

The Highlander

December 2015

Peace on Earth !



Sunday Worship in December 2015

6th Advent 2	9.00 10.30	Holy Communion - Rev Julia Monaghan Morning Worship - Maureen Gutteridge
13th Advent 3	10.30	Parade and Toy Service - Baptism Rev Teresa Rutterford with Worship Leaders
20th Advent 4	10.30 4.00	Holy Communion - Rev Julia Monaghan Carol Service by Candlelight - Rev Julia Monaghan
27th	11.00	Section United Service at Wesley - Jane Fulford

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

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**Highlands Methodist Church
Hospitality in the Midst of our Community**

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Church Stewards	Ros Bryant	478631
	Lesley/Andrew Hyde	473111
	Jean/Frank Edmonds	525250
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All items for the **January 2016** 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 13th December**. Preferably, items may be emailed to frank66thecroft@sky.com *The Highlander* will be ready for distribution on **Sunday 20th December 2015**.



Message from your Minister:-

Leave the rest to God



The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light. Those who once lived in gloom, now have light shining upon them. A child is born to us! He is called, "Wonderful," "Counselor," "Mighty God," "Eternal Father," and "Prince of Peace."
Isaiah 9: 2, 6

I write this letter with snow promised on Sunday and the shops now full of mince pies, Christmas cake and tinsel, and my attention is drawn once more to carol services and Christingle making.

At this time of year, Christians celebrate Jesus as the "*child born to us,*" who is our light. Yet, I reflect that Jesus born as a baby could do nothing by himself. He needed to be fed, clothed, and protected. As a baby, he was simply a child of God. During Advent it is our practice to contemplate our spiritual temperature and to think upon what it means to live a moral and giving lifestyle. When we are challenged with our own shortcomings and character flaws, our discipleship calls us to hand these things to God, who we trust will transform them into glory.

You see, our call is not to be the light, but to be God's glory. We are to allow the light of God to shine through us, without blocking this glory through anxiety and preoccupation. In a way, with Jesus, we are to be at peace with our helplessness and insignificance and make ourselves available to let the light shine through us.

This is something, which I think Rev Hannah has been embracing in her town centre ministry; and reflecting on at the Chaplaincy Course, recently held at Highlands. A form of spirituality and mission, that makes ones self available to God for conversation with others, but then leaves the deep spiritual work to God, confident that Jesus is the light and not ourselves.

P.T.O.

Message from your Minister continued:-

There is a life-giving, reprioritising truth here to be embraced, as we busy ourselves in our preparations for Christmas and within our churches. We are not *the light*, what a relief; we are merely to reflect it, being the glory of God and then leave the rest to Him.

Spiritual Exercise.

In your preparations for Christmas, consider and be at peace with both your insignificance and glory as a child of God. Then ask yourself the following questions.

- Where do you experience the light or energy of God in your life?
- How might you try to multiply your God given opportunities to allow the light of God to shine through you and reach others?

In prayer, imagine yourself as a shepherd before Jesus at the manger. Allow the light of God's glory shining around and through the child Jesus, to penetrate your soul. Silently sit, warmed by the light and energy of God's overflowing love and leave the rest to him. Amen

Prayers for Christmas**God of gold, we seek to reflect your glory:**

the richness that transforms our drabness into colour,
and brightens our dullness with vibrant light;
your wonder and joy at the heart of all life.

God of incense, we offer you our prayer:

our spoken and unspeakable longings, our questioning of truth,
our search for your mystery deep within.

God of myrrh, we cry out to you in our suffering:

the pain of all our rejections and bereavements,
our baffled despair at undeserved suffering,
our rage at continuing injustice;
and we embrace you, God-with-us,
in our wealth, in our yearning, in our anger and loss
that your light might shine through us. Amen

Prayer by Jan Berry: *Bread of Tomorrow*

Welcome Christ, welcome baby Jesus,

We are ready for you now.

Here are our hearts – make us your manger

Here are our lives – make us your Bethlehem

Here is your church – make us your Body.

Welcome Jesus Christ.



Prayer by Michaela Youngson: *Making the Colours Sing*

Rev Julia December 2015



Prayer

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

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

Congratulations

We send our best wishes to Rev Teresa and Peter Rutterford on the arrival of their first grandchild. Hattie Florence weighed in at 6lbs 15 oz on 19th November. A first child for son Toby and his wife Kelly. Our love and prayers are with them all.

Congratulations to Doreen Gray on being presented with the Joe Dorado Award for her work in the Mencap shop in Southend since 1998. The award was made by the Mayor of Southend who congratulated her on her outstanding achievements.

Greetings

Mary and Bruce Barter would like to wish all their friends at Highlands a Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year and advise that they will not be sending Christmas Cards this year.

Flower Rota for December 2015

<u>Date</u>	<u>Donated by</u>	<u>In memory of</u>	<u>Arranged by</u>
6th	Church		
13th	Frank & Jean Edmonds	Family	Jean Edmonds
20th	Jennifer Courtenay	Parents	Mary Barter
27th		Section Service at Wesley	



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.

10th Leigh Rainbows & Brownies

Wish to thank everyone at Highlands for their support during 2015 and wish them a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Highlands Hobbies

To finish a happy and productive year our only meeting for December will be our Christmas Party and Lunch on Thursday 10th December from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm in the Coffee Lounge. We look forward to seeing you all.

(Contact : *Jean Edmonds* 525250)



MOTHs

MOTHs now meeting at 2.30 in the afternoon will continue on Tuesday 1st December. There will be Carols, Songs and Readings for Christmas together with a visit from Father Christmas who will collect gifts for the Women's Refuge. All are welcome.

ABRSM Music Exams

ABRSM end-of-year exam period continues until Dec12th. We are still seeking volunteers to act as stewards for a couple of slots. Any help, even if only for an hour or two will be most welcome. The list is in the Jubilee Room.



Future Committee Meetings:-

- Property & Finance Committee -
Monday 30th November at 8.00 pm
- Church Council -
Thursday 11th February at 8.00 pm

Other Highlands Dates for Your Diary

Friday 11th December - Mencap Concert at 730pm

Circuit Events

Wesley Panto - "Cinderella"
4th and 5th December at Wesley Church Hall
Energise Puppet Christmas Show
19th December at Belfairs

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

Alternative Worship

Belfairs Methodist Church - "Thirsty For ??" - 2nd Thursday
Next date — 10th December at 7.00 pm
+ + + +
Wesley Methodist Church - Informal Worship - 4th Tuesday
Next date - 22nd December at 8.00pm

Christmas at Highlands 2015

Sunday 13th December - Parade and Toy Service



Sunday 20th December - Carols by Candlelight Service at 4.00 pm
Rev Julia Monaghan

Christmas Eve - Christingle Service at 5.00 pm
Rev Julia Monaghan

Christmas Eve - Midnight Communion 11.15 pm (at Wesley)

Christmas Day - Morning Service at Highlands
Pamela Smith

Sunday 27th December - Section Service at Wesley

Coffee Mornings

5th December	Music at Highlands
12th December	World Mission
19th December	Church

Serving the Homeless/HARP/Winter Night Shelter

Everyone is invited to Serving the Homeless popular "Songs for Christmas", this year to be held at Our Lady of Lourdes on Friday 18th December at 7.00pm. There will be the usual retiring collection with mince pies and mulled wine to follow.

Sunday lunch at the Park View Suite in Chalkwell Park has been booked for Sunday 7th February. Further details to follow.

In the present economic climate more people are finding the need to use the services of HARP and the local foodbanks. Please check out the deals in the local supermarkets to see whether you are able to make a contribution to stocks. Thank you.

The Circuit appeal to raise funds for showers at Whittingham Avenue has been so successful that the showers have been installed and ready for use. Thank you for your support.

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



Are you ready boots?

On the more distant horizon, we would like to organise a week of pilgrimage on the famous Camino de Santiago in north west Spain. Probably aiming at the spring of 2017. Again if you would be interested, please get in touch with Andrew on 473111.



An Opportunity to help

We are looking for someone to help on a one off basis when lettings have been made and Les Davis is unable to unlock the premises for the outside hirer. If you feel that you could help or require more information please talk with Les Davis or any of the Stewards. Thank you.



Eddi's Service (A.D. 687)

EDDI, priest of St. Wilfrid
In his chapel at Manhood End,
Ordered a midnight service
For such as cared to attend.

But the Saxons were keeping
Christmas,
And the night was stormy as well.
Nobody came to service,
Though Eddi rang the bell.

'Wicked weather for walking,'
Said Eddi of Manhood End.
'But I must go on with the service
For such as care to attend.

The altar-lamps were lighted, –
An old marsh-donkey came,
Bold as a guest invited,
And stared at the guttering flame.

The storm beat on at the windows,
The water splashed on the floor,
And a wet, yoke-weary bullock
Pushed in through the open door.

'How do I know what is greatest,
How do I know what is least?
That is My Father's business,'
Said Eddi, Wilfrid's priest.

But – three are gathered together –
Listen to me and attend.
I bring good news, my brethren!
Said Eddi of Manhood End.

And he told the Ox of a Manger
And a Stall in Bethlehem,
And he spoke to the Ass of a Rider,
That rode to Jerusalem.

They steamed and dripped in the
chancel,
They listened and never stirred,
While, just as though they were
Bishops,
Eddi preached them The Word,

Till the gale blew off on the marshes
And the windows showed the day,
And the Ox and the Ass together
Wheeled and clattered away.

And when the Saxons mocked him,
Said Eddi of Manhood End,
'I dare not shut His chapel
On such as care to attend.'

*Seen in Salisbury Cathedral and submitted
by Andrew Hyde*

Smile Lines

Let's Play

Four-year-old to her two-year-old
sister: "Let's play Christmas. I'll be
Santa Claus and you can be a present
and I'll give you away."

Misquoted Carols

Deck the Halls with Buddy Holly

We three kings of porridge and tar

On the first day of Christmas my tulip
gave to me



Methodist
relief and
development



At Christmas we celebrate the coming of Jesus, God's extraordinary gift to us. It is a season of thanksgiving, as we reflect on our wonderful God, who loved the world so much that he gave us his only Son. A God who offered a practical response to a broken world in need of restoration.

All We Can is the Methodist relief and development partner which helps people to find solutions to poverty and become all that they can. It is inspired by Jesus' command to love our neighbour and is grounded in the Methodist tradition of social justice and going to those who are in greatest need. *All We Can* does this by investing in partnerships with talented local people who hold a vision and a drive to improve quality of life and create positive, long-term change in the communities that they serve.

As a church we will be devoting our collections over Christmas to this good cause.

Be Kind to Clergy this Christmas

One of the most thoughtful presents you could give this Christmas might simply be to be sensitive to all our local clergy and their families as they embark on this, the busiest time of the church year. The vast majority of clergy are conscientious and very hard-working, wanting to make the most of every opportunity for Christian witness and celebration that Christmas provides. You can help: they will value your practical support and prayers – and Christmas cheer!

Debt Despair - Don't go there this year

Christian charities are warning people not to get into debt this Christmas, so that they will not be vulnerable if interest rates and/or energy bills rise next year.

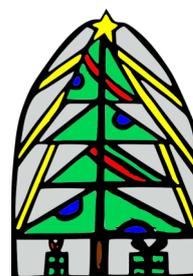
Instead, Christians Against Poverty urges people to carefully plan what they will spend, to ask relatives for help with children's presents, and to enjoy all the low-cost things on offer – the lights in town, get-togethers, making mince pies, playing family board games, and seeing the kids in their school nativity.

Parish Pump

Highlands Advent Calendar

We are celebrating Christmas in the community this year, with an Advent Calendar using shop, business and house windows, along Thames Drive and London Road. From the 1st December a new window will be lit, until 24 windows are shining. Come and be part of the fun by picking up a competition form to identify which Christmas character is found in which window.

Application forms are available from andrewhyde@aol.com and should be returned to him by 23rd December. The winner will be pulled out of the hat at the 5pm Christmas Eve Christingle Service, at Highlands Methodist Church, Sutherland Boulevard. Whether it has been the nativity trail or searching for lost sheep, the Highlands' community always enjoys coming together to celebrate this joyful time of year.



Changing Patters of Worship for 2016

The stewards and church council have been giving some thought as to how to make worship at Highlands sustainable for the coming year, recognizing the pressure on resources for organists and stewards. A thoughtful discussion took place at Church Council on the 8th October and the following plan will be implemented from January 2016. On the 1st Sunday in the month, there will be a 9.30am informal worship service at Highlands followed by breakfast. Transport will then be available, to facilitate attendance at the 11am Communion Service at Wesley, where Rev Julia will be presiding. Where there is a 5th Sunday in the month, worship will also be at Wesley. Worship at Highlands on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sunday of the month, will remain the same pattern as before. Church Council viewed this mixed economy, of participating in some services together and some services individually, as a positive way forward in sustaining the valued community at Highlands. Wesley church council have heard these plans and offer a warm welcome to their friends in Christ.

Rev Julia

December 2015

Serving the Community 7 Days a Week



Children and Young People

Toddlers Group, Monday	9.30-11.30a.m.	Margaret Wood e-mail contact :- highlandstoddlers@hotmail.co.uk	557512
Rainbows Wednesday	4.00-5.00 p.m.	Karen Packer	474151
Brownies Wednesday:	5.30-7.00 p.m.	Dilys Haddow	710207
Cub Scouts Thursday:	5.45-7.15 p.m.	Ros Miller	557399
Scouts Thursday:	7.30 p.m.	Sally Monk	558857
Rangers Alternate Thursdays	7.30 p.m.	Jacqui Hendle	557147
Guides Friday:	7.00 p.m.	Jacqui Hendle	557147
<i>School Term-Time Only</i>			
Highlands Pre-School Mon - Fri:	9.15 - 12 noon	Clara Mintern	715880

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 : Catalogue available for orders. Various items on sale at rear of church.

Social and Recreational

Craft Group	Tuesday	10.00 a.m.-12 noon (<i>Sept.-July</i>)	
Badminton Club	Monday	8.00 p.m.	Sarah 01702 476009 or Sophia 07796 265676
Hobbies	1st & 3rd Thursday	10.00 a.m. - 12.00p.m.	Jean 01702 525250
Ladies Badminton	Friday	10.00 a.m.	Dilys 01702 710207
MOTHs (<i>Meet on Tuesdays at Highlands</i>)	1st Tuesday	2.30 p.m.	
Adult Art Classes	Thursday	2 - 4 p.m.	Susan 07875 079739
Children's Art Club	Thursday	4 - 5 p.m.	or 01702 551025
Brush Strokes Art Group	Saturday	9.15 a.m. - 12.15 p.m.	Beverley 01277 627043

The Badminton Players meet quarterly for play readings. Contact: David Gare (711013).