



The **HIGHLANDER**

February 2024

The monthly newsletter of Highlands Methodist
Church, Leigh on Sea

These are services at Highlands for February 2024.

11:00 am Sun 4 th	Morning Worship Café Church	Worship Leaders
11:00 am Sun 11 th	Morning Worship Communion	Rev Heather Simmons
11:00 am Sun 18 th	Morning Worship	Susie King
11:00 am Sun 25 th	Morning Worship	Rev Heather Simmons

Details may change, so please check in advance if you are in any doubt.



 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 (TFC) for February 2024.

09:30 am Sun 4 th	Morning Worship Communion	Rev Heather Simmons
7:00 pm* Sun 11 th *for 7:30	Gospel Service	Rev Heather Simmons
7:30 pm Sun 18 th	Anchored	Rev Heather Simmons
7:30 pm Sun 25 th	Mindfulness	Rev Heather Simmons

Humour Corner

Notice found in a French church (translated)

When you enter this church, it may be possible that you hear "the call of God". However, it is unlikely that he will call you on your mobile. Thank you for turning off your phones. If you want to talk to God, please enter, choose a quiet place, and talk to him. If you want to see him in person, we suggest sending him a text while you are driving...

Thanks...



...to S Stibbards & Son Ltd funeral directors for our beautiful Christmas tree, efficiently supplied and delivered by Daws Heath Timber Ltd.



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	Patrick Smith (minutes Secretary Margaret Wood)	557702 (557512)
Church Stewards	Andrew Hyde Donald Mayes Andreas Botzios (also Web Editor) Lesley Hyde	473111 473787 479476 473111
Worship Leaders	Jean Edmonds Jennifer Courtenay Frank Edmonds	525250 556140 525250
Church Treasurer	Steve Watson	07543 905641
Children's Worker	Ros Bryant	478631
Pastoral Co-ordinator	Jean Edmonds	525250
Church Flowers	Jean Edmonds	525250
Lettings/Use of Premises	TBA highlandslettings@gmail.com	07510 808519

From Your Minister

Dear Church family,

I am writing to you from my little study at home. The sun is shining, and it is bitterly cold outside, my dog Bessie is sat at my feet only because I have given her a treat; normally she lies in her bed under the piano. Dave is teaching at the moment, so maybe she has had enough of the same tune going round and round!

I wonder, do we sometimes get fed up with the same things going round and round? In our Covenant Service I talked about repetition and asked you to think of the things you do regularly in your prayer life and church life. I asked you to think



whether you might want to try something a little different like going on a prayer walk, meditating, learning scripture off by heart etc. There is comfort in doing the things that make us feel safe but in order to deepen their meaning we need to keep them fresh and remember their purpose.

At our service together on 28 January we are going to have a Love Feast and share some of our experiences in small groups in the church. There is no pressure to speak, but if you would like to join in and share how you are finding making these small changes, we can all help one another.

Thinking about doing things a little differently and following on from our Church Council Meeting, we unanimously decided to take the path of growing our membership through Intergenerational Worship and Mission. This will reflect the age of our membership now, and of all the wonderful groups we have in our church on a daily basis. In order to get this off the ground we are making some exciting plans.

This will happen on our Mission Planning Day. We will be meeting at The Fishermen's Chapel (downstairs) and putting together a mission plan for the next 5 years. Lunch will be provided at a cost of £7 a head for fresh sandwiches, cake and teas/coffees from a local

business. There is paid parking directly opposite the chapel, I suggest car sharing. In the chapel all facilities including a disabled toilet are downstairs and are wheelchair accessible.

ALL are welcome, not just church members!



The Mission Planning Day will be **from 10:00 am - 4.30 pm on Saturday 2 March** – Please put this in your diaries and let me know if you can attend.

(RSVP heather.simmons@methodist.org.uk or text 07879 232231). I hope whatever your plans are this month you keep warm and well. I look forward to seeing you.

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



Save the Date

We literally have so many dates that the pages of the calendar are getting clogged.

Please put these into your diary now, so that you can be sure of being free. The

number beside each entry is the page upon which you can find a bit more detail.

31 January	Ron Crafer Thanksgiving Service (10)
23 February	Daisy Bowlers Concert @ Trinity (18)
2 March	Mission Planning Day (5-6)
2 March	Waterside Choirs/The Music Man concert (14)
16 March	Easter Coffee Morning (9)
24 March	Palm Sunday Parade Service

Mission Planning

Elsewhere you'll learn that the Church Council has opted to go down the route of growing our membership through Intergenerational Worship and Mission, and that planning for this begins now. This only works if everyone gets involved, according to their ability. Which is rather daunting.

You need to know that we plan to get some paid help - a Community Outreach Pastor (COP). Our COP will certainly not be able to make a difference single-handed. They will need me and you and everyone else to pitch in. To give an idea what this means, I have borrowed (and condensed) an article from Pastor Mike Webb the Rochford COP.

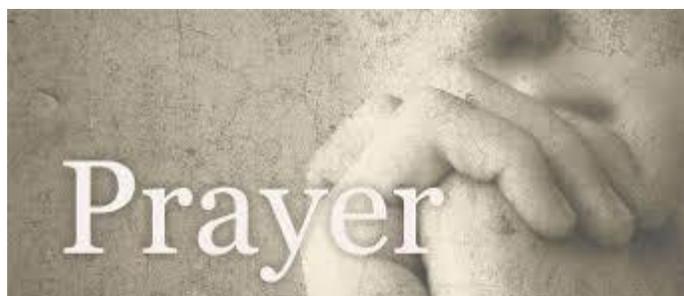
I have enjoyed my role. The members are friendly and keen to try

out new ideas. They run a lot of community activities and have strong community links, praying when needed. We have struggled to engage with slightly older children and families, so we have built an outreach plan of overlapping circles.

We have led school assemblies, sharing Faith with a large number of pupils who get to know what I am doing in the area and, I hope, some credibility as well. I have also been able to advertise events that we are running. I have kept assemblies light and fun and the busy teachers have appreciated it. The next circle has been to put on more targeted events such as a party and Christmas craft club. offering free craft, free pumpkins to carve and a free dinner. Families really liked this. We worried about low turnout, but publicity and prayer overcame this. Responding to feedback. I hope to run a larger event every 6-8 weeks. These events rely on volunteers and need a hook of some sort - craft / games / talk / food. I am looking to start a Lego club in the new year.



The final circle is that of events in the church, remembering that the end goal is not to increase church attendance. Rather, it is to share the good news by bringing people to a place where they can hear the gospel message. There are many questions: can other activities like messy church be made available as well? Could these be run on a monthly basis at the weekend? How would these link with the bigger events? Or can a specific games night / families event be run on a monthly basis? We must keep our main work in focus, but keep praying for trust and friendship to build across all generations.



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*, Peggy Gosling in *Westcliff Lodge* and Joan Ford in *Hope Green Care Home*. 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; may God grant in each case a speedy recovery. Especially we think of Andrew and Pauline Saville both undergoing long recoveries; also of Jean Barton recovering from a fall.

Sincere condolences for friends and families of Ron Crafer and Margaret Derby.

Congratulations go to Jean Barton (90th birthday) and the stripling Frank Edmonds (80)

We pray for the people of Gaza and of Ukraine, wherever they find themselves, and for a just and lasting peace in their homeland.



Snippets

Hobbies

On Thursday 1 February we meet at Highlands to start making Easter cards, with Marjorie and Margaret will lead us in découpage with lovely new designs.

On 15 February we plan to make Easter baskets using stitch craft. Please come and join us. Bring your own hobby to teach us or just come and join us for a cup of coffee. All are welcome.

On 16 March we're planning to hold an Easter coffee morning. Put the date in your diary then come along and join us. Easter Bonnets can be provided but they're not compulsory.

Highlands Toddlers

Calling all 'little people' (up to school age) with their adult carers to join our friendly group on Monday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30 am. Price remains £3 per child, £4 per family, which includes refreshments – a bargain! Come and enjoy meeting old friends and making new ones. Further details on our website:

www.highlandsmethodist.org.uk

or contact Ros (478631) or Margaret (557512).

Church Flowers for February.

Flowers will be donated for these services

- ✿ 4 February in celebration of Frank's 80th birthday and in memory of his brother, Brian
- ✿ 18 Feb donated by Sheila Whitelegg, in memory of Ged
- ✿ 25 Feb donated by Maureen Kelly, in memory of family and friends



Rev Norman Hooks has a new 'phone number 07933 548981.

Mrs Joan Ford

Joan's new address is Hope Green Care Home
16 Brook Road, South Benfleet, SS7 5JA

She would love to receive visits and cards

Mrs Margaret Eve...

...Is still living in Great Ayton in North Yorkshire having left Highlands in 1996 when she and her husband retired. According to son Michael (Highlands 1968-91), she enjoys reading the Highlander every month when she is sent it.

Ron Crafer

You may already have heard that Ron has died at the age of ninety-four. Nothing I could write could possibly do justice to Ron, but I shall have a go anyway. Ron was for many years Akela of 9th Leigh on Sea Cubs. I can't give a precise date for his retirement but it would be about 25-30 years ago. Even after that, Ron was available for some years to help out when needed. His speciality was his extensive collection of tall tales, any of which he would perform at the drop of a hat, keeping a troop of cubs spellbound. Ron's long service to the community was despite his responsibilities not only to his own family, but also to the retail ironmongery business that he owned and ran, then as now trading as 'Housebrite' on the London Road. He sold the business, and his house backing onto it, in Olive Avenue, in order to retire to a smaller property nearby, where he could grow superb flowers and vegetables.

In all his interests and endeavours his wife and co-worker Georgie was always with him, so we send to her our deepest condolences. Following a private committal, a celebration of Ron's life will be held at St Barnabas's Church SS7 2EJ at 3:00 pm on Wednesday 31 January. All are welcome.

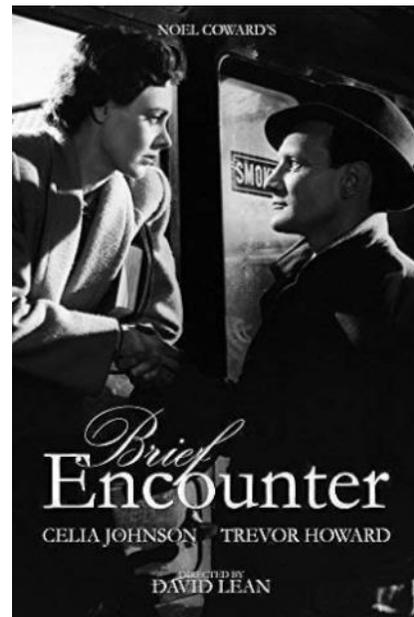
Margaret Derby

Margaret died on 19 November aged 96. She used to live in Tattersall Gardens but moved some years ago to be near her daughter in Ludlow, Shropshire.

From the Editor

The inspiration for these few words came when I was considering what I would talk about in the course of a launch event for my recent book¹

I decided that I would talk briefly in the event about what constitutes a 'story'. A story comes about typically from a sort of imbalance or tension between the characters around whom the story is to be built. Consider the 1945 movie *Brief Encounter*, which begins with one person content in a marriage relationship whereas the other is unhappy. Even with that brief description it's possible to see a number of ways in which the tension could resolve itself. I will not describe how the movie proceeds just in case there is somewhere someone who has never watched *Brief Encounter*.

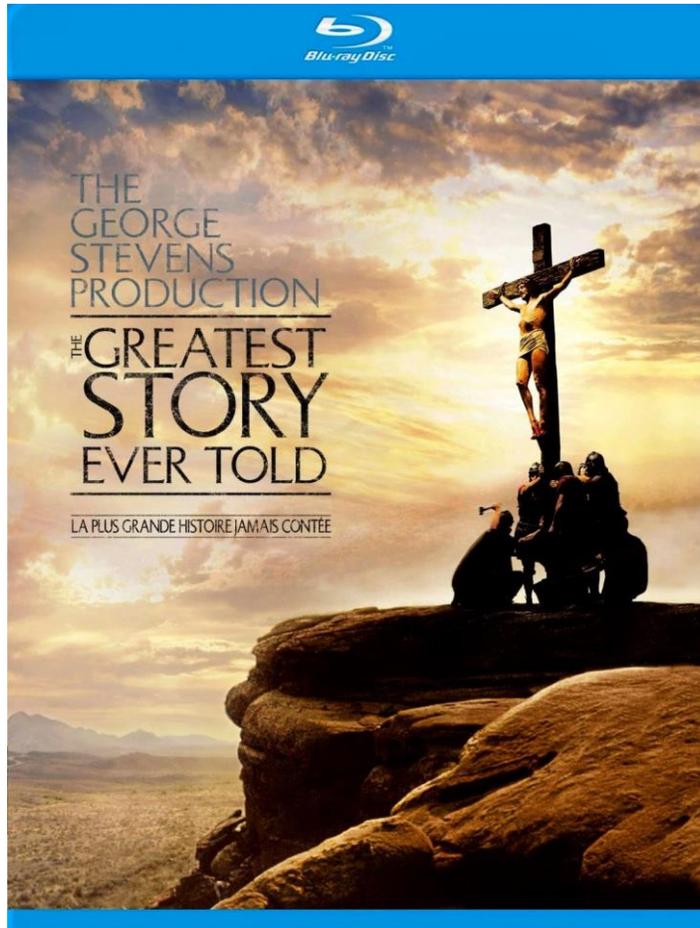


Another example might be *The Lord of the Rings*. The characters are threatened by the existence of a ring which confers huge and malevolent power over its owner. At the beginning of the story, it is clear that the ring must be destroyed. Tension here lies in how that can be achieved. Again, I'll avoid a spoiler..

¹ Going well - thanks for asking. *To Muddy Death* is available at all good bookshops at £12.99. Online, just search the title, or my name, or ISBN-13 978-1800167353

Great novels and films may involve multiple stories that weave together, either in series or parallel - which makes for a satisfying conclusion when all the loose ends fall into place. However real life does not always provide a nice, neat ending. Therefore, one of the

biggest hurdles a storyteller must clear is that of writing an ending.



A great example of a story is the one that US author Fulton Oursler (1893-1952) dubbed *The Greatest Story Ever Told*. You might know the title better as a 1965 Twentieth Century Fox blockbuster movie. Starring Max von Sydow and Charlton Heston, it tells of the birth, life and death of a seemingly unimportant working-class Palestinian man who suffers oppression and injustice under a powerful and corrupt regime.

This may seem to be a modern story that is sadly familiar. But this story begins 2,000 years ago. What marks the protagonist is that He is Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Messiah that was promised by the prophet Isaiah 800 years earlier.

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him
[Isaiah 11: 1-2 NIV]

What is exceptional about this story is the ending. There isn't one! Not for the central character anyway. Jesus Christ is eternal and unchanging.

As far as the rest of us are concerned, we must write our own ending, for which there are only two choices - a happy ending and a not-so-happy ending.

We can accept Jesus as saviour, and thereby choose eternal life: or we can reject him and choose death and oblivion.

End of story.

Puzzle of the Month²

A fairly quick word puzzle in three parts.

1. What is distinctive about this strange sentence? *A roughly dressed dough-faced ploughman jogged, coughing and hiccoughing thoughtfully, through the streets of Scarborough.*
2. Which English word has a sequence of three pairs of doubled letters?
3. Which number when written has all its letters in alphabetical order? (Clue: think 'Ali Baba' and 'thieves')

Humour Corner

I'm reading a sci-fi book about a world with no gravity. It's impossible to put down.

Why do you never see sharks hiding in trees? Because they're really good at it.

² Solution page 17

Waterside Choir and The Music Man Project

bring you an evening of

“Singing and Smiles”

Saturday 2nd March 7:30 pm

Doors open 7:00 pm

Tickets £7:00

Children free (under 16)

Soft refreshments available

Tickets available from Eventbrite or Highlands church in cash
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/waterside-choir-and-the-music-man-project-tickets-807806590257>

<https://bit.ly/3tVWRcL>

Please support this wonderful event in your community. The contemporary choir are award-winning led by grammy-nominated Dave Cooke and The Music Man Project led by David Stanley are previewing their Albert Hall performance right here at Highlands!

Don't miss it!!



Dining In

This month's recipe is a new vegetarian chilli that I've just found. It's delicious and has become my new favourite chilli recipe. Do include the chocolate – it makes it *soooo* good.

Don't be put off by the long list of ingredients (and I always substitute if I haven't got the exact match!) This makes enough for about 8 people so there's plenty to freeze for later.

- 2 tbsp veg oil
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 yellow peppers, deseeded and chopped
- 2 jarred roasted red peppers, drained and chopped
- 15g fresh coriander, chop stalks, leaves left whole to serve
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tbsp light brown soft sugar
- 1-2 tbsp chipotle paste (optional)
- 400g cans of black beans, kidney beans and cannellini beans
- 400g chopped tomatoes
- 300ml vegetable stock
- 20g dark chocolate

1. Heat oil in deep pan or casserole.
2. Fry onions with a pinch of salt until softened – about 10 mins. Add garlic and peppers and cook for further 5 mins.
3. Mix in coriander stalk, spices, sugar and chipotle paste (if using). Cook for further 5 mins.
4. Add beans along with their liquid, tomatoes and stock. Season well and bring to a simmer
5. Leave to simmer on a low heat for about an hour until thickened/reduced. Stir in the dark chocolate and season to taste.

Story of a Famous Hymn

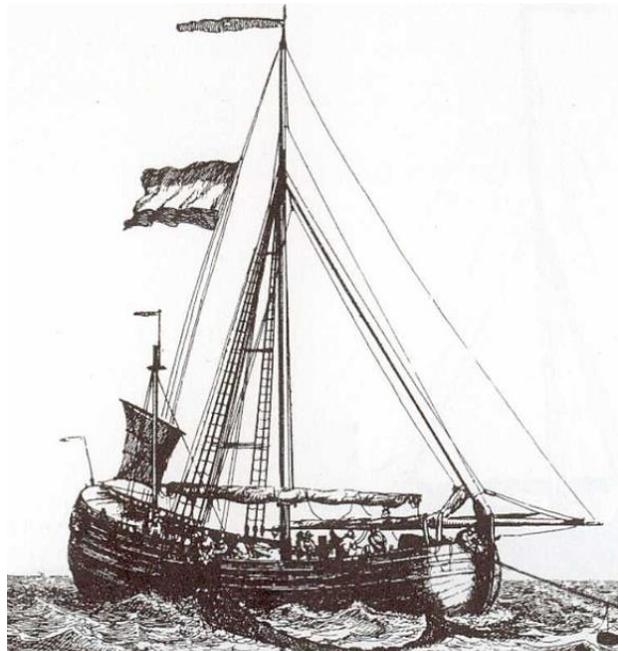
Eternal Father! Strong to Save.

This hymn is sung the world over by those who are journeying by sea. It is frequently used in congregational worship either as an intercession for someone known to be on the sea, or as a general petition for the safety of all seafarers. Very few hymns relating to the sea are found in our hymnal, and of these *Eternal Father! Strong to Save* is the most popular.

You can find the hymn at 517 in *Singing the Faith*, including its plaintive chorus:

*O hear us when we cry to Thee
for those in peril on the sea!*

The traditional tune is named Melita. I expect that many of you will recognise that as a maritime and biblical reference. Melita was the Latin name for Malta, where St Paul was shipwrecked (Acts 27 and 28) in about 60 CE.



The hymn was written by William Whiting, who was born in London in 1825. At an early age he became Master of Choristers at St Mary's College, Winchester. He wrote several prose works besides this fine hymn. Although a sufferer from ill-health he was invariably cheerful and was gifted with a fund of ready humour. He died in 1878.

The hymn was written in 1860, although the final version, as we have it today, bears the date of 9 February 1875. This hymn is as familiar to British sailors as "Rule Britannia" and is invariably sung at services on board ship. A translation appears in the "Nouveau Livre Continue", the hymnal of the French Navy.

FE

Poem of the Month

Joanna Fuchs lives in Idaho USA where she writes poetry, fiction and nonfiction. She is recorded as born in 1932, but was still with us in 2020. This is a very short poem, chosen by Heather, that explores the outcome of not communicating carefully enough.

'Yes! No!' by Joanna Fuchs

My turn signal wasn't working,
So I asked for help from a friend.
'Stand behind the car,' I said.
'Let's get this problem to end.'

'When I turn the signal on,
If it's working, let me know.'
I hit the blinker and then I heard:
'Yes! No! Yes! No! Yes! No!'



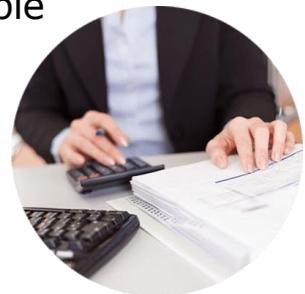
Puzzle of the Month Solution

1. You may not have realised it, but there are, in English, no fewer than eight ways of pronouncing the combination of letters 'ough'. This sentence contains them all.

They are 'UFF', 'OWE', 'OW', 'OFF', 'UP', 'AW', 'OO' AND 'UH'.

For another example of crazy English pronunciation, I offer the expression 'Pacific Ocean' which gives no fewer than three pronunciations of the letter 'C'. No wonder people find it difficult

2. The answer is 'bookkeeper' (or 'bookkeeping')
3. Forty



THE DAISY BOWLERS



LIVE
1920s-1950s
MUSIC

The Daisy Bowlers in Concert at
Trinity Methodist Church

Friday 23rd February at 2pm

Tickets £10 including refreshments from

Email: louise@trinityfamilycentre.org or Deacon Sarah: 07368908749
All proceeds are going to the work of Trinity Family Centre, Westcliff

07879232231

WWW.THEDAISYBOWLERS.COM

SERVING the COMMUNITY 7 Days a Week

Children and Young People

Group	Time	Contact
Scouts	Thu 7:30 to 9:00 pm	Carl Mason 07814 226133
Cubs	Thu 5:45 to 7:15 pm	Lesley Bacon 07947 116891
Rainbows	Wed 4:00 to 5:00 pm	Julie Griffiths 07834 321724
Brownies	Wed 5:30 to 7:00 pm	Dilys Haddow 710207
Guides	Fri 7:00 to 9:00 pm	Jacqui Hendle 07961 545037
Rangers	Thu ³ 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	Rosalind 478631

Services to the Community

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

Social and Recreational

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

³ Every fortnight

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 March 2024 issue should be emailed to
andrewghyde@aol.com before the **deadline of Sunday 18
February**, and earlier if possible. No email? Don't despair; just
telephone 473111 to arrange an alternative.



A Final Image

The newly restored
Battersea Power Station,
London. Once an icon of
power and technology, it
is now restored as a
temple of commerce, but
rather beautiful in its own
way. A lift now takes you
to the top of the closer
chimney for a
breathtaking view over
the nation's capital city.

Picture A Hyde