesus from Advent to Pentecost, and now we begin the cycle again by turning to creation. Scripture begins with God's delight in creation: *"God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good"* (Genesis 1:31). The earth is not ours to use up, but God's gift in which we share, entrusted to our care as part of creation. When the land suffers, as it has this summer, we are reminded of Paul's words: *"The whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now"* (Romans 8:22). This Season of Creation is a time for us to join our prayers with creation's groaning, and to renew our calling, as fellow creatures, to *"serve and keep"* the earth (Genesis 2:15), caring for the web of life of which we are a part.

September is also the beginning of the academic year. When we learn, teach, and seek understanding we are honouring God. Jesus himself was called *"Teacher"*, and now is a good time to give thanks for all who teach, guide, and encourage the young. Even if your church has no young people, this is still a good time to pray for students and staff.

This year, in particular, we are living through a time of heightened tension about immigration. Again and again, Scripture calls God's people to remember their own history: *"You shall love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt"* (Deuteronomy 10:19). *"When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God"* (Leviticus 19:33–34). Abraham and Sarah set out in faith towards a new home (Genesis 12:1), Israel knew exile and return, and Jesus himself was once a refugee in Egypt (Matthew 2:14–15). The church is most truly the church when it embodies this welcome. I especially want to reassure all Ministers, Elders, and members who have come to the UK from around the world that you are not only welcome among us, but that we treasure the insights and experiences you bring to enrich us.

In all these things we hold fast to the unshakable promise: *“Nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Romans 8:39).

With my thanks for all that you do for God’s work through the United Reformed Church, and with prayers for every local church and minister,



Michael Hopkins
Wessex Synod Moderator

Treasures to Find!

Do look out regularly for new booklets coming from **Our Daily Bread Ministries**.

These easy to red resources are full of treasures to help in our walk with the Lord.

One such is, **‘Prayers of the Bible at a Glance’**.

It lists 23 prayers from the Old Testament and 16 from the New Testament.

We will be sharing during our times of Worship and prayer on a Sunday (17:00 at Shanklin URC, except on the second Sunday of the month, when we will share in worship across The Bay) some thoughts on prayer, dipping into some of these prayers.

The Scriptures, our Handbooks for life, are full of wonderful treasures to guide us on our earthly journey and the prayers of the Bible are a blueprint for us, covering all kinds of situations that are relatable to us. May they be a help to us all in our prayer lives. Again, do look out for these booklets and do join us on Sunday afternoons to seek the Lord together.

Blessings in Jesus’s Name

Jane H

Source: [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#)

PS If you’d like to receive their Daily Reading notes (free), please ask me, or go to www.odbm.org/en-GB/.

Church Meeting

27th November 2025 @ 19:30

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

...or join via our regular Zoom link

Refreshments from 19:00

Please pick up an agenda and minutes when available

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



Can You Help Out???

Have you got 45 minutes to spare on Tuesday lunchtimes, perhaps once a month?

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

Hannah both sets up the counter beforehand and clears away after Bible Bite, which she is happy to continue to do... so we need 2 or 3 folk prepared to come in at about 13:15 to be ready to serve between 13:30 and 14:00.

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

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



Robin

Chip Supper – Saturday 18th October

18:30 – open from 18:00 for welcome drinks

**Cakes are invited to round off
- with teas and coffee.**

Brian will then share some stories and pictures from his trip to Africa in June – to Uganda and Madagascar.

Please sign the list on the board at the back of the church with your choice of order by Tuesday 14th. Money will be collected on the day.



All are very welcome – do bring a friend along.
This is a really great opportunity to give people a first taste of our church community.

*If cost is an issue, please have a quiet word with Brian or Robin.
We want everyone to be able to come.*

Connection Quiz

1. The future George IV was given what title on the 5th February 1811?
2. The tomb of the ancient Egyptian pharaoh Tutankhamun was discovered in November 1922 by which British archaeologist?
3. What took place on Saturday, 6th May 2023 at Westminster Abbey?
4. Who was the Reverend character in Cluedo?
5. Elizabeth II, Victoria, Anne, Mary are collectively what?
6. So, what is the **connection** between the answers to questions 1 - 5?
7. And bonus question... where was the cover photo taken? Hint... If you need a hint, it's not in Shanklin!!



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 26th October,
and led by Brian**

a great day to invite friends along

– café serving from 10:15

Website of the month

www.odbm.org/en-GB/devotional where a daily
devotional can be accessed for free

Shanklin United Reformed Church

In the High Street - at the heart of the town



On a dark evening, why not try...

A Light Alternative



17:00 - 19:00

Friday 31st October

Open House

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

**Games Crafts Snacks
Drinks Chat**

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

Reverend Ashley Trask (Imtiaz)

He will be visiting Shanklin URC over the weekend of 21st -24th November. He will be speaking at several events, as follows:



Saturday 22nd ~ Joint Fellowship Breakfast @ Viv's
Cooking from 10 am ~ Imtiaz will be sharing testimony ~ please sign up on the list at the back of the church

Sunday 23rd ~ Preaching @ SURC Morning Worship (10:30)

Sunday 23rd ~ Speaking at The Bay Evening Shared Worship (17:00)

Monday 24th ~ Sharing details of his work in Pakistan over the past year @ SURC (10:30)

Imtiaz will be in Pakistan from 10th October until 15th November and asks us to pray for all the people his team will meet and,

- For healing for Miss Mehak and Miss Neelam, and their family, in mind, body and spirit, after a recent car accident.
- For safety and good health, and against anxiety and worry
- Pray against the work of the enemy
- For safe journeys in our travels
- For anointing as we minister to the broken and hurting
- For the team in this ministry

Some of you will be aware of the work of his team in Pakistan, and Imtiaz has requested that two of them be allowed to visit us with him next year. We have provided invitations, and Imtiaz will shortly be applying for the appropriate visas for Neelam and Mehak (Grace) Shahbaz. We hope to be able to welcome them in March next year. Please keep this in your prayers.



I receive regular updates and prayer requests from Imtiaz. If you don't already receive these but would like to, please let me know, and I'll add you to the group.

Robin

Shared Worship in The Bay



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

At a recent meeting it was agreed that all our Sunday gatherings will now be at 17:00 and will follow this pattern:

Shared Worship on 2nd Sunday each month at different churches with a more informal time of worship and prayer on the other weeks – at the URC, as happened over the summer months.

The meeting on 12th October will be **at Sandown Baptist Church**

Outreach Together

Ann Burnell is organising for “The Bay Band” to play again at the Sandown Christmas event on Saturday 13th December at 11:00 in the High Street.

Gift bags will again be given out to children and families. Your help and support would be much appreciated.

We plan to contribute some small Christmas puzzle books.

We are prayerfully exploring whether we should do something in Shanklin on the previous Saturday.

Alternative Gift Catalogues

Dare we say it, Christmas is not many weeks off!

How about a different approach this year to giving gifts and puzzling over what our loved ones need or would appreciate!

Or, as we have tried to do for some years, giving smaller gifts to family and friends and then giving money for such as a goat, honeybees, chickens, helping to supply clean water, etc., and to us seeking to bless those who have so very little and who struggle even with everyday needs. Also, it has been enjoyable to pour over the catalogues with family and they choosing to do the same for us! It's a 'win/win' situation we feel!

There are very many Christian and other ministries that now have similar schemes, such as Tearfund, Barnabas, Release, Open Doors to name a few, but the one that we have used that also covers so many different possible gift opportunities is **Samaritan's Purse** – who are also the ministry that runs the Shoebbox Appeal.

We hope to have some of their catalogues in church soon, but you can go to www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/be-part-of-it/give/gift-catalogue for more details of the 33 gifts of hope you can give.

Do take a catalogue or go online and browse and see how far as little as £5, we can bless those who are so grateful and whose lives can be transformed by these gifts. Christmas can then become an even more meaningful time for those who give and those who receive. If you do it online, it is an easy three step process:

Step 1: Choose your gift

Step 2: Select a card option

Step 3: Make a life-long impact

The beauty of this scheme too is that they can be used all year round for birthdays, anniversaries, etc.

I would be happy to share more if I can be of help.

Blessings in Jesus' Name,

Jane H



Shoebox Appeal

Following on from last month's article in The Link, we now have some news of events to support this ministry.

Firstly, in our own church, Sandra Snell will have a display of boxes and items to include and will be available to share with anyone who wishes to know more about this amazing work of God and how we can support it. This will be at **The Well** on **Wednesday 22nd October** (from 11:00 – 13:00).

Do please pass the message on, come and have coffee and cake and a chat and be inspired to bless dear children across the world with these wonderful gifts that have been a stepping stone to countless children across the world giving their lives to Jesus!

Other fund-raising events for this are at 45 Alfred Road, Lake with Sandra and Jonathan and are as follows:

- **Coffee Morning** – Friday 10th October from 10:30.
- **Tea Afternoon** – Thursday 16th October from 14:00.
- **Three Course Meal** – Friday 10th and Friday 17th October, 18:30 (names to Sandra – messages can be left on 01983 408266 or a text message sent to 07835 486128. Cost of the meal is £12.50.

We have been to some of these events over the last few years and it has been so good to have fellowship with others over a lovely meal and at the same time having the opportunity to support Operation Christmas Child.

Do ask if you'd like to know more. In the meantime, do keep collecting items for the shoeboxes (leaflets will soon be on the table in the lobby), if you are able. Also do say if you'd like a flatpack for your box or to give a monetary gift towards transportation, do let me know.

Thank you so much!

Jane H





“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)

Understanding Who You Are

Over the last couple of months, we have looked at both the Law and the Will of God. Neil Anderson explains that in exercising God's Will, it is vital that we know who we are, and this is what he has to say ...

“For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” Romans 8:14

I enjoy asking people, "Who are you?" It sounds like a simple question requiring a simple answer, but it really isn't. For example, if someone asked me, "Who are you?" I might answer, "Neil Anderson".

"No, that's your name. Who are you?"

"I'm an American".

"No, that's where you live".

I could also say that I'm five feet nine inches tall (1.75 metres) and a little over 150 pounds (68 kg) - actually quite a little over 150 pounds (68 kg)! But my physical dimensions and appearance aren't me either. If you chopped off my arms and legs, would I still be me? If you transplanted my heart, kidneys or liver, would I still be me? Of course! Now, if you keep chopping, you'll get to me eventually because I'm in here somewhere. But who I am is far more than what you see on the outside.

“So, from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.” 2 Corinthians 5:16

We may say with the apostle Paul that we, "recognise no man according to the flesh". But we tend to identify each other and ourselves primarily by physical appearance (tall, short, stocky,

slender) or by what we do (plumber, carpenter, nurse, engineer, clerk). Furthermore, when asked to identify ourselves in relation to our faith, we usually talk about our doctrinal position (Protestant, Evangelical, Calvinist, Charismatic), our denominational preference (Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Independent), or our role in the church (Sunday school teacher, choir member, deacon, usher).

But is who you are determined by what you do, or is what you do determined by who you are? That's an important question, especially as it relates to Christian maturity. I subscribe to the latter. I believe wholeheartedly that your hope for growth, meaning and fulfilment as a Christian is based on understanding who you are - specifically your identity in Christ as a child of God. Your understanding of who you are in Christ will greatly determine how you live your life.

Lord Jesus, I know I am complete in You. Don't allow me to fall back into fleshly attributes today in an attempt to impress others or You. .

Neil Anderson

Freedom in Christ Ministries

Daily Devotionals

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Neil's Freedom In Christ course majors on **Who We Are in Him** and suggests three phrases which we need to take to heart:

I am Accepted:

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

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

I am Significant:

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

“I can do all this through him who gives me

strength.” (Philippians 4:13)

I am Secure:

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

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

Neil explores this in more detail in the article printed in the October 2024 Link, which can still be found on our website.

Those who attended the two “Freedom” courses earlier this year were given a pamphlet from Rose Publishing which explores the topic... I have some of these left and will put them out in the church in October. Please do take a copy for your family, if you haven’t had one before.

Lord, help us to be always aware of the status You have granted us in Your Kingdom. Help us to know that You will always be with us, protecting us and helping us to be the people You want us to be. We ask this in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Robin

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The
**United
Reformed
Church**

Heaven's Grocery Store

I was walking down life's highway a long, long time ago.
One day I saw a sign that read, '**Heaven's Grocery Store.**'
As I got a little closer, the door opened wide, and I found myself standing inside.

I saw a host of **angels**. They were standing everywhere.
One handed me a basket and said, "My Child, shop with care."

Everything a human needed was in that grocery store.
And if you couldn't carry it all, you could come back the next day for more.

First, I got some **patience** and **love** was in the same row.
Further down was **understanding**, you need that everywhere you go.

I got a box or two of **wisdom**, a bag or two of **faith**.
I just couldn't miss the **Holy Ghost**, for it was all over the place.

I stopped to get some **strength** and **courage to help me run this race**.

By then my basket was getting full, but I remembered I needed some **grace**.

I didn't forget **salvation**, for **salvation** was free.
So I tried to get enough of that to save both you and me.

Then I started up to the counter to pay my grocery bill.
For I thought I had everything to do the **Master's** will.

As I went up the aisle, I saw **prayer**, and I just had to put that in,
for I knew when I stepped outside, I would run into sin.

Peace and **joy** were plentiful; they were last on the shelf.
Song and **praise** were hanging near, so I just helped myself.

Then I said to the angel, "Now, how much do I owe?"

He smiled again and said, "**My child, Jesus paid your bill a long, long time ago.**"

By Ron DeMarco
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What one school thinks of Open the Book



Standing with the team in this photo, Mr Jon Kirby is the Head Teacher of a school in Ryde. He sent the following to The Bible Society:

We are really appreciative of the incredible work of the "Open the Book," and the significant impact they have had on our Dover Park Primary School.

Their visits have brought Bible stories to life in ways that have captivated and inspired our children. Each session is thoughtfully crafted, engaging, and deeply meaningful, leaving a lasting impression on the children. The group's creativity and dedication enrich our school community and help to instil values of kindness and respect.

The children absolutely love the assemblies and eagerly look forward to them each week. They are always excited to see which story will be brought to life next, and the pupil participation makes them even more enjoyable. It's lovely to see the children's enthusiasm and engagement during the assemblies.

We have also noticed children making meaningful connections between the stories re-enacted by Open the Book and our Religious Education (RE) curriculum. Children often comment about stories they have shared with Open the Book in their lessons and this helps the children to deepen their understanding.

We are incredibly grateful for Open the Book's commitment to sharing Bible stories with the children and the joy they bring each time they visit.

Teacher Quotes:

"The sessions help children remember bible stories and they make great links to the RE curriculum. Children often talk about what they have learned during Open the book Assemblies and they really look forward to them. (Holly - Year 3 teacher)

"It's great that children hear stories from the bible in a fun and interactive way." (Maria - Y5 teacher)

"Open the Book really go the extra mile to bring Bible stories to life." (Mike- Year 6 teacher)

Pupil Quotes:

"We really love joining in." Rosie

"It's always enjoyable and fun and we enjoy the acting." Gabriel

As you can see, Open the Book is an amazing ministry to precious children. Do you know anyone who might be willing to join a team?

What's happening with The Quiet Revival?

Back in April, a Bible Society report showed that more people in Britain are regularly attending church and reading the Bible. Dr Rob Barward-Symmons, co-author of The Quiet Revival, speaks about the aftermath of the report's release.

'It's been amazing to see how it's continued to spread across the Christian space,' says Rob, who worked alongside Dr Rhiannon McAleer on the report.

Since the report was released, Rob and Rhiannon have been interviewed for podcasts, webinars, TV programmes and newspapers for global audiences. 'Where lots of coverage of Christianity is still quite negative, this has provided an opportunity for people to write about the appeal of church and the Bible in the mainstream space where they haven't had the opportunity in a while,' Rob says.

To read this article in full please go to www.biblesociety.org.uk/latest/news/whats-happening-with-the-quiet-revival

IDoP 2025

What does this stand for, you might ask?

It is: International Day of Prayer, for the persecuted church – this year being marked as usual by many ministries that exist to support and bring the situation of our persecuted brothers and sisters to the attention of the ‘free’ world and the date this year being:

Sunday 2nd November

with the theme being: **Pastors under Pressure**.

News of persecuted believers very rarely reaches the headlines, even though we are living in days when persecution of Christians continues to rise.

However, in spite of this, God is drawing many to Himself out of the nations and this includes many from nations where believers have to remain hidden. Jesus said, “I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it,” – may we pray for those for whom following Jesus can even cost their lives, but all the time praying that in the freedoms we have we will let our lights shine for Jesus.

Do please take and read the new **Release International** magazine and prayer leaflet, with a prayer for each day (October – December 2025). And on the International Day of Prayer may we raise our voices on behalf of the suffering church, uniting with thousands of Christians throughout the nations in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Articles in this quarters magazine include:

- Faith under fire
- When flight is the only option
- Hopes and fears of a Christian nation
- How £8 changed a life
- Was martyr’s death a tragedy?

Do read and be encouraged to stand with our persecuted family and in seeing how God is at work, even in the darkest of circumstances.

A prayer to use for the International Day of Prayer – and beyond.

Heavenly Father,

Grant my persecuted brothers and sisters Your unending grace as they face challenges of many different types, whether bereavement, injury, imprisonment, being forced to flee their homes, general discrimination or surveillance.

May my persecuted brothers and sisters daily experience the fulfilment of Your promise, 'that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose' (Romans 8:28).

Let their testimonies encourage me to live wholeheartedly for You despite any challenges this brings me.

In Jesus' precious name I pray.

Amen.

Blessings in Jesus' Name,

Jane H

Source: Release International

 Open Doors
ARISE AFRICA
**Unite in prayer with
the church in Africa** 
Arise Africa, an Online Event:
22nd October 19:30 - 20:30
A chance to pray online with other Christians in the UK and Africa.
To register go to www.opendoorsuk.org/resources/webinars/ and
follow the link to register to take part.

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/viewlatesteditionpage.htm) has several great articles, including the headline article, '**Gangster Finds Mercy** - A near-death experience leads gangster to forgiveness'.

Other contributions include:

- **Spiritualist Sees the Light** - A medium believed she was helping people until she was enlightened by Jesus
- **Astrologer Finds Heavenly Power** - The psychic who didn't predict she'd turn to Christ
- **Ozzy Osbourne** - Did 'Prince of Darkness' find the light?
- **Alice Cooper** - Veteran rock star says heaven and hell are real and he answers to Jesus
- **Love Island Presenter And Prayer** - Maya Jama believes in prayer and thankfulness
- **Hulk Hogan Found Peace** - Wrestling icon died knowing "my Lord and Saviour"

Good News... for a change



Future Church Meetings

It has been suggested that we review the days and times that we hold Church Meetings, especially during the winter months. This is with a view to enabling as many folk as possible to attend. Our Zoom link for those online will remain in place.

One suggestion is to have a bring-and-share lunch immediately following our Sunday service and then to convene the Church Meeting after that. In light of our prayer ministry work and refreshments after the service, this might be difficult to achieve. Also, many folk use Sunday afternoons for family/friends-oriented activities.

It was agreed at the Church Meeting that I would consult all regular worshippers regarding their thoughts and preferences on when and how we should hold our meetings. I will be emailing all who use technology about this, but if you would like to provide me with any written comments over the coming month, that would be great too!

The intention is for Elders to discuss your ideas/thoughts in early November, and then a discussion on the future of our meeting will be on the agenda for our Church Meeting on November 27th.

Robin

Prayer Alert: Russian pastor imprisoned for criticising war

Moscow pastor Nikolai Romanyuk has been sentenced to four years' imprisonment in a labour camp for expressing his opposition to the war in Ukraine.

The 63-year-old church leader was arrested last October after speaking out against the war.

The Balashikha City Court further imposed a three-year ban on Romanyuk administering websites.

He intends to appeal to the Moscow Regional Court, but his daughter commented, 'We all understand perfectly well that there will be no fundamental changes.'

Source: [Release International](#)

Thank you

Dear Church family

This is to say a very big 'thank you' for all of you who united to give me the best birthday ever. Never was there such a birthday as my 70th!! There I was on Wednesday 17th not another thought in my head but to pop into the Well to say Hi and have a cup of tea before being taken to the Amazon World by Denise and a friend, Tracey. When i got there,



surprise number one awaited me....flowers from the church, cake from Melodie (which i had unknowingly helped to make) and another cake from Pat, and a bring & share spread brought by you all my dear thoughtful and loving church family along with some gifts. Thank you all so much. I was completely taken by surprise!!

Special thanks to Pat Blair for initiating my party at the Well. It was lovely!!

I don't know if many of you know how good Amazon World is. We were fortunate enough to witness the sloths, the ring-tailed lemurs and the anteater being fed. They have capybara and many other amazing amazon creatures, a variety of birds and an impressive museum. Its was drizzly but we think we saw everything. We did a quick tour through Thompsons and had a pleasant pub meal at Pointers.

By then i was sure my birthday treat was over. Well on Thursday 18th I was innocently doing my shift at 50plus serving teas and washing up when Mel and Roy arrived with our niece, Kelly (a paramedic in High Wycombe), in tow. I sustained quite a severe shock (similar to a mild heart attack) but recovered enough to enjoy her 3-day



visit. And i thought to myself surely this must be the end of the birthday treats. This was also the evening our home group meeting and Melodie screened, instead of our usual podcast, a video put together by Melodie and our brother (Kelly's father), about my life. It was very moving and I received so much encouragement, acceptance, and affirmation, much of it by yourselves. I can't tell you what it meant to me, and thank you all who participated!! By this time I was overwhelmed by love and a warm glow.

My birthday, Friday the 19th, dawned the same time as usual and I was just finishing off my devotions when there a knock on my door. Who should walk in but our ex-Sister-in-law, Kelly's mum, Robyn!! I sustained another mild heart attack!!! Oh my word i was so taken by surprise I started crying!! We had a a lovely morning chatting together preparing lunch for ourselves and the weekly worship group that meets in our home. After a very tasty meal (a traditional South African dish of curried mince) Robyn had to leave to get back to the mainland.

The meeting was as usual, with the eight of us, and we listened again to the video done by just about everybody I know on the island and my family. It is astounding to me!!

I said to Melodie after this milestone birthday that I now have an enormous reputation to keep up. If I fall short will somebody tell me????

Much love, your sister in Christ

Carol W

Focus

**on our Christian Brothers and Sisters being
persecuted for their faith**

***Nigerian Christians need your help
after deadly attacks***

More than 200 Christians were killed and thousands displaced after attacks by radical Islamist militants in Benue State, Nigeria. Now they need your help for survival.

Radical Islamist militants attacked Christians in June in a wave of brutal assaults. For those mourning and fearful, the ordeal was only just beginning.

Now, months later, many thousands have lost their homes and are displaced. They face life-threatening scarcity of food, medicine and shelter. They urgently need your help.

“They killed many of our people”

“They invaded our village at night, around 10pm,” says Imma*, one of the survivors. “They killed many of our people, including many of my husband’s family.”

“After the attack, they burned down buildings, including stores where mothers and children were sleeping,” adds Simon*, another survivor from Benue.

The community were warned of the attacks, but they couldn’t escape. The militants burned down the food stores where some of the villagers were sleeping, because their homes had been destroyed in previous attacks.

Not enough food

Believers are living in temporary, makeshift accommodation in an international market. They have lost everything.

“Because all of our food supplies have been burned, we don’t have any food to eat,” says Imma. “Since we arrived here, not all of us

found a place to sleep. And there's not enough food. I pray that God empowers fellow believers to help us."

"The situation is really not good – people are still hungry," says Virtue*, a local Open Doors partner supporting Christians displaced by these assaults. "When you interview anybody, they tell you their main problem is hunger."

Equipping Open Doors partners

Support for Open Doors' ongoing Arise Africa campaign means our local partners have been able to help a few hundred believers already. But the scale of the emergency is huge, and more funding is needed, fast.

Open Doors partners have identified 9,000 people who have lost everything and are in critical need of assistance.

Simon puts it plainly: "To anyone who can help us, please support us who are displaced by extremists."

And do keep praying for our Nigerian brothers and sisters. Your prayers are crucial as they combat the terrible aftermath of these vicious attacks.

Sign the petition

You can add your voice to the Arise Africa petition, answering the call of the African church to join them in calling for protection, justice and restoration. Go to:

www.opendoorsuk.org/act/arise-africa/africa-petition/

Please pray

Heavenly Father, please sustain and comfort Christians who are mourning, injured or fearful in the wake of these attacks.

Provide food, shelter, medicine and encouragement for those who have lost everything.

May Your sovereign power and endless love thwart the plans of those who choose to do evil to our brothers and sisters.

Amen.

For the latest news go to: www.opendoorsuk.org/news/latest-news/

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

Isle of Wight Street Pastors



Street Pastors are trained Christian volunteers from Island churches who provide a practical, caring, and non-judgemental presence on the streets at night and at events, to help people in need and improve community safety.

Street Pastors serve as '**the church in action**', offering tangible assistance like flip-flops, water, or help to get home, and a listening ear or prayer, with the goal of sharing God's love through their actions and providing a positive influence.

Street Pastors show the love that Jesus has for everyone with a non-threatening uniformed presence.

We regularly attend Island events such the IoW Festival, Cowes Week, Scooter Rally and some carnivals

We also run a Safe Space in Newport Bus Station on Friday and Saturday nights and this has already reduced the crime rates around the bus station on the nights it is open.

Isle of Wight Street Pastors are currently recruiting for more volunteers to enable us to continue growing in our ministry.

We are being asked to increase our patrols not only in Newport and Ryde but to also start patrolling in other towns on the Island and at more events and to also increase the nights that our Safe Space is open in Newport Bus Station, but this can only be done if we have more volunteers.

Requirements: -

- Be at least 18 years old, with no upper limit (our oldest currently is in their 70s)
- Be a committed Christian who has been attending a local church for at least a year
- Provide good references and pass a DBS check
- All abilities welcome (has been known for volunteers to patrol on mobility scooters and we have the safe space you can do if your mobility is not great)
- Care about their community.

- Able to offer at least one night a month, more is welcome.

Please get in touch if you would like to know more about Street Pastors or to volunteer.

✉: suzanne@iowstreetpastors.org.uk

☎: 07511 163632

Suzanne

Street Pastor Coordinator



Southern Vectis
Part of Southdown

NEWPORT BUS STATION

SAFE SPACE

A safe place to...

- WAIT FOR FRIENDS** (Icon: group of people)
- RECEIVE FIRST AID** (Icon: cross)
- GET ADVICE & SUPPORT** (Icon: speech bubble)
- HELP GETTING HOME** (Icon: map with A and B points)
- REPORT ASB OR ANY CONCERNS** (Icon: notepad and pencil)

Pop in & talk to us!

In partnership with

- Isle of Wight Constabulary
- Street Pastors



The Well

a place for

Living Well Together

Drop in at any point

Wednesdays 11:00 – 13:00

A safe place for friendship, a chat,
support and refreshments



And sausage rolls!



Towards an Eco Island

An inspirational and practical conference to help you on your NZC journey

**Saturday 18th October,
10am to 2pm, Newport Minster**

£5 per person

With contributions from St Helens Church, St Helens (Eco Church Gold award winners), and St Mildred's Church, Whippingham (Eco Church Silver award winners), and the diocesan net zero teams of Portsmouth and Guildford.

Book at: bit.ly/iow-nzc-25



CreationMatters!





Dates For Your Diary

Day	Date	Time	Details
Sat	4 th Oct	15:30	Messy Church
Sun	12 th Oct	17:00	Shared worship at Sandown Baptist
Sat	18 th Oct	10:00 18:30	Towards an Eco Island in Newport Chip Supper (see page 9)
Sun	19 th Oct	10:30	Paul Fryatt will be speaking
Sat	25 th Oct	10:00	Elders' Retreat at Ryde
Sun	26 th Oct	10:30	Encounter Café Service (see page 10)
Fri	31 st Oct	17:00	Light Alternative drop-in (see page 11)
	7-8 Nov		Sabbath of Prayer - watch out for more details nearer the time
Sat	15 th Nov	19:00	Big Quiz for Tearfund
	21-24 Nov		Visit of Imtiaz (see page 12)
Thu	27 th Nov	19:30	Church Meeting
Sat	13 th Dec	19:30	Shanklin Town Brass Band's annual Christmas Concert



Saturday
15th November 2025
19:00

For an evening of fun and entertainment

More details nearer the time

Connection Quiz Answers

1. Prince **Regent**
2. Howard **Carter**
3. **Coronation** of Charles III
4. **Green**
5. **Queens**.
6. Connection: they are all **roads in Shanklin**, Regent Street, Carter Avenue, Coronation Gardens, Green Lane and Queens Road.
7. This issue's cover photo is of: O2 Class locomotive 'Calbourne' in Havenstreet Station yard on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway.



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!

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

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

Last month's Sudoku - how did you do?

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

Across

- 1 'A Year in -' 1989 book by Peter Mayle (8)
 5 Seabird with Great and Arctic species (4)
 7 Geoff -, scored hat trick in 1966 World Cup final (5)
 9 Sport, union or league, with an oval type ball (5)
 11 Australian rock group *initials* (4)
 12 ABBA's fourth studio album (7)
 13 Unclothed, could be necessities (4)
 16 Spanish car manufacturer (4)
 18 Payment for work (4)
 19 Don't go (4)
 21 - *Gems*, McVitie's biscuits (4)
 22 Second largest city in Wales (7)
 26 Bed, en français (3)
 27 Warminster safari park (8)

- 30 Chemical element Sn (3)
 31 'A - -' David Essex song (6'1 4)
 32 Don't stay (2)

Down

- 1 French capital (5)
 2 'Orinoco Flow' singer (4)
 3 ' - of Fire' 1981 film (8)
 4 European Union *initials* (2)
 5 Market stands for the sale of goods (6)
 6 Climb or walk to the summit of a mountain or hill (6)
 8 Brian's abbreviated title (3)
 10 Storage place for a car (6)
 13 Blood Alcohol Content *initials* (3)
 14 Rouge, en anglais (3)
 15 - *Fruits*, now *Starburst* (4)
 17 - *Grace*, John Newton hymn (7)
 18 Wood used to make cricket bats (6)
 20 Exclamation used when feeling pain (2)
 23 - Mansell, ex F1 driver (5)
 24 Saint or street abbreviation (2)
 25 US musical comedy-drama TV series 2009-15 (4)
 28 French for no (3)
 29 Very young child (3)

Can You Guess The Year?

- Robin Cousins wins gold at the Winter Olympics.
- Vauxhall launches the Astra, replacing the Viva
- Britain's first nudist beach opens, in Brighton.
- British Leyland announces its Morris Ital range of cars
- West Ham won the men's FA Cup, beating Arsenal 1-0.
- And UK No. 1s included:
 - Blondie with '*Atomic*'
 - The Jam with '*Going Underground*'
 - ABBA with '*The Winner Takes It All*'
 - Johnny Logan with '*What's Another Year*'

Answer next issue

Name the Sweets - *unravel the clues to find 10 sweets*

1. Frankie Vaughn wanted it
2. Wobbly infants
3. Talk quietly
4. Big bus
5. Spin around
6. Lorry drives snack
7. 100% Au
8. Istanbul harem
9. Big cat's pub
10. Sport for princes

Answers next issue

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

Sunday 19th October

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 1970
- Last issue's crossword ↓

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

Last Issue's 'Name the Sweets' Quiz Answers

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Snickers | 6. Kit Kat |
| 2. Quality Street | 7. Roses |
| 3. Mars Bar | 8. Milk Tray |
| 4. Smarties | 9. Matchmakers |
| 5. Treats | 10. Chocolate Buttons |

Sunday Service

- Morning** **10:30 Morning Worship** in church
Broadcast live on YouTube
- ➔ **Holy Communion** on 1st Sunday of each month
- ➔ **All Age Encounter 'café style' service**
on last Sunday of each month
- Evening** **17:00 Worship and Prayer** in church (see [page 13](#))
Except on 2nd Sunday of the month

Weekday Activities

- Monday** **13:00 Prayer Meeting** in church (from 13th October)
- Tuesday** **14:00 Bible Bite** ministry in church
Refreshments & fellowship from 13:30
- 19:30 Prayer Meeting** on Zoom (see [page 4](#))
- Wednesday** **11:00 The Well**
- Friday** **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**



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

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