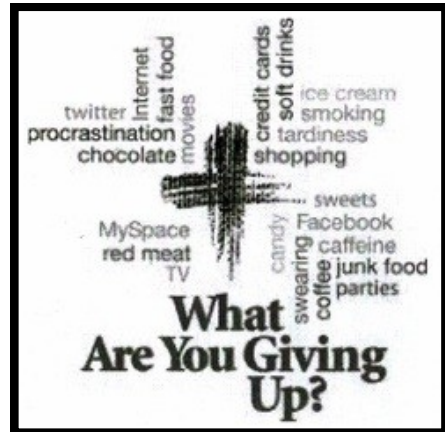


The Highlander

February 2015

“Jesus returned from the Jordan full of the Holy Spirit and was led by the Spirit into the desert , where he was tempted by the Devil for forty days. In all that time he ate nothing, so that he was hungry when it was over.”

Luke 4 : 1

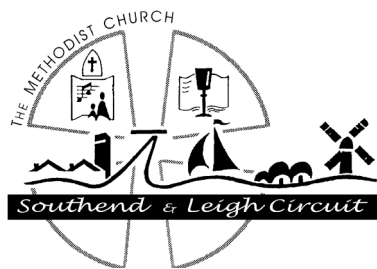


Sunday Worship in February 2015

1st Education Sunday	9.00	Holy Communion - Rev. Julia Monaghan
	10.30	Morning Worship - Val Windsor
8th	10.30	Parade Service - Rev Julia Monaghan
15th Sunday before Lent	10.30	Holy Communion - Rev Brian Gameson
22nd Lent 1	10.30	Morning Worship - Sue Hockett

**“S Club” meets at 10.30 am every Sunday
Sunday Club for Children - Crèche available**

No. 801 Vol. LXVXI



The Highlander is published by Highlands Methodist Church, Sutherland Blvd, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 3PT. Highlands Methodist Church is a member church of the *Southend and Leigh Circuit*, 34/10, which is part of the Beds., Essex and Herts. District.

Highlands Methodist Church Hospitality in the Midst of our Community

Minister	Rev. Julia Monaghan	483827
Secretary to Church Council	Credwyn Tolhurst	557070
Church Stewards	Ros Bryant	478631
	Credwyn Tolhurst	557070
	Lesley/Andrew Hyde	473111
	Janette/Rob Land	477507
Worship Leaders	Jennifer Courtenay	556140
	Frank Edmonds	525250
Church Treasurer	Janet Watson	555702
Property Co-ordinator	Anne Lane	01268 565644
	e-mail: annelane8@btinternet.com	
S Club Leaders	Jean Edmonds	525250
	Ros Bryant	478631
Pastoral Co-ordinator	Maureen Kelly	556152
Church Flowers	Jean Burgess	556278
Lettings/Use of Premises	Les Davis	558381

All items for the **March 2015** issue of *The Highlander* should be handed in writing to **Frank Edmonds** (or put in the "E" section of the pigeon box in Jubilee Room) latest 10.30 a.m. **Sunday 15th February**. Preferably, items may be emailed to frank66thecroft@sky.com *The Highlander* will be ready for distribution on **Sunday 22nd February**.



Message from your Minister:-

To Love Extravagantly!

With Valentines Day being one of the biggest shopping days after Christmas, and with men spending double what women do, Tina Gowers at Belfairs has been researching into its origins. She established that St Valentine was an early Christian martyr killed by the Romans in 269 AD for marrying couples against the order of the Emperor. Claudius II had a view that men were better soldiers if they remained unmarried, their sole allegiance being to him. For his subversive acts, Valentine, a priest, was executed and buried in the cemetery on the Via Flamin ia Rome on February 14th.

In the middle ages, the poet Chaucer linked Valentine with the idea of romantic love through a poem called, "Parliament of Fowles," and the celebration began in earnest. The British Postal Museum, located near to Russell Square in London, has one of the earliest preserved heart shaped cards from the 18th Century and a suitably romantic poem is included.

All of which raises the question, so what does it mean to be romantic anyway?

One of the best descriptions of love is found in 1 Corinthians 13. Here Paul seeks to correct the balance that would have us look only to ourselves, by describing love as unconditional, self-denying and self-sacrificing.

If you are in love with someone, you do not think solely about your own needs, because your mind is on making the person you love happy. Driving from London to Newcastle and back, just to spend a few hours with the person that you love, not worrying about the time, cost or effort involved. Love can be extravagant, self-denying, self-sacrificing.

The skeptics amongst you may dismiss romantic gestures as foolish, but I think that dying to aspects of self, actually means finding life in somebody else's joy as well as your own. It's about understanding what makes other people tick so that their happiness becomes your happiness, their joy your joy and at other times, their sorrow your sorrow. When we die to aspects of ourselves, we find the secret of being alive.

Perhaps today, we could think of how we might be extravagantly generous to someone, how we could make a wild gesture of love, as much as the confines of our world allow. Perhaps we might discover not the froth and the pink of a fictional love story but rather the true romance of finding life in another's joy.

Loving God, we rejoice that your love is unconditional and there for us 365 days of the year. We thank you for revealing it to us so extravagantly in your Son, Jesus Christ. Make us generous people, so that lost in love we might find ourselves truly alive. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen.

Rev Julia

Course in Spiritual Direction at Pleshey 2015 -2017

Many people today are benefiting from the opportunity to spend time with a 'spiritual companion' or 'guide' who is there to help them on their journey through life. 20 years ago, the ecumenical course based at Pleshey was established, to develop the skills of those who experience being called to such a ministry. You may well be the kind of person - a listening 'ear,' that people gravitate to, seek your counsel or simply share their joys and cares with. In such circumstances, you may not be formally engaged in 'spiritual direction', but you are nevertheless being graced by God to 'be there,' and this training may well be for you.

The next *Course in Spiritual Direction* starts in September 2015. It lasts 18 months, meeting one mid-week day per month, during the school terms, and three mid-week 2 night residentials. As an experiential course, it is designed to develop the participant's self-knowledge as well as their ability to understand others and their life's journey in faith. Please contact Fran McEvoy, the course administrator: 01702 330178 or franmcevoy@hotmail.com for information and an application form. The course costs £1,200 and can be paid in instalments. I am also happy to talk to anyone who would like to know more. Visit: <http://www.spiritual-direction-in-essex.org>

Rev Julia

January 2015

Flower Rota for February 2015

<u>Date</u>	<u>Donated by</u>	<u>In memory of</u>	<u>Arranged by</u>
1st	Meriel Mallett	Tony	Jean Burgess
8th	Dilys Haddow	Elsie Bradford	Jean Burgess
15th	Jane Crookall	Peggy Rudd	Betty Garrood
22nd	---	---	---



Prayer

We pray for our friends who are ill, housebound or bereaved and for Joan Field in residential care at *Merrie Loots Farm* and Marie Moore in residential care at *Archers Court* in Hitchin.

Our thoughts and prayers are with them and their families at this time.

Change of Address

Marie Moore would like you to know that her new address is :-

4 Archers Court
Elmside Walk
Hitchin
Herts. SG5 1HB
Telephone : 01462 420393

Marie is settling in well to her lovely little flat and sends her love and best wishes to all her friends at Highlands.

Thank You

A really big thank you goes to Rev Teresa Rutterford for designing and creating the "Highlands Triptych" that was commissioned on Sunday 18th January and now hangs at the back of the church.

Please read the extract from Rev Teresa's sermon later in this issue and take time to study the hangings. They are really worth making the effort.

The Highlander

If anyone would like to receive *The Highlander* by email, in pdf format, please let me have your email address and I will add you to my list.

Past editions of *The Highlander* are already available to read on the church website at :- www.highlandsmethodist.org.uk

Frank : frank66thecroft@sky.com

'The Highlands Triptych'



It has been a great pleasure to design and make this set of Wall Hangings - 'The Highlands Triptych' as I have named them... And it was a joy to be able to join you at Highlands Methodist Church for the Covenant Service when they were dedicated and commissioned. Your Minister - Revd. Julia, asked me to allow the notes of my sermon to be printed in your magazine as many of you wanted to have them as they include the story of the Wall Hangings and explain the many symbols of our Faith in the stitching..... As any of you who are preachers know, even though we may write our sermons down, when we actually come to preach we find ourselves moved to add or change some of the things we planned to say. Those of you who attended the service will realise that the notes which follow represent most of what I said in my sermon, but that on the day I added to it!...

My thanks go to Credwyn, Jean and Frank for all their help in the planning and for so generously giving me transport to and from the Church..... Blessings to you all,

Revd. Teresa M. Rutterford

Covenant Service Highlands Methodist Church

18th January 2015 10.30 a.m.

Including the Dedication and Commissioning of Church Wall Hangings

OT - Ps. 139: 1-6, 13-18 NT - John 1: 43-51

Sermon - Labour of Love

It was a real privilege to be asked to design and make these Quilted Wall Hangings for you here at Highlands.....

.... For me it has been a real 'Labour of Love'

Introduction:

It seems to me that one definition of madness is to take beautiful lengths of material and then cut them into pieces just to sew them back together again! It seems a daft thing to do!

.....Sometimes - perhaps more often than not - we want to keep things as they are and not change or alter the way they have been..... We like familiarity..... But when Jesus came among us he was all about change! He took people such as Nathaniel and Philip - hardly the sort who would have been considered 'most likely to succeed' in society! - Just ordinary people... And he transformed them; changed them into powerful, charismatic leaders of the Church and strong in faith.

..... As daft as it may have sounded at first, unless these lengths of fabric had been cut up and changed, they could not have become what you see before you here...

It takes courage, commitment and confidence in God's presence and guidance for us to change, or even on occasion to abandon the things we have become used to and take up new challenges, projects, and lifestyle in order to fulfil God's calling to us..... We can feel uncertain - afraid even - we can feel insecure and sometimes this results in stagnation instead of growth....

... Our service today incorporates our Covenant service - a time when we renew our promises and vows to God in the light of his love and grace to us... We shall be saying that we want God to put us to what he wills, to let us have all things or let us have nothing.... We will be re-affirming that we freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to God's pleasure or disposal... .. How can we do this if we then cling to the things which He would have us change.. Whether they are about our church, our possessions or our lives...

Sometimes our calling means that our lives, like those of the first Disciples, are completely and dramatically changed beyond recognition Like these beautiful lengths of fabric which had to be completely cut apart in order to place them in a totally different way which has transformed them from all that they were, to become something new and, I hope you will I think, something even lovelier ...

1. So let me now draw your attention to them....

Central to everything we are as Christians, and everything we do, is the Cross - ...

So it is here in the centre (Show Wall Hangings)

... it is from the Cross - the empty Cross from Which we are gifted Life Eternal through Christ - it is from the Cross in the

central Cross Hanging, but how different they look when they are shaped and placed differently.....

.... The impact is different, they look different even though they are made up of exactly the same fabrics that you see when you look at the Cross....

When others look at us - even though we are different from one another - what will they see?.... Will they see Conflict or Harmony? Will they see Disapproval or Welcome? Judgement or Forgiveness? Meanness of spirit or Generosity of heart?

..... As different as we may be, other people should see exactly the same things in all of us because our mission/ our callings should all reflect the Cross, the Glory of the Risen Christ and the Love of our God who gave Himself for us, and our words should always reflect the teachings and example of Christ in the Scriptures

2. And so to the Scriptures In each side Hanging I have incorporated panels with verses of Scripture, and in the centre of each cross design is a piece of fabric from those Scripture panels.

- So what we have is the Cross in the Scriptures and the Scriptures in the Cross..... They are bound together and in the Wall Hangings each individual Cross is illuminated by a star behind - Guiding us, like the Wise Men, towards Jesus.

... But these pieces of fabric - cut apart and sewn together in a variety of ways — needed something even more before they could become truly complete ...

.. They needed the wadding to support and improve them - even though this wadding will never be seen, it has a crucial part to play in the whole..... and the wadding in its turn needed backing fabric to keep the wadding from losing its shape -

As Christians we know there are those who are at the forefront including those who teach, preach, evangelise and fulfil their callings given by God -

...Those like myself and your own minister Julia, our Local Preachers and so on ... And none of us can do this work - this 'Labour of Love' - for God without the support, encouragement and help of faithful Christians who may not be in the limelight - who may think themselves lowly or inadequate - who may never even be particularly noticed by others - but who nevertheless work tirelessly to maintain the Ministry, the Church, the numerous activities and Groups which take place here and in the Community.

.... And just as all these layers of the Wall Hangings then needed to be stitched - quilted - to bind each layer firmly together, so we as Christians

need to grow and deepen our Faith and Love in Christ to keep us firmly bound together...

3. ... So the final Quilting: I designed shapes of Doves to represent the Holy Spirit, Scallop Shells to represent St. James (the patron Saint of Pilgrims) as well as being a long used symbol of our Methodist Church, an open Bible for our Scriptures, and Hearts for the Love of God which is shown both in His Eternal Covenant towards us and our response of Love to God and one another -

These are the shapes you will see that I have stitched throughout each panel and these are the things which bind, not only these quilted hangings, but each of us: you and me:

- The Holy Spirit
- Our Calling to follow Christ
- Our Bible containing our Scriptures
- And our Love - freely and unconditionally given - eternal in its nature

.....

May we use this service and these symbols of our faith to

Bind ourselves more firmly

Love one another more deeply and

Follow Christ more closely

I pray that every work you undertake may be for you as this has been for me:

'A LABOUR OF LOVE' Amen

Revd. Teresa M. Rutterford

.....

A Prayer of Dedication of Wall Hangings

We dedicate these Wall hangings to the glory of God in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

May they be a visible sign to all who come to this Church of our commitment to live by the wisdom from above which is pure, peaceful, gentle, friendly, compassionate, good, free from prejudice and hypocrisy, and which produces a harvest of good deeds.

So, we also dedicate ourselves, as individuals and as a Church, to follow in the footsteps of Jesus by becoming peacemakers who plant in peace in order to produce a harvest of goodness.

May all our works be Labours of Love for Christ Jesus, our Saviour.

We ask this in the name of the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen



Dates to Remember

Craft Group

We are a very friendly group and any lady interested in Craft work is always welcome. We meet on Tuesday mornings during term time and are always glad to see new members.

MOTHs

We next meet on Tuesday 3rd February at *Affinity* for our annual meal. Please check the notice board in the Jubilee Room to sign up.

On 3rd March at 7.30 for 7.45 pm. Gordon Parkhill and Friend will tell us of the History of Salvation Army Farm. All are welcome.

Highlands Hobbies

We meet in February on 5th and 19th to pursue our various interests and crafts. Everyone is welcome. (Further details from Jean Edmonds or Credwyn Tolhurst)

Table Tennis

If you enjoy a game of table tennis come and have fun on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 10th February at 7.30 pm in the Church Hall.



Action for Children

Could the holders of home collection boxes for Action for Children please let Sylvia Cornwell have them during February for the annual opening. Thank you.

Daffodil Day

There is a coach going to Westminster Central Hall on Monday 2nd March for this years Daffodil Day. The cost is £10 which



includes a tip. If you would like to know more please speak to Credwyn as soon as possible.

Love is:-

"When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouth." Billy-4

~ "Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on shaving cologne and they go out and smell each other." Karl - 5

~ "Love is what makes you smile when you're tired." Terri - 4



Other Highlands Dates for Your Diary

Thursday 2nd April - Section Maundy Thursday Service

Circuit Events

The Circuit website :- " www.southendandleigh.org " also contains details of Circuit events, prayers, contacts and the Circuit Plan

Saturday 7th February — Circuit Prayer Breakfast at *The Elms* 8.30am

Tuesday 3rd March - "21st Century Faith for a 21st Century Mind"
Chalkwell Park Methodist Church at 7.30 pm

Alternative Worship

Belfairs Methodist Church - "Thirsty For ??" - 2nd Thursday
Next date — 12th February at 7.00 pm

+ + + +

Wesley Methodist Church - Creative Worship - 4th Tuesday
Next date - 24th February 2015 at 8.00pm

Saturday Coffee Mornings

7th February	Music at Highlands
14th February	Action for Children
21st February	
28h February	World Missions



Future Committee Meetings:-

Church Council - Monday 9th February at 8.00 pm

Pastoral Meeting - Tuesday 10th February at 10.00 am

Church Family Meeting - Monday 23rd February at 8.00 pm

Property & Finance Committee - Monday 16th March at 7.30 pm

Winter Night Shelter

The Saturday evening facility is this year being provided at Whittingham Avenue Methodist Church. The next evening for which we are responsible with Wesley is 7th February. Donations of warm clothing, hats, scarves, gloves etc are still required. If you feel that you would like to help in any way with this desperately needed facility please talk with Credwyn Tolhurst or Janet Watson.

Serving the Homeless/HARP

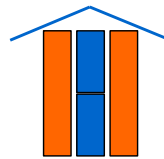
The popular Lunch at the Park View Suite proved very successful and raised over £600. Thank you for your support. Our next fund raising event will be a meal at "EAST" in Alexandra Road, Southend.

You are also welcome to our Annual General Meeting on 23rd March at Our Lady of Lourdes Church Hall. Your chance to hear all of that we have achieved during the past year and our plans for the future.

All are welcome. Full details of both these events later.

As Winter approaches the weather will get colder for those living on the streets and your gifts of food and clothing are warmly welcomed by HARP

Thank you once again for all your supportive prayers and the gifts at the back of the church.



Flashmob

It is amazing how many people will talk to you when you are made up in "fancy dress" as one of the wise men! It was a real eye opener to be part of the "Flashmob" presentation in Southend High Street just before Christmas. To some it was an amusement, some enjoyed joining in the carols and songs and for some it really was a moving event and appreciated as a real beginning of Christmas. Churches Together managed to get well over a 100 people to rehearsals on a Sunday afternoon and then to appear "spontaneously" to join in the presentation.

If you missed the report in the local paper it can still be seen on YouTube at : <http://bit.ly/sosflashmob2014> "Southend-on-Sea Christmas Flashmob"

Congratulations to Rev. Hannah Bucke, our Town Centre Minister for organising the event!

Christmas Starts with Christ !

Lent Course March 2015: The Long Road to Heaven

The Long Road to Heaven, is a Lent course based on the film *The Way*. Starring Martin Sheen as a bereaved father, this uplifting film observes a group of pilgrims walking *The Way of St James to Santiago de Compostela*. As it follows their journey of inner transformation, the course examines biblical accounts and images of salvation past, present and future and addresses the questions: What are we saved from? What are we saved for? Who can be saved? What do we have to do to be saved? How are we saved? The course will run as a section over 5 weeks. The first being an opportunity to watch the film, the following 3 for group study and discussion, with the 5th session being a reflection on the course at the Section Maundy Thursday Service.

There are a number of ways the course can be accessed :-

Tuesday 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th March 2pm Highlands

Tuesday 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th March 7.30pm Belfairs

And through the Wesley house group system (for details see the Notice Sheet)

The Section Maundy Thursday Service is on 2nd April at 8pm at Highlands Methodist Church

Rev Julia

Jan 2015



Time for closer Anglican-Methodist unity

The Church of England is being encouraged to "face head on" the task of closer Anglican - Methodist unity as Synod recently endorsed recommendations made in a report on the covenant between the two Churches. The report, presented to November's group of General Synod sessions jointly by the Bishop of Coventry, Christopher Cocksworth and Peter Howdle, Methodist Co-Chair of the Joint Implementation Commission, made specific recommendations supporting the ongoing work between the two Churches. The Archbishop of York welcomed the call to unity for mission in the subsequent debate, saying: "We need to be more committed to joyous evangelism where the gospel is being preached... Could we resolve it [unity between the Churches] so we can get on with the most important job: the re-evangelisation of England?"

Synod voted overwhelmingly to support the motion and the recommendations of the report.

Parish Pump

Clutter

My room is full of clutter
 And so much like my life
 As they're both packed full of memories
 Made special with my wife.
 They fill the shelves and cupboards -
 And make it hard to dust -
 And if one gets moved just
 Half-an-inch, the mark that's left is
 Just like a friend
 Who's there - then gone -
 To remind us of life's race
 Which always is best run
 With the help of God's own grace
 Now seen in the Man in everyone
 Who carries us along
 That we might cross the finishing line
 To hear God say, 'Well done'!

By Sam Doubtfire

Refugee Crisis in the Middle East

The present turmoil in the Middle East has produced the worst refugee crisis since the end of the Second World War - but in spite of the huge numbers involved, we are in danger of forgetting all about them.

That's the view of Jeremy Moodey, CEO of Embrace the Middle East, a Christian charity tackling poverty and injustice in the Middle East. Writing in his blog, Moody explains: "The Reuters news agency suggests that the number of displaced Syrians and Iraqis is now equivalent to the population of London. In fact, it is much worse. Greater London has a population of just over eight million. A closer analogy would be the combined populations of England's three biggest urban areas - London, Birmingham and Manchester."

Embrace is asking for funds to support local Christians throughout the Middle East to provide food, healthcare and education to refugees of all faiths and backgrounds trying to rebuild shattered homes and lives. The recent deaths of two Syrian babies from cold in a Lebanese border town highlights the appalling conditions faced by hundreds of thousands.

Moodey believes that, despite the desperate situation for the 20 million refugees struggling to survive in the Middle East today, there are signs of hope. "The region's small Christian communities are responding to the needs of refugees with a generosity of spirit and an abundance of compassion which is humbling, especially when one considers all the other pressures on Middle East Christians," he said. "The Anglican Diocese's Refuge Egypt project in Cairo, the Middle East Council of Churches' work among refugees in Gaza and the West Bank and the assistance offered by Lebanese Baptists and Catholics to Syrian refugees - these are just some of the incredible projects deserving of our help."

Serving the Community 7 Days a Week



Children and Young People

Toddlers Group, Monday 9.30-11.30a.m.

Rainbows Wednesday 4.00-5.00 p.m.

Brownies Wednesday: 5.30-7.00 p.m.

Cub Scouts Thursday: 5.45-7.15 p.m.

Scouts Thursday: 7.30 p.m.

Rangers Alternate Thursdays 7.30 p.m.

Guides Friday: 7.00 p.m.

School Term-Time Only

Highlands Pre-School Mon - Fri: 9.15 - 12 noon

Fellowship Groups

Housegroups meet on Wednesdays.

Services to the Community

Regular Sunday Worship

Midweek Communion at 9.00 a.m. :-

1st Wednesday Wesley Methodist Church

2nd Wednesday Belfairs Methodist Church

4th Wednesday New Road Methodist Church

Tuesday Morning Prayer Service at 9.00 a.m.

Coffee mornings: Saturday from 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon in the Church

Coffee is also available to visitors to the Craft Group on Tuesdays and Hobbies on Thursdays

Traidcraft Stall : Sunday of Parade Service (some goods also available at Coffee Mornings)

Social and Recreational

Craft Group Tuesday 10.00 a.m.-12 noon (*Sept.-July*)

Badminton Club Monday 8.00 p.m.

Hobbies 1st & 3rd Thursday 10.00 a.m. - 12.00p.m.

Ladies Badminton Friday 10.00 a.m.

Short Mat Bowls Friday (*Oct to April*) 2.15 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.

MOTHs (*Meet on Tuesdays at Highlands*) 1st Tuesday 7.30 p.m.

Table Tennis 2nd Tuesday 7.30 p.m.

Adult Art Classes Thursday 2 - 4 p.m.

Children's Art Club Thursday 4 - 5 p.m.

Brush Strokes Art Group Saturday 9.15 a.m. - 12.15 p.m.

The Badminton Players meet quarterly for play readings.