

The Highlander

January 2018

They entered the house
where the child and his
mother were.
They offered him gifts of
gold, frankincense and
myrrh.



Sunday Worship in January 2018

7th	10.30	Cafe Church - Kathy McCullough
14th	10.30	Covenant Service with Holy Communion - Rev Julia Monaghan
21st	10.30	Morning Worship - Eileen Simmons
28th	10.30	Morning Worship - Worship Leaders <i>Homelessness Sunday</i>

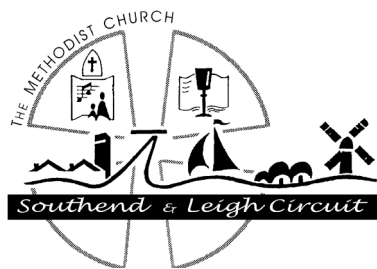
“Crafty Church” meets at 10.30 am on Sundays

For young people - meeting Jesus through art and craft

No. 832 Vol. LXVXV



Come in and FaceTime with Jesus



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	Patrick Smith	557702
Church Stewards	Lesley/Andrew Hyde	473111
	Jean/Frank Edmonds	525250
	Steve Jones	553898
	Kathy McCullough	714528
	Donald Mayes	473787
Worship Leaders	Jennifer Courtenay	556140
	Frank Edmonds	525250
Church Treasurer	Janet Watson	555702
Property Co-ordinator	Anne Lane	01268 755291
	e-mail: annelane8@btinternet.com	
Crafty Church Leaders	Jean Edmonds	525250
	Ros Bryant	478631
Pastoral Co-ordinator	Maureen Kelly	556152
Church Flowers	Jean Edmonds	525250
Lettings/Use of Premises	Les Davis	558381
Mission Enabler for Older Persons	Julie Peek	479804
Website :	www.highlandsmethodist.org.uk	

All items for the **March 2018** issue of *The Highlander* should be handed in writing to

The Stewards (or put in the "H" section of the pigeon box in Jubilee Room) latest 10.30 a.m.

Sunday 18th February 2018. Preferably, items may be emailed to frank66thecroft@sky.com

The Highlander will be ready for distribution on **Sunday 25th February 2018.**



Covenant Sunday



As is our tradition, early in the New Year we meet to renew our covenant with God. This is a distinctively Methodist practice which can be traced back to the first covenant service held by John Wesley in 1755. That first service took place in August, but it soon became the custom for the covenant renewal to take place early in the year, as a day of solemn reflection and rededication. That these were times of great spiritual blessing is evident from Wesley's descriptions in his Journal. For example, on Sunday 1st January 1775 Wesley wrote:

We had a larger congregation at the renewal of the Covenant than we have had for many years; and I do not know that ever we had a greater blessing. Afterwards many desired to return thanks, either for a sense of pardon, for full salvation, or for a fresh manifestation of his grace, healing all their backslidings.

In Wesley's time the covenant service would be preceded by a period of preparation, including prayer, fasting and exhortation, which helped to underscore the importance of what was taking place.

These days, coming so soon after the excess of Christmas and New Year, it is more likely to be preceded by feasting rather than fasting and the rigorous seriousness of the covenant service increasingly feels like a much needed spiritual detox. It is unfortunate that the covenant service has become detached from the prayer and preparation that used to precede it, for what we undertake in the service, is no trivial or insignificant matter.

As Daniel Benedict writes, 'A covenant renewal service is not a seeker's service... There is no such thing as "covenant renewal lite."'

P.T.O.

A Message from your minister - continued

The Covenant we make is primarily about a relationship; the relationship between God and God's people. Or as God says through Jeremiah (31:33)

I will be their God, and they shall be my people. In the service when we make the Covenant Prayer, we will say to God: *you are mine, and I am yours.* If you don't remember anything else about Covenant, remember this phrase: ***I will be your God, and you will be my people.*** This is the very centre of what covenant is all about. Scripture then continues...

"This is the covenant that I will make" says God: "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts." (31:33)

Now for the ancient Hebrews, the heart wasn't just associated with emotions, but with the rational, decision-making part of us as well. So when Jeremiah speaks of God writing his law on our hearts he doesn't just mean that we will have a warm and fuzzy emotional feeling toward God; he means that the desire to put God's will and purposes into practice will be absolutely engrained in our deepest being.

And then thank goodness, he gives us the means by which we might fulfil this relationship by promising that God's grace and forgiveness abound "I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more." (31:34)

What a relief, a new relationship – written on people's hearts – initiated by God; in fact, a *gift* of God. This is the covenant, which we come to renew at the beginning of each year. We thank God that God not only offers this covenant-relationship to us, but gives us the ability to keep it! If it were not so, the commitment we make in the words of the covenant prayer would be quite foolish and would last as long as many of the resolutions made with the New Year. But there is grace here, and the power of God to change us, and it is this that makes us bold to renew the covenant and say the words of the prayer.

*"I am no longer my own but yours.
Put me to what you will,
rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing,
put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you,
or laid aside for you,
exalted for you,
or brought low for you;
let me be full,*

*let me be empty,
let me have all things,
let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours. So be it.
And the covenant now made on earth.
let it be ratified in heaven"*

Rev Julia

January 2018



Prayer

We pray for our friends who are ill, housebound or bereaved and for those in residential care: Mary Barter in *Fernbrook Nursing Home*, Pat Gare in *Admirals Court*, and Marie Moore at *Archers Court* in Hitchin. Our thoughts and prayers are with them and their families at this time.

Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to Brenda Easton and daughters, on the recent death of David, husband and father & to all the family & friends.

We also extend our sympathy to Rev Teresa Rutterford and family on the recent death of her mother in Swaffham.

New Year Greetings

From Jean and Frank Edmonds. May you know the peace and love of God and all his blessings in 2018

Service for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

5pm Sunday 28th January for Prayer Walk remembering the stories of Refugees followed by service at 6.30pm at Leigh Road Baptist Church.

Please come along and support this ecumenical event. Rev Julia

Annual Week of Accompanied Prayer

This will take place from Sunday 15th to 22nd April 2018

Please put these dates in your diary and look out for the "sign up" sheets in the Church in January

CINDERELLA

Wednesday 24th January 2018

Pick up 11.15am from **Highlands**

Coach Fare £10 now due by Sunday 14th January

Highlands people please pay **Frank Edmonds**



Dates to Remember

Knit and Natter Social Group

We are a friendly group of ladies who meet on Tuesday morning from 10am to noon during term time. Some of us knit, some crochet and some of us just natter.

We enjoy each other's company and a cup of coffee/tea and biscuit. You will be made very welcome if you would like to join us.



Highlands Hobbies

We will be meeting from 10 - 12 on Thursday 4th January, following with lunch for those who wish to stay. We will also meet on 18th January. The February dates will be 1st and 15th. Following our successful Christmas Crafts we will look to fresh ideas for the New Year but will still include our profitable card making and some flower arranging for the church.

Stay all day or just look in.

All are welcome

Jean 525250 - Ros 478631

MOTHs

We return for a get together again on Tuesday 9th January at 2.00 pm. All are welcome.



ABRSM Exams

Many thanks to all who helped with stewarding for the recent ABRSM Music Exams; Your efforts contributed to raising over £1800 for church funds.



Pin Point - Teresa and Glenis would welcome all ladies interested in needlecraft to join them on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month, 10th & 24th January, 14th & 28th February from 9.00 to 12.00 in No. 1 Room. Having completed the amazing Community Window, which was displayed at our Community Day, we plan a fresh project of patchwork for the New Year. We would be happy for you to bring your own work. Maybe even alterations or mending. Coffee and cake will be available through the morning from the HUB team.



Wednesday Coffee Morning at the HUB

Take a break from your busy life, look in for a chat or information about Highlands through the week.

Highlands Christmas Fair

A good day with decent footfall which raised over £959. Well done to all who contributed.

Editor : Au revoir !

Thank you for all your contributions over the years.



Other Highlands dates

Sunday 14th January - Covenant Service

Circuit Events

Saturday 17th March - Thundersley trip to Thriplow

Further details in the Jubilee Room
or the Circuit website at
www.southendandleigh.org

Alternative Worship

Belfairs Methodist Church - "Thirsty For ??" - 2nd Thursday
Next dates — 11th January, 8th February at 7.00 pm

+ + + +

Wesley Methodist Church - Informal Worship - 4th Tuesday
Next dates - 23rd January. 28th February at 8.00 pm

+ + + +

The Fishermen's Chapel - Gospel Choir Vespers - 2nd Sunday
Next dates - 14th January, 11th February at 7.00 for 7.30 pm

Future Committee Meetings:

Property & Finance - 8th January 2018 at 8.00 pm

Church Council - **22nd January** 2018 at 8.00 pm

Pastoral - 13th February 2018 at 10.00 am

Family - 12th March 2018 at 8.00 pm

Monthly Movies @ Highlands

A HIGHLANDS WEDNESDAY HUB EVENT



"MISS POTTER"

Wednesday 24th January 2018 at 1.30 pm

Whilst delighting generations of children with her books, Beatrix Potter kept her own story locked carefully away.

Miss Potter is the enchanting story inspired by Beatrix Potter's own life

A FREE event (come from 12 noon with your picnic lunch and enjoy some soup. Tea, coffee also available.)

Regards and best wishes

Julie Peek

Mission Enabler for Older People

Wesley & Highlands Methodist Churches

All are welcome



MEMORY WORSHIP

.....
Worship for those with
and without Dementia
.....

2PM - 4PM

3RD MONDAY OF THE MONTH

Coffee Mornings in January

Saturday 6th Music @ Highlands
Saturday 13th Church
Saturday 20th Missions
Saturday 27th Serving the Homeless



Coffee Mornings in February

Saturday 3rd Music @ Highlands
Saturday 10th -
Saturday 17th Knit and Natter
Saturday 24th Church

Flower Rota for January 2018

<u>Date</u>	<u>Donated by</u>	<u>In memory of</u>	<u>Arranged by</u>
7th	Jill Grove	Parents	Jean
14th	Mrs. E. Thomas	Ralph and Gordon	Pauline
21st	Keith Carter	Parents	Margaret
28th	Joan Ford	Gordon	Jean

Flower Rota for February 2018

4th	Church flowers	Margaret
11th	Dilys Haddow Elsie Bradford	Jean
18th	Meriel Mallett Tony	Pauline
25th.	Betty & Arthur Hall Parents	Jean



Serving the Homeless / HARP

The winter night shelters have been busy over the Christmas period as the nights get colder, but a warm shower, good food and company have been offered and accepted.

The next fundraising event for Serving the Homeless is the annual lunch at Affinity on Homelessness Sunday. There are a few tickets left at £20.

Thank you for your continued prayers and items at the back of the church. There is still a need for smaller sizes of clothing, including underwear, together with trainers, jeans, and toiletries.

HARP is currently in desperate need of small cartons of juice, owing to the big increase in rough sleepers recently, they are using up to 100 cartons a day. Also much needed are toothbrushes and roll on deodorant.

Message from MENCAP re Christmas Concert.

I am writing to you both to express my immense thanks for all the support provided by you and your fantastic team at Highlands Methodist Church in making our Christmas concert on Friday 8th December another truly memorable evening.

I cannot stress enough about Highlands Methodist Church being such a brilliant venue to come to with such a charming and pleasant atmosphere, especially now with our Showstoppers Project being also brilliantly supported by the church, and that was clearly seen by yet another capacity audience who turned up to watch our Music School and Music Man students perform our annual pre-festive celebration concert. The immense appreciation shown by the audience for the talent of our students was another moving experience for me as well as to David and his team leading the concert.

Please accept my thanks and the thanks of Southend Mencap as a whole for the continued fantastic dedication and support provided by everyone at Highlands Methodist Church. It is immensely appreciated.

Warmest regards, Marc McOwens General Manager

Well Done Everyone. Thank you for support is setting up, serving and clearing up afterwards. Editor.

Trip to Thriplow Daffodil Weekend & Country Fair

Saturday 17th March

Adults £20

(price includes coach travel and entrance to Thriplow)

Many items including stalls, gardens open to look round, flower festival, bell ringing, Morris dancing, organ music and of course food and drink and much more.

Please book your place or for more information contact Anne on 01268 755291 or annelane8@btinternet.com



The Revolving Door - Conflicts and contradictions

The role of the Street Pastor is fraught with conflicts and contradictions: everything from the measured approach and language necessary - so as not to put ourselves in harm's way, when trying to persuade argumentative drunk people not to fight; through needing to be non-judgemental when helping a hapless drunken person to sober up so a taxi driver will allow them into his or her car; to the dismay at finding a rough sleeper still on the street in the knowledge of how much local agencies have endeavoured to engage with them.

When we see the passion of argument building into an assault in front of us, we focus on Prayer as our key 'Tool in the Box' - both as intervention and for our own protection. Our mission is not one of physical intervention or even passive resistance and certainly not martyrdom. Sometimes our mere overt presence can be calming and indeed it can often be disarming just to state that we have already drawn attention of the CCTV Centre to the incident; that the police are probably already on their way; and that during the intervening period, we as a team will be praying that God will help them reconcile their differences. Many times we have seen such arguments just dissipate in front of us: Coincidence or the power of Prayer? It happens too frequently to be coincidence!

The second category is more easy to deal with because the sobering up process just takes a bottle of water, our calming influence and the patience to walk the person for a while – perhaps to another taxi rank by which time they have often recovered capacity to speak their address coherently enough to be accepted by the driver. Often we can extract a phone number and persuade a typically highly embarrassed but very thankful parent to come out to collect. We don't discuss what their conversation might be the following day! But perhaps we should because we often muse that the typical club-goer's can pay high drink prices while their lifestyle seems to poor

Those in the third category are typically rather more intractable and here are a few examples which are pertinent in the context of this winter season:

- Joan is a middle-aged woman who I have encountered throughout the few years that I have been Street Pastoring. Usually drunk, she will respond to suggestions of her seeking support from Family Mosaic or HARP by the announcement that "They are all corrupt". We know that the Southend Borough Council's Complex Needs Panel have allocated her a place within the recently commissioned

'Housing First' hostel operated on their behalf by Family Mosaic but typically on Friday and Saturday nights she will be found begging in the doorways on the High Street. Then when I ask why she is not using that accommodation her normal responses "it is worse than prison"! She has spent so much of her life doing whatever and when she pleases that any tenancy rules cause conflict.

- We find a couple in a tent at a temperature falling below 2°C, when we know that David has been allocated a room in the HARP hostel and Kelly would have been expected at the Church Winter Night Shelter. There is not a long-standing relationship but nonetheless, such is the camaraderie amongst rough sleepers that David felt he needed to watch out for Kelly to the extent of staying with her in conflict with his interests by risking loss of his room at the hostel. An example of how life on the Street can undermine mental capacity necessitating us having to point out that, all he had to do was to accompany Kelly to the night shelter and then go back to the hostel.
- George is another long standing rough sleeper who believes that his experience on the Street can carry him through all circumstances. He declines to seek accommodation in the Church Night Shelter because a friend has told him that he will be breathalysed and not allowed in. He refuses to believe our assurances to the contrary preferring to rely on 'street rumour' rather than fact from volunteers who are serving or have served at the shelters. We see contradiction here but our judgements based on our values are for from the realities in George's experience.

Often drunk revellers demand to know: "Why is the Council not helping those rough sleepers" as if conflicted by their own profligacy. We try to explain the complexities but they are so diverse and 2 am on Sunday morning is no opportunity for such discourse. And can we intervene with advice not to give those who are begging money because it goes on drink and drugs? In reality we just cannot go there because firstly we are there to befriend in sharing God's love as Jesus did and secondly, we know that the depth of mental health and sustained rehabilitative support they need to be able to hold down a tenancy is just not available.

We await Southend Council Housing Department's revised Homeless Prevention Policy following on from the new responsibilities thrust upon them under the Housing Reduction Act 2018 - which passed through Parliament - notably unopposed, and will commence from April next year.

Even with £61million of new government funding the legal duty now placed on councils to give people meaningful support to help the likes of Joan, David, Kelly and George to resolve their homelessness, there will be no easy answers. And the key issue in Southend is shortage of rented accommodation for all household sizes. The official count of rough sleepers in November saw double the number from at least 40 in 2016 and we know that the night shelters will draw more into the Town from surrounding areas. Local press recently headlined the practice of London authorities giving homeless people 'one-way' tickets here but this is not new and some East London boroughs have even purchased housing here into which to relocate their people. Housing associations operating regionally have also allocated 'social housing' tenants here, all taking up our local housing capacity.

So when you see an increase in your Council Tax in March, bear a thought for Southend's Housing officials who have to respond to the contradiction in our asking them to cut expenditure whilst having to respond to these increased demands. Our shortage of housing nationally is at crisis point and much is made of the inability of first time buyers to afford to purchase but less about how the resulting increased rental demand has made accommodation unaffordable for those on benefits so pushing them onto the street. What I can only infer was God's realignment of me into collaboration with one of the founders of HopeThree16, is a finance initiative for social and affordable housing over which your prayers will be welcomed but we will still need to identify where to build! So surely the ultimate contradiction in this context is the demand on Government to build more housing whilst defending our own space by deploying the 'not in my back yard' argument. We must ask ourselves: What would Jesus' response be?

We annually recognise how inappropriate Jesus' birth in a stable was 2000 years ago but at least Mary and Joseph had opportunity to establish a home in Nazareth when they returned there. Not so for the chaotic pregnant women we encounter on the street such as Jane who attended the Night Shelters last Winter. She failed to follow the 'house rules' at the hostel she was placed in by Social Services and was excluded. When eventually her third 'unwanted' child - each from a different 'partnership', was born shortly after Christmas, Social Services did recognise their 'duty of care' to the child and placed her immediately into care. However, Jane was back on the streets within months and I cannot help but wonder how the next 2000 years would pan out if this was the manner of Jesus' promised 'Second Coming' to-day.

Peter Courtenay – a Southend Street Pastor January 2018

Serving the Community 7 Days a Week



Children and Young People

Toddlers Group, Monday	9.30-11.30a.m.	Margaret Wood	557512
Rainbows Wednesday	4.00-5.00 p.m.	Jacqui Hendle	557147
Brownies Wednesday:	5.30-7.00 p.m.	Dilys Haddow	710207
Cub Scouts Thursday:	5.45-7.15 p.m.	Lesley Hyde	473111
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

Fellowship Groups

Housegroup meets on 2nd and 4th Tuesdays.

**Goodness is the only
investment that never fails**

Henry David Thoreau

Services to the Community

Regular Sunday Worship

Tuesday Morning Prayer Service at 9.00 a.m.

Midweek Communion :-

2nd Wednesday Belfairs Methodist Church at 9.00 am (when advised)

3rd Wednesday Wesley Methodist Church at 9.00 am

Highlands Hub : Wednesday from 10.00 am to 12.00 pm

Coffee mornings: Wednesday and 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. Please contact Pamela and Patrick Smith - 557702.

Social and Recreational

Knit and Natter Group Tuesday 10.00 a.m.-12 noon Sylvia 01702 556433

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

Pin Point 2nd & 4th Wednesdays 9.00 a.m. - 12.00p.m. Jean 01702 525250

Ladies Badminton Friday 10.00 a.m. Dilys 01702 710207

MOTHs (*Meet on Tuesdays at Highlands*) 2nd Tuesday 2.00 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

Highlands Methodist Church

Hospitality in the Midst of our Community

MINISTER: REV. JULIA MONAGHAN Tel: 483827

When the Sabbath came Jesus went straight to the Synagogue. He started teaching. Unlike the scribes he taught them with authority.

Mark 1 : 21 - 22



Sunday Worship in February 2018

4th	10.30	Cafe Church - Kathy McCullough
11th	10.30	Parade Service - Rev Julia Monaghan <i>Racial Justice Sunday</i>
18th	10.30	Holy Communion - Rev Clifford Newman <i>First Sunday in Lent</i>
25th	10.30	Morning Worship - Rev Peter Moorhouse

www.highlandsmethodist.org.uk



“ Crafty Church ” meets at 10.30 am on Sundays
For young people - meeting Jesus through art and craft
Come in and FaceTime with Jesus