

The Link



June 2024



Shanklin United Reformed Church www.shanklinurc.co.uk

View From Number 10



You will be my witnesses...

I have been encouraged by the variety of input and inspiration for prayer over the recent **Thy Kingdom Come** prayer season leading up to Pentecost. It was an enjoyable journey as we prayed for friends and family in various styles and approaches to prayer.

A video interview with Rev Canon Chris Russell, Mission and Evangelism adviser to the Archbishop of Canterbury, was especially good, exploring the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

The last part of this focussed on how we are all called to be witnesses to Jesus. He pointed out the word is a noun not a verb – a witness is what we are, not what we do. It should become part of our DNA as we walk in the Spirit. We may not all be gifted as evangelists and have the confidence to lead people to salvation in Jesus Christ, but we can and must be witnesses. A witness doesn't have to understand everything – they simply tell others what they have seen and heard or experienced.

Peter in his first letter explains that we must all be ready and prepared to give an answer when people ask us about the hope we have. This is not an invitation for Bible bashing but a chance to explain our faith with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15-16).

Our lives need to exhibit the change that faith brings, and this is as important as any words we may speak – it has been said that your life may be the only Bible that some people will read. We need to be people of integrity; it is a crucial part of our discipleship.



Let's pray for one another as we seek to be authentic followers of Jesus who can tell our personal story without embarrassment. It is ours to tell - and a unique and distinctive contribution that no one else can replicate.

But we can also work at becoming better at sharing our faith and talking to others that we meet, while leaning on the Holy Spirit for guidance and inspiration. He's there, right up

close, to help.

There will be a precious opportunity next month to grow in confidence in personal witness, as we are hosting three training afternoon sessions with Christ for All Nations (CFAN). This is linked to the Lionheart Festival and will take place on the three days leading up to the event – Wednesday 24 - Friday 26 July. CFAN are once again partnering with Lionheart and part of this is to run this training in seven locations across the Island. Look out for details and do try and come along – to one, two or all three sessions. They will each have a different emphasis as we explore together how to be effective in our witnesses to Jesus. Let's grasp the opportunity!

Every blessing for a wonderful summer season,

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

New Elders

It was great to ordain Ann Burnell and Ann Foster to Eldership in the URC on 19th May and also to welcome Malc Stevens back onto the leadership team. Do pray for the whole group as together we seek to steer the church going forward and care for the flock.

Times away...

I am away 29th May – 2nd June leading worship with my daughter Sarah at Barnes Close near Bromsgrove for a special Dunamis prayer training event – part of their Advanced Course for Strategic Intercession and Spiritual Warfare. This is a small gathering of just 30 people for a significant time of preparation and training in prayer.

From 10th - 13th June I will once again be at Sarum College in Salisbury, for the URC Wessex Synod Minister's Spring/Summer School. This is precious time away with colleagues, learning and growing.

Please pray for me in these very different activities – and for family.

Brian

Prayer



Midsummer Prayer Walk Friday 28th June 19:30

We are once again stepping out in prayer and taking a Spirit-led wander around the town to pray for our community. Please do come and join us – you can stay at the church or pray on the bench outside if too much walking is a challenge. The recent Free the Wight event was an amazing time of open-air prayer in and for the community. Let's build on that as we pray for our town.

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 **07474 273119** (or, as a back-up, Jean Cunningham on: 07854 324809) with your prayer request and she will mobilise a team of over 30 intercessors by forwarding the message to the group. Each of the team will pray and then delete the message.

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

Prayer for Israel

Is held each Monday at 14:30 at Roy, Melodie and Carol's home in the Old Village.

Should you wish to know more details, please contact Melodie or Roy on ☎ 866912 or melodieroywilson@gmail.com.



ENCOUNTER

Usually on the last Sunday of each month
at 10:30

A café style meeting place to drop in
and enjoy some refreshments



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

EVERYONE is welcome
– why not bring a friend?

This month the café service will be held on
30th June and led by Brian

Café serving from 10:15

Men's Breakfast – Saturday 15th June



08.45 for 09:00

at Viv's Cooking,
9 High Street Sandown



**Full English breakfast with drinks and toast
– all for £10**

Darren will be sharing a bit about his life and faith journey.

Please sign the list if you plan to come along. Do invite a friend (pick up an invitation card) and please offer a lift if you think someone needs one.

More info - Dave White or Robin.

Connection Quiz

1. What was George III's son's title from 1811, until he became George IV in 1820?
2. What was the last thing left in Pandora's box?
3. What is the name of the private sporting club in Barons Court, West Kensington, London, that hosts an annual men's tennis tournament?
4. Who is the minister/vicar character in the British version of Cluedo?
5. So, what is the **connection** between the answers to questions 1 - 4?
6. And where was the cover photo taken? Good luck! I'll tell you that it was taken in Normandie, France



Answers are on [page 42](#)

**Come to
'The Well'**

a place for

Living Well Together

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

Wednesdays 11:00 – 13:00

Free refreshments and craft activities

Just drop in at any point



Coming again soon...



A Summer Special...



Saturday 20th July

15:30 – 17:30

Free fun for all the family
- no unaccompanied children please

Please let Yvonne know if you can help.

Bring and Share Lunch

16th June (*after the morning service*)

We plan to have a bring-and-share lunch on 16th June to celebrate with the three ladies in our church family who have reached the dizzy heights of a milestone birthday. Do come along and join in the celebrations!

Church Open Morning

22nd June

10:00 - 12:00

With

- Crafts & Games
(for children and
adults)



- Refreshments
Drinks, Cake,
etc...

A place to meet up on a
Saturday morning and have
some fun
(and a chat of course)

Inside the May edition of *Reform* magazine

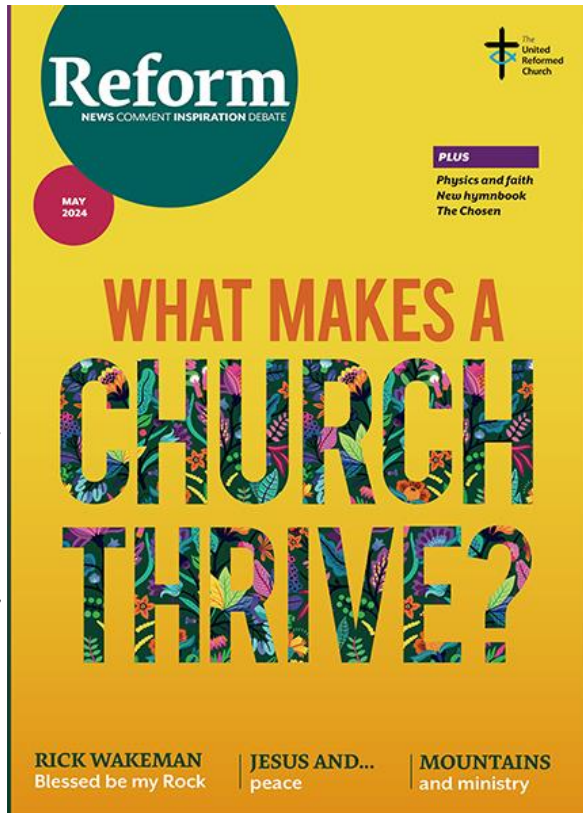
Progressive rock icon Rick Wakeman shares his love for the United Reformed Church in this month's *Reform*. He talks Henry VIII and funeral hymns, and tells the magazine he likes to consider himself "a Christian who lives in the real world".

Also in the real world, URC Youth Moderator Heather Moore says faith and physics make sense together, and the Rev Al Barrett is inspired by the secret world of fungi. Geoff Felton makes a pilgrimage right around his Mersey Synod, and walking enthusiast Stephen Thornton reflects on 60 years of ministry and mountains.

Two aspects of Jesus' ministry are explored by Graham Handscomb and John Cooper – the failed "banality of evil" demonstrated by Christ's crucifixion, and the hard call to non-violence revealed in Jesus' example of peace.

Plus all the regulars – thoughtful reviews, a challenging crossword, and columnist Paul Kerensa, this month revealing a great business idea and asking if anyone wants to go halves.

[Subscribe to Reform](#) digitally or in print. Any queries, please [email the Reform team](mailto:reform@urc.org.uk) - reform@urc.org.uk.



Source: urc.org.uk/

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

Worship in the Open Air



**Each Sunday 19:30
at Rylstone Gardens**
(turn left just past the Old Village)



**An informal service for everyone led
from the bandstand by local Churches**

Until 25th August

Free the Wight 1

The motto of the Wight Church Network is 'One Island One Church'. This was definitely displayed at 16:00 on Pentecost Sunday. Christians from 12 different expressions of Christian fellowships/denominations and prayer groups gathered in small groups around the coast and on the high places of the Island to declare God's blessing over our Island (see the map overleaf). God offers people freedom from addiction, oppression and worthlessness, then gives His abundant life. 60 declarations were simultaneously read out over the course of an hour.

This was organised by Richard and Rajinder Buxton who went to St Boniface Down, the highest place on the Island. Richard said: "Nine others from different churches arrived there also. It was a great time in beautiful weather."

We will never know how many people were involved in Free the Wight. There were 4 teams just along Shanklin seafront with another couple on the cliff tops. One group was near Fisherman's Cottage. 'A passerby asked whether we were doing the Stations of the Cross, because she had noticed the other teams as she walked along the esplanade. She was delighted by what we were doing. One slight problem - we hadn't realised we were a few yards away from a bus stop, and some of us had an arm raised. When a second bus approached, we quickly lowered them.'

Based on Numbers 6:24-26 we declared: 'In Jesus' name we speak God's grace and peace into our local government, council offices, the police and all other authorities that have power and influence over the residents of the Island and speak the peace of God into every home, business, congregation, community group and charity. We speak a revival in all our local churches and Christian fellowships, that will cause God's people to experience the fullness of the life of Christ, that spills out into, and affects all the communities around us, all over the Island.'

Amen and Amen.





Free the Wight 2

Nine of us were gathered in our home for the Free the Wight prayers and declarations on 19th May.

Roy had the following strong impression:

“I feel that the Lord says He has heard each one of our prayer requests, and that provided that we are prepared to meet each one of His Conditions, He is prepared to meet our needs.”

Melodie and Roy

Good News re Recycling

Empty blister packs from tablets and capsules can now have another life!

Boots the Chemist - currently in Shanklin and Ryde branches now have a bin to put these in and this is well worth doing. They are made up of plastic and other materials and with nearly 70% of our plastic waste in the UK coming from plastic packaging, the old adage seems to fit the bill: ‘Every little counts’

If it’s difficult for you to get to Boots, I will always be glad to take them from you at church. One little step in caring for God’s wonderful creation!

Blessings, Jane H

Further Reflections from the Sabbath of Prayer – 19th - 20th April 2024

Dear church family,

In last month's copy of **The Link**, I shared a few thoughts from the Saturday morning's prayer time with the Lord.

On the Friday evening I had felt the Holy Spirit's prompting to write down what I sensed the Lord was saying then and the words of the following just seemed to flow. One of the themes from the Sabbath of Prayer was an exhortation for us to 'wake up' and so what I believe I received seemed to confirm this and with our minister's agreement I now would like to share this with you. We are living in times of much shaking in the world and recent strange events in our nation seem to indicate the need to keep alert and watchful for the 'signs of the times'.

I submit this knowing always I need to examine my own heart and asking that you weigh it to see if you too sense it is from the Lord, and praying that it will bless and encourage you in your walk with Him.

We have just had the amazing event of '**Free the Wight**' on Pentecost Sunday with Christians all over the Island joining together in unity to seek the Lord for our Island - what a blessing and truly a sign that our God is in the midst of us and doing great things.

Blessings and **so** much love in Jesus.

Jane H

Wake Up, Wake Up... the Time is Short

I am the Lord, I who keep Israel, I neither slumber or sleep.

Where are the prayer warriors, where are those who will stand in the gap for Me?

Where are those who will be watchmen on the city walls?

Do you not know, have you not heard... I give strength to the weary and to him who has no might, I increase strength...

Those who wait upon Me shall renew their strength, they will rise up

on wings as eagles, they will run and not be weary, they will walk and not faint.

Do not faint dear children, for all that is coming on the world... I have gone before you, you are My beloved children. Do not fear for I have chosen you for such a time as this to be witnesses to My power, My glory...

'Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon him whilst He is near, let the wicked forsake his ways and let him turn to the Lord'... who alone can save him.

What are You saying to us as a church family, dear Lord Jesus?

'Be bold, be strong, for the Lord your God is with you...'

Be alert, for the enemy is around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour...

Is anything too hard for the Lord? With God all things are possible.

The walls are broken down and need rebuilding, the walls of the nation are broken down and need rebuilding. This nation needs to rediscover its calling from Me, the destiny that I gave to stand with My people, to be an instrument of blessing to them... after so many in the nations cursed and persecuted them.

You stand on the brink as a nation, the church in this nation stands on the brink, when will it heed My Voice? When will it purchase from me for itself, white garments to hide its shame? When will it return to its first love to devotion and worship of Me, to believing My Word, to seeking Me for the times in which it is living... My Church - bought with the precious blood of my dear Son, Jesus.

When will my Church discern what I am doing, when will my Church be on its face before me?

O My Children, I am calling out to you, the days are very urgent, do you not see the enemy at the door... seeking to devour as many as he can...

Many are perishing for lack of knowledge...

You have had My Word and others gave their lives that you might have it... so you could read it and in reading be blessed and nourished and for you to truly know Me, 'whom to know is life eternal'.

I am pleading with you, children, again I say, “the days are short;” the darkness grows ever darker but in it the light of Jesus will shine ever brighter.

Are you prepared to lay down your lives, dear children. Many of your brothers and sisters are already doing this,

Are you willing to lay down everything for My sake and for the sake of the Gospel?... So that you may bring ‘good news to the poor’, that you might reach the lost.

It will be costly, because it will mean a surrender of yourselves, “All of your ambitions, hopes and plans we surrender into your hands.” You sing this children, but do you really mean it?

My precious Son gave His life for you... enter into the joy that only I can bring...

Come, dear children, come to Me... do not delay.

Five ways you can pray for Iran

Recent events have once again shone a spotlight on the nation of Iran, and their role in the Middle East. For the beleaguered Christians in Iran, their ever more extremist government presents many challenges. So, as we pray about the situation in the Middle East, here are some ways in which you can pray for the Christian witness in the country.



Pray for the growth of Christianity among disadvantaged groups

Christianity has been growing in Iran as Christians have been helping vulnerable groups. Stories have been shared of drug addicts turning to Christianity in a search for peace and a new path for themselves. Some have even formed house churches.

An Open Doors partner and church leader in a neighbouring country to Iran says, “We’ve been serving among drug addicts and have witnessed how God amazingly transforms their lives and uses them.

However, we recently heard that the government has found out about the activities that many Christians do in many cities, serving among addicted groups.

“Please pray with us that God would protect the believers who preach the gospel in such environments, especially when they gather in the house churches,” our partner adds. “Please pray that God would keep using the weakest ones to show His glory.”

Pray for the effect of forbidden media

Christian satellite TV channels and an active presence in social networks - especially Instagram - have given people the opportunity to learn about Jesus. This increase in social media engagement has, in turn, led to an increase in the number of people coming to Christ. Again, the government is extremely concerned about this. They have prohibited the possession of satellite dishes (although many people still own them nevertheless) and the authorities do all they can to stop access to satellite broadcast channels and internet sites which they disapprove of, including Christian media – in particular, Christian sites focusing on evangelisation are blocked. Part of their goal is to slow down the growth of the church.

Iran has bought state-of-the-art surveillance systems from China and is able to monitor its citizens, including their movements, purchases, tele-communications and online activity. But even a Christian's public and private online presence (including email) while located outside of Iran could lead to the Iranian government's identification of their faith.

However, Iranian Christians report that contact with the wider world is nonetheless growing rapidly through such media as satellite TV and Internet, despite all restrictions and monitoring by the government.

Please pray for the continued effectiveness of this ‘forbidden media’.

Pray for more freedom for Christians

In Iran — officially an Islamic republic — the only official religion is Shia Islam. Some Christians are permitted to publicly follow Jesus in very limited ways: they must belong to historical churches, and they are not allowed to worship in Farsi, the national language of Iran.

And converts from Islam are certainly not allowed. The punishment for converting Muslims or for converting from Islam can be the death penalty, though this has rarely occurred. At the same time, attendance at mosques is falling – interpreted by many as lessening support for the Iranian regime.

Pray that the recent waves of protest and the increasing dissatisfaction with the regime will lead to an opening up and a change in the spiritual landscape of the country.

Pray for Christians in prison

Many Christians are in prison in Iran.

Both leaders and ordinary members of Christian convert groups have been arrested, prosecuted and have received long prison sentences for ‘crimes against national security’.

Simin* attended a house church in Iran, for which she was arrested. In prison, she was even told that she may never see her daughter again.

She eventually escaped to another country where she and her family had to make a new life. She was helped by Open Doors partners’ training which helps women process the pain of persecution. Through an online ministry, Simin now teaches the Bible to women in Iran and prepares them to lead house churches.

Praise God that, reportedly, at least nine Christian prisoners serving long prison sentences because of their faith were paroled and released last year. But please remember others who remain in custody.

Four Iranian Christians were recently arrested in a raid on a house-church gathering. Pray for their safe and expedient release and that they would see God’s hand continue to move in their lives. One of the believers arrested is a refugee from Afghanistan. Pray that that God would bring comfort and peace in unexpected ways to this believer far from home.

Pray too for your brother Esmaeil Narimanpour, a new convert in Iran. After being forced into ‘re-education’ sessions with an Islamic cleric, he has now been arrested. Pray that he would continue to seek and trust God in these trials.

Pray for safety, strength and justice for all Christians in Iran’s

prisons, and for their families as they wait for their release.

Pray for peace

“You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed” (Matthew 24:6). Jesus shared this with His followers, along with warnings about persecution, before He died.

Pray for peace in Iran and over Iran. Pray for wise governance, that the Iranian authorities will put the safety of their people above any desire for retaliation or escalated conflict.

And pray for the peace of Christians in Iran, that they will cling to the promises of Jesus and the hope that they have in Him. Pray too that their peace will overflow into the lives of their families, workplaces and communities, and draw many to the love of God.

**Name changed for security reasons*

Please Pray

Heavenly Father, we pray for our brothers and sisters in Iran who risk so much to follow You.

We think of those in prison for their faith; would You be with them, right now, showing them Your grace and mercy?

We also think of those forced to flee the country; be with them and help them to know they aren't alone.

Finally, we pray You would strengthen the courage of the underground church in Iran — thank You for their example, and may they couple wisdom with boldness. In Jesus' name,

Amen

Source: [Open Doors](#)

For the latest news on the persecuted church go to

www.opendoorsuk.org/news/latest-news/.

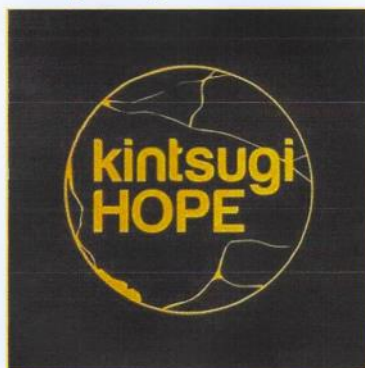
Carisbrooke Priory

MENTAL HEALTH FRIENDLY CHURCH

Training Day: Saturday 8th June, 10am to 4pm



To be led by Lynette Brooks of



Tickets £15 per person

Please book at www.kintsugihope.com/joinus

Ticket price sponsored by Carisbrooke Priory

39 Whitcombe Road, NEWPORT, Isle of Wight, PO30 1YS (01983 523354)

Carisbrooke Priory Trust Company Limited Registered Company No. 6624300 Registered Charity No. 1126024

Mental Health Training Reminder

With just over three weeks to go, it seems good to broadcast a reminder about the Mental Health Friendly Church training day at Carisbrook Priory on Saturday 8th June, 10:00 to 16:00. See poster on opposing page.

It will be delivered by Lynette Brooks of Kintsugi Hope, whose Director, Patrick Regan, is due to speak at the Wight Church All-Island Celebration next January.

Booking is essential, but the cost for the day is heavily subsidised by Carisbrooke Priory so that as many people as possible can attend and help to transform the response of the Church on the Isle of Wight to mental and emotional challenges.

Please make this event known among your people. Thank you and bless you.

Abundant blessings and encouragement,

Bob White

Carisbrooke Priory

Prayer for Street Pastors at IoW Festival – 20th - 23rd June

Could you pray for the following please.

- That all the organisation goes well.
- The health of the volunteers, as we have quite a few Island ones unwell at the moment.
- That we have enough kit for the four days of patrols.
- That the Mainland volunteers all arrive safely.

We have a very busy summer with normal patrols and events. We literally jump from one event to another in June, July and August.

See also the poster on the next page

Thanks.

Suzanne



DONATIONS NEEDED!



The Isle of Wight Street Pastors initiative are looking for donations to aid our support within the IOW festival this year! We are for the first time ever being allowed to run patrols inside the festival! From the 21st-24th of June

Here are just a few things you could help us with:

- **Sweet's and/or lolly pop donations**
- **Bottled water donation**
- **Chocolate boxes or small chocolate's**
- **Money towards funding kit and resources such as first aid and specialist equipment**

We are also looking for Street Pastor volunteers to support and patrol with us alongside the CEO of Ascension Trust - Bejoy, who is also attending alongside us this year!

Pick up's and drop off's can be arranged to suit you as required!



Please contact - sp@iowstreetpastors.org.uk

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 (a Euro 2024 special!) is available to read in church and online at www.goodnews-paper.org.uk/viewlatesteditionpage.htm and has several great articles, including the headline article 'From Junkie to Journalist' - violent drug dealer's new life after finding Jesus.

Other contributions include:

- Euro 2024 - Testimonies of six international players, including England's Bukayo Saka
- Wimbledon - Contender Coco Gauff stays focused with prayer
- Jurgen Klopp - Tribute to Christian manager Klopp as he retires from Liverpool
- Reacher Actor's Faith - Jack Reacher star finds purpose after failed suicide
- Traitor Who Was Faithful - Competitor in TV show really is faithful
- Onlyfans Model Quits For Christ - Top earner on OnlyFans gives it up for Jesus

Good News... for a change



Open the Book at St Blasius



On April 28th, Roy, Melodie, Bill, Julie and Ron (a storyteller from St James' in Ryde) presented 'Open the Book' during the morning service as St Blasius.

When this was arranged a couple of months earlier, the clergy told us of a family with children whom they felt sure would be there, especially as an article would appear in their church magazine beforehand. Just in case, we also arranged for a family with children from our church to come along. As the minutes ticked by, and none of this had happened, we finally asked for volunteers from the congregation. Thankfully, Annie and Paul were happy to be involved. Julie was hurriedly putting the head covering on Paul when she spotted the choir processing up the aisle towards them! She pulled him into the pew so the procession could pass, and the service began. The fact that no children were present underlined the opportunity provided by Open the Book enabling us to fulfil Psalm 78:

God commanded our ancestors to teach their children, so the next generation would know . . . and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.

The 'people of Israel' followed 'Moses' through the wilderness. Just

as in a school assembly, they had no preparation and were simply told to react to whatever happened – which included polystyrene manna and rubber ducks masquerading as quail falling from heaven. The congregation joined in, reading out a long list of grumbles. Afterwards, the minister described Annie and Paul as ‘expert complainers’.

The point we were trying to make is that it's no use complaining that children don't come to church, we need to go where they are. Do you know of anyone who could help the team bring the Bible to life for the children of St Blasius school?



Wight Church Network

They want to extend the reach of the Wight Church newsletter, and it would be a great help to them if you would subscribe.

The easiest way would be, to use this weblink where you will find a sign up form.

<http://eepurl.com/dGVGoL>

Many thanks



Open The Book Story: Rebellion

This half term on 23rd April, we were illustrating through our Bible Story, "Rebellion", the Core Value of **wisdom** where the children are being taught to recognise that God's wisdom helps us to make the right choices. When we show His love to others, God lives in us.

Again, we are so grateful for prayers especially as we were a team member short, with Roy not being able to join us yet after his hospitalisation. All went smoothly. We erected the backdrop in the passageway in front of the reception since we only have 10 mins to set up in the hall! The Lord clearly went before us and Claire reports: When I sat watching the children all come in, two waved and smiled very enthusiastically to me, and I could hear others, looking at the backdrop as they came in, saying to their friends "oh, I love this!!" It was so lovely. It was Y3 children who were smiling and waving, and Y1 children who were chatting excitedly.

Tracy handled the introduction, the story narration and the conclusion – but leading the actions was a bit more complicated since she was holding the book! This meant that the relationship actions were not all demonstrated from the front, but the children joined in wholeheartedly with 'ssssss' every time they heard the word 'serpent' and Tracy also observed that they were excited and waved to us as they came in.



Actions for Relationships were as follows which Adam and Eve could demonstrate: 1. between us and God – hands raised upwards. 2. between people – a high five..

3. with the created world – a big circle drawn with hands, to symbolise the earth.

God: "Here is a job for you, Adam. It's called Name the



Animals.” (Three children participants wore the hats we are exhibiting here, as they carried the respective animal – a Hippo, Horse and Hamster – which had also appeared in our previous “Creation” story. Eve led them one by one past Adam and he came up with their names.)

But this was not the only ‘hat’ that Chris wore! She ‘wore several’ handling various props behind the screen and at the last moment appearing (in celestial attire) in front of the screen – see last photo.



God: “And here is the only tree in the garden whose fruit you must not eat. It’s called The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. You can eat from any other tree. But if you eat from this one, you will die.”



But then, one day Eve was approached by the serpent (sss) – a proud and crafty creature who thought he knew better than God. And who was keen to destroy the three loving relationships God had made with women and men.

The proud serpent (sss) wanted to make Eve proud, too – to ruin the innocent, loving and trusting relationship she had with God (Action). And he wanted to use the fruit of the tree – something God had made – to ruin the loving relationship Adam and Eve had with God's creation. (Action).

And, sadly, the serpent's (sss) plan worked. Eve took a bite. And so did Adam.





'Adam, where are you?' God called.

'We're naked!' Adam replied. 'So, we're hiding!'

...'It's not my fault!' Adam cried. 'It's Eve's fault! She gave me the fruit!'



And even though Eve blamed the serpent (sss) God punished them all.

And with that, God made clothes from animal skins for Adam and Eve and sent them out of the garden,

leaving an angel with a flaming sword to prevent their return.





But he didn't forget about them. Not for a moment. He already had a plan to restore those three loving relationships – and it had everything to do with the child who would crush the serpent's head!

Open the Book - in Guatemala (and Beyond!)

Alfredo and Irene's son was an outcast in society. He wasn't even made to feel welcome at their local church. The reason for all of this was that their son Alfredo Jr. had Down's syndrome. But the couple, who live in one of the poorest regions of Guatemala, prayed for guidance and received an amazing response.



Thanks to the generous donations of Christians from other churches in the region they were able to set up

Tebow Down Centre in Northern Chimaltenango, an area where two thirds of residents live in poverty. The centre's aim is serve children who have special needs and/or physical disabilities.

But God's answer to prayer didn't end there. Alfredo and Irene now run a total of four centres for a total of 150 children with special needs or disabilities. Here they receive a mix of therapeutic care and education. And, just recently, they set up a school, too.

Bible Society's Open the Book programme, which is flourishing in Guatemala since it began in early 2023, has also been introduced to the school. This amazing ministry is supported in Guatemala by your kind giving through Bible a Month. You're enabling these children to understand the message of hope found in the Scriptures, and to understand that Jesus loves them.

Scripture storytelling teams visit Tebow Down fortnightly and have adapted their Bible stories to be fully understood and appreciated by the children with special needs or disabilities that they serve.

When we visited, the children were having a ball in the classroom! The story was of God's creation, and the children would go to the front of the class and add pictures of animals to a huge book. Later, the children were pretending to be superheroes with face paint and capes. They were singing, running around, and pulling off some impressive superhero dance moves! It was a joy to watch, with Bible messages being clearly revealed. We could really feel the presence of the Lord.

There is little governmental support for children with special needs in Guatemala so Tebow Down Centre staff members meet with new parents who have just found out their child has special needs or a disability. The staff tell the parents that their child is such a special gift from God, which is so important when they are sometimes hearing negative views from other people about their child.

The oldest student at the new school is 18 and has both learning and physical disabilities. She loves to paint and dance, and make jewellery at craft lessons. And she really enjoys the challenge of mathematical puzzles.

'I'm so blessed here,' she told us. 'They lack facilities for me at the public school so I couldn't stay there, so I came to Tebow Down when I was 16.'

At Tebow Down she also takes part in communication classes and benefits from physical therapy sessions, as well as learning how to cook. Tebow Down is teaching these children and young people crucial life skills so they can be independent in the future.

Though there's something greater to be learned at Tebow. 'I like learning about God, and that's why I love Open the Book,' says Josselin.

Thanks for your amazing support of the Open the Book programme. And you're not just taking the Bible into schools in Guatemala. Open the Book has also been introduced in Ecuador, Honduras, Argentina, Albania, Gambia, Uganda, Kenya, Angola, Cape Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe, Guinea Bissau and Mozambique. None of this amazing work would have been possible without your kind giving here in England and Wales, which is where Open the Book started many years ago.

Source: Bible Society

Sharing Bible stories with children as bombs rain down

Anatoliy Raychynets was carrying his sleeping seven-year-old son Georgy in Kyiv as Russian missiles rained down all around.

The Ukrainian Bible Society Deputy General Secretary entered a bomb shelter and laid his boy down beside a concrete wall.

Georgy stirred and muttered the words: 'Dad, are there rockets again? Why doesn't God answer our prayers for the war to end?'

Anatoliy was reminded of the story of Simeon (Luke 2.25–33), who waited on God's promise that he would not die until he saw the Lord's promised Messiah, the salvation of all nations, with his own eyes.

Sitting in the shelter, Anatoliy shared Simeon's story with Georgy and other children, saying it was a reminder that the Lord always fulfils his promises.

'Sometimes we just need to wait long and patiently, trusting him,'

said Anatoliy as explosions were heard outside the shelter.

If and when this conflict will end, only God knows. But one thing is for sure, Ukraine will be needing our healing prayers for many years to come.

For more than two years now, Ukrainian Bible Society colleagues such as Anatoliy have been risking their lives taking aid, medicine and the Scriptures to people across the country, and increasingly to areas of fighting.

In England and Wales, Bible Society supporters have responded to the invasion by generously donating more than £1.17 million. This has been used not only to help distribute more than a million Bibles, but also to provide the Bible-based handbook, Beyond Disaster, to help people to deal with trauma suffered during the conflict. The money has also provided other much-needed help and support for Anatoliy and his colleagues.

It was thanks to the reliable monthly giving of Bible a Month supporters that they were able to get Scriptures to Ukraine without any delay when the war started.

Join Bible a Month today to help provide this kind of immediate provision of Scripture. You'll receive a prayer letter for Bible a Month members (where this article first appeared) every three months, outlining how your regular giving puts the Bible in the hands of people all over the world.

Will you join Bible a Month today with a regular donation? You'll be making huge investment in life-changing Bible mission. Go to:

www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/bible-a-month/

Source: [Bible Society](#) - used by permission





The View From The Cross ~ 2

In Matthew 16, Jesus tells His followers ***“For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?”*** (vv 25&26).

In part 1 last time we looked at the *View from the Cross* and *Denying Ourselves*. In part 2 we are looking at *Picking up the Cross Daily* and *Following Him*. Here is what Neil Anderson has to say about these:

Picking Up The Cross Daily

“Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must... take up their cross.”.” (Matthew 16:24).

The cross we are to pick up daily is not our own cross but the cross of Christ. We are closely identified with His cross because we have been crucified with Christ and no longer live but Christ lives in us, as Paul tells us in **Galatians 2:20**: ***“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me”***

His cross provided forgiveness for what we have done and deliverance from what we were. We are forgiven because He died in our place; we are delivered because we died with Him. We are both justified and sanctified as a result of the cross.

To pick up the cross daily means to acknowledge every day that we belong to God. We have been purchased by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect,” (1 Peter 1:18-19).

When we pick up the cross, we affirm that our identity is not based in our physical existence but in our relationship with God. We are identified as children of God.

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God,” (1 John 3:1-2a).

Our life is in Christ, who is our life... ***“For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory,” (Colossians 3:3-4).***

As a result of this acknowledgement, we stop trying to do our own thing in order that we live daily to please our heavenly Father. We stop trying to become something we aren't, and we rest in the finished work of Christ, who made us something very special.

Jesus said, ***“For whoever wants to save their life¹ will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it” (Matthew 16:25).*** Those who strive to establish their identity and seek to establish purpose and meaning in their natural life will someday lose it. We can't take it with us! We must take up our cross daily by acknowledging that life only finds meaning in Christ.

Thank You, Lord, that because of the cross, I can soar in the heavenlies with You. You are my life.

Following Him

“Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple, let him follow Me,” (Matthew 16:24).

Seeking to overcome self by self-effort is a hopeless struggle. Self will never cast out self because anyone self-motivated by the flesh

still wants to be God. We must follow Christ by being led by the Holy Spirit down the path of death to self-rule. Paul wrote:

“For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body,” (2 Corinthians 4:11).

This may sound like a dismal path to walk, but I assure you that it is not. It is a tremendous experience to be known by the Shepherd and to follow Him as obedient, dependent sheep... ***“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me!” (John 10:27).*** The fact that we are led by the Spirit of God (even when it results in the death to self-rule) is our assurance of sonship... ***“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God,” (Romans 8:14).***

We were not designed to function independently of God. Only when we are dependent on Him and intent on following Christ, are we complete and free to prove that the will of God is good, acceptable and perfect.

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will,” (Romans 12:2).

Self-rule is motivated by self-interest and supported only by self-centred resources. When we come to the end of our resources, we discover God's resources. God will let us do our thing and patiently wait until self-interest and self-rule leave us spiritually and emotionally bankrupt. We can turn to God any time we weary of trying to run our own lives independently of Him. He doesn't force Himself on us; He just simply says, *“If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him follow Me”*.

Are you willing to forsake self-rule and follow Him?

Loving Shepherd, I desire Your will for my life, and I purpose today to follow You in obedience and dependence.

Neil Anderson

Freedom in Christ Ministries
Daily Devotionals
Used by permission

Neil asks “Are we willing to forsake self-rule and follow Jesus?” Brian recently asked “Are we prepared to be counted as witnesses today, even if it proves costly, are we willing to be identified with Jesus in his suffering?” (Newsheet+ 5th May).

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16).

“Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.” (Luke 9:26).

“Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” (Hebrews 12:1-3).

Thank you, Father, that you love us so much that you gave your only Son, that, believing in Him, we will not perish but have eternal life.

Dear Lord, three things we pray: to see You more clearly, to love You more dearly and to follow You more nearly, day by day.

Robin

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Focus

on our Christian Brothers and Sisters being persecuted for their faith

“Even if they kill me for my faith, I want to continue serving the Lord” – Hari’s courageous faith in India

Hari has been thrown out of his home, his church has been closed and he’s been arrested under false accusations – but nothing will stop him from following Jesus.

When a pastor visited his village in India to tell people about Jesus, Hari* was intrigued by the message he heard – but also warned of the dangers it would bring.

He watched as three families from his tribe became Christians through the pastor, only to be driven out of the village. Since traditional religion is so deeply entwined with the tribe’s culture and history, choosing to follow another belief is seen as a rejection of the community.

The families fled to the pastor’s village, where they were warmly embraced. Together with the message he had earlier heard from the pastor, this had a profound impact on Hari. “I was so amazed at the love these Christians showed to each other,” he says. “I knew this was the God that I wanted to believe and follow. From then on, there was no turning back for me.”

His family were furious – just as he expected. “My parents hated me. My brothers and sisters forced me to leave the house because of my newfound faith.”

Despite this, Hari stood firm in his faith, even deciding to study Christian theology. After completing the course, he dedicated himself to full-time ministry in his village, with many people giving their lives to Jesus.

Arrests and accusations

Threatened by the remarkable growth of Hari's church, extremists looked for ways to thwart its impact – including false accusations of breaking anti-conversion laws, a common tactic used against Christians in many parts of India. These laws purport to prevent forced religious conversions, but are abused to target and harass Christians and other minority faiths.

"The extremists influenced local police and had me arrested on false charges of forceful conversion, but the police could not find any evidence and had to let me go," he says. "I continued my ministry and then, one day, I baptised some people. These were people who wanted to be baptised out of their free will – but the police arrested me. Again, they found no evidence and had to release me."

Worse was to come. "During our Easter service, religious extremists, along with the police, barged into our service. They threatened the believers, telling them they would be arrested and drove them all away from the church."

Hari was called to the police station and questioned, along with two other Christians from his church. "While we were being questioned, the extremists were also present, and they kept pressing the police officers to oppose us," recalls Hari. "The police asked us, 'Who gave you the right to do this?' I replied: 'The Indian Constitution gives me right to preach, and my Bible and the God whom I worship also give me the right to preach. I do not force people – they hear my preaching and, if they like it, they come to the church.'"

But the police refused to listen. "The police kept alleging that I was destroying the harmony of the village by teaching about a 'foreign' God. They told me strictly not to conduct church services anymore. The extremists standing there threatened to kill me – right in front of the police."

Indefatigable faith

Hari's church was closed and he's since been unable to get it reopened. "We now gather in secret – only in small numbers in houses," he says. "We take precautions, but I am confident that, even if they kill me for my faith, I want to continue to serve the Lord. Christ has given me His life and, all these years, He has protected me amongst all these threats. I know there is so much work yet to complete for God's Kingdom."

“In every disappointing moment, I was reminded of 1 Chronicles 28:20: ‘Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the temple of the Lord is finished.’ This promise keeps me and my family motivated to do more of God’s work, as we know that the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few. Nothing can stop us from loving Christ and serving Him.”

God answers his prayers – through your support

Hari is immensely touched by the provision of practical and pastoral support by Open Doors local partners, including food and help for his business. It’s an answer to his prayers.

“It is so joyful to see God’s children standing with me in the midst of persecution,” he says. “As a pastor of a small church, offerings from believers had been our only source of income. Since the church was shut down, I have been unable to manage the expenses of my family. I prayed to the Lord for help, and He sent you. The help you have provided us is a great encouragement and helps us attain sufficient income to sustain our family. Our God has indeed not forsaken or failed us. Thank you so much for your help and support.”

Hari and his church miss gathering in their church building, but they continue meeting in secret and expressing their faith, in whatever ways they can. “Continue praying for us,” asks Hari. “I am very convinced that Christ is able to protect what we have entrusted unto Him.”

**Name changed for security reasons*

Please Pray

- That Hari’s family will continue to find peace in difficult circumstances and continue to have strong faith
- That Hari’s church will be able to reopen, and ask God to encourage them as they gather secretly
- That this trend of false accusations against Christians in India will stop.

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

Prophetic Ministry Weekend

with David & Greta Peters



David & Greta, founders of Spirit Life Ministries are recognised prophetic ministers. They travel extensively and carry a passion to see global awakening so that nations turn to Jesus Christ.

To this end, they proclaim the good news of forgiveness of sins and eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.

David and Greta's heart is to see God's people walk in his amazing purposes and become all that he intends them to be.

- They love to release believers into life transforming encounters with God, train them to operate in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit and thus bring Kingdom influence in their daily lives.

- They also love to encourage, advise and support pastors and leaders, especially through prophetic ministry.

- They champion unity, prayer, and mission throughout the diverse Body of Christ.

Sat 8th June - Islandwide Teaching morning
10:00 - 13:00 (followed by free lunch)

Please book Saturday's session through our facebook page

Sun 9th June - Islandwide Ministry Evening
18:30 - 20:30 (with refreshments)

David and Greta will also be with Ryde Elim Pentecostal Church during their 10:30 Sunday Morning Celebration

Ryde Elim Pentecostal Church



a: 48 Albert Street, Ryde, Isle-of-Wight, PO33 2SB

e: info@rydeelim.org t: 01983 615965

www.rydeelim.org Charity Number: 251549



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JULY 2024

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Connection Quiz Answers

1. Prince **Regent**.
2. **Hope**.
3. **Queen's** Club.
4. Rev **Green**.
5. Connection: they are all **roads in Shanklin**:
Regent Street, Hope Road, Queen's Road and Green Lane
6. This issue's cover photo is of a local in a field on the D229 in Br  el, Normandie, France [   C Sparks]





Dates For Your Diary

Day	Date	Time	Details
Fri	7 th Jun	19:00	Elders Meeting
Sun	9 th Jun	10:30	Rev Kelvin Burke speaking
Tue	11 th Jun	14:00	Grace McKenzie from Christ Church speaking at Bible Bite
Sat	15 th Jun	09:00	Men's Breakfast @ Viv's Cooking
Sun	16 th Jun	13:00	Bring and Share Lunch - 80 th Birthdays
Fri	28 th Jun	19:30	<i>Midsummer Prayer Walk</i>
Sun	26 th May	10:30	Encounter Café Service

Street Pastor Update

It is now only just four weeks until the IoW Festival where IoW Street Pastors will be covering patrols on the outside and for the first time, inside the festival.

We have 42 volunteers patrolling over four days with 8 teams on each day split over 2 shifts per day.

We have been donated items already from various churches and organisations but we still need more of the following items please:

- Lollipops
- Small bottles of water
- Individually wrapped chocolates (Celebrations, heroes etc) or sweets
- First Aid Items- Plasters, Bandages, Ice-packs, Micropore tape etc
- Money towards items
- We are happy to pick up any donations or we have various drop off points.

This is a fantastic opportunity to show potentially thousands of people the love of Jesus.

Please contact Suzanne (Street Coordinator) on suzanne@iowstreetpastors.org.uk or 07511 163632 to arrange a collection/drop off or if you have any questions.

The Puzzle Pages

Sudoku

A numerical placement puzzle!

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

Enjoy!

Difficulty level: medium

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

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

Last month's Sudoku - how did you do?

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

Across

- 1 A 1976 regal ABBA song (7 5)
 7 Did this come before the chicken, or did the chicken come first? (3)
 8 Central American country, capital Managua (9)
 10 Enjoyment (3)
 12 Land surrounded by water (6)
 16 Juliet's friend (5)
 19 Indefinite article before a vowel (2)
 20 2nd book of OT (6)
 22 English university city of dreaming spires (6)
 24 Not out (2)
 25 Either (2)
 27 Large hairy creature said to live in the Himalayas (4)
 28 Unusual or surprising (7)
 31 Superseded EEC *initials* (2)

- 32 Transgression (3)
 34 Fozzie Bear, Kermit and co (7)
 35 Sesame Street grouch (5)

Down

- 1 CBBC animated rodent who's saving the world (6 5)
 2 Capital of the Alpes-Maritimes département of France (4)
 3 Formed in 1920 to sell goods to servicemen *initials* (5)
 4 North American country *initials* (3)
 5 Nine, en français (4)
 6 Getting old (5)
 9 Not off (2)
 11 Italian name for Genoa (6)
 13 What dogs are often told to do (but often don't) (3)
 14 Capital of the Orne département, Normandie (7)
 15 Greek god of wine-making (8)
 17 Mission Aviation Fellowship *initials* (3)
 18 Sainsbury's clothing range (2)
 21 Member of a boat or ship's crew (6)
 23 Chien, en anglais (3)
 26 Relax, sleep, or recover strength (4)
 29 Slang for stomach (3)
 30 Partner of tuck? (3)
 33 Est, en anglais (2)

Can You Guess The Year?

- Ford launched the Focus range of cars.
- Winter Olympics were held in Nagano, Japan
- Rolls-Royce Motors were acquired by BMW
- Eurovision Song Contest was held in the UK, in Birmingham
- And UK No. 1s included:
 - B*Witched with 'C'est La Vie'
 - Boyzone with 'All That I Need'
 - Spice Girls with 'Goodbye'
 - Aqua with 'Turn Back Time'

Answer next issue

This Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Questions

1. Which British driver won the 2001 World Rally Championship?
2. When was the Royal Air Force formed?
3. What's the capital of Moldova?
4. Who was the first Stuart monarch?
5. What was the German currency before the Euro?
6. What is the motto of the SAS?
7. Who was the first person to fly across the channel?
8. Who wrote the book 633 Squadron?
9. On the periodic table, which element is Zr?
10. Who was the first team to win the women's FA Cup?

Answers next issue

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

Sunday 23rd June

However, contributions can be emailed at anytime up to the deadline day to the editor at:

surc.thelink@btinternet.com

Last Issue's Solutions

- Guess the year: it was 1995
- Last issue's crossword ↓

B	R	O	T	H	E	R	S	I	N	A	R	M	S
A		G		A			A	X	E		O		I
Y	P	R	E	S			G		P		A	T	
E		E		T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R		P
U		S		E		U			E				I
X		S	I	N	G	E		A	W	N	I	N	G
	B					R	O	B			B	O	A
T	A	U	N	T	O	N		S			I		L
R	A	N		A		I	C	E		I	Z	A	L
I		T	O	X	I	C		N	A		A	T	E
K		I				A		C		T		O	
E	C	L	A	I	R		R	E	N	A	U	L	T

Last Issue's 'Pot Luck' Quiz Answers

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Johnny Herbert | 6. Bibendum |
| 2. 27 th July 1694 | 7. Rev Wilbert Awdry |
| 3. Andorra la Vella | 8. Wing Commander Guy Gibson |
| 4. Queen Anne | 9. Mercury |
| 5. Escudo | 10. Queen Victoria |

Sunday Service

Morning

10:30 Morning Worship in church
Broadcast live on YouTube

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

Weekday Activities

Monday 14:30 Prayer for Israel (see [page 4](#))

Tuesday 14:00 Bible Bite ministry in church
Broadcast live on YouTube
Refreshments from 13:30
19:30 Prayer Meeting on Zoom (see [page 4](#))

Wednesday 11:00 Living Well Together (aka 'The Well')

Friday 10:00 CatURpillars

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

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

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

Minister:

Rev Brian Harley



10 Dracaena Gardens, Shanklin PO37 7JQ



01983 862485



brianharley58@gmail.com

Day off: Monday

Secretary:

Robin Wightman



robinwightman@aol.com

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

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