The Link

November 2026

Shanklin United Reformed Church



View From Number 10

The being one…

Over recent weeks, we have been exploring the ***I am*** sayings of Jesus in John's gospel. These seem to deliberately connect with the divine name revealed to Moses in Exodus 3:14

"God said to Moses, 'I am who I am'' This is what you are to say to the Israelites: "I am has sent me to you.""

The Hebrew can also be translated as – *I will be what I will be*. God essentially exists – always has and always will. He just is – he's the being one! In that passage, we also find the title ***Yahweh*** which in Hebrew is very close to *I am who I am.* The Lord God indicates that this is how he wants to be known. The name helps us understand that he is the stable eternal presence in our ever-changing world.

John begins his Gospel affirming that Jesus was around from the very beginning – *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."* (John 1:1-3). John sets out where he is going with his incredible literary portrait of Jesus.

Hebrews 13:8 tells us that: *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever."* Like the Father in heaven, he's always existed and has now been revealed in human flesh. Revelation tells us that he is the alpha and omega (A-Z), the beginning and the end (22:13).

The seven ***I am*** sayings all reveal aspects of Jesus' nature and ministry. He identifies himself with the divine being and shows various ways in which he helps people connect with God and find new life through him. He's the way, the light, the good shepherd, the bread and the vine – and he's the resurrection and the life.



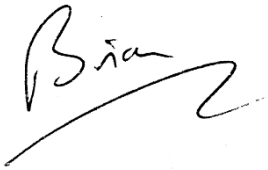


These were outrageous statements and were utterly blasphemous to the Jews – if they were not true. Jesus is not one choice among many prophets and religions; he claims to be the unique Son of God who came to earth to save us – because God loved the world that much.

We are offered new and abundant life through all he has done for us – living and dying to bring God's love down to earth and to release us from the captivity of sin and death. It is put across like a second Exodus - from slavery to freedom. This is the Good News that John and the other Gospel writers are so passionate to get across. It is the same Good News that we continue to carry as lights in the world, taking the light of Jesus into our communities.

Join me as light-bearers in these exciting couple of months in the lead up to celebrating Jesus' birth (I'm not mentioning the "C" word).

Grace and peace,



Open Day

An early reminder that on the 5th of December we have another **Open House** outreach. Last year was such a success.

If you are able to help it would be appreciated. We plan on walking the streets, giving out leaflets and bringing joy. So welcome team, kitchen helpers and walkers would be great.

Any ideas on how or what to do would be great, please speak to Lou, Yvonne or Serena.

Thank you, blessings.

Prayer



Prayer - always at the heart of our life

Pray for The Bay – there is now **a new monthly gathering** for fellowship and prayer on a Saturday at Sandown Baptist Church. There was a very encouraging time together on 17th October with 25 - 30 people joining in for time for coffee, conversation, prayer and praise.

The next **Bay Connect** meeting will be on **Saturday 21st November from 10:30 – 12:00** – and then 23rd January - do save the dates.

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

Tuesday Prayer at 19:30 - Continues each week via Zoom using the same account as for other activities and groups:

https://us04web.zoom.us/j/3242665584?pwd=ZTlXZzBLWnkrWTNBY2JBK1o0K2ZXdz09 or use the Zoom app and click on 'Join a meeting'. The Meeting ID you will need is 324 266 5584, and the Password is: 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.



"I call on you, my God, for you will answer me; turn your ear to me and hear my prayer."

Psalm 17:6

SURC November Prayer Diary

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

Sun 1	Communion service today	Mon 16	Church tech team - and for the tech used
Mon 2	Rise & Shine initiative	Tue 17	Church property team
Tue 3	Those who aren't well enough to get to church	Wed 18	Churches on the IoW spreading God's Word
Wed 4	The Well - volunteers, regulars and visitors	Thu 19	People suffering from dementia & their families
Thu 5	Those affected by natural disasters	Fri 20	Text prayer network, & Lou who organises it
Fri 6	Shanklin Town Council and IoW Council	Sat 21	The Island's emergency services
Sat 7	Those affected by violence and conflicts around the world	Sun 22	The Persecuted Church and the organisations supporting it
Sun 8	Remembrance Sunday and world peace	Mon 23	Vulnerable children & adults and their carers
Mon 9	UK Government	Tue 24	Care homes on IoW
Tue 10	European Union	Wed 25	Prayer ministry team
Wed 11	United Nations	Thu 26	The church meeting taking place today
Thu 12	Our 'Feed the Bay' initiative	Fri 27	Work of IoW Youth for Christ
Fri 13	Home groups	Sat 28	Our minister, Brian
Sat 14	Visit of Imtiaz	Sun 29	Encounter service
Sun 15	The NHS; staff, patients and services	Mon 30	Those leading worship and prayers

The time is now- a prophetic word

God is pleading with us that the time to prepare is now.

He wants to encourage us that we have already been in battles, some battles have been won but the fight isn't over so we need to look to our armour - make sure it is clean and that's not just about protecting us but it's about showing whose army we belong to.

His radiance shining through us causes the enemy to flee before they have even reached the battleground.

The sword is mighty in slaying the enemy, keep it sharp by keeping in touch moment to moment with the Holy Spirit.

Remember we are not alone, God and His heavenly army lead us.

It is a spiritual battle we are engaged in.

Ephesians 6:10-18

Richard Ash-Lemeer

Connection Quiz

1. What was the name of Ruth Madoc's character in the BBC TV Sitcom 'Hi-De-Hi'?
2. Who was Fred Flinstone's friend and neighbour?
3. Who is the patron saint of Northumbria?
4. Who was Top Cat's police officer friend?
5. What word can mean an insect or used as a slang for food?
6. So, what is the **connection** between the answers to questions 1 - 5?
7. Where was the cover photo taken? *No hints this month.*



Answers are on page 43

ENCOUNTER

On the last Sunday of each month at 10:30

A café style meeting place to drop in and enjoy time together with God





A relaxed time of Friendship, Fun, Food and exploring Faith…
with craft, songs, challenges, prayers…

EVERYONE is welcome – why not bring a friend?

The next café service will be on 29th November – do please invite friends to join you for this more informal service

– café serving from 10:15

Website of the month:

Christian Institute www.christian.org.uk/

The Christian Institute is a nondenominational Christian charity committed to upholding the truths of the Bible, and exists for the furtherance and promotion of the Christian religion in the UK and elsewhere

So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir." **(Galatians 4:7)**

FREEDOM IN CHRIST

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

A Yoke of Freedom

We are planning to run Neil Anderson's Freedom in Christ course again beginning in January 2027. It has been a while since we have done this, and many newer faces in the fellowship will not have had a chance to experience this life-changing series.

Jesus said, ***"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*** **(Matthew 11:28-30)**

Jesus uses this illustration to offer those who would follow Him the chance to find unparalleled freedom under His yoke. To be under this yoke (the authority of Jesus) is not a burden; it is a delight!

By nature, we cannot do what we ought; we are yoked to our own desires, a path that promises much but delivers little. We need Jesus to set us free from our bondage to sin so that we might live in freedom and obedience to God's will.

The Freedom in Christ course is designed to help us become the people God designed us to be by gaining a deeper understanding of who our Father God is, who we are in Christ, and what *we can do with Christ in us*.

This is how Neil Anderson introduces the course:

His Accepted, Adopted Child

"Beloved, now we are children of God" **(1 John 3:2)**

Having a right relationship with God begins with settling once and for all the issue that God is your loving Father, and you are His accepted, adopted child. That's the foundational truth of your spiritual heritage. You are a **child of God**; you are **created in His image**; you have been **declared righteous by Him** because you trust that what Christ accomplished in His death and resurrection is applicable to you. As long as you believe that and walk accordingly, your daily experience of practical Christianity will result in growth.

But when you forget who you are and try to produce in your daily experience the acceptance God has already extended to you, you'll struggle.

- We don't serve God to gain His acceptance ~ we are accepted, so we serve God.
- We don't follow Him to be loved; we are loved, so we follow Him.

This is why you are called to live by faith**:** ***"For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed – a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith'"*** **(Romans 1:17)**

The essence of the victorious Christian life is believing what is already true about you. Do you have a choice? Of course! Satan will try to convince you that you are an unworthy, unacceptable, sin-sick person who will never amount to anything in God's eyes. Is that who you are? No, you are not! You are a saint whom God has declared righteous. Believing Satan's lie will lock you into a defeated, fruitless life. But believing God's truth about your identity will set you free.

Your perception of your identity makes such a big difference in your success in dealing with the challenges and conflicts of your life. It is imperative for your growth and maturity that you believe God's truth about who you are.

The Bible says:

"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" **(1 John 3:1)**

Tragically, many believers are desperately trying to become something they already are, while others are living like something they aren't, but always remember:

"Beloved, now we are children of God" **(1 John 3:2)**

Lord God, I affirm anew that I am Your blood-bought child. The evil one cannot touch me as long as I live according to my position in Christ.

Neil Anderson
Freedom in Christ Ministries
Used by permission

In the next Freedom article in December/January's issue, we will look at "Who we are in Christ". This will give you a flavour of what we will be looking at during the course.

I have been through the 10-week course a few times now, and it has transformed my daily walk with Christ!

If you haven't tried it yet ~ you are missing out ~ so look out for details early next year and sign yourself up!

If you've been on the course before, I would urge you to **come along again** ~ it is a wonderful time of fellowship, learning, discussion and getting to know our awesome God better.

Robin

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FREEDOM IN CHRIST

Beautiful Baptisms

Loads of us gathered on the main beach on the last Saturday of September to celebrate the baptism of Becky and Serena. The weather was beautiful and the short service drew a lot of attention from others who were down there. We heard how they had journeyed with God to this point and were now ready to make a public declaration of faith in Jesus as Lord & Saviour.



Our prayers are with them both as they continue to walk with us all in the footsteps of Jesus and grow in discipleship.





A bring and share lunch up at the church rounded things off very nicely and gave opportunity to connect with some of their guests.





Dear Robin,

Fairtrade Fortnight has come to an end, and we wanted to say thank you.

Over the past two weeks, you've helped bring the voices of farmers and workers to communities, businesses and decision-makers across the UK. Whether you signed our petition, attended an event or spread the word, every action helped build momentum for fairer trade. Here's a look at what we achieved together.

Connecting communities



Fairtrade fortnight ended on a high with two brilliant events. Comedian Cody Dahler hosted an all-star **Comedy Roast**, using humour to tackle serious questions of unfairness and **Decolonise Fest** brought Fortnight to a close with an exciting weekend of punk music, workshops and cold beers.



Across the UK, more than 1,000 events engaged schools, young people and local communities in conversations about fair pay. Coffee farmer **Martin** helped bring producers' perspectives to supporters and policymakers through events including a special reception at the **Welsh Senedd** and our **online coffee morning**.

Taking the message to the government

We took our call for fair pay directly to decision makers at the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool. Whilst delegates were arriving, our

digital van displayed a clear message to Andy Burnham 'Wake up and smell the inequality in your coffee'. We were also joined by Drag sensation **Tia Kofi,** who stopped passersby to ask them if they prefer Tea or Coffee, before spilling the tea on the realities facing the people behind our favourite drinks.



Watch The Video

Turning awareness into action

Together, we turned awareness into action. During Fairtrade Fortnight, **thousands more people signed our petition** calling for fairer business, helping grow a movement of **more than 110,000 people** demanding change. But farmers can't afford to wait. If you haven't already, add your name and urge the government to introduce a new law that protects the people behind our food and the planet.

Sign The Petition



People. Planet. Pay. Do it Fair.

Fairtrade Fortnight may be over, but the movement continues. Thank you for being part of it and for helping create a fairer future for farmers and workers around the world.

Best wishes,

The Fairtrade Foundation

The Real Advent Calendar

With Fairtrade Chocolate and a Christmas storybook

£5 each

On sale in the church from the beginning of November



FAIRTRADE

Our Next Church Meeting



26th November 2026 @ 19:30

Refreshments from 19:00

All members and regular worshippers are encouraged to come along as we seek to plan ahead.

Copies of the agenda and minutes of the previous meeting will be available ahead of the meeting so we can all come prepared.

As usual, the usual Zoom link will be provided for those who cannot make it in person via the regular meeting space.

Details of the Zoom link and how to access the meeting are on page 4.

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



The Curry Boys

A group of a dozen or more men meet every three months to enjoy an evening of fellowship and food at Cinnamon, an Indian restaurant on Regent Street.

This is not exclusive to Shanklin URC as some other friends join in. If you would like to come along to our next gathering on Monday 4th January 2027, please let me know, and if you give me your mobile number, I can add you to our WhatsApp group.

(If you don't use WhatsApp, I can text you separately).

Any questions, please speak to me.

Robin



Newsletter 1. CAP IoW September 2026

Thank you to all the CAP supporters on the IoW. This project is growing and seeing great things, happen. We couldn't do this without the support and backing of many individuals and churches, we're so grateful for each of you!

We plan to produce this newsletter monthly to enable you to pray meaningfully and be able to support and respond where necessary.

Recently CAP had a recommissioning service on the IoW. The team on the ground now consists of 2 Debt coaches, a Service Team Leader and a Community Links Co-ordinator, also supported by the 5 churches which form the CAP partnership on the IoW. These are: Kerith now in Gunville (lead church), Castlehold Baptist (Newport), Apex (Cowes), URC (Shanklin) and Christchurch (Sandown).

There is scope for more people to train as debt coaches, money coaches and Befrienders (people who can visit with the Debt coach and support the client with a cuppa or prayer)

If you wish to give regularly to support the work of CAP IoW please use these account details:- Kerith Community Church. Account Number 70001449 Sort Code 40-22-65 and use the reference CAP IoW.

Praise reports

1. Lady needed to sell house, been on the market for a long time, we prayed and an offer came in.
2. More than six of our clients are free from debt since we began last year, for which we praise our God of victories.
3. One of our clients testified (recorded on video) how God had changed her since she began her journey out of debt, and she 'was floating on a cloud'.
4. A client had lost his job, and the befriender testified how he had been healed after a deep diving accident . We then offered to pray for him and the next day he said he was offered three jobs!! God is good!
5. One client who was in debt had not long lost her husband, then discovered an insurance policy that cleared debts.

Across the UK, we've already seen over £16.3 million of debt cleared or repaid and 1,424 clients walk into freedom from debt this year! (Jan - July 2026) Our God is awesome!

Prayer requests

1. An older couple in insecure housing need to find a new home.

2. A young man seeking help through CAP, has done Alpha and needs to know God.
3. Lady needs wisdom about whether to cut financial ties with a family member to allow her to get free from debt.

It's amazing what God is doing through faithful people who are serving him through CAP.

If more people would like to offer support (financially, through prayer, referring clients or through volunteers) that would be excellent.

For more information, please contact the service team leader, Rhoda, who will be happy to give more details and answer questions.

Mobile: 07916 910289 Or email: rhodamacleod@capuk.org

If you would like information regarding signposting clients to CAP or you would like to have a presentation made in a local organisation, please contact Sandra Snell our Community Links Co-ordinator.

Mobile: 07835 486128 Email: ssnell.eyp@gmail.com

Christians Working Together in the Bay

On 15th October there was a meeting of around 20 people from among the local churches in The Bay – 10 of the 16 congregations were represented. Thoughts were shared about future work and witness, and a further meeting is planned for 9th February to pick things up.

In the meantime, we have monthly informal gatherings to bring folk together for fellowship and prayer and these are kindly being hosted by Sandown Baptist Church for an experimental period.

Sat 21st Nov	10:30	Bay Connect at Sandown Baptist Church
Sat 12th Dec	10:30(?)	Christmas music and outreach in Sandown High Street
Sat 23rd Jan	10:30	Bay Connect at Sandown Baptist Church

Shanklin United Reformed Church
In the High Street - at the heart of the town

On a dark evening, why not try...



16:00 - 19:00

Saturday 31st October

Open House

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

Games ***Crafts*** ***Snacks***
Drinks ***Chat***

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

The Well

a place for

Living Well Together

Drop in at any point

Wednesdays 11:00 – 12:30

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









And short mat bowls!



Lake of Tears

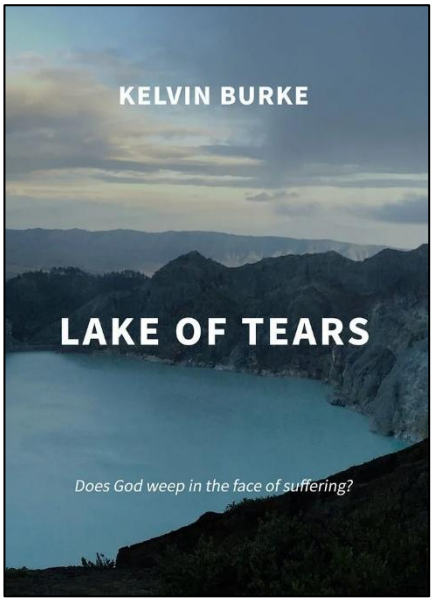
Saturday 28th November at 15:30

Afternoon tea and an audience with Kelvin Burke

We are delighted to be welcoming our good friend Rev Kelvin Burke to share part of his moving testimony with us. He's published a book about his life and the struggle to come to terms with his disability following a serious accident when he was 23. After much wrestling and heartache as to why he was not healed, he gradually discovered that God had wept alongside him in his suffering and truly shared his pain, enough to fill a lake.

After 20 years as an accountant, Kelvin was called to the ministry in the Church of England and then to hospital chaplaincy, once his phobia of hospitals had been broken. He ministered God's love to many broken souls, first in Yorkshire and then moving to the Island where he served at St Mary's and Mountbatten before his retirement. He and Jenny live in Ventnor and have shared with us a few times over recent years.

Please invite friends along if you think they might be helped by his story. Flyers will be available soon and copies of his book will be on sale on the day.



Christian Institute

During October, Christian Institute held their Autumn Week of Prayer (18th – 24th). The needs are ongoing for prayer into our nation and if you did not manage to pick up a leaflet, the focus for each day encompassed the following:

- The Church
- Sanctity of Life
- Gambling
- Schools
- 'Conversion Practices'
- Gospel Freedom
- The Christian Institute Team

Their Autumn Newsletter has also been published with up-to-date information on issues affecting faith and living out a Godly life in what is a society either indifferent to or rejecting of the Biblical standards and heritage, which has blessed us as a nation through the years. The editor has an electronic copy, or it can be viewed online at:

www.christian.org.uk/resource/newsletter-autumn-2026/.

It is so important to keep abreast of developments in the life of our nation from a spiritual perspective. Their website for information online can be found at www.christian.org.uk/. Do please take a copy of the newsletter, or visit their website, and do ask me about the October Week of Prayer's prayer points in more detail if you missed this.

The Christian Institute is our website of the month on page 7.

Blessings

Jane H

Source: Christian Institute

Good News for All!


KATIE TAYLOR: BOXING LEGEND BOWS OUT WITH WIN AND WORSHIP – see page 8

GOOD NEWS

www.goodnews-paper.org.uk November 2026

FROM REGGAE TO GOSPEL
'Lovers rock' singer has a new calling
See page 3

SKY SPORTS PRESENTER
How God repaired me after losing my first wife
See page 2

CLIMBER SURVIVES 600-FOOT PLUNGE

Mountaineer breaks neck but lives to tell of peace

AN EXPERIENCED climber who fell 600 feet down a frozen mountainside in the Lake District has told of his incredible survival.

GOOD NEWS... for a change!

'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.

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 '**Mountaineer's Miracle** - Climber survives 600ft fall and broken neck after feeling God's protection.'

Other contributions include:

- **Sky presenter's test of faith** - Simon Thomas says 'God repaired me after losing my wife'
- **Hobbit star finds fulfilment** - Evangeline Lilly's faith is most important thing to her
- **With the Lord in the ring** - Irish boxing legend bows out with worship song
- **Atheist pretends God is real** - and 20 days later finds that he is
- **Second chance for alcoholic** - Prayer in prison changes his life
- **Overwhelmed by love** - Marijuana addict transformed after Jesus speaks to him
- **Stunning design** - New book reveals astonishing complexity in every living cell

Good News… for a change

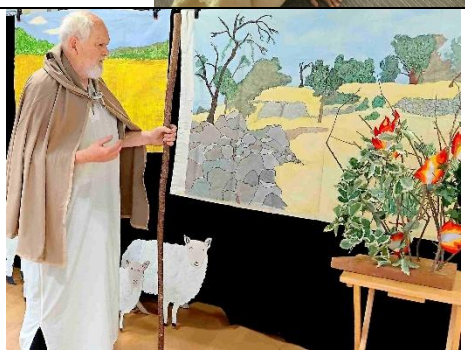
Open The Book to Exodus

Moses fled to Midian where he helped the daughters of the priest Jethro who were looking after their father's sheep. Moses married the eldest, beautiful Zipporah





One day, Moses saw a bush on fire, but it was not burning up! Moses went over to have a look. A voice said: "Take off your sandals. You are standing on holy ground."



God said to Moses: "Go to Pharaoh and tell him to let my people go."

Moses asked: "If the people ask your name – what shall I say?" God replied: "I AM who I am. Tell them 'I AM' has sent you."

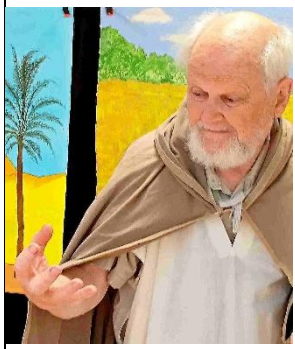
God also gave Moses signs. His staff turned into a snake. God also told Moses to put his hand beneath his cloak.



When Moses took his hand out, it was covered in a horrible skin disease.



When Moses did it again, his hand was healed. But Moses was scared. "I'm no good at speaking" he said.



God replied: "Your brother Aaron is here.

Aaron will speak for you."
Moses and Aaron went back to Egypt.



But Pharaoh refused to listen to them.
Pharaoh defied God.
So began a series of plagues.



First, the waters of the Nile turned to blood. The court magicians



called on the power of the crocodile-headed god, Sobek, who, supposedly, controlled the Nile. But, instead of making the river pure again, they turned the only remaining water to blood. The frogs left the Nile and went into the homes of the Egyptians. The magicians called on Kuk, the frogheaded god.



This produced even more frogs! With no water, there were dead frog-gods everywhere. Poo!



These were followed by gnats and flies. The farm animals died and painful boils appeared on the Egyptians. Hailstones and locusts destroyed the crops.
Then the sky went dark for 3 days. None of this affected the people of Israel. But still Pharaoh refused to let God's people go.

So God gave Moses instructions for the final plague. The people of Israel were to kill a lamb and paint the doorways of their houses with the blood.



Then they ate the roast lamb and flat, unleavened, bread,



The angel of death saw the blood on the doorposts and passed over their houses.
But every family in Egypt lost their firstborn.
At last, Pharaoh gave in and let God's people go.



Moses and Aaron led the people of Israel out of Egypt.



But then Pharaoh changed his mind He sent his army to bring them back!
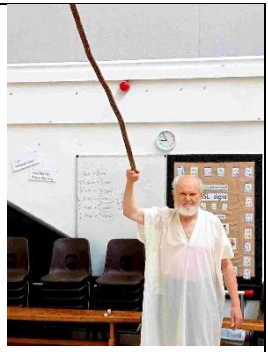


With his troops, Pharaoh sent six hundred chariots and went in one himself to watch.



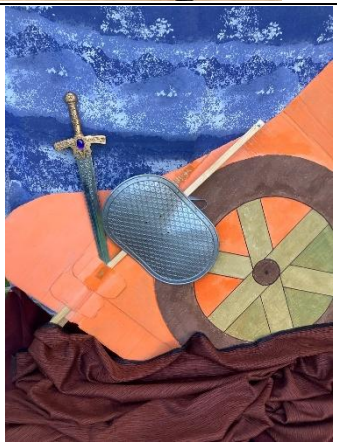
When the people of Israel reached the shores of the Red Sea, they saw the Egyptians coming.



God told Moses to stretch his staff over the waters.



A path appeared going right through the sea. The Israelites crossed with a wall of water on each side of them.



But, when the horses followed, the chariots got stuck in the mud and their wheels came off. When all God's people had crossed, Moses lowered his staff and the water came crashing down on the Egyptians. Pharaoh turned and went back home.

That's why Pharaoh is not in any list of the kings killed by the Israelites:



Psalm 135:9-11

'God sent His signs and wonders into your midst, Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his servants.
God struck down many nations and killed mighty kings – Sihon king of the Amorites, Og king of Bashan, and all the kings of Canaan. '



Miriam, the sister of Moses, led the Israelites in dancing and praising God for this great victory.

Make sure you get the December Link to see how the Isrealites fared on the journey to Canaan.

East Wight Youth Newsletter

Here are some extracts from Meg's latest newsletter

It has been a really encouraging season for East Wight Youth, with continued opportunities to build relationships with young people and create spaces where they can feel known, valued and supported.

It has been particularly encouraging to see young people growing in confidence, developing friendships and becoming more comfortable exploring and expressing their faith.

There is a real sense of foundations being built at the moment - investing in relationships, developing new partnerships and exploring where God is opening doors.

As we look towards the months ahead, we are excited about the opportunities in front of us and grateful for everyone who continues to pray, volunteer, give and support the work.

***

Meg began Bible Explorer observation and training, with the hope of eventually bringing this exciting programme Into primary schools across the Bay area.

Bible Explorer is a dramatised walk through the Bible, using props, actions, key words and storytelling to help children engage with and remember the stories of Scripture.

We are particularly looking at working with Years 5 and 6, creating an engaging and memorable way for young people to explore the Bible and discover more about Jesus.

***



This summer, East Wight Youth joined the Sandown Carnival, walking alongside local churches as we came together around the theme of Noah and God's promise.

It was a brilliant opportunity to be visible in our community, have fun together and share a message of

hope and promise with the wider Island.

***

This summer, Meg joined YFC for her first Dreaming the Impossible youth festival.

It was an incredible opportunity to spend time alongside young people from across the country - seeing them pray for one another, hear from God, build relationships and go deeper in their faith.

It was a real encouragement and a reminder of why investing in the next generation matters so much.

We came home inspired and expectant about what God could do through the young people here on the Isle of Wight.

***

The first season of Rock Solid began in June, bringing together young people from Years 5-8 for an evening of games, activities, conversations, faith and fun.

It has been so encouraging to see the group grow - not just in numbers, but in friendships, confidence and faith.

Rock Solid is hosted at Lake Green Mission Church, and we are incredibly grateful to Brian Cooper for allowing us to use the space.

A huge thank you also goes to our amazing volunteers who have stepped up, got stuck in and helped make each session possible. Youth work is very much a team effort.

Prayer points

As we look towards the next season, please Join us in praying for:

- *Primary schools - For open doors and new connections with primary schools across the East Wight, and for opportunities to introduce Bible Explorer.*
- *Rock Solid - That the group would continue to grow in friendship, confidence and faith, and that more young people would feel able to Join us.*
- *East Wight Youth - For wisdom, energy and God's guidance as we continue building relationships and creating opportunities for young people to discover real hope.*

God With Us: Thy Kingdom Come 2026 Reprise

Last time we looked at The Spirit of Confidence from both the TKC Novena (by Archbishop Sarah Mullally) and the Prayer Journal (by Rev Canon Chris Russell). Now we turn to …

The Spirit and the Whisper

1 Kings 19: 9b-13: The Lord appears to Elijah

[9b]And the word of the Lord came to him: 'What are you doing here, Elijah?'

[10] He replied, 'I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.'

[11] The Lord said, 'Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.'

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. [12] After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. [13] When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

Then a voice said to him, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?'

This isn't like the story of Samuel and Eli. Elijah has no problem communicating with God – he can hear Him loud and clear, understand Him, respond to Him. God asks a rhetorical question; He already knew why Elijah was there!

So, Elijah is told to go outside – he experiences mountains being torn apart, the earth shaking beneath him, and a blazing inferno. After all that, the Spirit returns to whisper nothing other than the same question - telling Elijah to leave excuses behind, get out of hiding, and to act, and eventually Elijah gets the hint. Even the great heroes of the faith can miss God's calling!

Whilst it is uncomfortable, it seems that we all can close our ears, eyes, hands, minds and sense to what God is trying to give to us. We can all miss the difference God's presence wants to bring to us.

So let us pray that, whatever question the Spirit is whispering to us, we may respond to it as God wants us to: not ignoring it, not suppressing it, not with excuses – but with action.

Robin

Shoebox Appeal 2026

'Thank you' to those who have already given goods and money towards this year's 'Operation Christmas Child'.

There is still time to come on board with this wonderful opportunity to bless children who otherwise have so little, alongside giving each child a booklet about Jesus – 'The Greatest Journey', Where culturally appropriate.

Do ask if you'd like to know more, but in the meantime I am very happy to pass on any completed boxes or individual items and monetary gifts. Sandra Snell, our local co-ordinator, continues to assemble and receive boxes and would be grateful for any support given – deadline 8th November.

Leaflets are available at church to help make your choice of what is needed and last month's copy of 'The Link' gave comprehensive information on the different ways of helping this year's appeal.

Sandra is also hosting another fund raising three course evening meal on Wednesday 4th November at 19:00. Booking required: 07835 486128.

Thank you for any support you are able to give.

Blessings in Jesus' Name

Jane H

CARE Prayer Diary

Another helpful resource for informed prayer is the CARE Prayer Diary and the newsletter (from Oct 2026 to Jan 2027) is now with us.

There are reports of young people enquiring about Christianity and coming to faith, for which we rejoice. However, we also see a lot of unrest amongst young people in many nations, demonstrating against their governments and circumstances.

May these be days of harvest for God's Kingdom and may many of these young people find the hope to be found in following Jesus, in a world which can be confusing and fearful for them.

The last week's entry in the previous CARE Prayer Diary (18th – 24th October) was for 'Gen Z'.

If you did not have the last copy, may these prayers for Gen Z, reproduced below, be an inspiration to commit to praying for our young people, that 'as many as possible may be saved'.

- Sunday 18th: Father God, we commit to Your benevolent mercy this unique generation that has already experienced the upheaval of Covid and is growing up in a world beset by conflict, uncertainty and many other challenges. Please draw them to Yourself and grant them freedom and a sure hope. In Jesus' name. Amen.
- Monday 19th: Lord, we pray for the many teens and young adults scrolling through news sites who feel overwhelmed by current events. Please help them to be wise in their internet usage and detect information that is exaggerated, harmful or false. In Your mercy. Amen.
- Tuesday 20th: Gracious God, we ask You to grant special wisdom to the government in the wake of the Milburn Report as they consider how to address the plight of the 16% of young people in the UK who are unemployed, many applying for scores of jobs each week. Please reveal strategies to turn this around and help individuals to find work. In Your mercy. Amen.
- Wednesday 21st: Lord, please enable more young people to be accepted as apprentices, especially through incentives to employers to take them on. We pray for opportunities to learn skills

and adjust diligently to the expectations of working life. By Your grace. Amen.

- Thursday 22nd: Thank You, Holy Spirit, that growing numbers of 'Gen-Zers' are discovering Christian preachers, digital devotionals and church communities through online platforms. Speak powerfully into their minds and hearts through these channels! In Jesus' name. Amen.
- Friday 23rd: Lord our Healer, we remember the reported 28% of this age-group – doubled since 2016 – who have high levels of anxiety, and the 53% who self-identify as neurodivergent*. Please release them from any problems this creates. For Christ's sake. Amen. (*a neurodivergent person's brain functions, learns, and processes information differently from what society considers standard or "neurotypical".)
- Saturday 24th: God of grace and truth, we pray for young people as they pursue 'spirituality' not to be deceived and led astray by false religion but to encounter and believe the gospel. Please help churches to welcome them with understanding and love. In Jesus' name. Amen. Their souls to You. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

'Young people, it's wonderful to be young! Enjoy every minute of it. Do everything you want to do; take it all in. But remember that you must give an account to God for everything you do.' Ecclesiastes 11:9

Generation Z refers to the demographic cohort born roughly between 1997 and 2012. They are the first generation who have never known a world without the internet and smartphones. They tend to have a heightened awareness of social justice, sustainability, and mental health and have lower rates of binge drinking, drug usage and smoking than previous generations of young people.

If you've not taken this great resource before, it is so helpful for informed prayer about our nation. Copies are on the tables in the church and lobby. Do take one and pray for the Body of Christ in our nation and in the world.

'Pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honoured.' 2 Thessalonians 3:1.

Blessings in Jesus' Name

Jane H

Source: CARE Prayer Diary

Focus

on our Christian Brothers and Sisters being persecuted for their faith

"We need prayers": another pastor killed in Myanmar violence

8 October 2026

Please pray for believers in Chin State, Myanmar, as they reel from the death of another church leader, Pastor Dal Thawn Tuang, and are increasingly gripped by fear amid ongoing violence.

Yet another pastor has been killed in Chin State, Myanmar, along with other citizens who were fleeing gunfire in Tedim township. He is the latest in the growing number of church leaders killed in the violence that erupted after a military coup shattered the nation's tense peace in 2021. The conflict has exacerbated the persecution already faced by believers in the country, and five years on, Myanmar's population has felt no relief.

Pastor Dal Thawn Tuang was assistant pastor of Lamzang Baptist Church in Lamzang village, Chin State, one of the regions that has been most affected by the conflict. The details of his death are ambiguous, but the details provided are unsettling: residents report that escaped prisoners of war opened fire on civilians as they ran, while others state that armed groups were responsible for Tuang's death.

Previously, pastors were afforded a protected status as they travelled across Chin State to minister to communities. Open Doors local partners have met with church leaders in recent years to provide persecution survival training and retreats – and Pastor Dal Thawn Tuang was among those who received this support.

An unfolding pattern

Tragically, Pastor Tuang's death is not an isolated incident. Earlier this year, Reverend William from Chungcung village in Chin State was arrested in May by the military. Rev. William did not resist arrest or flee, believing that his pastoral ID card would protect him. Sadly, he was wrong. He was arrested along with another man named Nam Ceu, and neither have returned to their families since.

Though church leaders appealed to authorities for information concerning their whereabouts, they reportedly received no response. Their families have made the painful conclusion that their loved ones have been killed.

Across conflict-affected regions in Myanmar, a chilling pattern is unfolding: one which points to the growing violence encroaching upon church communities.

In 2021, Pastor Cung Biak Hum was killed in Chin State, along with another pastor named Om Kee.

In 2023, a priest named Saw Radi was killed in Karen State.

In 2025, Pastor Salai Ngwe Kyar was killed, also in Chin State.

Attacks and aid raids are battering the church, whilst legal protection in the face of such vulnerabilities is becoming a rarity. In Chin State, where most residents are Christians and most of the conflict is concentrated, reports military forces using citizens as human shields during operations. Forced conscription is also being applied in areas under military control, separating families and leaving young men and women increasingly vulnerable.

Will you pray?

As violence continues and accountability remains elusive, Christian communities across Myanmar are increasingly concerned for the safety of pastors, church workers and ordinary civilians who find themselves trapped in the conflict – one they did not create.

Win Tin*, a local Open Doors partner, shares, "The situation in Myanmar is not showing signs of improvement and the security situation is dire. Pastors and church leaders are thoroughly checked and interrogated at military checkpoints. We need prayers, encouragement and courage to face the challenges ahead of us."

**Name changed for security reasons*

Please pray

- For the family of Pastor Dal Thawn Tuang and Reverend William, that God would comfort them in their grief and surround them with His peace
- That the Lord would bring about a significant deescalation of the violence and raise up leaders to secure peace in Myanmar
- For the church to remain wise, humble and courageous, upheld by the Lord's strength as they navigate the challenges of this time.

Myanmar – Information

Myanmar is number 14 on the World Watch List

How many Christians? 4.6 million (8.3%)

Main threats - Dictatorial paranoia and religious nationalism

How are Christians persecuted in Myanmar?

- Christians in Myanmar continue to experience untold suffering because of persecution and conflict, with last year's devastating earthquakes adding to the vulnerability of many believers.
- It's now five years since the military coup that has deepened Myanmar's long-running civil war and had a catastrophic impact on the whole country. Many Christians have been caught in the crossfire, particularly in ethnic minority areas, with believers killed, churches bombed and villages destroyed.
- Thousands have been displaced by the war, and March's earthquake – which killed more than 3,600 people – has forced even more from their homes.
- Christians face everyday discrimination, such as trouble getting Christianity recognised on ID cards, denial of access to basic services like water, and forced participation in Buddhist rituals.
- Churches have difficulty registering with the authorities.
- Evangelistic activities are strongly opposed.

- Converts can face additional hostility from their families and communities, who may view their faith as a betrayal of their heritage. Myint*, a church leader, remembers when he led one man to faith, 'his family ridiculed him, and his own son physically assaulted him'.

Why are Christians persecuted in Myanmar?

The vulnerability of Christians in Myanmar goes back years, rooted in the belief that to be Burmese is to be Buddhist – and that means other faiths are often seen as foreign and a threat to national unity.

What has changed in Myanmar in the past year?

- Myanmar has dropped a place in this year's World Watch List, but the suffering facing many Christians remains severe and multifaceted.
- The past year has seen conflict intensify across Myanmar, with Christians among those affected.
- Sagaing Region – which was hit by the earthquakes – saw Christian villages targeted.
- In the Christian majority Chin State, attacks on churches persist.
- Overall, Christians have faced worsening violence, displacement and systematic targeting, with the earthquakes deepening the suffering of many.
- In one of many tragic incidents, ten-armed men stormed a parish in Kangyitaw, forcing Father Donald Martin to kneel. He refused, declaring he kneels only to God, and it cost him his life.

For more news on our persecuted brothers and sisters please visit the Open Doors website:

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

Source: Open Doors - used by permission

Christmas Gift Box Appeal

Can you help a person in care home who would not otherwise receive a Christmas Gift.

Each year Embracing Age send Christmas Gifts to residents in care homes who otherwise would not receive a gift. In 2025 we gave out over 300 gift bags, Could you please help with any of the following:

- *Toiletries, especially shower gel and fragrant talc*
- *Toiletry bags*
- *Bed socks or normal socks*
- *Small packets of tissues*
- *Puzzle books*
- *Small teddy bears*
- *Soft hairbrushes*
- *Arts & crafts*

Or make a donation at carehomefriends.org.uk/giftbox

If anyone can help in any way, there will be donation boxes at Tesco's Ryde, Boots Newport and Regent Beauty Shanklin.

They can also be given to myself, Yvonne, (or Christopher) at Church or collected if needed.

We will be putting the gift bags together at the beginning of December so please could we have any donations by 30th November.

Thank you for your help, Yvonne S.

For more information contact: email yvonne@embracingage.org.uk or 07419 338066.

EMBRACING AGE
Later life in all its fullness

Shanklin Town Community & Youth Brass Bands

ISLE of WIGHT
Est. 1993

Charity Concert for Embracing Age

EMBRACING AGE
Later life in all its fullness

30th October 2026 at 19:30

Shanklin United Reformed Church
High Street, Shanklin PO37 6LA

Free Admission
Retiring Collection in aid of Embracing Age

Come and learn about us and what we do, and help support our Christmas Gift Box Appeal

www.embracingage.org
Registered charity number 1160400


The Big Quiz Night
Saturday 21st November
19:00
Shanklin United Reformed Church
Join us for a fun evening
(the questions aren't too hard)
as we raise funds for Tearfund
tearfund.org
Tearfund, 100 Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8QE
020 3906 3906 info@tearfund.org /tearfund
Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR
tearfund

Alternative Gift Opportunities

Another year has flown by and now Christmas looms on the horizon!

For most of us, we do not need more things and so this is a great opportunity to give alternative gifts – from as little as £5.00 (towards a shoebox, blankets and bedding, along with many other wonderful ways in helping those in need – a dairy goat to provide for a family, towards heart surgery for a child – just a snapshot of the 36 gifts from the Samaritan's Purse 2026 Gift Catalogue – see copies at church or go online at www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/be-part-of-it/give/gift-catalogue).

There are many Christian and other ministries who participate in this scheme, to name a few:

- Barnabas Fund,
- Voice (formerly Release International),
- Leprosy Mission,
- Love Russia,
- Bible Society to provide a Bible for someone who hasn't got God's Word.

If you felt to add an alternative gift to your Christmas giving list, that would be such a blessing, and it can be both fun and informative to browse the catalogues and leaflets with loved ones and choose together who and what you would like to bless.

Do ask if you'd like to know more.

Blessings in Jesus' Name

Jane H

Source: Samaritan's Purse

Dates For Your Diary

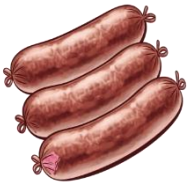


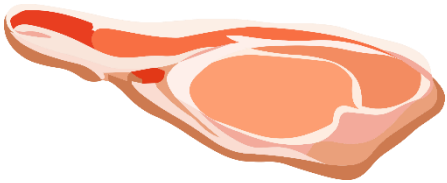
Day	Date	Time	Details
Fri	30th Oct	19:30	Shanklin Community/Youth Brass Bands Charity Concert for Embracing Age
Sat	31st Oct	16:00	Light Alternative
Sun	1st Nov	10:30	Commissioning of Sheilagh as Lay Preacher
Wed	4th Nov	15:30	Gather ready for a tea party for Denis
Sat	7th Nov	10:00	Elders' Retreat
Sat	14th Nov	10:00	Breakfast at Viv's with Imtiaz – for all
Sun	15th Nov	10:30	Guest preacher – Imtiaz/Ashley Trask
Fri	20th Nov	18:00	Elders' Meeting
Sat	21st Nov	10:30 19:00	Bay Connect - at Sandown Baptist Church Big Quiz for Tearfund
Thu	**26th Nov**	**19:30**	**Church Meeting**
Sat	28th Nov	15:30	Lake of Tears – tea and cake with Kelvin Burke
Sun	29th Nov	10:30	Encounter café service
Sat	5th Dec	10:00	Open House
Sun	6th Dec	17:00	Light up a Life service with Mountbatten

Rise and Shine

As the days get colder and winter approaches, our Monday and Tuesday morning initiative to help the needy and homeless needs your help

To help meet demand, they are in need of sausages and bacon





Any Donations, gratefully received, can be given to Steve, Baz or Sheilagh either at church or on Monday or Tuesday mornings

Thank you

Connection Quiz Answers



1. Gladys **Pugh**
2. **Barney** Rubble
3. Saint **Cuthbert**
4. Officer **Dibble**
5. **Grub**
6. Connection: they are the Trumpton fireman from the 1967 BBC children's TV Program – Pugh, Pugh, Barney McGrew, Cuthbert, Dibble & Grubb
7. This issue's cover photo is of the Shanklin war memorial – taken last November (photo © C P Sparks).

The Puzzle Pages

Sudoku

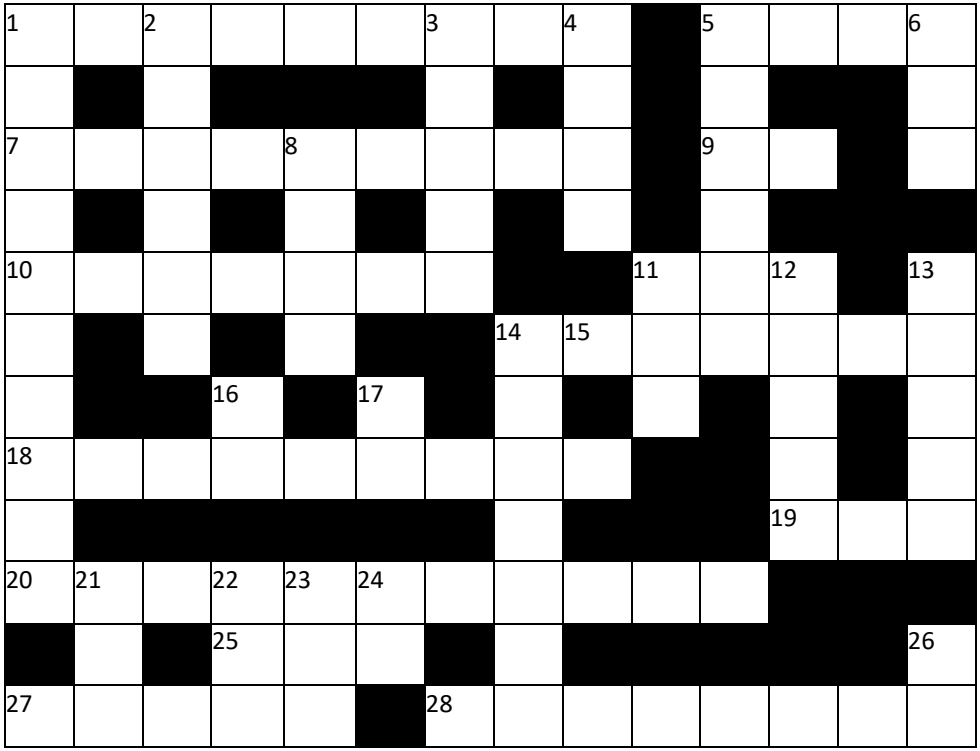
A numerical placement puzzle!

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

A moderate one this month.

Enjoy!

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



Last month's Sudoku - how did you do?

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

Across

1 German city, home to the European Central Bank (9)

5 French Normandy city where William I is buried (4)

7 Winemaking scientist (US spelling) (9)

9 Exempli Gratia *initials* (2)

10 European country, capital Budapest (7)

11 Not good (3)

14 British military 'jump jet' (7)

18 Large & hairy spider (9)

19 Japanese currency (3)

20 Act of remembering; - Sunday, 11th November (11)

25 Sandown – (3)

27 Famous Epsom horse race, takes place in June (5)

28 Heritage railway based in Sheffield Park, Sussex (8)

Down

1 West Wight town (with a 25 across) (10)

2 '- *the World in 80 Days*' Jules Verne (6)

3 State of being undivided, or in agreement (5)

4 '- *& Lyle*' sugar refiners (4)

5 Julius -, Roman Emperor; a salad (6)

6 Immediately (3)

8 Scottish resort and seaport, aka '*Gateway to the Isles*' (4)

11 Female supportive undergarment (3)

12 Not clean (5)

13 Our minister (5)

14 Large strong bag (7)

16 Thanks, slang (2)

17 @ (2)

21 One of what you see with (3)

22 – and flow with the tide (3)

23 5th month of the year (3)

24 Le mot 'Par', en anglais (2)

26 Paul Simon sang you could call him this (2)

Can You Guess The Year?

- The Winter Olympics were held in Albertville, France.
- Polytechnics were allowed to become new universities.
- The Women's Royal Army Corps was disbanded.
- Liverpool won the FA Cup, beating Sunderland 2-0.
- And UK No. 1s include:
  - Shakespear's Sister with '*Stay*'
  - Right Said Fred with '*Deeply Dippy*'
  - Jimmy Nail with '*Ain't No Doubt*'
  - Charles and Eddie with '*Would I Lie to You*'
  - Whitney Houston with '*I Will Always Love You*'

Answer next issue

This Issue's General Knowledge Questions

1. Where were the 1924 Olympic games held?
2. Who was the English monarch after Henry II?
3. What is the chemical symbol for lead?
4. What is the capital of Thailand?
5. What is the currency in Albania?
6. Why is the PM Spencer Percival different to other PMs?
7. In computer terms, what does SSD stand for?
8. Who composed the '*Blue Danube*'?
9. When was the current London Bridge built?
10. In GB motor racing, what does BTCC mean?

Answers next issue

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

Sunday 22nd November

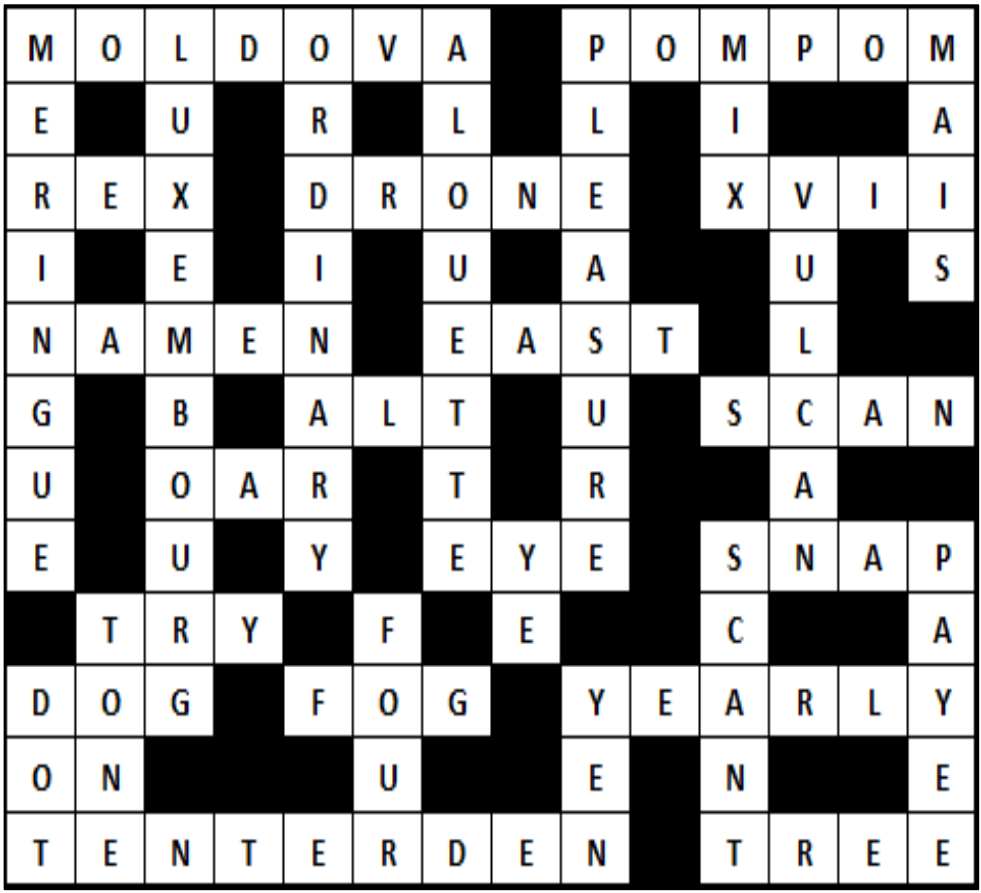
Contributions can be emailed anytime up to the deadline day to:

surc.thelink@btinternet.com

As usual, the next issue will be a double one covering December and January – I get a month off

Last Issue's Solutions

- Guess the year: it was 1987
- Last issue's crossword ↓



Last Issue's General Knowledge Quiz Answers

1. France
2. Stephen
3. Lordi, for Finland
4. Santiago
5. Euro
6. Labour PM who was expelled from the Labour Party
7. File Transfer Protocol
8. Richard Wagner
9. Between 1886 and 1894
10. Brands Hatch, Kent – the last time it was held there

Sunday Services

Morning **10:30** **Morning Worship** in church
Broadcast live on YouTube
➔ **Holy Communion** on 1st Sunday of each month
➔ **All Age service** on last Sunday of each month

Evening **17:00** **Alpha Course** in church

Weekday Activities

Monday 08:00 **Rise and Shine**
13:00 **Prayer Meeting** in church (see page 4)

Tuesday 08:00 **Rise and Shine**
14:00 **Bible Bite** ministry in church
(Refreshments from 13:30)
Broadcast live on YouTube
19:30 **Prayer Meeting** on Zoom (see page 4)

Wednesday 11:00 **The Well** (see page 20)

Friday 10:00 **CatURpillars Toddler Group** (*term time*)

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

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