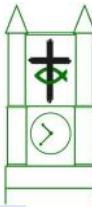


The Link

February 2026



Shanklin United Reformed Church www.shanklinurc.co.uk

View From Number 10



A Warm Welcome

Part of the **Leading your Church into Growth** initiative that we've been exploring involves a challenge to carefully examine the nature of our welcome. There is much we can take for granted about our church building and the way we do things – the culture that most of us don't even notice because it is all so familiar.

But what does all this look like for someone who has been passing the door and trying to summon up the courage to come in? What do our noticeboards communicate – what is the entrance area like; is it all attractive and exuding a message of welcome and warmth?

So often our noticeboards can be tatty, cluttered and sometimes out of date and stuff gets left lying around the place sometimes for years not just months. We must try to make our premises as homely as possible and make sure that the things left out are there for a good reason and that the key pieces of communication are most prominent.

In his recent paper about Missional Trends, Phil Knox of the Evangelical Alliance urges us to have our eyes and hearts open in what seems to be a ripe season when people in the UK are interested in finding out about faith in Jesus:

"Are we ready to welcome people who are searching? Are we prepared to connect with people who walk through our doors?



**Leading your Church
into Growth**

People come to church for many reasons, but they will stay because of relationship. In this season, as people encounter Jesus and search for truth, are our communities of faith ready to journey with people towards the way, the truth and the life?"

As we explore ways in which we can grow as a church - in number, in spiritual depth, and in missional breadth - we must look carefully at how we can better offer a warm and genuine welcome to those who venture through the doors. In both congregations I lead we have seen new faces and people showing interest in the faith. Making

friendships and getting involved in community life are keys to those folk feeling at home and getting more deeply involved.

Please let's not take anything for granted – let's be alert to the needs of new people in our community and do all we can to help them feel at home and begin to belong. Often it seems that for many folk belonging comes before believing.

I find it hard to believe that it's 12 years now since I was inducted as minister for the IoW URC Group and became pastor of the congregation at Ryde (and Freshwater for several years until they sadly closed). We have journeyed on as partner churches and I thank you all for the way you have supported me as I have sought to serve our friends 8 miles to the north. May we continue to have a Kingdom mindset and invest in God's work across the Island and beyond. We can make others at a distance and watching online feel valued and even welcomed because of our love and attitudes shown in action.

May the Lord richly bless us in this new season of opportunity.

In His Grip. ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish underneath the main name.

Exploring Church Membership

**Saturday 21st February
from 10:00 – 16:00**



A chance to look at what it means to be a member of this local church, discover more about how we function and get your questions answered.

Please speak to Brian or Robin if you are interested in attending this meeting.

Prayer



Always at the Heart of our Life

Saturday 14th February - Soup Lunch at 12:30
- followed by an hour of prayer

Do please come and join in as we seek the Lord together

Pray the Wight – Saturday 28th February in Newport - join Brian from 10:00 - 11:00 (see [page 8](#)).

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

Tuesday Prayer - Continues each week at 19:30 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 – If you have an urgent and important issue that needs immediate cover, please text Lou on **07514 766798** (or, as a back-up, Jean Cunningham on: 07854 324809) with your prayer request and she will mobilise a team of intercessors by forwarding the message to the group. Each of the team will pray and then delete the message.

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

Pray for The Bay – Grace McKenzie from Christ Church hosts this gathering, normally on the first Thursday of each month, at her home in Lake at 14:00. Ask Brian or Lou for details if you are interested in going along – the next meeting is on 5th February

Next Sabbath of Prayer – reflecting on *Leading Our Church into Growth*.

Save the date - **Friday 17th April – Saturday 18th April.**

SURC February Prayer Diary

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

Happy praying

Sun 1	Today's Communion service	Tue 17	Our pancake social/outreach
Mon 2	The Monday prayer meetings in church	Wed 18	Ash Wednesday - Lent starting today
Tue 3	Bible Bite	Thu 19	Churches on the Isle of Wight spreading God's Word
Wed 4	The Well - volunteers, regulars and visitors	Fri 20	The Persecuted Church
Thu 5	Churches in The Bay	Sat 21	Organisations supporting the Persecuted Church
Fri 6	CatURpillars	Sun 22	Church tech team - and for the tech used
Sat 7	Shanklin Town Council and Isle of Wight Council	Mon 23	Those who aren't well enough to get to church
Sun 8	Christian youth work in The Bay	Tue 24	IoW Youth for Christ
Mon 9	European Union	Wed 25	The text prayer network, and for Lou who organises it
Tue 10	Our Tuesday prayer meeting	Thu 26	The church AGM in four weeks' time
Wed 11	World peace	Fri 27	The NHS; staff, patients and services
Thu 12	Those affected by violence and conflicts around the world	Sat 28	Sheilagh & Steve's wedding today at 14:00
Fri 13	Elders' Meeting		
Sat 14	Lunch and Prayer event		
Sun 15	The children in our congregation		
Mon 16	Half term that begins this week		



New Year message 2026

Dear Friends,

As the year turns, I want to begin with something simple and sincere: thank you. Thank you for the faithfulness that is so often unseen, for the steadiness that keeps going when enthusiasm is in short supply, and for the care you offer in ways that rarely make headlines or reports. Over the Christmas season especially, many of you carried extra responsibilities with grace, even when energy was limited. Your presence, patience, and quiet perseverance matter more than you may realise.

The arrival of a new year can stir a wide range of emotions. For some, it brings relief; for others, apprehension; for many, a mixture of both. Not every year ends neatly, and not every story reaches a satisfying pause at midnight on 31st December. If the year just past has left you tired, uncertain, or simply glad it is over, you are not alone, and you are not failing. Faithfulness is not always loud or productive. Sometimes it looks like staying, listening, and beginning again gently.

January often arrives carrying expectations it cannot possibly meet, forcing us to feel as if we need to reset, reinvent, and improve ourselves at speed. Yet the gospel offers a different rhythm. We are not required to become someone else in order to be valued by God. We are invited instead to live more truthfully, more attentively, and more kindly, to ourselves as well as to one another.

That is why, as we begin 2026, I want to commend once again the spirit of Gentle January, not as a programme but simply as a permission. Permission to ease into the year rather than rush it. Permission to notice what sustains rather than what exhausts. Permission to set aside unnecessary urgency. Gentleness can take many forms:

- a softer pace,

- a kinder inner voice,
- more spacious expectations,
- time to breathe, pray, and reflect,
- and a renewed attentiveness to the people and places entrusted to our care.

None of this is about doing less for the sake of it. It is about grounding what we do in grace rather than strain, and allowing God's faithfulness, not our own effort, to be the firm ground beneath us.

As this new year unfolds, my hope is that you will know moments of rest, clarity, and quiet joy, and that you will feel encouraged rather than driven. May 2026 be a year in which you are gently held, and gently renewed.

With every blessing for 2026,

Michael Hopkins

New Year, 2026

CARE Prayer Diary

The latest CARE Prayer Diary, for January to April 2026 is now available in church and online, covering:

- Peace in the World
- Overcoming Evil
- Compassion for Vulnerable Adults
- Children's Welfare
- Christian Light and Salt
- Migration and Refugees
- Safety and Security
- Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
- Pressures on Families
- Energy Resources
- Freedom from Addictions
- Frail and Elderly People
- Rising Cost of Living
- Cities

PRAY THE WIGHT

Saturday 28th February in True Vine Church

26a, High Street, Newport (above the Slug & Lettuce)

Believers from all over the Island coming together to pray for God to help, bless make fruitful and bring a fresh breath of his presence across the whole of our Island:

- in all our congregations and christian organisations
- in our out reach to local communities
- in our schools, colleges and institutions that have authority and influence over us
- in other areas that need our prayers

Spread over 6 hours, with one hour of both prayer and worship led by leaders from each area, devoted to each of the 5 regions of the Island:

10.00 – 11.00 – The South & East	(Sandown, Brading, Shanklin, Ventnor, Wroxall, Godshill, Niton & all villages)
11.15 – 12.15 – The North & East	(Wootton, Ryde, Bembridge & all villages)
12.30 – 13.30 – The South & West	(Freshwater, Totland, Yarmouth Brightstone & all villages)
13.45 – 14.45 – The North & West	(Cowes, East Cowes, Gurnard & all villages)
15.00 – 16.00 – Central	(Newport & its surrounds)

Come and pray for your own region for the relevant hour, or stay to pray for longer



For further details contact either:

Rev Richard Buxton, email: prayer@rydelm.org

Rev Brian Harley, email: brianharley58@gmail.com



Knitted Items for Seafarers

Sylvia is collecting knitted hats, scarves, gloves and blankets for the Seafarers Christian Ministry.

This year Sylvia has collected around 70 hats, which Peter Wells from the Mission was extremely grateful for as many of the ship workers are extremely poor and lack basic items.

If you would like to help by providing any spare wool or even knitting one or more of the items, please talk to Sylvia at the church or phone 01983 862942.

Thank you for your support.

God Bless

Sylvia

YFC East Wight Project

As reported at the November Church Meeting, we are contributing towards a part-time youth worker for The Bay and Brading area. Megan West, who runs the café and Pilates studio across the road, started in this role from 1st January and has been spending time with the YFC team on the Island getting ready to begin some fresh work in our area.

She will attend the evening shared worship on 8th February at Lake Methodist Church where we can hear more of the vision and pray for her ([see page 25](#)).

A date for the diary...

Annual Spring Clean working party

**Saturday 14th March
from 10:00 – 12:00.**



We will end with soup and bread together sometime after 12:00. We had a great team last year - come and join the fun. There are odd jobs for all abilities. Please bring cloths, buckets, steps etc...

Church Meeting

Including our AGM

26th March 2026 @ 19:30



Refreshments from 19:00

...or join via our regular Zoom link

All members and regular worshippers are encouraged to come and share in this important gathering as we discuss the business and plans of the church family, including the election of Elders, as we serve the Lord together.

**Please pick up an agenda and minutes
when they are available**

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

Connection Quiz

1. What colour is the Central Line on a map of the London Underground?
2. What song did Chelsea FC record and release in 1972?
3. What is the name of the vicar character in the board game Cluedo?
4. What colourful song was a hit for Scottish singer Donovan in 1966?
5. Mr Tickle is what colour?
6. So, what is the **connection** between the answers to questions 1 - 5?
7. Where was the cover photo taken - hint, it's of a cathedral in Normandy, France

Answers are on page 39



Back to Madagascar...



Sarah Harley has just given notice to leave her job in the NHS in Nottingham and is returning to work with Mercy Ships for a couple of years, initially back in Madagascar. After mentioning the idea, she has been asked to take on a leadership role in ITU nursing.

At the end of February, she flies to Texas for ship training which is a requirement for those serving in longer term roles. She will return to the UK for a month and then head off in late April to rejoin the ship. She may pop down to the Island around Easter – and she would value your prayers as she embarks on this fresh season of service.

For information on Mercy Ships and what they do, please visit www.mercyships.org.uk/

Warm thoughts of dear Hazel.

2021 I had a fall and was out of action and not able to get to church for several months.

I received beautiful cards from my wonderful church family. One particular card was from dear Hazel. I didn't know Hazel very well apart from greetings from her on arrival at church on Sunday mornings. Hazel's words of comfort and encouragement really touched my heart. This card is now in my memory box.

We all look forward to seeing this very special lady on Saturday 24th January.

Lots of love Hazel.

Pat B

ENCOUNTER

On the last Sunday of each month at 10:30

A café style meeting place to drop in and enjoy



some refreshments

A relaxed time of Friendship, Fun, Food and exploring Faith...

with craft, songs, challenges, prayers...

EVERYONE is welcome – do bring a friend along

The next café service will be on the 22nd February

A great time to invite friends along

– café serving from 10:15

Website of the Month:

Wight Church Network

<https://wightchurch.net/>

Shared Worship in The Bay



At 17:00 Each Week

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

A shared service on the second Sunday of each month

8th February - Lake Methodist Church*

8th March - Church of Good Shepherd, Lake

12th April - St Blasius, Shanklin

All other weeks - informal prayer and praise at Shanklin URC

All are welcome - please join us when you can

***come and meet Megan West, new YFC worker on 8th February
(see [page 25](#))**

World Watch List 2026

The new World Watch List will be arriving in print around mid-February, but is available online at the Open Doors website.

In brief

4,849 pay ultimate cost for their faith

Open Doors research shows that the number of Christians worldwide killed for their faith increased by eight per cent to 4,849. Of these, 72% were from Nigeria – that's more than the rest of the world combined. Other countries in sub-Saharan Africa that recorded at least 100 faith-related killings include Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burkina Faso and Cameroon.

Syria jumps 12 places, making it the biggest riser

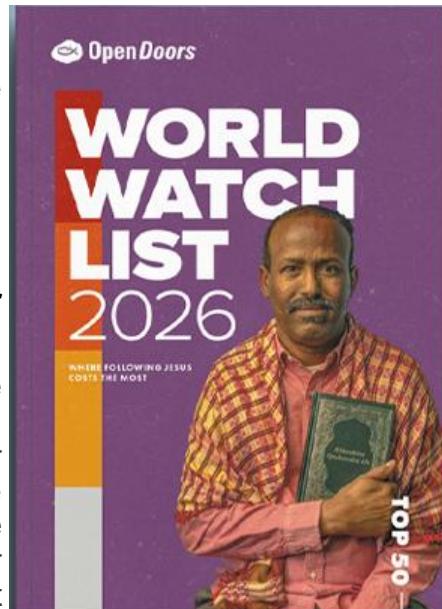
Syria has jumped to sixth. It's the biggest riser in this year's list and now a place of extreme persecution for many of the country's tiny minority of believers. This is largely down to a sharp rise in the number of Christians killed and churches attacked since the fall of the Assad regime, notably the suicide bomb at Saint Elias Church, Damascus, in June that killed 22 people.

Drop in violence in Bangladesh

Among the good news from the latest list is a 20% drop in reported incidents of violence in Bangladesh. Since the ousting of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasana in August 2024, a period of relative calm has emerged under the interim leadership of Muhammad Yunus, an advocate of religious freedom. However, with elections scheduled for early this year, this will be tested, with concerns that it could lead to greater persecution of religious minorities.

Trends

Heightened hostility in Syria



The persecution facing Syria's (No. 6) embattled and dwindling Christian minority has heightened over the past year, with the country recording the largest single-year increase in score on the World Watch List since 2014.

This dramatic rise is largely attributed to a surge in violence. During the reporting period, at least 27 believers were reported to be killed for their faith, but the true number is likely to be higher. In the previous 12 months, the number was zero. Attacks on churches and forced closure of Christian schools have also increased.

The fall of the Assad regime in December 2024 was a seismic moment in Syria's history. Among Christians, there was cautious hope that it would represent a turning point after more than a decade of persecution and conflict. However, under the rule of the Islamist group Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), despite some economic improvement, political power remains fragmented and widespread disorder is playing into the hands of militants. Meanwhile, pressure from wider society to conform to Islamic ideals and practices has grown.

It's deeply added to the fears and unease of our family in Syria. Many have stopped attending church, whilst churches have had to curtail their activities. There are believed to be 300,000 Christians in Syria today – hundreds of thousands fewer than ten years ago. For the remnant, the hope of better days feels as fragile as ever.

Instability and insurgency in sub-Saharan Africa

The intensifying persecution facing Christians in sub-Saharan Africa has become a theme of the World Watch List over recent years and this year is no different, with weak governance, institutional failure and lawless regions among the key factors exposing believers to rising hostility.

Five of the 14 countries on the World Watch List that are in sub-Saharan Africa have experienced coups in the past five years – that's Niger (No. 26), Mali (No. 15), Burkina Faso (No. 16), Central African Republic (CAR) (No. 22) and Sudan (No. 4). Meanwhile, armed conflicts plague several countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (No. 29) and Mozambique (No. 39), as well as Sudan (No. 4), up one place on the World Watch List as Christians are targeted by both sides of its civil war.

One of the effects of regional instability is the rising influence of Islamist groups, with Christians often disproportionately targeted. In Mozambique (No. 39), five Christians were beheaded by a group with links to so-called Islamic State (IS), and 38 people were killed during a prayer vigil in one of several devastating attacks by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in eastern DRC (No. 29). In Nigeria (No. 7), the epicentre of deadly violence against Christians in the region, 258 were killed when Fulani militants attacked a Christian farming community in Benue State in June.

In recent months, the world has begun to talk more about the suffering of Christians in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly Nigeria. It's a very welcome development but, as the latest World Watch List report shows, the need is enormous – and that's why Open Doors' Arise Africa campaign remains crucial in raising awareness, support and prayer, including through a petition aimed at raising one million signatures.

Driven to isolation

You might be familiar with the smash and squeeze of persecution. The former reflects the overt targeting of Christians, such as violence, whilst the latter is a more subtle approach aimed at suffocating believers through tactics including surveillance and tight regulations.

Algeria (No. 20) is one country where the squeeze of persecution has been particularly pronounced in recent years. Since 2021, opposition has jumped markedly, largely because of an increase in pressure by the authorities. In December 2024, the Algerian government shut down a Christian Facebook group with more than 50,000 followers. They've also kept previously closed churches shut and ordered others to cease activities. It's now believed that 75% of Christians in Algeria no longer have a place to gather for worship, leaving many isolated in their faith.

It's a similar story elsewhere, including in nearby Tunisia (No. 31), where the country's authoritarian leadership has heightened its surveillance of Christians. For those already forced to keep their faith secret because of pressure from family and their community, this troubling trend has only added to many believers' isolation.

And in China (No. 17), a renewed crackdown on church activities, including the arrest of believers, followed the introduction of new regulations governing online religious activity in September 2025. The

pressure to align with Communist ideology is ramping up, further suffocating believers' freedoms and pushing them into the shadows.

What's the good news?

Alongside the good news from Bangladesh (No. 33), where there has been a reduction in reported attacks on Christians, there are other countries where there have been positive developments.

In Mexico (No. 30) and Colombia (No. 47), there is growing recognition – from media, civil society and some state actors – of the specific risks faced by religious leaders in areas affected by organised crime and armed groups. A spotlight is also being shone on the authorities' approach to religious freedom in Cuba (No. 24) and Nicaragua (No. 32), through the work of international monitoring groups and advocates speaking up on behalf of affected churches and leaders.

And in a wonderful answer to prayer from Malaysia (No. 51), truth and justice prevailed with Susanna Koh winning her court case against the state over the disappearance of her husband, Pastor Raymond Koh, in February 2017.

God of the impossible

These trends are a reminder that the drivers behind the persecution of brothers and sisters are complex and multifaceted. But perhaps the most potent and powerful reason for persecution is that, in all these countries, the church is still present and alive. In many places, it's even growing!

Despite the best efforts of dictators, extremists, secret policemen and party officials, Christians continue to show remarkable resilience and creativity in how they witness to Jesus. Churches still meet, prayers are prayed, Scripture is shared and the gospel is still proclaimed. The enemies of Christianity will always try to make life impossible for Christians. But it won't work. Because ours is an impossible faith. And nothing is impossible with God.

“If you could see what God is doing in my country, you would never have any doubts again. The Holy Spirit is at work, thanks to your prayers.” – a North Korean escapee

Your support helps persecuted Christians continue to courageously follow Jesus..



"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery"
(Galatians 5:1)

Who Shall Be Our Guide?

Ignoring the Enemy and Choosing The Truth

"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to feel sympathy for our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet he did not sin." (Hebrews 4:15)

"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7)

There are three ways of responding to the demonic taunts and barbs being thrown at you during your daily walk with Christ, and two of these ways are wrong!

First, the most defeated people are those who consider demonic thoughts and believe them. A subtle thought is shot into your mind: "You don't pray, read your Bible, or witness as you should. How could God love you?" That's a bald-faced lie because God's love is unconditional. But you start thinking about your failures and agreeing that you're probably not very lovable to God.

The second response is just as unproductive. You try to argue with the demons: "I am not ugly or stupid. I am a victorious Christian." You're proud that you don't believe what they say, but they're still controlling you and setting your agenda. You're standing in the middle of the street shouting at them when you should be marching forward.

The third, and correct way, is to ignore them and choose the truth. You're equipped with the armour of God; they can't touch you unless you drop your guard. With every arrow of temptation, accusation, or deception they shoot at you, simply raise the shield of faith, deflect

the attack, and walk on. The way to defeat the lie is by choosing the truth.

“We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5)

“Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled round your waist” (Ephesians 6:14)

People in bondage are not liberated by what I do as the pastor, but by what they do with my help. As a pastor, it's not what I believe that breaks the bonds; it's what those in bondage believe, confess, renounce, and forgive.

Notice the progressive logic of Scripture:

“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:32)

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6)

“The Spirit of truth will guide you into all the truth” (John 16:13)

“My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. Sanctify them by the truth, your word is truth” (John 17:15,17)

“Brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things” (Philippians 4:8)

When Satan harasses you, you may be prone to languish in the shadows of your misery. You may cry out for God to deliver you, like Jesus miraculously and instantaneously delivered the demonised people in the Gospels. But when you read through the Epistles, it is obvious that **your deliverance has already been accomplished in Christ's work on the cross and His resurrection**. Since you are with Christ in the light, you never again need to live in the shadows.

You must choose the truth and assume your responsibility to exercise your authority and resist the devil. From your position in Christ, you must resist the devil, renounce participation in his schemes, confess sin and forgive those who have offended you.

In the face of the lies the enemy throws at me today,

Lord, I choose and embrace Your truth, which gives me life and leads me in the everlasting way. I embrace your truth to direct my steps today.

Neil Anderson

Freedom in Christ Ministries

Daily Devotionals

Used by permission

Day by day, dear Lord, three things I pray:

To see you more clearly,

To love you more dearly,

And to follow you more nearly. Amen.

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. All rights reserved worldwide.



**Saturday 28th
March**

15:30 - 17:30

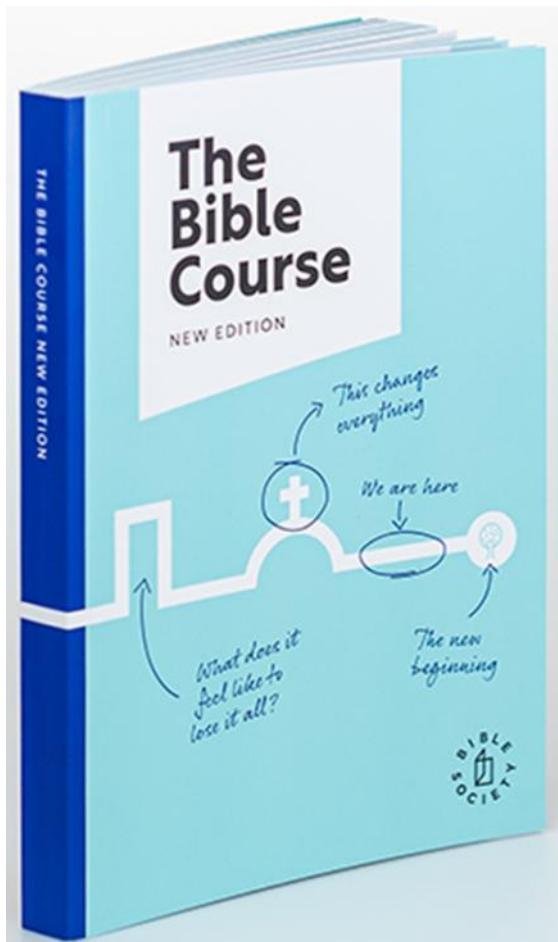
**Free fun for all
the family**
- no unaccompanied
children please

Do come along and explore the Easter story through a Messy Church experience at Shanklin URC.

There will be several craft activities to choose from followed by a short celebration with songs, prayers, and then some delicious food.

For more information, or if you can help - please speak to Yvonne Sparks or Brian and Janet Harley

The Bible Course



An 8-week series each Friday at 14:00

Starting on 6th February

Please sign the list at the back of church



We are holding a pancake party...

**On Shrove Tuesday
17th February
from 1700 - 19.00.**

The plan is to have some games out for children, but everyone is welcome. It will be by donation for the refreshments and the pancakes.

Any donations will be given to the Mother and Baby Unit at Winchester House.

There will also be a concert on the 1st May by the Shanklin Town Brass Band to raise money for them as well: watch out for more details later.

If anyone is able to help on the evening or donate any toppings for the pancakes, please could you let me know as soon as possible so I can organise a rota, to allow everyone to join in.

Help at the end to clear away and set up for The Well the following day will also be helpful.

Thank you

Yvonne

(☎ 07725 845956)



Good News for All!

'Good News' is a contemporary outreach newspaper used by churches and missions to take the good news about Jesus Christ into communities across the UK.

Every month, Good News reaches thousands of readers with true stories of how God is changing the lives of those who put their trust in his Son, Jesus. Using jargon-free language, it also explains how everyone can find a personal relationship with Jesus.

This such a great resource for people to read - and then share with others!!

This month's edition (available to read online at www.goodnews-paper.org.uk/viewlatesteditionspage.htm) has several great articles, including the headline article, 'Winter Olympian - British skeleton racer's lesson from God.'

Other contributions include:

- **Actor Saved By Love** - How Samuel L. Jackson's wife saved him by her faithfulness
- **Bake Off Pressure** - How winner Jasmine's prayer life helped her cope
- **Rock Star Redemption** - Lead singer of Foreigner now knows what love really is
- **Matt Le Tissier** - Former football 'god' gets baptised after finding the real God
- **Big Brother Winner** - Christian wins reality show by sticking to biblical principles
- **Washing Prisoners' Feet** - Women demonstrate Christian love in Brazil

Good News... for a change



IoW Street Pastors IoW Festival 2026



Street Pastors will be patrolling again at the IoW Festival in June.

As well as patrolling on foot off site and on site at the festival we are also opening our Safe Space in Newport Bus Station and our Festival Safe Space gazebo onsite at the festival, which will be run in a similar way as the Newport Bus Station one.

This year the Festival Safe Space will be situated in the main public area and will be open from around 10:00 until 02:00 each day (except Thursday, which is open from around midday). This means the 90,000 festival goers/staff will be able to access it themselves instead of being referred to it like last year.

All foot patrols and the Safe Spaces will be happening from the Thursday to the Sunday (18th - 21st June).

Once again, this is a mammoth task for us so mainland street pastor volunteers will be joining us to help out.

The mainland volunteers cover the cost of their own travel with the option of camping onsite at the festival, camping at Miriam & Malc's or if they are unable to camp, then we find them a host house to stay at.

Organising has begun for this year's festival and as our Festival Safe Space will be on the main public area we need this to be manned the whole time that area is open and will also involve more kit being needed.

We started asking for donations earlier this year in order to make sure we have enough for the two safe spaces and the two areas of foot patrols.

This is the list of items that we are looking to be donated: -

- Individually wrapped sweets and lollipops
- Small bottles of water
- Wipes, tissues, small bottles of hand sanitizer, ice packs, paper cups

- Colouring sheets/books, crayons, colouring pencils, children's games
- We are also asking for financial donations towards other kit that the volunteers use.

The opportunity to show the love of Jesus at the festival, where 90,000 people attend each day, is amazing.

We are the only Christian organisation that are allowed to patrol on foot on the whole festival site.

If anyone would like to volunteer to cover shifts in either the Newport Bus Station Safe Space or the Festival Safe Space, please let me know. We had a few people last year volunteer who are not trained Street Pastors, help cover shifts alongside Street Pastors, which was amazing.

Added bonus to helping in the Festival Safe Space is you will receive a Festival Staff Wristband for free which gives you access to enjoy the festival site and stages when not on duty in the Safe Space, you will also get a staff parking permit for free, should you need it.

We also have a WhatsApp Prayer Group that will be live through the whole weekend, where we post prayer requests for people we meet, incidents we come across or dealing with etc. If you would like to join this, please let me know either on 07511 163632 or by e-mail on suzanne@iowstreetpastors.org.uk.

God Bless

Suzanne (IoW Street Pastor Coordinator)



Everyone deserves to be safe

We are here to listen and support



SPEAK OUT

if you or someone you know:

- has difficulties with drugs or alcohol.
- feels unsafe in a relationship.
- feels depressed, anxious or suicidal.
- feels unsafe in any way.

To get the support you need contact your church safeguarding coordinator:

Mrs Letitia Ash-Lameer: Telephone 07506 003006 or email shanklinurcsafe@icloud.com

The Freephone 24-hour National
Domestic Abuse Helpline
0808 2000 247

The Frank Drugs Helpline
0300 123 6600

Mind Helpline
0300 123 3393

Bay Christians

(Christians Working Together in The Bay Area)



**Worship Together
and meet Meg
East Wight Youth Project Worker**

**Lake Methodist Church
Sunday 8th February at 17:00**

**Hear also about the Coat of Hopes pilgrimage on
the Island and the Flourish Project/Youth for
Christ/School Pastors in the The Bay CofE Schools**

Open Church

In 2024, we set up a nativity scene and invited people to dress in Biblical costume and have their photo taken. Nobody came. On 6th December 2025, the same invite was combined with an Open Day and handed out to shoppers by shepherds roaming Shanklin town. Around 100 people came!



Whilst the others carried sheep, our largest shepherd, Leon, was deliberately given something the size of a newborn, which he tucked into his tunic – a novel take on 'the lion and the lamb'.

On arrival, guests received a warm welcome and were offered a bag containing Christmas gifts. There were different ones for adults and children, and 50 were given out.

Several people dressed in costume to have their photo taken. This was done on their own device so there was no issue with Data Protection. An elderly man, with restricted mobility, was thrilled. He said he intended sending the photo to his daughter. He was accompanied by an Irish lady with dark hair and eyes. She said that, when she was at school, it was always a blond-haired blue-eyed girl that was chosen as Mary. She was delighted that we had a dark doll in the manger. We invited people to





email us their photo if they were happy for it to be used publicly. The father in the one below said they had only left the house to get their turkey from the butcher and never expected anything like this. He told us that his children used to love coming to our toddler group,

CatURpillars, but they are now at school. When informed of the upcoming 'Messy Christmas' event, he said they would all be there. Children enjoyed deciding which costume their parents should wear, and invariably chose animals. Various families had adults dressed as a camel, a cow, or, as in this photo, a donkey.

Around 30 church members took it in turns to help, whether by setting up, clearing away, or during the time the church building was open to the public.

Free drinks and snacks

were available from 10:30 to 14:30, with soup offered at lunch time. More and more chairs had to be added to the café style tables.

In addition to craft activities and toddler toys, a prayer tent was set up to which people could withdraw from the crowd, either by themselves or with prayer partners.



Christmas Messy Church took place two weeks later and a good crowd gathered to explore the Christmas story in craft, story and song. Brian pointed out that we even had a Gabriel playing Gabriel! He said: "A huge thank you to the team - especially to Yvonne who masterminds the craft and food. Great job again. Thanks also to those who came in to clear up at the end and help turn the place around for Sunday - really appreciated."

This was followed the next day by carol singers discussing the nativity. Keeping to the biblical

text, we saw the shepherds arriving to see a baby in a manger, and the magi presenting gifts to a toddler in a house.

Even after Christmas, Yvonne and Christopher continued the costumed fun during the All Age Service before New Year. Camels Camilla and Cameron carefully clomped down the aisle. The magi confidently came to Jerusalem, only to quickly find that the capital city was not correct. Because Cameron contracted Covid, they had to camp there (conspicuously keeping the regulation two metres apart) whilst he recovered. The camels discussed the continuation of their quest as soon as his clinical convalescence could be completed.



All these events definitely shone a light on the real meaning of Christmas.

Christian Institute Newsletter

The Winter newsletter from the Christian Institute is now available in church and online at www.christian.org.uk/resource/newsletter-winter-2025/, covering:

- Street Preacher's Charter: 'A timely shield for those who dare to speak'
- GAFCON rejects 'revisionist' Archbishop appointment
- Church leaders criticise proposals for new 'conversion practices' law
- Scot Govt cedes to Court rulings on sex and gender
- NI: Supreme Court rules against 'exclusively Christian' RE lessons
- ROI: 'Inclusive' Connolly installed as President
- Much more...

You can also join their free online mailing list.

Supporting North Korean Christians: interview with an Open Doors secret fieldworker

An Open Doors fieldworker, Lydia Lee*, shares what she sees in the North Korean church, and how you can be part of God's impossible plan.

What is life like for Christians in North Korea?

The church in North Korea looks nothing like churches in the rest of the world. Christians cannot gather openly, worship freely, or read the Bible without putting their lives at serious risk. Following Jesus in North Korea requires total commitment – a 100% dedication, even in the face of imprisonment, torture or death.

Because public worship is impossible, believers meet in secret, in very small and trusted groups. Often, it's an older family member who quietly shares the gospel and passes down biblical teachings to younger relatives. When a Bible is available, it is hidden – sometimes buried underground – and brought out occasionally so that people can read and memorise portions before it is hidden again. Possessing a Bible is considered a capital offence, so memorisation is a vital part of discipleship.

In addition to face-to-face sharing, some believers secretly listen to Christian radio broadcasts that are aired during the night. These programmes, produced by Open Doors fieldworkers, provide biblical teaching and encouragement. But accessing them requires an illegal, modified radio – another serious risk.

Despite these dangers, the underground church in North Korea is alive. It worships not with sound, but with whispered prayers and memorised Scripture. Believers continue to follow Christ with quiet courage, deep faith and a willingness to give everything for the sake of the gospel.

Why are North Korean Christians at risk?

The North Korean regime does not tolerate worship of anything other than the ruling Kim family. Followers of any faith face extreme risk. From early childhood, citizens are fed propaganda that portrays Christianity as dangerous, foreign and evil. Fabricated stories are circulated in schools and state media depicting American missionaries poisoning children or stealing their organs.

Many, especially those loyal to the regime, truly believe the propaganda and view Christians as enemies. Others don't necessarily believe it but, in a society built on fear and survival, might still betray them: reporting a Christian to the authorities can result in rewards like food, favour or social advancement.

Despite these dangers, the underground church in North Korea is alive. Most remarkably, some North Koreans have come to faith in Christ despite never hearing the gospel in a conventional way. Underground believers testify that God personally opened their hearts to the truth. Though deeply secret and often isolated, their quiet faith persists – demonstrating that, even under the harshest repression, the power of the gospel cannot be entirely silenced.

What has changed in North Korea in the past year?

The overall situation remains largely unchanged. North Korea has strengthened its military capabilities, indicating a continued emphasis on self-reliance.

Humanitarian conditions remain dire. Hunger and malnutrition continue to plague the population, leading to many deaths throughout the year. Daily life in North Korea is dominated by government control and political indoctrination. North Koreans endure a life shaped by scarcity, surveillance and fear – yet even in this repressive environment, people quietly care for their families, share what little they have, and find small ways to endure.

Why do North Koreans leave their country?

They may be disillusioned with the state, but the main reason they attempt to leave their country is simply survival for them and their families. During the 1990s and early 2000s, especially during the Arduous March – a period of famine and economic crisis – widespread starvation claimed the lives of millions. At that time, it was relatively easier to flee from North Korea, and many did it in search of food and safety.

Is it still easy to flee?

Escaping North Korea has become far more dangerous due to tightened border controls. They must use a large sum of money to ensure the guidance of a broker and to bribe border guards. Most people cannot afford it.

A more common method is to obtain a visa to visit relatives or to work in neighbouring countries. Many of these people overstay their visas because the limited time allowed is not enough to repay the debts they owe for their journey.

Unlike in the past, many people who leave North Korea today do so with the intention of returning. Staying in China or attempting the perilous journey to a third country like Thailand (and eventually to South Korea) is extremely risky and nearly impossible for most. Their decision to cross the border is usually driven by the dire conditions they face at home – poverty, hunger and lack of supplies.

How do Open Doors fieldworkers help?

There are safe houses and shelters near the border to reach and support them with basic necessities such as food, medicine and clothes. We offer thorough pastoral care, Bible training and special Bible studies for North Korean women who are trafficked near the border

Some of these believers may have opportunities to come back to our safe house for shelter and more biblical training. But for many others, the first visit could be their last chance to hear the gospel in their whole life. It is the very special and precious moment for our workers to share Jesus.

Some of the North Koreans we serve stay out of their home country long term; others plan to go back to support their families. They also bring the good news when they go back to the country.

What are the dangers of returning to North Korea?

The regime views defection as a serious crime. Any North Korean who is caught leaving or outside of the country is typically arrested and subjected to severe punishment, such as imprisonment in political or labour camps, torture, forced labour and sometimes execution.

Anyone who is caught endures a period of intense and brutal interrogation. North Korean officials ask prisoners who they talked to outside of the country, if they had contact with anyone and if they encountered Christians. This means Christians caught by authorities face an even harsher fate; they are often transferred directly to political labour camps without trial, where they have no chance of

release and effectively disappear from the outside world.

How can we pray for North Korean Christians?

Let us pray that God would give them both spiritual and physical strength: the endurance to remain faithful, and the courage to live boldly for Christ, even in the face of danger. Ask the Lord to strengthen their hearts with unshakeable peace, and to let their hidden faith burn like fire – alive, growing and unquenchable.

Pray that God would inspire, guide and teach North Korean believers as they quietly share the gospel with those around them. Ask that His Word would continue to spread in miraculous ways, even behind locked borders, and that many in North Korea would come to witness His love and power.

Let's also lift those who serve them – those who help North Korean believers and refugees outside of the country. Pray that God would fill them with wisdom, strength, comfort and the unmistakable presence of the Holy Spirit as they carry out their mission for His Kingdom. Pray that God would send us more faithful, humble and dedicated servants – those willing to go wherever God sends them, love those who are suffered, and carry the gospel with their lives.

Your prayers matter. God hears every word – not only for the North Korean church, but for all persecuted believers around the world. And the underground church in North Korea is deeply grateful for your support and faithful intercession.

**Name changed for security reasons*

Please Pray

- That God would grant North Korean Christians strength and courage to endure, and joy in their walk with Christ
- For Open Doors secret fieldworkers to know God's presence with unmistakable clarity, and for more to be called to serve in this way
- That God's impossible plan would continue to develop in North Korea, so that many more hear the gospel and choose to follow Jesus.

Source: [Open Doors](https://www.opendoorsuk.org/pray-for-north-korea)

Greetings and all the very best as we venture into the New Year of 2026.

We ask God for his protective armour, His healing blessings, His Guidance and the Power of the Holy Spirit as we all go forward into the unexpected and unknown! We all well know how unpredictable life is at the moment globally and the chaos and uncertainty in our own country not to mention the suffering and broken systems we all have to deal with or endure each and every day. We pray that God's Word and hand will reach out to each and everyone and each and every problem that needs his guidance and resolve.

Firstly, on behalf of all in the SURC church, our grateful thanks for Brian, the Elders and each and everyone of our working teams within the SURC., the worship team, the electronics, sounds and media technicians and teams, the refreshment and catering teams and not to forget all the hard working dedicated people running Messy Church, CatURpillars, The Well and the Wednesday fitness sessions, Bible Bites, and the children's worship teams, the prayer teams, the running of the bookshop, the cleaning and maintenance of the church and all those who tirelessly move the seating around and, when called upon, the amazing one and only very special Shanklin Town Brass Band! All of us hold each and everyone of you up to our Father God for thanks, praise and Blessings for the continued dedication, hard work and outstanding and exceptional job you all do tirelessly to bring joy, peace and fellowship of God's Word to us all.

Last but not least, a deeply heartfelt Thank You and unbelievably amazing Blessing to once again Brian, the Elders, the members and the congregation of the SURC and special thank you to very special Friends of the SURC being Pam Dana and St Blasius Church, and Kristina and Louis and family from Southampton for their very generous gifts and for the outpouring of giving from you all for the amazing amount of money that was raised for a very special Christmas gift for the young mothers and babies at the Mother & Baby Unit at the Lodge, managed and run by Jo and

Tessa. One cannot express the thanks, love and appreciation for the amazing generosity of giving and love and the gift of outreach to our own special local charity. Your response was absolutely amazing and the results enabled us to gift each of the ten mothers with

an individual Christmas card with a financial gift enclosed from all of us. On Tuesday 23rd December we, Brian, Ann and Rodney visited The Lodge to deliver the cards and to meet with Jo and Tessa and a few of the mothers with their babies where we thoroughly enjoyed tea and cakes and chatted with the mums. As always, they went out of their way for us and we were very well received and entertained and made us feel right at home! The surprise, amazement and joy and heartfelt gratitude expressed by each and every mother for their gifts was extremely touching and emotional. Once again a very **big** thank you for the hard work and tireless dedication of Jo and Tessa - thank you so very much!

So a very **big huge** Thank you and Blessing to each and everyone of you for your contributions. May God richly bless you in every way. Amen

Thank You all

On closing, they are looking for a fridge/freezer for one of the two apartments - the depth can be any size but they are looking for a narrow one. Measurements are: width 23 inches (58.4cm) and height 67 inches (170.1cm).

There is always a need for everyday items such as baby clothes from one month to 2 years, cot linen and blankets, always a need for nappies, baby wipes, creams, powders, shampoos, baby bath towels and any other mother and baby consumables one can think of. Please contact Rodney or Ann or drop any items off at the Well on a Wednesday morning between 11:00 and 13:00 to whoever is on duty at the SURC.

Rod (07394 044614) and Ann (07841 596958)

e-mail from Mother and Baby Unit

As Lodge Manager I would like to express my deepest appreciation for the ongoing support from The SURC Church, Rev Brian Harley, the Elders, Ann & Rod, Church Members and congregation of the Church with a special thank you to special friends of the SURC for their support of the Mother & Baby Unit. i.e. Pam Dana & St Blasius Church and Kristina, Louis & family of Southampton.

The recent collection made for our young mums was so greatly received and our residents will be informing us of what they have chosen to treat themselves and their child to. We have already been informed that some have chosen to treat their child or put into a savings account in preparation for their move on, while others have used the donation towards food shopping or to help pay bills. We will be feeding this back in the near future to share how these kind donations were spent. Our mums were very touched by the generosity of this gift and one in particular was overwhelmed with generosity saying she felt she couldn't accept. We assured her that the wonderful church community have shown such dedication to our Lodge and that all we would like is a personal thanks from each and a message to share what they spent the gift on.

We currently have a full house, supporting 10 young mums and their children- we also have a waiting list for spaces.

We support our families to work towards independent living and so we have a range of needs and we liaise with external agencies to ensure each resident is offered appropriate support.

Kindest regards,

Jo McGrath
Mother and Baby Support Manager



The Well

a place for

Living Well Together

Drop in at any point

Wednesdays 11:00 – 13:00

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



And sausage rolls!



NEWPORT BUS STATION

SAFE SPACE

A safe place to...



**WAIT
FOR FRIENDS**



**RECEIVE
FIRST AID**



**GET ADVICE
& SUPPORT**



**HELP GETTING
HOME**



**REPORT ASB
OR ANY CONCERNs**

Pop in & talk to us!

In partnership with



Support Recycling

Have you ever wondered what to do with the various plastic tubs containing chocolates, biscuits and sweets? Well, here is the answer!



Pub and brewery company Greene King is once again running 'Tub2Pub', a recycling campaign to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support and to recycle plastics.

In 2024 Tub2Pub collected over 150,000 tubs. In 2025 we collected over 240,000 tubs; raising so far over £34,00 for Macmillan Cancer support. With your help, that can be beaten in 2026.

Many of us are guilty of indulging in chocolate, sweets and biscuits over the festive period, and in the UK we are buying tens of millions of these plastic tubs every year!

Make sure your tubs don't go to waste so take your clean, empty plastic confectionery, biscuit and cracker tubs to any Greene King managed site from 1st January – 15th February 2026 to be recycled.

Simply leave your tubs with a Greene King staff member at the bar or welcome station within one of their locations (see below for details of Island locations).

After 15th February, all tubs will be collected and taken to a plastic reprocessing centre where they're shredded, before being sold onto plastic manufacturers to use in place of virgin plastics. All money raised from the sale of Tub2Pub plastics will be given directly to Macmillan Cancer Support.

For more information, please go to www.tub2pub.co.uk/

Drop your clean tubs at any of the following places on the IoW:

- The Crab, 94 High Street, Shanklin (in the old village)
- Ryde Castle Hotel, Esplanade, Ryde
- Hare and Hounds, Downend Road, Newport (next to Robin Hill)
- The Folly, Folly Lane, Whippingham, East Cowes
- The Fountain Inn, High Street, Cowes

Focus

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

Crackdown on Christians in Yemen

14th January 2026

Christians in Yemen are facing an unprecedented crackdown as more than 50 believers have been arrested – and made to disappear – in 2026 already.

“We were waiting for some brothers who were coming to attend planned training,” says an Open Doors partner who works with Yemeni believers. “We do not know where they are and we cannot reach them.”

This is one of many similar stories that have taken place in the past couple of weeks. Christians in Yemen are facing an unprecedented crackdown by the Yemeni authorities. Since the beginning of 2026, the Yemeni church has witnessed a record number of arrest and imprisonments, with more than 50 people being taken into custody already.

Once detained, these believers effectively go missing.

Held without contact for weeks

Trusted sources suspect that the arrested will be held in secret locations for several weeks while they are being investigated and interrogated. We know from previous experiences that they are likely to be harshly interrogated with possible torture. During this time, family members do not receive any updates or information, and lawyers are not permitted to intervene. Prayer is the best and only means to have any influence over what is happening behind the closed doors of Yemeni police.

“Most of the people that I was always in contact with are now imprisoned,” shares an Open Doors partner. “Along with local Open Doors partners, those that we can still reach, we are trying to find ways to help. Pray for wisdom to avoid making the situation worse.”

Threats against Christians are circulating on social media and distributed as physical flyers. It seems that new alliances are joining forces to continue the crackdown on ‘infidel’ Christians across the country.

This crackdown is unusually ferocious, but these are threats that Yemeni believers have sadly long lived with. Yemen is number three on the Open Doors World Watch List, making it one of the most dangerous places in the world to follow Jesus. Choosing to convert to Christianity comes with the death penalty for apostasy, and believers can face death threats from their family and community, too.

Please pray

Although governing parties in this country place immense pressure on Christians, we pray that the Prince of Peace would grant His church in Yemen protection, wisdom and refuge amid the ongoing chaos. We pray that the authorities discover that Christians have no political agenda and are a blessing to the country rather than a threat.

Please join the Yemeni church in praying:

- That this aggressive wave would stop, and the prisoners are released immediately without any harm
- That every brother or sister that has been captured and taken into custody will find grace in the eyes of prison guards and interrogators, and that they will experience God with them in their most difficult moments
- For God to protect those that have not been captured, giving them courage and hope
- For God’s peace to fill the hearts of those whose loved ones have been arrested, and that God would grant them the ability to forgive their persecutors
- That the church in Yemen will be strengthened during this time and not be crippled by fear. May our Lord give extraordinary power and bravery to His church in this time of sorrow to reflect God’s love to those around them.

Lord God, please protect my brothers and sisters in Yemen. Thank You for their courageous faith – please give those who are imprisoned still deeper courage, strength and peace. May their loved

ones know Your sustaining comfort, and may the church in Yemen be a light in the darkness. In Jesus' name, amen. .

Yemen is No. 3 in the 2026 World Watch List

How are Christians persecuted in Yemen?

Christians in Yemen continue to endure a highly unstable condition of life, with threats from both authorities and family. Believers whose faith is discovered by their family could be forced into divorce or separated from their children.

Converts from Islam could face the death penalty for apostasy, creating an environment in which many feel forced to keep their faith secret. Islamist extremist groups attack Christian communities, meaning that if those who gather in secret are discovered, they face grave consequences.

Who is particularly vulnerable in Yemen?

In the south, fractured governance and Islamist extremist groups pose continuous threats to Christians. In the Houthi controlled north western regions, pressures are particularly severe – these areas are heavily policed, dissent is brutally repressed, and Christian converts who are discovered could face arrest and torture.

Christian women experience increased harsh treatment if their faith is exposed, including abuse, forced marriage and even so-called 'honour' killings, as Yemen's penal code grants leniency to perpetrators. Many feel spiritually isolated because of the repression they endure and their frequent inability to enjoy fellowship with others.

In the war-torn environment of Yemen, Christian men could be forcibly recruited into militias, some even as young as 13. If discovered, converts from Islam could lose their job, be imprisoned or even killed. Once taken from their families, their homes are especially vulnerable financially. Many Christian men choose to flee the country.

For the latest news on our persecuted brothers and sisters please go to: www.opendoorsuk.org/news/latest-news/

Source: [Open Doors](http://www.opendoorsuk.org) - used by permission



Make 2026 the Year You Welcome a Child into Your Life

Across Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton, children are waiting for loving homes where they can grow, thrive and belong. At **Adopt South**, they are here to help you explore how you could be that family.

They are proud to be one of the **fastest and most forward-thinking adoption agencies in England and Wales**, with a compassionate, modern approach built around the needs of children and families.

Here's how you could make a difference:

- **Children in our region need families who can offer love, patience and a sense of belonging**
- **You don't need a perfect life, just ready to be there for a child who needs you**
- **Their families come from all walks of life: single people, couples, renters and homeowners.**
- **They prioritise placing children with our own adopters, so children feel connected to their identity.**

Their support doesn't stop when your child comes home to live with you. They offer ongoing support, therapeutic services, as well as community connections and friendship.

Join one of their **online Adoption Information Events** to learn more, ask questions, and explore how you could become a family in 2026.

Visit their website for more information or to book your place
[www.hants.gov.uk/
socialcareandhealth/adoptsouth.](http://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adoptsouth)



The partnership Regional Adoption Agency for:





Dates For Your Diary

Day	Date	Time	Details
Fri	6 th Feb	14:00	Bible Course Begins
Sun	8 th Feb	10:30 17:00	Nigel Cox speaking Shared Worship at Lake Methodist Church
Fri	13 th Feb	18:00	Elders' Meeting
Sat	14 th Feb	12:30	Soup Lunch and Prayer
Tue	17 th Feb	17:00	Pancake Party
Sat	21 st Feb	10:00	Exploring Church Membership
Sun	22 nd Feb	10:30 12:00	Encounter Café Service Bring-and-share lunch
Fri	27 th Feb	19:30	Shanklin Town Brass Band 'Open Rehearsal'
Sat	28 th Feb	14:00	Steve and Sheilagh's Wedding
Sat	14 th Mar	10:00	Annual Church Spring Clean
Thu	26 th Mar	19:30	Annual Church Meeting

Shanklin Town Brass Band 'Open Rehearsal'

The band will be rehearsing in the church on 27th February in preparation for Torquay contest (in March) and the summer season.

All are welcome to come and have a listen.

From 19:30

The (annual) Christmas Trivia Quiz Answers

1. Bethlehem, Judea
2. Midge Ure and Bob Geldof
3. Dundee cake.
4. Patara, Asia Minor, which is modern-day Turkey
5. King William I (aka William the Conqueror).
6. Catalonia, Spain
7. Galette des Rois
8. Isaac Newton
9. US Thanksgiving
10. A fictional witch like old woman
11. Presents for good children
12. Nadolig Llawen
13. Radishes
14. Seven
15. Irving Berlin
16. "Long Haired Lover From Liverpool" by Jimmy Osmond
17. Artificial spider webs and spider ornaments
18. Good king Wenceslas
19. 1843, by Sir Henry Cole
20. Nuremberg, Germany

Connection Quiz Answers

1. Red
2. Blue is the Colour.
3. Rev Green
4. Mellow Yellow
5. Orange.
6. Connection: they are colours of the rainbow.
7. This issue's cover photo is of...
la Cathédrale de Bayeux, Normandie, France.



The Puzzle Pages

Sudoku

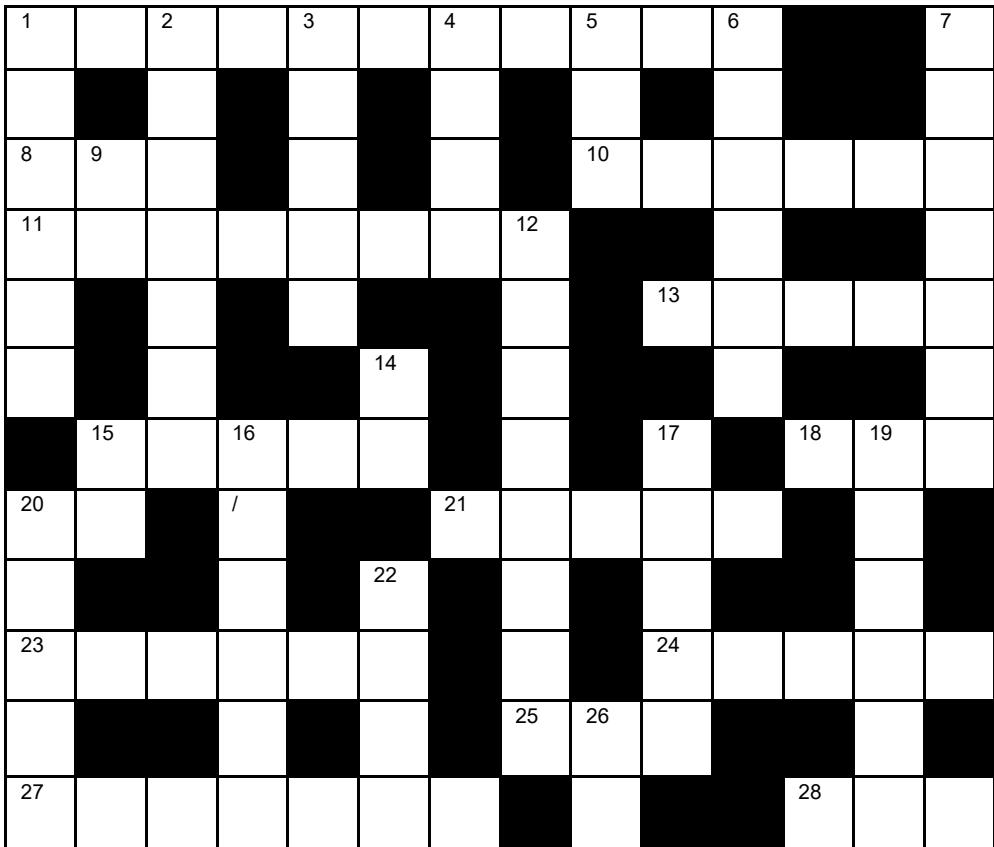
A numerical placement puzzle!

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

An easy one this month.

Enjoy!

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



Last month's Sudoku - how did you do?

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

Across

- 1 Parisian iron landmark, 330m tall (6 5)
- 8 Fossil fuel, also used as a lubricant (3)
- 10 Surname of Donny, Alan, Wayne, Jimmy, for example (6)
- 11 Inability to hear (8)
- 13 Glide on ice (5)
- 15 100cm (5)
- 18 *initials* (3)
- 20 Of, en français (2)
- 21 Red engine, number 5, created by Rev Awdry (5)
- 23 A person from Normandy, or Mr Wisdom late British actor (6)
- 24 Battle in Northern France in 1346, part of 100 years war (5)
- 25 Nervous or timid in the company of other people (3)
- 27 Self - flour (7)

28 Summer, en français (3)

Down

- 1 Second book of the Old Testament (6)
- 2 Normandy birthplace of king William I of England (7)
- 3 Something that happens or takes place (5)
- 4 There are 5 on a foot, 10 on two feet (4)
- 5 Doctor -, BBC TV Sci-Fi show (3)
- 6 Make (something) again (6)
- 7 *The - of King George*, 1994 film, or British pop group famed for *Baggy Trousers* (7)
- 9 Id Est *initials* (2)
- 12 Cumberland, Lincolnshire, edible items, for example (8)
- 14 I, en français (2)
- 15 Moi (2)
- 16 Blue engine, number 1, created by Rev Awdry (6)
- 17 - *the Park Keeper*, animated TV series (5)
- 19 Piece of timber left behind after cutting a larger piece (6)
- 20 Person eating in a restaurant (5)
- 22 Anonymous abbreviated (4)
- 26 Hello, informally, or '- de -' 1980s BBC Sitcom (2)

Can You Guess The Year?

- The cruise ship Costa Concordia ran aground.
- Former RBS CEO Fred Goodwin lost his knighthood .
- The Sun on Sunday was first published..
- Chelmsford, Perth and St Asaph were granted city status
- Chelsea won the Champions League, beating Bayern Munich..
- And UK No. 1s included:
 - Little Mix with 'Wings'
 - Psy with 'Gangnam Style'
 - Rihanna with 'Diamonds'
 - James Arthur with 'Impossible'

Answer next issue

General Knowledge Quiz

1. Between which two stations does the Bluebell Railway operate?
2. Who was "Mary, Mary, quite contrary"?
3. Where was film producer Samuel Goldwyn born?
4. Which is the red Teletubby?.
5. In what country was Carmen Silvera born?
6. Whose autobiography was called "The Ragman's Son"?
7. In computer terms, what does WWW stand for?
8. What does the B stand for in the name Hank B Marvin?
9. Who wrote the Hunchback of Notre Dame?
10. What did Rev Wilbert Awdry write/create?

Answers next issue

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

Sunday 15th February

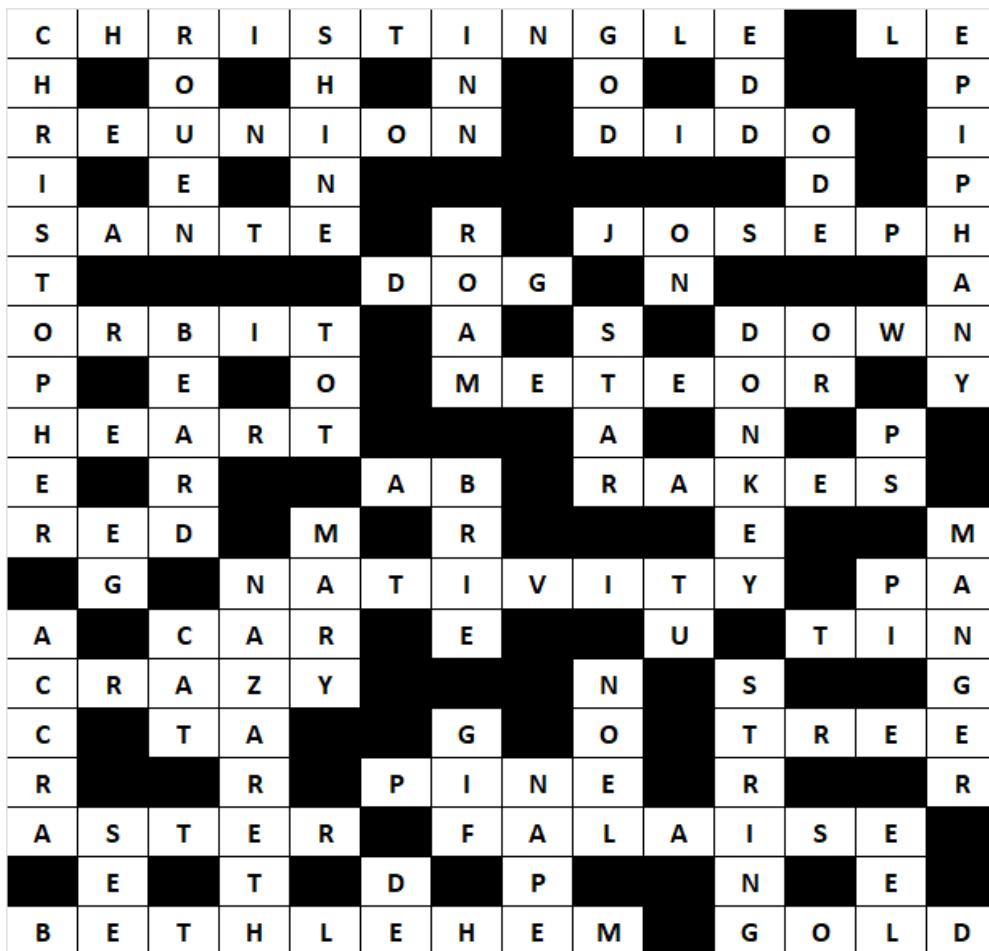
Contributions can be emailed at anytime up to the deadline day to the editor at:

surc.thelink@btinternet.com

Last Issue's Solutions

- Guess the year: it was 1972

- Last issue's crossword ↓



Last Issue's 'Musical Instrument' Quiz Answers

1. Cymbals	6. Ocarina
2. Mandolin	7. Trombone
3. Lute	8. Tuba
4. Harmonica	9. Banjo
5. Xylophone	10. Zither

Sunday Service

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

➔ **Holy Communion** on 1st Sunday of each month

➔ **All Age Encounter ‘café style’ service**
on last Sunday of each month

Evening **17:00** **Worship and Prayer** in church
Except on 2nd Sunday of the month

Weekday Activities

Monday **13:00** **Prayer Meeting** in church (see [page 4](#))

Tuesday **14:00** **Bible Bite** ministry in church
Refreshments & fellowship from 13:30

19:30 **Prayer Meeting** on Zoom (see [page 4](#))

Wednesday **11:00** **The Well** (see [page 39](#))

Friday **10:00** **CatURpillars Toddler Group**

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

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

Minister: **Rev Brian Harley**



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Day off: *Monday*

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Shanklin URC is a member of the Evangelical Alliance

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