

# The Link



# April 2023



Shanklin United Reformed Church [www.shanklinurc.co.uk](http://www.shanklinurc.co.uk)

# View From Number 10



## Help keep a warm space

It feels pretty well impossible to make our old church building a genuinely warm space in the coldest winter months – though one of the Shanklin Town Brass Band did say at Christmas that it's a lot warmer than his house!

We have done quite a bit over the years to both keep out the cold and to improve the heating within. This has not been without its challenges, including having a whole new gas supply to the building to serve an industrial size boiler (will this all soon be confined to history??).

We replaced the overhead fires with a programmable radiator system, and this was later refined with extra convectors to improve the performance. We provided a hot air curtain to the doors to the porch and then added secondary glazing to many of the windows.

At the time, we left the large windows at the front and the ones in the balcony because of the expense; we prioritised the areas where most people sat – but it's not been that comfortable for some of the musicians during morning worship, and though the 'Tech' Team do have a convector heater in their area, a lot of cold air comes off the back windows which face the prevailing wind.

Church Meeting decided we should now tackle these windows to try and conserve energy and so we commissioned a quote from the people that did such a fine job with the other windows and also constructed the beautiful screen to the old organ chamber.

Having decided in January that we should go ahead in faith with much of the work, we then got an email in February from Synod telling us about new Net Zero Grants. These are for possibly 50% of costs - the higher level of grant being designed to encourage churches in their efforts to move towards the 'net zero' goal.

We are in the process of submitting an application which will be presented at Church Meeting. Assuming we get that help, we would



aim to try and do all three areas that are outstanding at a total cost of around £15,000. We anticipate that we'd have to find half of that.

Though we do have some money in hand, there are other jobs also lined up and already agreed – the statutory electrical test, final areas of painting, a roof repair above the basement entrance – and various improvements to the a/v system (which we also have a grant towards).

As was agreed at Church Meeting, we are therefore asking the whole church family to pray about whether they can make a special one-off gift as a thank-offering to God for all he has done among us here. Many of those who have been part of the church for a number of years have given generously to help make the building what it is today, for which we are so thankful to God. Some of you have joined in recent years and enjoyed the benefits! People who attended the recent music night were so positive about the facilities we have - they are such a blessing, and the glory belongs to the Lord!

The Elders would ask everyone to give careful consideration as to whether they have spare resources that can be released to help with the work. Not everyone will be able to give, but many of us may well be able to assist in raising some extra funds to help make these much-needed improvements to the place we call our spiritual home.

Gifts will be to the Maintenance Fund in general, so that if there was any surplus it can be used for other necessary work.

With thanks in anticipation.

Love and best wishes,

# Prayer



**Tuesday Prayer at 19:30** - this is still being held 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.

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April will be a dedicated Day of Prayer** with a special focus on prayer at Bible Bite and then the usual evening gathering on Zoom.

**Prayer Chain** - please make use of this for urgent and important issues that need prayer. Phone Hazel on 865181 – or Jean on 863850 - do consider joining this if you are mostly around at home.

**Text Prayer Network** – this has supplemented our telephone chain and gets prayer needs around quickly . Please text Lou on **07474 273119** with your prayer request and she will mobilise a team of intercessors. Again, this is for urgent and important issues that need immediate cover:

**Prayer for Israel** – is held each Monday from 10:00-11:00 on the church Zoom. Please contact Roy & Melodie if you are interested in joining: [melodieroywilson@gmail.com](mailto:melodieroywilson@gmail.com) or ☎ 866912

**Sabbath of Prayer** – many of our members enjoyed taking part in our recent Sabbath period set aside for prayer. The Elders are suggesting that this might be repeated in October and maybe then become a pattern each February and October.

We plan to have another **Midsummer Prayer Walk** around the local community on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June from 19:30 - maybe with the church also open as a quiet space for those who'd prefer to pray there. Please note the date and look out for details.

# ENCOUNTER

**...is back!**

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April from 10:30**

**A Café style meeting place to drop in and enjoy some refreshments**



**...a relaxed time of Friendship, Fun, Food and exploring Faith... with craft, songs, challenges, prayers...**

**EVERYONE is welcome – why not bring a friend?**

## **New Hope Magazine**

There are copies of the latest edition now available - these are a great resource to give to friends and neighbours.



## **Crowned King**

We have also ordered copies of a special Coronation Souvenir Edition of Matthew's Gospel to give out over the coming month.

## **Easter Programme – Celebrate What God Has Done!**

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup>**

**15:30 Messy Church**

for families to explore the meaning of Easter

See [page 28](#) for details

Plenty of crafty fun as we look at:  
**The Miracle Man**



**Maundy Thursday 19:00**

**Shared Communion Service**

with friends from Ryde – followed by a snack supper – look out for details and please sign the list if you plan to come

**Good Friday**

**10:00 Short reflective service**

**11:15 Procession of Witness**

- starting at St Blasius Church  
*Pick up a leaflet for timings*  
(or see [page 8](#))

**Easter Day**

**06:15 Open Air Sunrise Celebration**

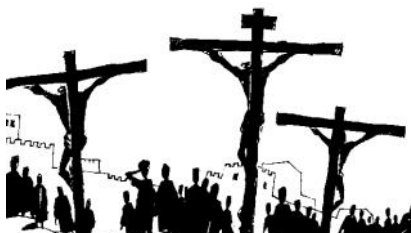
on the seafront at the bottom of Hope Road followed by breakfast at the beach café

**10:30 Easter Communion for all ages**

Led by Nigel Cox

**18:30 Easter Cafe with a short film**

A relaxed evening to end this special day





# Ruby Wedding Invitation

Brian and Janet celebrate 40 years of married life in May this year.



They discovered that another local Christian couple, Richard and Letitia, got married the week before them so have decided to have a joint celebration. This will take the form of a short service of worship with renewal of marriage vows led by mutual friend, Rev James Cook, then food...

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April**

**11:30 at Shanklin URC**

**Followed by a bring-and-share lunch**

All our church friends are most welcome to join us.

## **IoW Connection Quiz**

1. Where on the Island is one of the oldest and most respected regattas in the world held?
2. Honnor & Jeffrey has two garden centres, one in Dalverton but where's the other?
3. The Wightlink ferry for Lymington departs from where?
4. Where will you find an RNLI station with an 'all weather lifeboat' on the eastern side of the IoW?
5. So, apart from all being on the IoW, what is the **connection** between the answers to questions 1 - 4?
6. And bonus question... where was the cover photo taken (hint, it was in Normandie, France)?



Answers are on [page 51](#)

# **(CHRISTIANS WORKING TOGETHER IN SHANKLIN**

## **Good Friday**

### **Procession of Witness**

**Commencing at 11:15 at St Blasius Church**



**11:45 St Saviour on the Cliff**

**11:55 United Reformed Church**

**12:05 Methodist Church**

**12:20 Sacred Heart**

**12:30 St Paul's**

*You are warmly invited for  
refreshments at the end*

## **Easter Sunday Morning**

### **Open Air Sunrise Celebration**

**06:15**

**on the seafront**

**(at the bottom of Hope Road)**

**Followed by Breakfast**

**The South East Beach Café  
are opening especially for us**





# Warm Space

You are welcome to

# The Well

**A safe place for friendship, support and refreshing – here at Shanklin URC:**

**Wednesdays 11:00 – 13:00**

**Free refreshments and craft activities**

**Just drop in at any point**



## **Acts: Paul Before Festus And Agrippa**

We left Paul in 'limbo' as the Roman authorities prevaricate over what to do with him. The Governor, Felix, is succeeded by Festus who quickly instigates a trial. Will Paul at last be on his way to Rome?

He had been in prison for two years and perhaps took some comfort from the story of Joseph, languishing in an Egyptian prison for two years also (Genesis 41:1)... he will certainly have remembered what the Lord had told him...

*"The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, 'Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome.'" (Acts 23:11)*

\*\*\*

### **Acts 25: 1-12 Paul's trial before Festus**

It is AD59 and Festus is now the Roman governor ~ he immediately goes to Jerusalem to speak with the Jewish authorities and, even after two years, they still want to talk about Paul ~ they are determined to see the back of him! They ask for Paul to be brought back to Jerusalem but Festus says "No ~ you come to me in Caesarea and bring your charges".

The 'court' is convened, and Luke doesn't go into detail (he has laid this out for us before!), except to say, *"When Paul came in, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood round him. They brought many serious charges against him, but they could not prove them."* and give a summary of Paul's defence in 16 words, *"I have done nothing wrong against the Jewish law or against the temple or against Caesar."* (vv7&8)

The Jews have no evidence and Paul insists he has done nothing wrong and so he appeals to Caesar. Festus seems to be caught on the hop and consults his officials before announcing, *"You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!"* (v12)

*(In this appeal Paul is exercising his rights as a Roman Citizen to a fair hearing, for he knows he will not receive one from the Jewish authorities.)*

## **Acts 25: 13-22 Festus consults Agrippa**

Festus has been left with a dilemma, he must explain to Caesar why he has sent Paul to him but he has been unable to identify anything that Paul has done wrong!

Suddenly he has a bit of luck when a few days later King Herod Agrippa arrives to pay his respects. This is King Herod Agrippa II, who succeeded his father Herod Agrippa I (who was struck down by God, see Acts 12).

Agrippa has authority over an area to the north of Galilee (now part of Lebanon) and also the temple in Jerusalem together with the appointment of the High Priest. Festus discusses Paul's case with him... *"When his accusers got up to speak, they did not charge him with any of the crimes I had expected. Instead, they had some points of dispute with him about their own religion and about a dead man named Jesus whom Paul claimed was alive."* (vv18&19)... the heart of the dispute between Paul and the Jewish authorities boils down to a dead man who is alive!

Agrippa's interest is kindled and he asks to hear from Paul himself.

## **Acts 25: 23 ~ 26: 32 Paul before Agrippa**

A sumptuous audience before King Agrippa begins with *"the high ranking military officers and the prominent men of the city"* (v23) in attendance and Paul is brought before them.

Festus makes his "opening speech" explaining how things have come to this and asks for help ... he needs guidance on what to write to Caesar and what charges Paul is to be accused of.

So now Paul is the centre of attention. He finds himself in a privileged position in front of the city's dignitaries ~ God has used the delays and frustrations to set up a priceless opportunity for the Gospel to be heard... despite this unexpected turn of events, Paul is ready... what does he do?... he gives his testimony and proclaims the Gospel...

*(This is Paul's longest recorded speech in the whole of Acts.)*

**We Should Be Expectant, As Paul Was, Ready To Give Our Testimony About What Jesus Has Done And Is Still Doing In**

## **Our Lives**

### **Let's Look Out For Opportunities In The Days and Weeks Ahead...**

#### **What Doors May God Be Opening For Us?**

Paul knows that Agrippa is a Jew and is certainly aware of all that has gone before and Paul's thrust is that God has revealed himself in a fresh way, but a way which was entirely in continuity with what had been promised of old (see vv21-23 below). He speaks of his opposition to the followers of Jesus and then recounts the story of his conversion on the road to Damascus. This third telling in Acts has more detail about what Jesus said to Paul:

*"Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads."*

*Then I asked, "Who are you, Lord?"*

*"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," the Lord replied. "Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me. I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me." (vv14-18)*

The last verse here shows a progression in various stages, Paul's mission is to:

- open their eyes ~ as Paul himself experiences,
- to turn them ~ from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to the power of God
- for them to receive forgiveness of sins (central to the gospel message, Acts 2:38)
- and for them to belong ~ to the family of God!

It is interesting to note that there is no 'sitting on the fence' allowed here ~ either we are for God or we are against him.

And Paul explains *"That is why some Jews seized me in the temple*

*courts and tried to kill me. But God has helped me to this very day; so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen – that the Messiah would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would bring the message of light to his own people and to the Gentiles.” (vv21-23).*

This is all too much for Festus, who brings proceedings to a halt and:

*“The king rose, and with him the governor and Bernice and those sitting with them. After they left the room, they began saying to one another, ‘This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment.’ Agrippa said to Festus, ‘This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.” (vv30-32)*

But we know that God has told Paul that he must testify in Rome (See Acts 23:11 above)

### **God’s Plan Is On Track!**

**In All This, Paul Is Ready, Available, Expectant And Obedient.  
Are We?**

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Next time we will look at the final two chapters of the Book of Acts ...

*Robin (thanks Brian)*

## **Shanklin Spring Clean**

Just to let you know about the next town clean event.  
Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April from 10:00 until 12:00.

We will meet at Shanklin Library  
and tidy the town for The Great  
British Spring Clean.

Would be great to see you there.

Tina Homden  
Shanklin Green Town



## **Thy Kingdom Come... Pentecost 2022**

### **Day 10, Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

We are continuing to look at Peter's first letter during the devotionals associated with Thy Kingdom Come (2022) ~ a global initiative that invites Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus.

These reflections were delivered through a voice recording, try to imagine as you read them that you are listening and responding...

The overall purpose is to ask God to empower us to become effective witnesses for Jesus each day.

**P**, pausing to be still ...

**R**, rejoicing with a Psalm and reflecting on the early church ...

**A**, asking God to help us and others ...

**Y**, yielding to His will in our lives, come what may...

### **Come Holy Spirit (Jill Weber)**

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly, to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

***Creator God, who formed humanity from dust, breathe in me again. Revive me and sanctify me by the power of Your Spirit. Set my heart on fire with the good news of Your Gospel.***

I choose to rejoice in God's presence today, joining with the ancient praises of all God's people in the words of Psalm 22:

***"You who fear the LORD, praise him!  
All you descendants of Jacob, honour him!  
Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!  
For he has not despised or scorned  
the suffering of the afflicted one;  
he has not hidden his face from him  
but has listened to his cry for help"  
(Psalm 22:23&24)***

The apostle Peter writes to his exiled followers and speaks directly to their suffering:

***"Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on***

*you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.” (1 Peter 4:12-14)*

Archbishop Justin Welby comments on the passage as follows:

*“As we live as Christians we experience God’s blessings, even as we know humankind’s suffering. St Paul talks about us sharing Jesus’ sufferings, so that we may enter into Jesus’ glory. It is the depth of glory found in the unexpected places, in the darkest corners, and in those who are rejected and abused. It is knowing that God considers us worth dying for, for God loves us, and that no experience of suffering or sorrow is able to overcome the capacity of God to bring hope.” \**

I think back over the last couple of years...

How have I suffered during the pandemic and all of its effects?

How has God brought hope to me in those places?

In the quiet, I offer up both my lament and my thanksgiving.

**God, I pray for those who are still suffering from the effects of the pandemic and from war & conflict, wherever on earth that may be.**

**God, would You bring Your glory in the unexpected places, in the darkest corners of our world.**

### **Come Holy Spirit**

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

*“Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.” (1 Peter 4:12-14)*

God is always at work through His Holy Spirit to bring light in the darkness, to bring hope in despair, to bring healing in pain and desolation, and to bring glory in suffering ~ whatever we are going



through, the Holy Spirit changes things.

***In my darkness, I pray, Come Holy Spirit***  
***In my despair, I pray, Come Holy Spirit***  
***In my pain and desolation, I pray, Come Holy Spirit***  
***In my suffering, I pray, Come Holy Spirit***

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says in Luke: *“How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”* (Luke 11:13)

***Father,***  
***help me to live this day to the full,***  
***being true to You in every way.***  
***Jesus,***  
***help me to give myself away to others,***  
***being kind to everyone I meet.***  
***Spirit,***  
***help me to love the lost,***  
***proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.***  
***Amen.***

\*The extract from the thoughts of the Most Reverend Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, is from the Thy Kingdom Come Novena 2022 (page 22), which can be downloaded and read in full at: [www.thykingdomcome.global/resources/new-2022](http://www.thykingdomcome.global/resources/new-2022)

These Thy Kingdom Come devotionals were included in a much wider prayer initiative ~ 24/7 Prayer (Peter Grieg) ~ which provides Bible reflection and prayer twice daily (morning and evening). You can access these through an app, **Lectio 365** ~ for more details go to: [www.24-7prayer.com/dailydevotional](http://www.24-7prayer.com/dailydevotional)

Next time we will look at the devotional from the Day of Pentecost 2022 (Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June)...

***Robin***

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The Wight Church Network invites you to

# ***Pray The World***

*Getting behind Gospel  
outreach around the globe*



**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April  
at 19:30**

**Christ Church, Sandown**

**Broadway, PO36 9ET  
(next to The Heights)**

Please join us to pray for world  
mission with guests from:



**For more info, contact the hosts:**

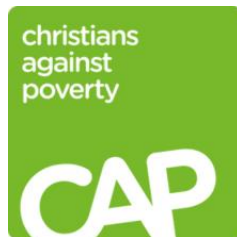
Rev Mark Williams      639280      [revwilliams71@gmail.com](mailto:revwilliams71@gmail.com)

Rev Brian Harley      862485      [brianharley58@gmail.com](mailto:brianharley58@gmail.com)

## **CAP Debt Centre - Update**

**Let us thank God for opening this path up for us to reach and pray for others.**

We have four clients on our books, two in Ryde, one in East Cowes and one in Sandown and have been made welcome in every home we have visited and each client has let us pray for them which is a great boost.



We are the second visit with some of the clients and we are on a first appointment with one of the clients.

I would ask you to pray for these clients as I feel that this procedure is hard for them to understand, but we are getting there and getting the clients on the road to being debt free, and they want to be debt free.

We still short of befrienders to cover the whole of the Island, so I have been taking befrienders from Castlehold, but we have been talking about what is available from churches in their area.

I have asked those who attend Castlehold, and would also ask you to ask your churches, for food to take to the clients (these are a small token of food not large bags) as many have used up their vouchers from the Foodbank.

I have met with the Chair of the Council, as well as other members of the Council, and spoken about what the Debt Centre can offer and they are on board with the project and are willing to help promote it.

I have also been in touch with the Citizens Advice Team and entered our details on the 'Isle Find It' website [www.islefindit.org.uk/](http://www.islefindit.org.uk/), which is where one of the clients found us.

What makes this worthwhile is a comment such as this one, "Thank you for helping me remove my head from the bucket of sand and making my life worth living."

Let us thank God.

Amen.

John.



## Refresher Safeguarding Training

**Part 1 - 19 October 2023**

**Part 2 - 2 November 2023**

**Part 3 - 16 November 2023**

**Virtual sessions on Zoom  
19:00 - 21:00**

A full day's training for all individuals working with children, young people and adults at risk. Also important for Ministers and Elders of the Church. The course covers:

- **Policy and Programme**
- **Premises** (risk assessments, security, accidents and first aid, fire safety, Transport)
- **People** (recruitment, working together culture, communication online & phones)
- **Protecting Children and Adults at Risk** (forms of abuse, recognising signs of abuse, responding to concern or disclosures, reporting structures)
- **Paper Trails** (forms, records, registers,)
- **Safer Church Culture**

Certificates are presented to those completing this training course.

*Trainers - Phil Ray and Ruth White, Children's & Youth Development Officers*

**For more information and to book your place please contact:  
[bookings@urcwessex.org.uk](mailto:bookings@urcwessex.org.uk) / 023 8067 4513**

# Understanding DBS checks in the Local Church

It seems that there is some misunderstanding of the situation as to which church roles require a DBS\* check and which do not. This is most likely my fault for not explaining things more clearly; hopefully the following will help.

Recently the Elders compiled a list to detail this, and it is as below. For information, some roles are required to have a DBS by law, some by the direction of Synod and others at the discretion of the Elders.

DBS Required	DBS Not Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Minister</li><li>♦ Elders</li><li>♦ Officers (if not Elders)</li><li>♦ Treasurer</li><li>♦ CSC*</li><li>♦ Lay Preachers</li><li>♦ Worship Leaders</li><li>♦ Junior Church (all involved in running sessions)</li><li>♦ Crèche</li><li>♦ Messy Church (all involved in running sessions)</li><li>♦ CatURpillars (all involved in running sessions)</li><li>♦ Open The Book</li><li>♦ Homegroup (leaders/hosts)</li><li>♦ Pastoral Teams (all involved)</li><li>♦ The Well (all involved in running sessions)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Prayer Ministry Team</li><li>♦ Prayer Chain Team</li><li>♦ Text Prayer Network Team</li><li>♦ Catering Team</li><li>♦ Welcome Team</li><li>♦ Bookshop Team</li><li>♦ Persecuted Church Prayer Group</li><li>♦ Israel Prayer Group</li><li>♦ Craft Group (or similar)</li><li>♦ Tech Team</li><li>♦ Musicians</li><li>♦ DBS Verifiers (doc. checkers)</li></ul>

The process of obtaining a DBS is very straightforward and costs nothing at local level. If an applicant has access to email, it can be initiated personally online; this prompts the church to be asked to check ID documents.

Acceptable documents are:

♦ Passport ♦ Driving Licence ♦ Birth Certificate	(only one item required)
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Plus

♦ Utility bill ♦ Bank Statement ♦ Government Letter ♦ Benefits Letter	(two items required).
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The checking process means meeting up with myself or a verifier, when details are recorded online to be linked with the original application.

We don't want anybody to be put off taking up a role because of this process, particularly if the problem is access to IT. We have done many applications with and on behalf of people who haven't been able to do it for themselves.

Similarly, if there is a problem with producing ID documents, there are alternative ways of getting a check done and we can pursue those; the Government guidance seems to cover just about every eventuality.

I hope that this clarifies the situation; please do speak to me, Brian or one of the Elders if you have any questions.

Dave White

\* **CSC** = **Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator**  
**DBS** = **Disclosure and Barring Service**

## Songs of Living Waters

We had an amazing evening on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March with various local Christian musicians sharing songs and testimonies. It was a café-style evening, and the place was absolutely packed. Caz Osborne, who helped organise it, used to be in the youth group at SURC and began to lead worship here at the Sunday evening gatherings. She has really developed her gift and has written some lovely songs.

There was a wonderful relaxed atmosphere and many of the visitors from around the Island commented on our brilliant facilities – it was such an ideal venue for this kind of informal concert evening.

A total of over £550 was raised for the two charities and will be split between our friends at Kalasa in Uganda and the project that the Niton folk support - Helping Hand Cambodia.

Do please pray for the next Living Waters event which is an evangelistic evening in Newport on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, see the opposite page, especially aimed at the under 40s with guest speaker Phil Knox from Evangelical Alliance.

It is hoped that this will build on the momentum of the two recent evenings and see many young adults bringing friends to hear about faith in Jesus.

It comes just a couple of weeks after Easter and coincides with the visit of an OM team – see poster.





Bring your friends to hear Good News

# Living Waters

## MUSIC NIGHT

7:30PM SATURDAY 22ND APRIL

TRUE VINE CHURCH

26A HIGH STREET, NEWPORT

Stories of hope and faith in Jesus  
shared through song, spoken word  
and a message from Author and  
Speaker **Phil Knox**



— ARTISAN CAFE  
SERVING CAKES + DRINKS  
THROUGHOUT —



WIGHT  
CHURCH  
NETWORK

## **Can you find 30 books of the Bible in the following paragraph?**

This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket, on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends... One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat Another friend studied it while playing his banjo, Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot, that's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially as the book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or a scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph. During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new record. The local paper, the Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, "the books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus, there really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found.

Answers next month

George Port

*Public domain - author unknown*

# 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.



Copies are available at the back of church - and is such a great resource for people to read and then pass on to others!!

This month's edition (also available to read online at [www.goodnews-paper.org.uk/viewlatesteditionspage.htm](http://www.goodnews-paper.org.uk/viewlatesteditionspage.htm)) has several great articles, including the headline article 'The Day Death Died' - explains how death was conquered on the first Easter Sunday.

Other contributions include:

- ♦ **Easter Message By J John** - Leading UK evangelist J John tells readers his faith is based on Easter
- ♦ **Did Jesus Really Rise From The Dead?** - Good News demolishes arguments against the Resurrection
- ♦ **Chelsea Winger's Faith** - Why Mykhailo Mudryk's tattoo says 'Only Jesus'
- ♦ **Rapper's Revelation** - British Sri Lankan rapper M.I.A.'s life-changing vision of Jesus
- ♦ **Drug Lord Saved By Lord Of All** - Killer transformed by a painting of Jesus
- ♦ **Unsung Titanic Hero** - The preacher on board who gave his own life to save a stranger

## Good News... for a change

## **Sahar's Story**

The following is an extract from the **Open Doors March/April** magazine in the opening letter from Henrietta, their CEO:

### ***Our Hidden Sisters***

***“Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days [...] and everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Joel 2:29-32***

*I often find that Bible verses I know well are illuminated by the stories of our persecuted brothers and sisters. You, like me, have probably often heard Matthew 19:29 – Jesus’ promise that ‘everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life’. But reading Sahar’s story and how she to leave her home and children, and even face prison after she became a Christian, brings the truth of. Jesus is words to life for me. Sahar is living in his promise. She was transformed by encountering Jesus, and knows He is worth the cost.*

Do take a copy of the magazine and read the inspiring and challenging testimony of Sahar from Iran, and how her story doesn’t end with persecution, of how God answered her prayers for her marriage and has given her a ministry to other women facing persecution ([www.opendoorsuk.org/news/latest-news/sahar-see](http://www.opendoorsuk.org/news/latest-news/sahar-see))

In many parts of the world, women's lives are hidden - and so their persecution is too.

### **Please Pray:**

*Lord God, thank You that You see Your daughters – that none of their suffering is hidden from You. As You have promised, You are ‘close to the broken hearted and save those who are crushed in spirit’ Psalm 34:18.*

*We pray that our persecuted sisters would heal from their trauma and be empowered to reach their God-given potential. Please give each woman and girl peace, joy and strength, and equip Sahar and all those who support persecuted Christian women. Amen.*

The **Open Doors Prayer Diary (March/April)** also gives very helpful

prayers for persecuted women and for our brothers and sisters in many parts of the world, as well as stories of hope in **Africa**, on the **Arabian Peninsular** and how God is on the move among **Afghan Refugees**.

**Prayer for the Persecuted Church** is so vital and so appreciated. To quote a Christian taking extraordinary risks for Jesus, “**We are like one team. Without your support and prayers, we cannot do anything.**”

**Easter** can be an even more dangerous time for believers – do uphold them over this time.

### **Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April – Good Friday**

*As we remember Christ's sufferings, remember all believers who are under pressure today to deny their faith in Jesus, whether from their family, community or the state. Pray for strength to overcome, for 'the one who is greater than the one who is in the world' (1 John 4:4).*

### **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> April**

*For the first disciples, Holy Saturday was a day when all their hopes seemed lost. Pray that persecuted believers who have lost hope for the future will know God's promise that 'weeping may stay for the night, but joy comes in the morning' (Psalm 30:5).*

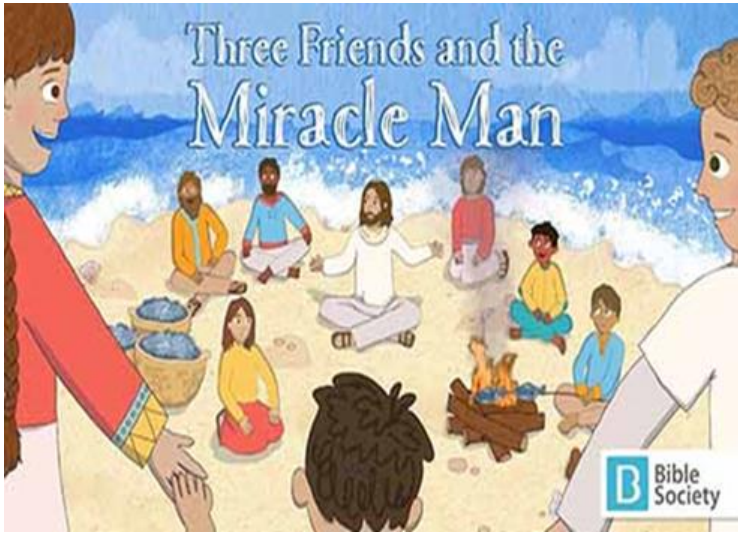
### **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> April – Easter Sunday**

*'Since we have a hope, we are very bold,' (2 Corinthians 3:12). Ask the Risen Lord to protect Christians celebrating Easter today in places where worshipping in public is risky. Pray that their witness will be fruitful, and pray that those of us who are free to worship will use our freedom courageously.*

*Source: Open Doors*

Do ask if you'd like to know more and do help yourself to the great resources from **Open Doors/Release International (April – June)** and **Elam Ministries** – focusing on ministry amongst Iranians. God is truly 'on the move' in the hardest of places, drawing many to Himself and building His Church – may we stand with Him in this awesome work.

Blessings in Jesus' Name, Jane H



## *The Miracle Man*

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April**  
**15:30 - 17:30**

**Free fun for all the family**  
- no unaccompanied children please

Come and explore Easter 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 Brian and Janet Harley – and please let Yvonne know if you can help in any way – even with clearing up!*



## Defibrillator

This was discussed at a recent church meeting, but we have **Good News**, one has now been fitted! On the 17<sup>th</sup> March in fact, after one was kindly donated in memory of Thelma Kell/Loe by her family.

It is mounted on the right hand side of the front doors by the bike racks.

Malc



## Thank You

Just a short note to thank all the church family and friends for your prayers over the last few months. As you know I went down with acute sciatica at the beginning of October last year which consequently needed ending up with an operation in the middle of January. The operation was amazing and a success and really felt your prayers all the way through it and the Lord with me. I am 80% better and now have a long recovery (up to a year) for my spinal cord to hopefully settle down again.

Thank you all once again.

Miriam





## Bringing the Bible to life for every child in every primary school

Come and learn how to be a storyteller for Open the Book.

At this session there will be an opportunity to experience how to do an Open the Book assembly/act of collective worship. You'll also find out why head teachers and children value it, along with a chance to ask your questions.

Come and find out how you can bring the Bible to life in your primary school.

**Event:** Information and Training Day.

**Note:** Attending does not commit you to joining a team

**Venue:** Quay Street Methodist Church, Newport. (long stay charged car parking in Sea Street)

**Date and time:** Saturday April 22nd. Register & Coffee from 09:30. Start 10:00.

**To reserve your place please contact:** Julie. Bring your lunch, the event ends 15:30 at latest.

**Email:** [julie.croydon@icloud.com](mailto:julie.croydon@icloud.com) Booking essential.

**Telephone:** 405067

**Bible Society** T: 01793 418355 E: [enquiries@openthebook.net](mailto:enquiries@openthebook.net) W: [openthebook.net](http://openthebook.net)

Photography by Layton Thompson

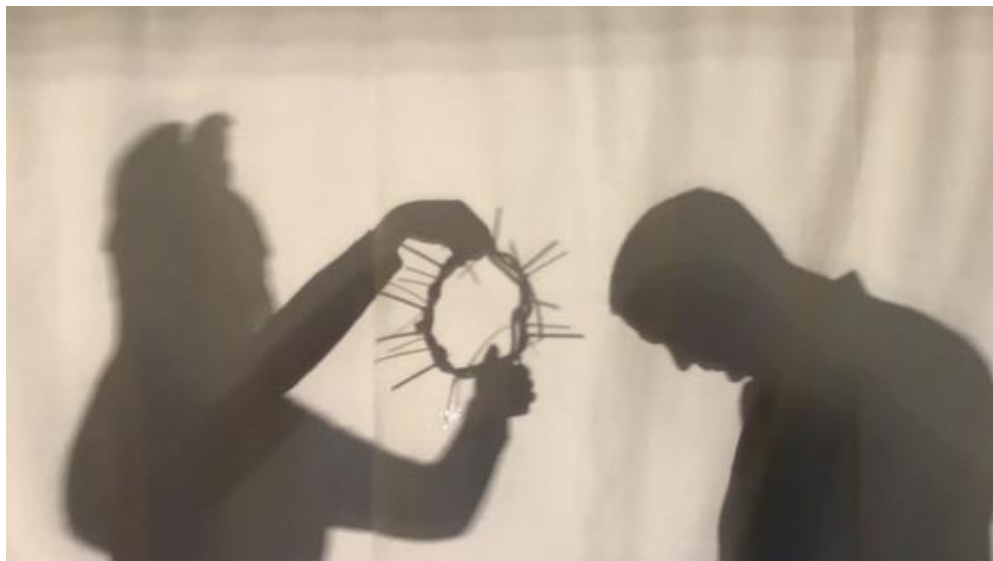
Registered charity 232759



## And Now for Something Completely Different

Open the Book assemblies in schools involve a handful of costumed children acting together with the storytellers, whilst everyone else joins in with orchestrated gestures and phrases. In our teams, the only voice the children hear is that of the narrator. Storytellers don't have to worry about forgetting our lines because we mime all the action. But, it's all change when it comes to the most important story of all – the heart of the Gospel.

When we present the Crucifixion and Resurrection, the children neither act nor interact. To emphasise the seriousness of what is happening, the children watch in awed silence as Jesus is mocked, tried and crucified in silhouette. The biggest shock is when Pilate asks what should happen to Jesus. All of us behind the curtain shout as loudly as we can "Crucify Him!" The children have never heard us speak before, so they are likely to remember this far more than if we present the story in the same way as other weeks.



The script continues:- 'Pilate asked "*Why? Tell me why you want him to die.*"

*"Because he says he is God's son!"*

The soldier shook his head and said to himself: "Kill him? That can't

### ***The Link*** - April 2023

be right.” Pilate didn’t think so either. He washed his hands to show that it was the crowd, not him, who wanted to kill Jesus.’ Again, this is a picture we hope will sear itself in the children’s memory.



During the last two weeks of March, the silhouette method was used to tell the children of Godshill, Dover Park and Haylands Schools ‘The Soldier’s Story’. But, from the point at which Jesus was taken down from the cross, the action continued in front of the backdrop. This was so that the no one should think that Jesus returned as a ghost.

The children gasped when they saw ‘the body’ slide into the tomb from behind the backdrop. After Joseph of Arimathea pushed the heavy stone across the entrance, a Roman standard bearer took his place guarding the tomb. When an angel appeared, the soldier ran away in terror, dropping the Eagle Standard to the floor, which made the children laugh in delight. The angel then effortlessly moved the stone to reveal a mannequin, also dressed as an angel, moving around inside the tomb. (You can just see it, and the standard on the

floor in the final photograph).

Mary Magdalene heard Jesus call her name, and rushed to greet Him. Jesus told her to go and tell the disciples He had risen. This left the soldier alone with Jesus, who turned and smiled at the soldier. The presentation ended with the soldier concluding that Jesus really is the Son of God.

It is a joy and privilege to tell the next generation of parents, teachers, social media influencers and politicians the truth of the Gospel. Afterwards, one teacher said that it really helped the children understand what is difficult for the school to explain.

Do you remember Paul's vision of the man from Macedonia pleading 'Come over and help us'? St Francis, St Blasius, Haylands and at least three other schools have shown interest in regularly having Open the Book assemblies. One of the most beautiful aspects of this ministry, is the way it displays the unity of Christ's body - The Church. Our own team members range from Anglo-Catholics to Pentecostals.

Please do pray and talk about Open the Book with anyone you know who might be interested. Could we set up teams to serve **all** those who are saying 'Come over and help us'?





# Latest News

March 2023

By now you may have heard that Traidcraft plc, one of the pioneers of the fair trade movement, has ceased trading. Our thoughts are with all affected producers, suppliers, Traidcraft staff and passionate supporters at this difficult time.

**The Fairtrade Foundation's vital work to make global trade work for the most exploited farmers will continue.** And we will continue to work in partnership with other organisations that Traidcraft helped set up, including Transform Trade, Cafédirect and Shared Interest.

Traidcraft was a founding member of the Fairtrade Foundation. The success of Fairtrade, with over 4,500 products now available across all major UK retailers, is a part of their incredible legacy. All fair traders and Traidcraft staff should be proud that their work has helped drive positive change in communities across the world.

## **Where can I get Fairtrade products now?**

If you have previously bought from Traidcraft, whether to run a stall, to stock your business or for personal use, you can still get most of these products elsewhere. [Visit our website to find out where you can get your favourite products.](#)

**Wholesale:** If you want to buy in bulk to stock a stall or shop, you can check out [this list of wholesale providers](#), maintained by volunteer fair traders.

[Oxfam have recently launched a wholesale online fair trade shop](#), while [Ethical Superstore are currently offering a discount](#) to mark Fairtrade Fortnight.

**Buy direct from Traidcraft suppliers:** [Traidcraft's website helpfully lists many of the suppliers](#) they bought from, many of which also sell directly to customers.

**Visit your local fair trade shop:** Your local fair trade shop will be

able to provide a wide range of fair trade items for personal use and you can talk to them about discounted or sale or return goods for stalls. [You can find a list of BAFTS members on their website.](#)

### **How else can I campaign for fairer trade?**

If the closure of Traidcraft makes it more difficult for you to sell Fairtrade goods, **there are still lots of ways you can stand up for fairer trade.**

Fairtrade Fortnight is now in full swing. And we need as many people as possible to spread the word that making the simple switch to Fairtrade means a greener, fairer and more sustainable future for our favourite foods.

[Visit our website to find ways to get involved.](#) If you are planning any events or activities in your area, our [Fairtrade Fortnight Campaigner Toolkit](#) has lots of tools, resources and options to help you get the Fairtrade message out there.

We're sorry to be sharing this disappointing news about a valued member of our Fairtrade family. But we are reassured by the knowledge that thousands of fair traders will continue to work to achieve our shared mission: **a world with fairer trade and more power in the hands of farmers and workers.**

Many thanks for all your support,

Stefan Donnelly

Campaigns Team Fairtrade Foundation

## **Christians Working Together in The Bay**

**Shared Afternoon Worship** each Sunday is now at 18:30 hosted by various churches. The venues for April are as follows:

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sandown Baptist Church**, Station Avenue

**9<sup>th</sup> Film and café at URC** Shanklin

**16<sup>th</sup> Christ Church**, Broadway, Sandown

**23<sup>rd</sup> Church of the Sacred Heart**, Atherley Road

**30<sup>th</sup> Church of the Good Shepherd**, Lake



## **Update from Samaritan's Purse**

Thank you so much to those who gave money for the recent appeal, following the terrible earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. We have received an update from Franklin Graham, CEO of Samaritan's Purse, in which he shares the following:

### ***Helping Earthquake Survivors in Turkey***

*Massive earthquakes devastated central Turkey on 6<sup>th</sup> February, killing thousands in collapsed buildings and leaving multitudes desperate for help.*

*The first quake had a magnitude of 7.8 with an aftershock of 7.5. In the town of Iskenderun, near the Biblical city of Antioch, the hospital collapsed in a pile of concrete rubble, entombing doctors, nurses and patients. This awful tragedy crippled the local medical system at the hour help is urgently needed.*

*Samaritan's Purse immediately airlifted one of our Emergency Field Hospitals to Turkey and have set up near Antioch, where the disciples were first called Christians, (Acts 11:26).*

*In addition to staffing the fully equipped 52 bed tent hospital, Samaritan's Purse also airlifted tonnes of emergency supplies, such as weatherproof tarpaulins to provide families with emergency shelter.*

*Please lift up the people of Turkey and neighbouring Syria as they grieve and struggle to rebuild their homes and lives. Ask God to open doors for our ministry and to provide resources for our teams to save lives, relive suffering and share the hope of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

Also in the newsletter is an update on their work in Ukraine and also delivering their 200 millionth shoebox gift to a dear 8-year-old girl who lives in an orphanage. Perhaps it might have even been a shoebox from the Isle of Wight!

### ***Good News from Ukraine!***

*I recently travelled to Ukraine, met with some of our courageous church partners, and celebrated a milestone for Operation Christmas Child – our 200 millionth shoebox gift. We praise God for the*



*powerful ways He continue to use these gifts in the midst of a war to advance the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.*



*The 200 Millionth Shoebox being opened*

*The news from Ukraine can be depressing. I want to encourage you with news about how our church partners in Ukraine are responding in Jesus' name to meet the needs of their neighbours. One pastor told me that 80% of the relief work on the frontlines is being done by the churches. Someday when the war is over, we want people to remember that their help came from churches working in Jesus' name.*

*Samaritan's Purse continues to deliver relief supplies through our church partners working on the frontlines. Since the war began a year ago, we have distributed almost 60,000 tonnes of food, plus thousands of wood stoves, solar lights and other assistance. Our teams have helped 11.8 million Ukrainians. One pastor reported that his church is caring for 30,000 families every week. "You helped us in showing them Jesus Christ," he said. "The church has awakened. We've stopped being religious and we've become real Christians. We are now ministering to strangers."*

*In Odessa, a port city across the Black Sea from Turkey, Samaritan's*

## ***The Link*** - April 2023

*Purse set up what we call a ‘warming tent’ where people can gather to escape from the cold and recharge their mobile phones. But it’s become much more than that – a spontaneous house of worship where more than 100 people gather to praise God. Ninety percent of them are new believers!*

*Another pastor said his congregation has grown from 200 to 2,000 during the war, “because people see us working.”*

*To help Ukrainians find hope and strength amid the fighting, Samaritan’s Purse is giving away a million Bibles. These are treasures to the Ukrainians, who haven’t forgotten how the Soviet Union tried to stamp out Christianity by branding Bibles as ‘anti-communist literature’.*

More than 400,000 children in Ukraine have made decisions for Christ through **‘The Greatest Journey’** over the past 13 years and despite the war, churches in Ukraine are planning to offer **‘The Greatest Journey’** good news for 120,000 children this year and around the world millions more children are hoping to share in this wonderful teaching.

Also included is a very moving story of a dear 14-year-old boy who was rescued by Samaritan’s Purse after being buried for 7 days in



*After spending over a week under the rubble, 14-year-old Mehmet was in desperate need of medical care*

the earthquake in Turkey – sadly he has lost his parents and siblings – please pray for **Mehmet** (name changed for privacy) as he recovers and for God's Healing Touch upon him in his great loss.

We praise God that Mehmet was cared for by Samaritan's Purse doctors and that he is on the road to physical recovery. Please continue to pray for the hearts and souls of those, such as Mehmet, who are coming to terms with all they have lost due to the earthquakes.

Do please take a copy of the newsletter – it has such an inspiring and moving message – and do ask if you'd like to know more.

## **Ways To Help**

- ♦ **Pray** - Please pray for the people of Turkey, Syria, and Ukraine as they deal with overwhelming loss and grief. Thank God for opening doors and providing resources for Samaritan's Purse to work in challenging corners of the world.
- ♦ **Turkey Response** - Survivors in Turkey need our help as they are living in brutal conditions after their homes were damaged or destroyed. Samaritan's Purse is operating an Emergency Field Hospital to care for the injured as well as others who need medical attention. We are also distributing tarps and emergency supplies.
- ♦ **Ukraine Response** - Your gift will enable Samaritan's Purse to relieve suffering and save lives in Ukraine by providing war-stricken families with much-needed relief supplies including food, warm blankets, solar lanterns, wood stoves, and plastic tarpaulins. We are also giving out New Testaments in their own language.
- ♦ **Donate** - Please go to [www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/donate-now/](http://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/donate-now/) or call Samaritan's Purse on 020 8559 1180.

**Thank you again so much** for the support already given.

Blessings in Jesus' Name

Jane H

*Source: Samaritan's Purse*



## Transformation (1)

**Over the next two issues of the magazine, we are going to look at Neil's views on our Christian transformation, especially how this alters our very nature. Here are the first two devotionals ...**

### Transfer

**"For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves"  
(Colossians 1:13)**

Perhaps you have heard the illustration of the two dogs. Some people say that we have two natures within us vying for control of our lives. They claim that our old sin nature, which we inherited from disobedient Adam, is like a big dog. Our new nature, which we inherited through Christ's redemptive work, is like another big dog. These two dogs are bitter enemies, intent on destroying each other. Whenever you involve yourself in worldly thoughts or behaviour, you are feeding one of the dogs. Whenever you focus your mind and activities on spiritual things, you are feeding the other dog. The dog you feed the most will eventually grow stronger and overpower the other.

This dramatic illustration may motivate Christians toward saintly behaviour, but is it accurate based on who we really are in Christ? Since God *"rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves"* (Colossians 1:13), can we still be in both kingdoms?

When God declares *"You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit,"* (Romans 8:9), can we be in the flesh and in the Spirit simultaneously?

When God says that *"you were once darkness, but now you are light"*

*in the Lord. Live as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8), can you possibly be both light and darkness?*

When God states, *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17)*, can we be partly new creature and partly old creature?

But we must be careful. Can a Christian sin? Of course! *"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8)*. But having sin and being sin are two completely different issues. When we choose to walk by the flesh we will sin, but John also reminds us, we don't have to: *"My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin." (1 John 2:1)*.

**Lord, how liberating it is today to know that I am in the light, that I am a new creature, and that my new nature is firmly anchored in Your work of reconciliation. Thank You.**

**The next devotional begins to explore the scriptural bases for this truth...**

## **A Radical Inner Transformation**

**"By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect." (1 Corinthians 15:10)**

If you believe that you are part light and part darkness, part saint and part sinner, you will live in a very mediocre manner with little to distinguish you from the non-Christian. You may confess your proneness to sin and strive to do better, but you will live a continually defeated life because you perceive yourself to be only a sinner saved by grace who is hanging on until the rapture. Satan knows he can do nothing about who you really are, but if he can get you to believe you are no different from the natural person, then you will behave no differently from the natural person.

Why does this profile describe so many Christians? Because we are ignorant of our true identity in Christ. God's work of atonement in changing sinners to saints is His greatest accomplishment on earth. The inner change, justification, is effected at the moment of salvation. The outer change in the believer's daily walk, sanctification, continues throughout life. But the progressive work of sanctification is only fully effective when the radical, inner

transformation of justification is realized and appropriated by faith.

You may wonder: “*didn’t I read somewhere that Paul referred to himself as the chief of sinners?*”. Yes, but he was referring to his nature before his conversion to Christ “*Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. (1 Timothy 1:15&16).*

He made a similar statement of self-depreciation in his letter to the Corinthians “*For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.*” (1 Corinthians 15:9) but continued by saying: “*By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect.*” (verse 10).

**Paul knew that who he was before Christ and who he became in Christ were two separate identities.**

If you claim to be just a sinner, what will you do? You will sin! You are professing that sin is at the core of your identity. That's not what the Bible teaches. Why don't we just believe God that Jesus is at the core of our being and then begin to live like it by His Spirit?

**Thank You, Father, that I am complete in Your Son Jesus and that my identity is rooted in Him and not in my sin.**

*Neil Anderson*

**Freedom in Christ Ministries**

*Used by permission*

Next time we will look at what Neil says about our very nature ...

**Heavenly Father, thank You for ministries such as *Freedom in Christ* which help us to focus on who we truly are ~ Your children, whom You love.**

**Help us to walk with Christ each day, taking up His yoke and bringing glory to You.**

*Robin*



*All Bible verses quoted are from the NIVUK (UK): Holy Bible, New International Version® Anglicised, NIVUK® Copyright © 1979, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.®. Used by permission.*

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## **Bible Society stall packed at Middle East's biggest book fair in Cairo**

Ayman the calligrapher was incredibly busy in the Bible Society section of the Middle East's largest and oldest book fair.

His pen danced over one sheet of paper and then another as he wrote Bible verses in beautiful script.

The line of people waiting for their free Bible verse seemed endless at times, with Ayman writing more than 500 verses in total.

Fears that attendance at this year's Cairo International Book Fair would be low due to the financial crisis proved unfounded. The four enormous halls at the exhibition centre were packed, with 3.6 million people visiting over the two weeks from 24<sup>th</sup> January to 6<sup>th</sup> February.

Due to the generous giving of Bible Society supporters, Scriptures can be heavily discounted in Egypt, so that people struggling financially can afford them. At the book fair, this meant our colleagues could make New Testaments available for just 13p (5 Egyptian pounds).

A woman came with her son, opened a Bible to the Sermon on the Mount and started reading to him. 'These are the wonderful teachings I was telling you about,' she said, and bought the Bible for him.



*Source: Bible Society - used by permission*





## **Isle of Wight Street & School Pastors**



It's been a time of change for Isle of Wight Street & School Pastors in the last few months.

Following Andrew Gardner's decision to step down as our Street Pastor Coordinator, the charity decided to enter in a period of reflection and renewal. This important few months has given the Trustees and paid staff the opportunity to consider where the charity is going, how we plan to get there, and with whom.

We all know from the news, and the Isle of Wight is not alone in this, the UK is facing a dilemma associated with street crime, anti-social behaviour and students absconding from school.

This has resulted in a bold new vision in relation to the planning and timings for future Street Pastor patrols, and how we can engage the services of School Pastors to provide a wraparound care for those we see in school.

With a view to meeting this problem head on, it is hoped we can deploy our School Pastor volunteers to patrol the streets after school and in the early evening and our Street Pastors would then take over in the later evenings. Covid had a huge impact on the Night Time Economy and now venues are seeing less people out drinking which means venues are not staying open as late as they did before Covid. As the Island only has one nightclub and the rest of the licenced venues are pubs or restaurants, Street Pastors are generally not staying out as late, with most patrols finishing around midnight.

Following Andrew's decision to step down, it has been decided I am now taking on the role of Street Coordinator and Sally Murphy will continue as School Coordinator, but Sally will also be overall manager of both initiatives. This means we are currently advertising for a new Administrator (See website for job pack).

Street Pastors are currently patrolling in Newport and Ryde on

Friday and Saturday nights and also doing extra patrols for big events like the Isle of Wight Festival and Cowes Week.

The School Pastors are mentoring and patrolling in Medina College, Carisbrooke College, Ryde Academy and The Bay Sandown (Secondary site).

Once again, therefore, we are crying out for additional volunteers to join us as a School or Street Pastor volunteer, a Prayer Pastor or as a Trustee of the charity on the Island.

Suzanne McCaffery



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



We are looking for volunteers to befriend care home residents across the Island. This might involve having a chat, playing a board game, reading aloud, or any other activities that a resident would enjoy.

[rebecca@embracingage.org.uk](mailto:rebecca@embracingage.org.uk)  
[embracingage.org.uk/isle-of-wight](http://embracingage.org.uk/isle-of-wight)  
07419 338066



Registered charity no. 1160400



## **Romans 1:11 - Prayer Update March 2023**

Dear friends,

I pray that you are well and that this changeable weather is not affecting you too much!

The Trust had a good Zoom meeting with sponsors at the end of last month and were so pleased to be joined by both Simon and Deus who led us in some Ugandan songs as well as answering questions about their churches – Simon's church meets every day and his first Sunday service (there are several services on a Sunday) is attended by around 300 people! He was shocked that a number of UK churches are attended by around 30 people.

Unfortunately technology was not with us that day, and we were not able to receive audio from the theological students' graduation, however we received images and video which were a joy to see. We thank God for the wonders of technology and for the time in fellowship between those in the UK and those across Uganda.

As some of you may be aware, the pastor's pre-ordination course is mostly funded from grants and gift aid received from child sponsorship donations, with only a few people donating directly to the course which educates up to 36 pastors, for free, a year. It is also the biggest part of our work as a Trust. As a result of this, the Trust is launching a new initiative this year called 'Boost 100' where we are seeking 100 individuals or groups to pledge £10 a month for three years, receiving a certificate for their commitment. This will pay for the theological course to run for almost 2 years and guarantees the Trust's survival for this time. Please pray that this initiative will be popular and that many people will sign up to help educate pastors in Uganda, we would love to see such an outpouring of love for the Ugandan pastors that we have to extend the scheme past 100!

Please also feel free to pass this information on to anyone who may be interested (more information is available on Facebook or via the email above)

We are also pleased to see that one of last year's graduates, Ernest, has started a further diploma at Trinity Bible Institute, Kapchorwa. Ernest's place has been supported by sponsors of the Trust and he has been doing well, completing two units already with great enthusiasm. It is such a blessing to receive news of pastors who have been trained by the Trust and seeing their life ambitions come to fruition as a result of the support of those in the UK. Please pray that Ernest continues to thrive on his diploma and that others from the pre-ordination training may also be identified and sponsored for such exciting future training and education.

God bless

## **Abducted Christian Aid Worker Released**

Many Open Doors supporters have faithfully prayed for Jeff Woodke, a Christian aid worker from America who was kidnapped in Niger in 2016. Praise God, he has now been released after six-and-a-half years in captivity.

Jeff Woodke was kidnapped from his home in Abalak, northern Niger, on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

His kidnappers were thought to be members of a local radical Islamic group called Mujao. They reportedly took him out of Niger to eastern Mali. In the intervening years, it appears he was moved across borders to other nations on multiple occasions. Alongside Woodke, French journalist Olivier Dubois was also released; he had been abducted in Mali in 2021.

See [www.opendoorsuk.org/news/latest-news/jeff-woodke-released/](http://www.opendoorsuk.org/news/latest-news/jeff-woodke-released/) for the full story.

*Source: Open Doors*

# FOCUS

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

\*\*\*

### *Thuy has forgiven the neighbour who attacked her*

**Thuy in Vietnam was brutally attacked for being a Christian – but she has forgiven the woman who assaulted her.**

*Thuy and her family are targeted in their community because they chose to become Christians.*

Ever since Thuy\* and her husband became Christians, they have been facing a lot of harassment and discrimination from their Vietnamese neighbours. This persecution escalated recently in a brutal attack, which left Thuy in hospital for two weeks.

The oppression that Thuy and her husband face can be traced back to the local authorities. While they didn't commit the acts of violence, they have fostered an atmosphere where Christians are deeply distrusted – spreading lies and malicious rumours.

“Authorities tell the villagers that Christianity is from the West – an American belief, a religion from the enemy which is not good for them.” Athan\*, a local Open Doors partner adds, “And if a Christian helps others to convert to Christianity, they are paid a lot of money – so the false rumour goes. This is why Thuy and her family were persecuted.”

Vietnam is number 25 on the Open Doors World Watch List, and persecution is particularly rife among rural communities where ethnicity and traditional beliefs are closely intertwined, and leaving an indigenous faith to choose to follow Jesus is considered a betrayal of the community.

## **Violent attack**

This tension came to a head earlier in the year. When Thuy's husband was away at work, one of her neighbours wouldn't stop insulting her, demanding that she either give up her Christian faith or leave the community. "If the local government does not do anything to stop you, I will!" the neighbour shouted.

Thuy asked her to stop, but the neighbour became even angrier. She grabbed a stick and started attacking Thuy.

"Her head was bleeding badly so they rushed her to the district hospital," shares Athan. "When her situation was not improving, she was moved to another hospital in the city. She stayed for 14 days in the hospital because of her injuries."

As Thuy naturally couldn't report to work while in the hospital, 5,000,000 VND (approximately £175) was docked from her wages. Medical expenses came to another 13,000,000 VND – about six weeks' wages for Thuy – as well as ongoing costs for medication.

## **Extraordinary forgiveness**

Her case was reported to the district police after she was discharged. The local police decided that the neighbour had to compensate Thuy's medical expenses and the wages she's lost. But Thuy's neighbour is very poor, and wouldn't have been able to afford this.

Thuy's local pastor encouraged her to extend forgiveness and love – and Thuy didn't hesitate. She has prioritised forgiveness and trying to have a good relationship with her neighbour, even after the attack, and has only asked for her to share the expenses of her medication (7,000,000 VND, about £245).

You might be reminded of the parable of the unmerciful servant, where the master says to the servant: "I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?" (Matthew 18:32-33) Unlike the unmerciful servant, that's exactly what Thuy did. She has experienced the astonishing forgiveness of God, and so has extended forgiveness to her neighbour.

## **Open Doors partners not allowed to visit**

After the incident, an Open Doors local partner tried to visit Thuy to pray for her and her family, but the local government did not allow him. They told him that they do not allow the practice of religion in their community.

This partner says: “They don’t know why we’re doing this (visiting and praying) as Christians. Praying for one another is our way of life. I told to them that there is no law in Vietnam that prohibits Christians from praying for one another, but they were adamant. The local government is just making things difficult for the Christians in that area.” He plans to take the issue to higher authorities, so he can get permission to support Thuy and her family.

Meanwhile, as Thuy is still recovering and on medication, Open Doors partners will be providing financial help to support her family until she is fully recovered and is able to get back to work. Athan is also in touch with Thuy’s local pastor – he is able to pass on the news that many people around the world are praying with her, and that she is not alone.

*\*Names were changed for security reasons*

## **Please Pray**

- For Thuy’s family to receive God’s strength and resilience as they face many kinds of persecution
- For believers in their district to stand firm and continue to share the gospel, and for the example of forgiveness to shine the light of Christ
- For Open Doors local partners to be equipped to support local Christians, and be given permission to meet and pray with them.

*“When a person or a family in the village decides to follow Christ, they can easily evangelise the whole village. This is why, when someone becomes a believer, he will be kicked out of the village.”*  
Nguyen Van Quan, a Vietnamese born Pastor and Open Doors Partner.

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





**14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**County Show Ground, Northwood**

The Lionheart Team are pleased to announce that, following the success of the 2022 Festival and the massive encouragement we have received, we shall gather again in 2023 with a wonderful line-up of worship bands and speakers to be announced in due course.

Tickets are now available via the website:

[lionheartfestival.co.uk](http://lionheartfestival.co.uk)

Are you able to volunteer in some way to help with the event...?

### ***Connection Quiz Answers***

1. **Cowes.**
2. **Freshwater.**
3. **Yarmouth.**
4. **Bembridge.**
5. **Connection: They are all places on the Island that used to have a railway station.**
6. **This issue's cover photo is of: Place Guillame le Conquerant, Falaise in Normandie**



# The Puzzle Pages

## Sudoku

*A numerical  
placement puzzle!*

To solve it you need to fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3 x 3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Enjoy!

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

## Last month's Sudoku - how did you do?

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

### Across

- 1 Rouen is the capital of this part of France (8)  
 4 Mr Presley (5)  
 7 @ (2)  
 8 'Super -', 1980 Abba album (7)  
 11 Appeared above Bethlehem when Jesus was born (4)  
 12 Fiat supermini 1983-2021 (3)  
 13 Opposite to start (3)  
 15 'Quatermass and the -' 1967 film (3)  
 17 Fast dog, often raced (9)  
 20 Shallow pastry case with a food filling (4)  
 21 Capital of Kenya (7)  
 23 Sound a horse makes (5)

- 25 Not small (3)  
 27 Birthplace of William I (7)  
 29 Not yes (2)  
 30 ' - *Tapestry*', depicts 1066 (6)  
 31 Chess piece, horse's head (6)

### Down

- 1 Most abundant element on Earth (8)  
 2 Thursday before Easter (6)  
 3 & 6 down 'Sultans of Swing' rock group (4)  
 4 He phoned home in 1982 (2)  
 5 Tax on goods and services *initials* (3)  
 6 see 3 down (7)  
 7 & (3)  
 9 'Or' in French (2)  
 10 Red Teletubby (2)  
 11 A WW2 aeroplane that might Triumph as a car (or beer!!) (8)  
 14 French for 'no' (3)  
 16 Slang for thanks (2)  
 18 Spherical object or shape (3)  
 19 Operation Dynamo port (7)  
 22 Not well (3)  
 24 *The -back of Notre Dame* (5)  
 25 He was a builder (3)  
 26 Mr Fawkes (3)  
 28 City in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region of France (3)

## Can You Guess The Year?

- The Queen Mother passed away, aged 101.
- The film '*Bend it Like Beckham*' was released in the UK.
- Arsenal win the FA Cup.
- And UK No. 1s included:
  - Westlife with '*World of Our Own*'
  - Gareth Gates with '*Unchained Melody*'
  - Ronan Keating with '*If Tomorrow Never Comes*'
  - Atomic Kitten with '*The Tide is High*'

*Answer next issue*

## This Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Questions

1. Which men's football team won the FA Cup in 1976?
2. When did construction of the present Westminster Abbey start?
3. What is the capital of Bulgaria?
4. What do Italians call Florence?
5. Who was King George IV's wife?
6. What is the name of the explorer James Cook's ship?
7. Who wrote the novel '*The Importance of Being Ernest*'?
8. When was the Barbican in London opened?
9. On the periodic table, which element is He?
10. When was the Forth Rail Bridge opened?

*Answers next issue*

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

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April**

Contributions can be emailed at anytime up to the deadline day to the editor at:

[surc.thelink@btinternet.com](mailto:surc.thelink@btinternet.com)

# Last Issue's Solutions

- Guess the year: it was 1969

- Last issue's crossword ↓

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

## Last Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Answers

- |                         |                                |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Arsenal              | 7. Victor Hugo                 |
| 2. NatWest Tower        | 8. 1950                        |
| 3. Chişinău             | 9. Iron                        |
| 4. Camulodunum          | 10. 24 <sup>th</sup> June 1981 |
| 5. Queen Mary (of Teck) |                                |
| 6. HMS Belfast          |                                |

## Sunday Service

### Morning

**10:30 Morning Worship** in church

*Broadcast live on YouTube*

→ **Holy Communion** on 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month

→ **All Age service** on last Sunday of each month

## Weekday Activities

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

**Tuesday 14:00 Bible Bite** ministry in church

*Broadcast live on YouTube*

**19:30 Prayer Meeting** on Zoom

**Wednesday 11:00 The Well**

**Friday 10:00 CatURpillars**

**Saturday 10:30 Coffee Morning** on Zoom

– a chance to catch up and have a chat

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

→ **inside the church**

→ **on our Facebook page**

→ **and on our website**

### Minister: **Rev Brian Harley**



10 Dracaena Gardens, Shanklin PO37 7JQ



01983 862485



[brianharley58@gmail.com](mailto:brianharley58@gmail.com)

*Day off: Monday*

### Secretary: **Robin Wightman**



[robinwightman@aol.com](mailto:robinwightman@aol.com)

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

[www.shanklinurc.co.uk](http://www.shanklinurc.co.uk)

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