



The **HIGHLANDER**


May 2025

The monthly newsletter of Highlands Methodist Church, Leigh on Sea

These are services at Highlands for May 2025

10:30 am Sun 4 th	Morning Worship Café Church	Paul Saunders
10:30 am Sun 11 th	Morning Worship Communion	Rev Heather Simmons
4:00 pm Sun 18 th	All Age Community Worship & Praise Aldersgate Sunday	Matt Bunkall
10:30 am Sun 25 th	Morning Worship	Rev Heather Simmons



 Highlands (Leigh) Methodist Church

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 May 2025.**

9:30 am Sun 4 th	Morning Worship Communion	Rev Heather Simmons
7:30 pm Sun 11 th (Refreshments from 7:00)	Gospel Service	Rev Heather Simmons
7:30 pm Sun 18 th	Evening Worship Anchorage	Rev Heather Simmons
7:30 am Sun 25 th	Evening Worship Mindfulness	Rev Heather Simmons





Highlands Methodist Church

Hospitality in the Midst of our Community

All telephone numbers are '01702' unless stated

Minister	Rev Heather Simmons heather.simmons@methodist.org.uk	07879 232231
Secretary to Church Council	David Watson	555702
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 mattbunkall@gmail.com	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 highlandslettings@gmail.com	07510 808519

From Your Minister

Dear Church Family,

Happy May! A wonderful spring month. full of flowers and longer days. Ancient Romans saw it as a time of honour and celebration, naming it after their goddess Maia. This beautiful month has become associated with renewal, growth, and devotion, particularly to Mary, mother of Jesus.



Highlands Methodist is starting something very special this year for the month of May. It is a community event that is called **Boulevard in Bloom**. It will be held on **Sunday 25 May**.

The event will begin with an all-age service at 10:30 am. Then from **11:30 am to 3:00 pm** the church will be open for refreshments while our community *visit the gardens in Sutherland Boulevard and judge who they think has **the best front garden***.

We will be raising money for **Fair Havens Hospice**. There will be collection buckets on the day. If you would like to enter your garden all you need to do is fill out a form. There is an option to give a donation to the charity too which would be greatly appreciated but is **not compulsory**. We are asking local firms to offer prizes and in return we will promote their business on the day.

Going away that weekend? No problem! You **don't even need to be around** on the 25 May to enter, as the community can see your garden from the pavement to make their decision. Please consider taking part!

We are very excited that our Uniformed Groups who meet at Highlands Methodist Church will also be taking part on the grounds of the church. Come and see their contributions!

This event is all about building community and encouraging neighbours to get to know one another. It is also about highlighting all the wonderful events and groups that meet at our church. We have a safe, fun and welcoming space for people of all ages. Come and get to know us and see if there is anything you would like to join in with.

That's not all that is new at Highlands Methodist Church. Last month we started a *Lectio Divina* Zoom on 16 April and this will continue **every Wednesday** from 7.30-8.15pm. Clive Johnson and I are offering this time of peaceful reflection to deepen our knowledge of scripture, hymns and faith writings. It is open to anyone and everyone who would like to join us.

<https://zoom.us/j/95347433390?pwd=VTY50eEye9ZE3fq0vbHGHjjQT5w8X9.1>

Meeting ID: 953 4743 3390
Passcode: 498912

I like to think of the month of May also as a time of thanksgiving. For my part I love the sun, joyfully anticipating summer days on the beach and stocking up on SPF 50+sunscreen. I am thankful for my faith, my family and my friends and my music of course. What are the things/people you are thankful for?

I love these words of Gerald Latty:

Worship God with the morning sunrise, lift your voice in the evening rain. Bring your thanks and praise, all your accolades to Him.



I also find comfort in Robert Browning's words in 'Pippa's Song'

*The year's at the spring;
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven.
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing.
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in his heaven –
All's right with the world!*

It just reminds me to be thankful for the blessings of the world and that all is as it should be. It is only when we corporately separate ourselves from God's invitation to love that we suffer. We all separate ourselves from God individually. We do so as the human race at one time or another. But what is extraordinary is that God never gives up on us, as we have just heard in our Easter story. Easter does not end with the last chocolate egg, but continues on through this beautiful month until Pentecost on 8th June.

So, my beautiful brothers and sisters, have a blessed May. I hope to see some of you along the way!

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

Humour Corner

Minister:

Had a wonderful dream last night. A fight broke out in church...

Spouse:

What's wonderful about that?

Minister:

They were fighting about who could sit in the front row.

Diary Dates

- Our second Classic Film Club will be on 30 May at 2:00 pm (and thereafter on the last Friday of the month), when we'll be watching 'Chocolat' (2000) directed by Lasse Halström, starring Juliette Binoche, Alfred Molina, Johnny Depp and Judi Dench. Set in rural France, it tells of the effect of opening a chocolate shop in a repressed village.
- Further Lectio Divina events take place at 7:30 pm on 30 April, 7 & 14 & 21 & 28 May Fuller details in Heather's letter on page 5.



- Labyrinth Walk. Saturday 3 May 1:00 – 1:45 pm

And further ahead...

- Church Council 7:00 pm Tuesday 13 May
- Saturday 21 June 10:00 am - 2:00 pm at Hadleigh MC - Circuit Quiet Day - In the Stillness:
- Highlands Pilgrimage. Sunday 10 August 12:00 noon - 1:30 pm
- Wesley Theatre Groups presents...
When The Lights Go on Again
Afternoon Tea & Entertainment to mark the 80th anniversaries of VE Day & VJ Day. Saturday 7th June 5:00 pm
Wesley Methodist Church, Elm Rd, Leigh on Sea
Tickets: £10, booking essential

Box office: 07813 553080

Online: Wesley Theatre Group event tickets from TicketSource.

WESLEY THEATRE GROUP PRESENTS

When The Lights Go On Again

Wesley Theatre Group

Afternoon Tea & Entertainment to mark the 80th anniversaries of VE Day & VJ Day

Sat 7th June
5pm

WESLEY METHODIST CHURCH
ELM ROAD | LEIGH ON SEA

TICKETS: £10 **BOX OFFICE BUY** **WWW.TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK**
BOOKING ESSENTIAL **07813 553080** **ONLINE: /WESLEY-THEATRE-GROUP**  

- Chalkwell Park Methodist Church Anniversary
Saturday 17 May 10:00 am – 1:00 pm
Exhibition 'Gift of Colour'. An exhibition of crafts with light refreshments – free entry
- Highlands in Bloom. We'd love it if as many people as possible could participate. For that reason, Jean can offer pots, baskets and dishes, with or without biodegradable oasis, to be filled with fresh flowers (including wild or silk) or plants. These could be placed on the church wall to contribute to the occasion. They can be in the competition or for sale.

Puzzle of the Month¹

Can you crack the code and enter the two missing numbers that will let you beat the Enigma code? Hint below

T	C	Z	I	L	H	P	E	Q	A	M
30	13	36	19	22	18	26	15	?	11	?



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. Especially we remember Jackie Carter and Gill Metcalfe, both

¹ Solution page 18 but before you go there, try writing the alphabet ABCDE...then 12345...26 underneath, and see if you can spot a pattern.

recovering from procedures. God grant in each case a speedy recovery.

We send our **condolences** to Colin and Philip Westripp and their families, following the loss in February of their father John. He was a long-time member of Highlands before he moved to Clacton to be near his sons. His pastoral visitor, Maureen Kelly, kept in touch with him. He served as a Sunday School teacher and as Treasurer during his time at Highlands.

We **also send our condolences** to the family of Mollie Cheney, especially daughter Jeanette and son Steven. Mollie died on 15 April having reached the grand age of 100. A faithful member at Highlands, whose contribution to church life, including regularly laundering the tea towels, was much appreciated.

An occasion for **thanks**, on Easter Day, was the reappearance at Highlands of Jim Ryan, recovering from a very serious operation. May his recovery continue. As a gospel choir member, he was glad that his voice was not damaged. As are we all.



Snippets

Highlands Toddlers...

...restarted on 28 April following Easter. We shan't meet on 5 or 26 May (Bank Holidays). The final session of this term is 14th July. Ros (478631) and Margaret (557512).

Mencap Showstoppers

A student's family from Showstoppers has donated a consignment of toilet rolls in appreciation of what Highlands provides. We greatly appreciate practical gifts such as this.

Church flowers for 11 May will be donated by Frank and Jean in memory of brother Mike

Games.

8 May from 10:00 am until 12 noon. Generally, games are held on second Thursday of the month.

Hobbies.

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month from 10:00 am until 12:00 noon. The cost is £3 including refreshments.

The meeting on 1 May will be one of our favourite activities - Card making with die cut découpage.

15 May - we will be trying our skill with calligraphy, together with more vellum work.

An advance date for 5 June. We'll be painting CDs to make a wind spinner for the garden.

Hobbies Easter Fair raised £326.27 for Church funds. Thank you to all who helped and supported the event. All are welcome at any time.

Christian Aid...

... is grateful for the donations of £255, (including £175 Gift Aided) to the appeal for the disastrous Myanmar earthquake

Christian Aid week runs from 11 to 17 May this year. If you can help in any way please talk with Jean Edmonds (01702 801517)

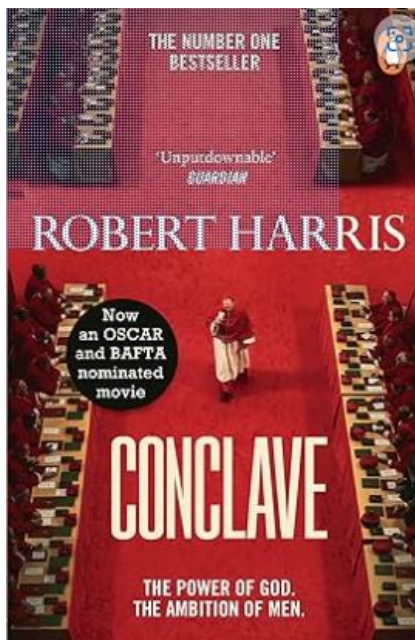


From the Editor

It would be remiss of me not to record here the death on 21 April of Pope Paul who had been pontiff since 2013. He chose Francis as his papal name in honour of Saint Francis of Assisi. Throughout his public life, Francis was noted for his humility, emphasis on God's mercy, international visibility as pope, and concern for the poor.

May he rest in peace.

By the time you read this the funeral has probably taken place and the Conclave is imminent. I shan't bother you with details of how the Conclave works – you can find out about it in any newspaper or TV news report.



Alternatively, you can refer to the fictional *Conclave* – a 2024 movie directed by Edward Berger, or a 2016 novel by Robert Harris (which I prefer). However I am not sure that the the real contest to become the new Pope can stand quite as much sensation as the fictional contest. We will never know.

Many of us carry out (or have carried out) roles that involve us defending the physical well-being of others. Think of doctors, transport workers, pharmacists,

government ministers, even the various people who check that our church building is safe to use. These people may have dozens, hundreds, thousands, even millions of lives for which they are responsible. It's a heavy load that not everyone can carry.

Compare this with the man (of course) who becomes Pope. This man becomes immediately responsible for the spiritual well-being of about 1,406,000,000 Catholics² in about 221,700 parishes of 3,491 dioceses and archdioceses. Now that's what I call a responsibility.

Meanwhile I understand that another leader much in the news of late – President Trump in fact – has promised to 'Make America Great Again'. Now, I don't really know what the word 'Great' is supposed to look like in this context. Probably best if I don't ponder it too much. On the other hand, a recent commentator on the career of the late Pope Francis said that he had tried to 'Make Humanity Great Again'. I think that 'great' is where we all work together to put right all that is wrong with the world, for the benefit of all of its people. I like that much better.

So when the time comes, and the white *fumata* from the Sistine Chapel shows that *habemus papam* - we have a Pope - we should all pray for him to take up his very heavy burden and carry on where Francis left off. It matters not a jot whether we are RC, Protestant, Orthodox, (or Muslim, Hindu, Jewish or Buddhist for that matter). We all share one world and one destiny.



Anarcu

² According to the *Annuario Pontificio* 2023

Some Words from Jean the Pianist

My name is Jean Oliver and I occasionally play the piano at our wonderful church, Highlands. I've played the piano for many years and played in school assemblies for about 25 years. When I was 11 my dad wanted me to learn the piano so he bought me my first piano from Mandela pianos, which was at that time in Southend. I had that piano for many years and loved it. I'm very fortunate that my husband Ollie bought me a beautiful grand piano recently.



I am mainly classically trained, but I do enjoy jazz funk piano too.

I have been a Christian for most of my life and became a born again Christian when I was about 15. My Mum and Aunt, both strong Christians, always encouraged me and prayed for me throughout my life. I miss my mother praying for me - she was a true prayer warrior. But at the great age of 98 she is now with the Lord. However I still have my Aunt, soon to be 98 and still

doing very well.

Thank you all for welcoming me at Highlands. I have always been made very welcome and really encouraged by you all when I play at the services

I am truly blessed. (And we are blessed to have you. Ed)

Jeannie



The Methodist Conference

26 June to 2 July 2025, Telford

The Conference is the governing body of the Methodist Church under God. It has responsibility for the government, discipline, management and administration of the life of the Church. The Conference is also a place for worship, thanksgiving, Ordination and celebration. You can attend most sessions of the Conference without a ticket. But if you want to come an Ordination service, you will need a ticket. Tickets are free and you can book them from www.eventbrite.co.uk including for the Ordinations of Rev Agnes & Rev Heather on 29 June at St Chads Church, Shrewsbury.

The Circuit is hoping to organise a transport to Shrewsbury but this can't be booked until numbers are confirmed. So many thanks if you have already let us know, but otherwise please contact Jess in the Circuit Office 01702 479476.

Poem of the Month



Howard Walter was an American minister whose CV included teaching English in Japan and promoting Christianity in Lahore (then part of the British Raj, now Pakistan). Sadly he died in Lahore, a victim of the Spanish Flu responsible for more deaths than WW1. He was just 35 years old.

He wrote this poem in a letter to his mother, who submitted it to Harper's Magazine. After publication it was scored as a hymn. Many thanks to Roger Smith for the suggestion.

I Would Be True (My Creed) Howard Arnold Walter (1883-1918)

I would be true, for there are those who trust me;
I would be pure, for there are those who care;
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;
I would be brave, for there is much to dare.

I would be friend of all--the foe, the friendless;
I would be giving, and forget the gift;
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;
I would look up, and laugh, and love and lift.

I would be faithful through each passing moment;
I would be constantly in touch with God;
I would be strong to follow where He leads me;
I would have faith to keep the path Christ trod

Dining In



Summery roasted courgettes, aubergines and tomatoes with feta and pine nuts.

Courgettes and aubergines are classic summer vegetables, but (dare I say it) a bit boring. This one pot veggie recipe uses feta cheese and herbs to lift the flavours a bit.

Ingredients

1 aubergine, thinly sliced
2 courgettes thinly sliced
150 g baby peppers halved
2 bay leaves
2 sprigs of fresh oregano leaves
2 sprigs of fresh rosemary leaves

3 tablespoons olive oil
5 vine tomatoes quartered
120g feta cheese
30g pine nuts
Juice of half a lemon
Ground black pepper

Method

- Preheat oven to 220°C / 200°C fan / gas 7
- Place the aubergines, courgettes, peppers, bay leaves, oregano leaves, rosemary leaves, olive oil, sea salt and a good grind of black pepper into a roasting tin.
- Mix well with hands.
- Transfer to the oven and roast for 30 minutes then mix in the quartered vine tomatoes. Scatter over the feta and pine nuts and return to the oven for a further 15 minutes.
- taste and season with more salt and pepper and the lemon juice as needed before serving.

Could be served with buttered pasta such as linguine.

Humour Corner

Thanks to comedian Peter Kay, we know already that pop lyrics can be misheard. For example: in the song *We Are Family* Sister Sledge apparently sing 'Just let me staple the vicar' rather than the more sensible and correct lyric: 'Just let me state for the record.'



Well, it seems that prayers and hymns can also be mistaken, usually but not only by younger worshippers...

- 'Sing lasagne' should perhaps have been the better-known hymn 'Sing Hosanna'.
- 'Our farmer, with calves in heaven, Harold be thy name.' Heard at a rural church I think.
- 'Help us to be awful to others all the day long'. I think the intended word was 'thoughtful' (but who knows?).
- 'I will make you vicious old men...' Probably meant 'fishers of men'.
- Why was a green hill being 'without a city wall' thought worthy of comment?
- Finally it's quite nice that one child felt that things bright and beautiful included 'All teachers great and and small'!

Puzzle of the Month Solution

Each letter on the top row corresponds to its alphabetical number plus ten. So **Q** corresponds to **27** (17 + 10) and **M** corresponds to **23** (13 + 10)

So, **33 15 22 22 / 14 25 24 15** if you got it right.

SERVING the COMMUNITY 7 Days a Week

Children and Young People

Group	Time	Contact
Scouts	Thu 7:30 to 9:00 pm	Jack Reeve 07847 355859
Cubs	Thu 5:45 to 7:15 pm	Chloë Nuttman ³ 07570 040085
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 ⁴ 7:00 to 9:00 pm	Jacqui Hendle 07961 545037
Toddlers	Mon 9:30 am to 11:30	Ros: 478631 Margaret: 557512

Fellowship Groups

Group	Time	Contact
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

Group	Time	Contact
Lunch Club	2 nd Tuesday 12:00	07951 963730 Registration essential

Social and Recreational

Group	Time	Contact
Hobbies	1 st /3 rd Thu 10:00 am to noon	Jean 801517

³ Chloë is a temporary contact while Jordan is on a break

⁴ Every fortnight

**Southend & Leigh Circuit invites you
to our**



**Wholeness &
Wellbeing
Services**

Wednesday 22nd January ZOOM

Wednesday 23rd April

Wednesday 25th June

7:45pm at Benfleet Methodist
Church

For more details contact southendandleighcircuit@gmail.com

TESTIMONY SERVICE



REVD
**AGNES
SAM**



REVD
**HEATHER
SIMMONS**



**SUNDAY 18TH MAY
7.30PM**

**RAYLEIGH METHODIST CHURCH
78A EASTWOOD RD, SS6 7JP**

WALK THE LABYRINTH!



**COME WALK A BEAUTIFUL CANVAS
LABYRINTH AS PEOPLE AROUND THE
WORLD WALK AS ONE AT ONE!**

**SATURDAY 3 MAY 1-145PM
HIGHLANDS METHODIST CHURCH**

V.E. DAY + 80

MASSED BRASS BAND CONCERT

Featuring the bands of:
Leigh-on-Sea Salvation Army
Southend-on-Sea Salvation Army
The Southend Band (Civic)


Saturday 3rd May 7pm

Admission on the door **£5**
(children free)

Presenting a programme of foot-tapping 1940s
sing-a-long medleys, military marches, favourite hymns,
nostalgic crowd-pleasers and a Proms Finale

**Leigh Wesley
Methodist Church**
Elm Road, Leigh SS9 1SJ

The poster features a large tuba on the left, a Spitfire aircraft in the top right, and a group of people in military-style uniforms and a Salvation Army band member in the bottom right. A Union Jack bunting is strung across the middle.

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

Items for the June 2025 issue should be emailed to me andrewghyde@aol.com before the **deadline of Thursday 22 May**. No email? Don't despair; just telephone 473111 to arrange an alternative.

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

A Final Image

One that requires no caption

