



# The **HIGHLANDER**


## March 2025

The monthly newsletter of Highlands Methodist Church, Leigh on Sea

These are services at Highlands for March 2025

10:30 am Sun 2nd	Morning Worship Café Church	Jane Fulford
10:30 am Sun 9 <sup>th</sup>	Morning Worship Communion	Rev Heather Simmons
4:00 pm Sun 16 <sup>th</sup>	All-Age Worship & Praise See Page 17	Matt Bunkall
10:30 am Sun 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Morning Worship	Rev Heather Simmons
10:30 am Sun 30 <sup>th</sup>	Morning Worship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United Service here at Highlands</li> <li>• Parade</li> <li>• Mothering Sunday</li> </ul>	Rev Heather Simmons



 Highlands (Leigh) Methodist Church

[www.highlandsmethodist.org.uk](http://www.highlandsmethodist.org.uk)

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.

**These are services at  
The Fishermen's Chapel for March 2025.**

9:30 am Sun 2nd	Morning Worship Communion	Rev Heather Simmons
7:30 pm Sun 9 <sup>th</sup>	Gospel Service	Rev Heather Simmons
11:00 am Sun 16 <sup>th</sup>	Morning Worship Parade	Rev Heather Simmons
7:30 pm Sun 16 <sup>th</sup>	Evening Worship Anchored	
7:30 pm Sun 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Evening Worship Mindfulness	Rev Heather Simmons
10:30 am Sun 30 <sup>th</sup>	Morning Worship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United Service at Highlands</li> <li>• Parade</li> <li>• Mothering Sunday</li> </ul>	Rev Heather Simmons





## **Highlands Methodist Church**

### **Hospitality in the Midst of our Community**

All telephone numbers are '01702' unless stated

Minister	Rev Heather Simmons <a href="mailto:heather.simmons@methodist.org.uk">heather.simmons@methodist.org.uk</a>	07879 232231
Secretary to Church Council	David Watson	557702
Minutes Secretary	Vanessa Mayes	473787
Church Stewards	Andrew Hyde Donald Mayes Lesley Hyde Jean Edmonds	473111 473787 473111 801517
All Age Community Builder	Matt Bunkall <a href="mailto:mattbunkall@gmail.com">mattbunkall@gmail.com</a>	07305 769086
Church Treasurer	Steve Watson	07543 905641
Children's Worker	Ros Bryant	478631
Pastoral Co-ordinator	Jean Edmonds	801517
Church Flowers	Jean Edmonds	801517
Lettings/Use of Premises	Sam Watson <a href="mailto:highlandslettings@gmail.com">highlandslettings@gmail.com</a>	07510 808519

## **From Your Minister**

Dear Church Family,

How are you? I ask because I always like to hear from you. My calling to presbyteral ministry is to word, sacrament and pastoral care. As I enter into each of these roles, I feel guided, fulfilled and a greater sense of relationship with God. Pastoral care is something, I have heard, that can get pushed to the back when a minister's schedule becomes full. For me it needs to be at the front. I can't bring God's word to you or preside at sacramental services fully if I don't know you or your needs.



I am delighted to say that I have passed my Probationary period. Thus, the call on my time for form-filling and regular meetings with advisory groups will be much less, so I look forward to more time being with you and in the church community. On a celebratory note, there will be a coach going to Telford on 29 June for those who wish to see Rev Agnes Sam and me be ordained!

In getting to know what you need from me, you preferred that I spend time in the community rather than run a Lent Course. So, I have organised that I will take a short service on Shrove Tuesday (4 March at 12:00 noon) to lead us into Lent, with some suggested reflections and pancakes. At this event I will also invite anyone to chat to me about becoming a member at Highlands. After this I will visit members, local shops, neighbours and groups that meet in our Highlands church to get to know you all better.

Although Lent is a time of reflection and preparation, March is also a

full month for celebratory services. On the 16 March from 3:30 pm to 6:00 pm we will again have a "Third" Service led by our Community Builder Matt Bunkall. This will be a vibrant worship time with supper included for all. This month it will be jacket potatoes and toppings! Come hungry!

On the 23 March at 10:30 am we are delighted to be hosting Mencap's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with the Showstoppers helping to lead us in worship. Refreshments provided afterwards too.

Last, but not least, on 30 March at 10:30 am, we have Mothering Sunday Parade and United Service, a really joyful all-age service. Bring along your Mum to be spoiled and celebrated or come to remember your Mum and give thanks.

Which brings me to some sad news - we say goodbye to a special "mum" who was a member of Highlands for over 50 years. Our dear Joan Ford went to glory on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. She is fondly remembered at Highlands. Our prayers and thoughts are with her family and friends at this time.



So, brothers and sisters in Christ, we are going to be in Lent very shortly and the Methodist Church has provided some wonderful resources for us all... the theme is **Soul Food**.

In the wilderness, Jesus reminded us that people don't live by bread alone. Each week during Lent, we'll reflect on what sustains us, based on the lectionary Gospel passage for Sunday.

### **What's available for individuals?**

Methodism is offering 40 daily deliveries of spiritual nourishment through Lent, delivered to your email inbox. Here's what to expect each day if you sign up:

- ✦ **Monday:** A recipe video using easily available ingredients. We encourage you to cook and share this with your community—perhaps as a Sunday meal after church!
- ✦ **Tuesday:** A Bible study video, with discussion on questions from the week’s Gospel passage.
- ✦ **Wednesday:** A craft video, perfect for doing at home or in a group setting. You can also find craft resources by following these links:

[Lent through to Easter](#)

[Hands holding heart](#)

[Women witnesses](#)

If you are reading this in hard copy, you will need to visit the Highlands Facebook pages where an electronic copy is freely available. This will give instant access to craft materials.

- ✦ **Thursday:** An inspiring story about how the Methodist Church and our partners work to ensure nourishment and care for all.
- ✦ **Friday:** A reflection on a classic soul song, revealing the good news within its lyrics.
- ✦ **Saturday:** *Soul Food Saturday*, our magazine-style video show, featuring a panel sharing weekly highlights and showcasing photos from across the church. We’d love to see what you’re up to during Lent!
- ✦ **Sunday:** No email, but we invite you to gather in worship, reflecting on the theme as you praise God together.

## **Sign up for our Lent reflections**

Daily deliveries of spiritual nourishment through Lent, straight to your inbox. All you need to do is visit

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/soul-food/>  
and sign up for free!

As we navigate this world together as the body of Christ, I come back to scripture:

*Be completely humble and gentle, be patient, bearing with one another in love [Ephesians 4:2 NIV].*

Let us do this as we get to know each other more deeply and see each other as God's sees us.

God bless,  
Rev'd Heather ( Rev Hev!) x

## **Diary Dates**

- **To prepare for Lent** Reverend Heather will lead a 30-minute service, immediately after Tuesday Chatter (i.e. about 12:00 noon on 4 March). All our welcome, member or non-member, or from another church or of no faith. Scotch pancakes and fruit will be offered.
- **All-Age Worship & Praise** On Sunday 16 March we'll continue trialling a new way of 'doing church' led again by Matt Bunkall. We'll incorporate feedback from the first event on 16 February. If you have any feedback (or ideas!) you haven't yet shared, do please get in touch with Matt on 07305 769086. Look forward to seeing you there – and you're welcome to bring a friend.
- **Easter 2025:** an exclusive preview.  
Palm Sunday will be on **13 April**. You need to know these dates:  
Maundy Thursday (17/04) Last Supper at Wesley 7:00 pm.  
Good Friday (18/04) United Service at Wesley 10:30 am.  
Easter Sunday (20/04) Communion here at Highlands 10:30

am, and Circuit Service of Easter Prayer & Praise, at Belfairs 6:30 pm

- **A District Synod** is to take place on Saturday 13 September 2025 at Belfairs Academy from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. The organisers need volunteers for different roles. If you could help, contact Jess in the circuit, especially if you have a first aid qualification (though it's not essential)
- A **Flower-Arranging** morning will be held by Hobbies with Jean, including Easter baskets, on 3 April. All are very welcome
- You are all invited to this year's **Annual Lent Lecture** at Billericay Methodist Church – Sunday 9 March at 6:00 pm. This year's lecture title is: *'The Bible and People of Other Faiths: A Personal and Theological Journey'* and will be given by Dr Elizabeth Harris, honorary Senior Research Fellow within the University of Birmingham. RSVP to [moses.agyam@methodist.org.uk](mailto:moses.agyam@methodist.org.uk)
- Finally, mark in the **Hobbies Easter Spring Fayre** which takes place on Saturday 5 April, 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. You can choose from a beautiful selection of Easter cards, gifts, floral baskets, raffle and much more. Delicious refreshments will be served. So please do come along to share friendship and fellowship with others. All money raised is for Highlands.

Singing Songs Above Leigh on Sea  
**THE HIGHLANDS**  
May Our Hope Echo Far & Wide

**Our Community Service**  
On the 3rd Sunday  
of the Month

At Highlands  
Methodist Church  
Leigh On Sea

**3.30pm - Open**  
Drinks / Chat / Activities

**4pm - Start**  
Celebrating Local  
Community Inspirations

**4.30pm - 5pm - Community Meal**  
Sharing Life with Thankfulness & Food

**5pm**  
Reflections on the Whole  
Community of LIFE

**5.30pm - Finish**  
Chat over Treats / Help Tidy Up

**6pm - Close**

Activities Before and After Service  
**Art & Craft Games**  
Music  
Quiet Spaces  
Free Time

Open from 3.30pm - 6pm

Help with meal Portions by letting us know you are hoping to come along. Message Matt on 07305769086

**ALL AGES WELCOME**





**We pray for** our friends who are ill, housebound, or bereaved and for those in residential care: particularly *Sheena Hunter* in *Westerley Methodist Care Home*, and *Peggy Gosling*. Our thoughts and prayers are with them and their families.

We **pray especially for** a number of church members afflicted by long-term illnesses and short-term accidents or recovering from surgery; may God grant in each case a speedy recovery.

We send our **condolences** to family - especially Geoff, Pauline and Ian - and friends of Joan Ford who has died at the remarkable age of 96 after some time spent in care.

**Congratulations** to Lesley Hyde, who becomes a grandmother for the fourth time. As I write this, Lliwen Fflur is two weeks old, starting to put on weight and younger sister to brothers Iolo and Osian.

We **ask for a blessing** on Frank & Jean Edmonds as they move house after many years in Woodside. An exciting but doubtless exhausting time for them. Happily, they have only moved literally round the corner to a more manageable residence in Park View Drive. Their land line has changed to 801517 but all other contacts are the same.



## **Snippets**

### **Highlands Toddlers**

Please come and support Highlands Toddlers at their Coffee Morning on Saturday 8 March, 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. All are welcome as they are for **Coffee**, every Saturday at 10:00 am in the Lounge.

### **Mencap Showstoppers**

Full details of the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday party are again on page 18.

### **Hobbies.**

We meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays of the month from 10:00 am until 12:00 noon. The cost is £3 including refreshments. On the 6 and 20 March we will continue with our theme for Easter and make die-cut découpage cards; also some designs on Vellum.

### **Games.**

This month we will meet at 10:30 until 12:30 on Thursday 13 March. All are welcome for tea, coffee, biscuits and chat to do puzzles or games or just come for the company.

### **Message from Roger**

Following changes to our car park, we have dark red used paving blocks in good condition for sale at Thundersley Methodist. 50p per block (approx 250) in total. Contact Roger Thomas at TMC.

### **ECO Church**

Congratulations to all of us on the attainment of a bronze award. More next month, including information on the birds and bees...

## **SVP (St Vincent de Paul)**

Do you ever wonder where supermarket food goes as it nears its 'sell-by' date? You may have noticed the yellow stickers that tell you there is a bargain to be had, always assuming you can use the food quite quickly.



There is however a scheme called FareShare that works with supermarkets to redistribute surplus food to charities that turn it into meals. For example, in 2023/24, 56,000 tonnes of food were redistributed free to 8,000 local charities across the UK. Locally, Tesco and Waitrose both take part. Lesley and I have for some weeks been picking up from these stores in Southend – a van load every Thursday evening. It is then resold at the Friday market, or frozen, or used.

Some strange things are handed out (anyone for blinis, quails' eggs and hasselback potatoes?) but overwhelmingly it's used. The photo shows Lesley accepting part of the weekly Waitrose consignment. You can find out more at <https://fareshare.org.uk/>

## **Puzzle of the Month<sup>1</sup>**

An easy maths problem. Remember to read the question...

$$A + A + A = 30$$

$$B + B + B = 15$$

$$C + C + C = 45$$

$$A + B \times C = ?$$

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<sup>1</sup> Solution page 16

## **From the Editor**

*Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. [Matthew 6:26 NIV]*

I'm tempted, when I read this passage, to point out an exception. Here in Leigh on Sea it is many of us, not our heavenly Father, who feed the birds of the air. But perhaps I need to think this through. Who is it that motivates us to feed the birds of the air? Exactly.

This is especially true in the spring. The starlings, sparrows, robin, blue tits and occasional goldcrest are all voracious feeders. (And don't mention the expanding waistlines of our local pigeons) But these birds need the calories. It's winter now and shortly spring, with a nest to build, a mate to find and a family to raise. So, I don't begrudge them a feed, even when they clear out a half-coconut filled with suet and seed in 15 minutes flat.

*...not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. [Matthew 6:29 NIV]*



Though tiny, this goldcrest is a handsome beast and my goodness he knows it. But my favourite spring bird is a very plain light brown chap who spends the winter in West Africa before migrating to SE England (eg Essex) in the third week of April. He is the national bird of Croatia, Iran and Ukraine, and probably lots more. Liszt, Beethoven and Stravinsky (a whole opera) have written music that tries to imitate this bird. Keats, Milton, Coleridge and Swinburne have all paid tribute in poetry.

The bird of course is the nightingale, and he (it's only the males)



sings at night until he finds a mate. His beauty is in his song, not his plumage. Occasionally he can be heard in Belton Hills, but the best place in Essex is Fingringhoe Wick, which stays open late for a short period in April, and houses 1% of the UK population. Details from [www.essexwt.org.uk/nature-reserves/fingringhoe](http://www.essexwt.org.uk/nature-reserves/fingringhoe) or telephone [01206 729678](tel:01206729678)

I have above briefly mentioned Ukraine. I am not avoiding the subject, (or Gaza for that matter) but I will just say that I have confidence that the God of truth in His wisdom and power will bring about a just and righteous solution. Perhaps not today, perhaps not tomorrow, but soon, and for the rest of eternity. We need to remember the words of a simple Jewish girl:



*He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.* [Luke 1:52 NIV]

What can we do? Probably the best and only contribution we can make as Christians is to support those who clearly bear no blame for what's happening – refugees, the bereaved, those injured by bombing...

At the same time, we should be wary of joining the clamour, whether we agree with it or not

*Do not judge, or you too will be judged.* [Matthew 7:1 NIV]

This is never an easy rule to follow, but the past shows that ultimately it works.

*Ananias*

## **A note from Frank & Jenny**

As we have now 'stepped down' from over 20 years of leading worship – such a privilege, we wish to thank everyone for their prayers, support and encouragement over those years. We feel humbled by the gifts to us, and looking forward to sharing the 'Maison Noir' vouchers with Jean and Peter who have been behind us in all we have done. Thank you, Frank and Jenny x

## **Poem of the Month**

**Spring** by Christina Rossetti

Frost-locked all the winter,  
Seeds, and roots, and stones of fruits,  
What shall make their sap ascend  
That they may put forth shoots?  
Tips of tender green,  
Leaf, or blade, or sheath;  
Telling of the hidden life  
That breaks forth underneath,  
Life nursed in its grave by Death.

Blows the thaw-wind pleasantly,  
Drips the soaking rain,  
By fits looks down the waking sun:  
Young grass springs on the plain;  
Young leaves clothe early hedgerow  
trees;  
Seeds, and roots, and stones of fruits,  
Swollen with sap, put forth their shoots;  
Curled-headed ferns sprout in the lane;  
Birds sing and pair again.

There is no time like Spring,  
When life's alive in everything,  
Before new nestlings sing,

*Christina Rossetti (1830 - 1894), who has featured here previously, was a poet who wrote romantic, devotional, and children's poems. She is perhaps best known for In the Bleak Midwinter, a poem that became a much-loved Christmas carol, best known in settings by Gustav Holst and Harold Darke. This is her description of spring, with an underlying theme of the cycle of life.*

Before cleft swallows speed their journey back  
Along the trackless track,--  
God guides their wing,  
He spreads their table that they nothing lack,--  
Before the daisy grows a common flower,  
Before the sun has power  
To scorch the world up in his noontide hour.

There is no time like Spring,  
Like Spring that passes by;  
There is no life like Spring-life born to die,--  
Piercing the sod,  
Clothing the uncouth clod,  
Hatched in the nest,  
Fledged on the windy bough,  
Strong on the wing:  
There is no time like Spring that passes by,  
Now newly born, and now  
Hastening to die.

## **Dining In**

**Lime & Ginger Ice Cream.** You can't beat a simple but delicious dessert. It's very easy to and does not need an ice-cream maker.

### **Ingredients**

175g condensed milk.

2 unwaxed limes - juice and zest.

5 balls stem ginger, chopped...

...and 75ml syrup from the jar.

300 ml double cream.

Simply put all ingredients in a blender, add a pinch of salt if you like, and whizz for 2 mins. Alternatively, a bowl and stick blender will do. Pour into a suitable container and freeze for at least 4 hours. Best enjoyed within 7 days.



## Humour Corner

A few mistakes from similar publications to this, just to show that others make them as well:

- Due to the Rector's illness, Wednesday's healing services will be discontinued until further notice.
- The Rev. Merriwether spoke briefly, much to the delight of the audience.
- Applications are now being accepted for 2-year-old nursery workers.
- The pastor will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing, "Break Forth into Joy."
- Next Sunday Mrs. Vinson will be soloist for the morning service. The pastor will then speak on "It's a Terrible Experience."
- Barbara remains in the hospital and is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Pastor Nelson's sermons.
- During the absence of our pastor, we enjoyed the rare privilege of hearing a good sermon when J.F. Stubbs supplied our pulpit [address].
- Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

## Puzzle of the Month Solution

The question asks for  $A + B \times C$ . You should have worked out that  $A = 10$ ,  $B = 5$  and  $C = 15$ . So what is  $10 + 5 \times 15$ ?

Well, if you wrote **30**, you've misread the instruction and given us  $10 + 5 + 15$ . If you wrote **225**, you've given us  $(10 + 5) \times 15$ , overlooking BODMAS<sup>2</sup> which gives priority of operations. M for multiplication comes before A for addition.

Well done if you got **85**.

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<sup>2</sup> Brackets Operators Division Multiplication Addition Subtraction.



**The 3rd Sunday– March 16<sup>th</sup> 2025**

## **Theme & Food**



- **Open at 3.30pm for pre-service activities confirm meal choices**
  - **The Community Service is 4pm – 5.30pm meal included**
  - **Close at 6pm**

**Community:  
A Gift for the Lonely  
&  
The Big Family of Life**

### **Menu**

Jacket Potatoes & Cheesy Chips



Pancakes



**Southend Mencap 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Church Service**

**Highlands Methodist Church  
Sutherland Boulevard, Leigh-On-Sea**

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025**

**10.30am**

Special church service including a short performance  
by our Showstoppers Project students.

Teas, coffees and cake will then be served after the event.

Places will be reserved for Highlands  
members but please arrive by about 10:15



## **SERVING the COMMUNITY 7 Days a Week**

### **Children and Young People**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Scouts	Thu 7:30 to 9:00 pm	Jack Reeve 07847 355859
Cubs	Thu 5:45 to 7:15 pm	Jordan Rutherford 07804 065933
Rainbows	Wed 4:00 to 5:00 pm	Julie Griffiths 07834 321724
Brownies	Wed 5:30 to 7:00 pm	Teresa Thompson 07809 219729
Guides	Fri 7:00 to 9:00 pm	Jacqui Hendle 07961 545037
Rangers	Thu <sup>3</sup> 7:00 to 9:00 pm	Jacqui Hendle 07961 545037
Toddlers	Mon 9:30 am to 11:30	Ros: 478631 Margaret: 557512

### **Fellowship Groups**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Prayer	Tue 9:00 to 10:00 am	Andrew Hyde 473111
Chatter	Tue 10:00 am to 12:00 noon	Rosalie 478631

### **Services to the Community**


<b>Group</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Lunch Club	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday 12:00	07951 963730 Registration essential

### **Social and Recreational**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Hobbies	1 <sup>st</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> Thu 10:00 am to noon	Jean 525250

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<sup>3</sup> Every fortnight

For updated news keep following [www.highlandsmethodist.org.uk](http://www.highlandsmethodist.org.uk) or  Highlands (Leigh) Methodist Church. Also [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk) is an excellent source of information and inspiration.

Items for the April 2025 issue should be emailed to me [andrewghyde@aol.com](mailto:andrewghyde@aol.com) before the **deadline of Sunday 23 March**. No email? Don't despair; just telephone 473111 to arrange an alternative.

All correspondence (including images) is welcome subject to editorial control by the minister and stewards, and copyright.

## **A Final Image**

A host of golden daffodils greets the early spring at Wimpole Hall (a National Trust property) in Cambridgeshire. The UK is the world's biggest grower of daffodils.

