

New Horizons

OCTOBER 2020



THE CORNERSTONE



Bournemouth Park Road,
Southend-on-Sea, SS2 5JL
(For car park on Central Ave, sat navs
use SS2 5HR no 59)

www.thecornerstonesouthend.org.uk
Email:
cornerstonequestions@outlook.com

WORSHIP AND ACTION

Many of the following activities have been postponed for the time being. However, please see inside for what is currently happening.

Sunday 10.30 am **Morning Worship** and Junior Church.
Holy Communion is celebrated during Worship on the 4th Sunday

FAIRTRADE Coffee and tea is served after Morning Worship

Please stay to talk with each other in an informal atmosphere.

Tues 10.00 am **Time of prayer** together for, the Fellowship, those with special needs, our neighbours, and the world-wide Christian Family. All are welcome to join with us.

Church Meetings are generally held in alternate months on the third Thursday at 7.30 pm. The dates and times will be published in this magazine and announced in Church.

Tues 10.00 am Tea and Coffee in the Foyer
11.30 am "Cornerstone Crafters"
(1st and 3rd Tuesdays or as announced)
2.30 pm Christian Forum (2nd and 4th Tuesdays)
4.00 pm Messy Church (1st Tuesday in the month)
19.30-21.00pm Digging Deeper (3rd Tuesday of each month)

Wed 9.30 am The Cornerstone Toddlers during Term Time
5.45 pm Pilots. Ends at about 7.00 pm.
6.00 pm Beaver Scouts and Cub Scouts
7.45-9.15 Scouts

Thurs 7.30 pm Elders' Meeting (1st Thursday)

Fri 7.00-9.00 Youth Club

We do offer Christian Marriage, Baptisms and Funerals so please talk to the Secretary or any Elder if you feel that we can help.

Little Turtles Pre-School meets on Monday to Friday from 9.00 am during term time. Please see (or rather speak to!) one of the Junior Church Leaders for details.



Letter to the Fellowship

Test of Faith and Maturity

Talking to people about God has become a regular part of our lives, well, for most of us especially during this Pandemic. Between meeting people in person or online and the opportunities which open up in our daily lives, I find myself sharing with people from all walks of life - unbelievers, new believers, people who have come and gone from the faith and back again.

It's so typical of the human nature to want all our questions answered before we decide to make any commitments, isn't it? We want proof that God is real and that the Bible is accurate. We want to know why sometimes those who call themselves Christians do awful things and how God could allow bad things happen to good people.

Sadly, as soon as we think all our questions are answered to satisfaction, undoubtedly more appear. It happens to the best of us. There are times when our faith is tested and we find it difficult to cope with. I have had a number of conversations with people especially in the last 5 months where the Pandemic and its effects on ordinary lives were at the top of the list. And some acknowledged that it has definitely weakened their faith in God.

While there are numerous answers and proofs to these questions, we must realize that some things just can't be answered with our minds - they have to be answered with our hearts. The deepest faith doesn't come by getting all our questions answered - it comes simply when we open our hearts to the Lord and invite him to search it through and through.



Don't get me wrong, it's good to ask questions and be knowledgeable of our faith, but the fact of the matter is that there are some questions to which we won't find answers until we can see the Lord face to face and ask him ourselves. It may be anything: an

unexpected illness, the death of a loved one, the loss of our job, or even a friend who turns against us. But when hard times happen, the true nature of our faith in the Lord is revealed.

None of us likes to go through hard times, but God can use them to show us our weaknesses. And when that happens, we need to ask God to help our faith grow.

Perseverance in testing results in spiritual maturity and completeness. This is why James wrote, *“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds”* (James 1:2, 4).

Regardless of whether we're new believers, old believers, it is time for us to open our hearts to God today, and ask him to do a work in us. May we be blessed even during these unprecedented times as the Lord reveals new and wonderful treasures to our hearts.

**God bless,
Sohail**

Let Go & Let God

As children bring their broken toys,
with tears for us to mend,
I brought my broken dreams to God,
because He is my friend.
But then instead of leaving Him
in peace to work alone,
I hung around and tried to help,
with ways that were my own.
At last, I snatched them back again
and cried, “How can you be so slow?”
“My child,” He said,
“What could I do?
You never did let go.”

Prayers for our Fellowship and those we know

Prayers can be for joy and sorrow, health and sickness, good news and bad in addition to those for our own needs and guidance.

Please pray for all of our fellowship at this troubled time as many of our congregation, who had been self-isolating, need confidence and courage to go out into society again, whilst still living with the threat of the virus.



Our church is open once more for worship, albeit with many conditions to adhere to and we give thanks that some of us are seeing each other in person, although at a social distance. We pray for those of our fellowship who cannot join us at present and look forward to the day when they too can take part in worship on our premises once more.

We keep in our thoughts any of our fellowship who may be in hospital, undergoing surgery or having tests, delayed because of lockdown. We pray for their return to good health. We especially think of Andy Anderson.

We remember in our prayers the family and friends of loved ones who have passed away. Be with them Father God at this difficult time. Give them peace of spirit and the knowledge that God knows of all their difficulties and hears all of their prayers.

Father, hear our prayers
Amen

Keep Saying One For Me

There is a dedicated post box on the railings by the Bournemouth Park Road entrance inviting members of the neighbourhood to send us their prayer requests for our Church Prayer Group.

We pray that this scheme will help The Cornerstone be and be known as a church that cares.

Some thoughts for prayers for all outside of our fellowship

Father God at this time of the year we celebrate the harvest of all things that sustain life and we freely give things and money so that those less fortunate than ourselves may share in your goodness.

We pledge to do more to protect our fragile world so that those who come after us might enjoy and be sustained in their life and go on to protect it for those who follow them.

However, whilst the charities are overwhelmed with gifts at this time, please keep reminding us that their need continues all of the year round and not just at Harvest, Christmas and Easter.

We are sheltered, warm, fed and secure. Each day let us remember and do something to help those less fortunate than ourselves and who have needs of mind, body and spirit.

We all have some gifts that can be used in many different ways so, keep our eyes, ears and minds alert to other's needs.

We all hit a time when
we've lost hope and need
someone to put their arms
around us and say:
"I've got you right now,
I won't let you face this alone."

Jesus is that someone

**How fantastic is it that the same God
that created oceans and mountains and galaxies
looked at you and thought
the world needed one
of You too!**

SECRETARY'S NOTEBOOK



You will all know that the Covid situation is changing rapidly, and as I write, a curfew has been imposed on pubs, bars and restaurants, and once again people are being asked to work from home if they can.

It probably does not affect the vast majority of our congregation, but I'm sure we all know someone whose livelihood is at risk so please bear these people in your thoughts and prayers.

We 'bit the bullet' and decided to resume weekly services in September, with two services led by Sohail and one by Roger. It was good to be together and although we cannot sing aloud, reading and appreciating the words afresh, while humming or crooning behind the mask, will have to suffice for now. It reminds me of the Matt Redman song "Heart of Worship" which you can listen to here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HwlGdZBSX8k> .

Our God hears the words on our hearts even when we cannot express that aloud and this too can be a moving experience for us. That said, we were very pleased when the government allowed small groups to sing (subject to additional measures) and our group has resumed singing an introit. That was an odd experience as, believe me, you cannot hear the others when you are three metres apart.

Our Harvest Festival service was certainly different, without the usual complement of Scouts on parade, collecting your donations in a different way and thanking God for his blessings at a time when our freedoms are curtailed. Even the Communion had to be arranged differently, it would be good to hear your opinions on that. Thank you all for your donations to The Storehouse which were much appreciated.



So, looking forward, as I mentioned we are having services every Sunday (unless further anti-Covid measures prevent that) and we

have space in the sanctuary for around 30 people. We have not reached that number yet, so if you are thinking about coming do give me a call. Safety measures have been previously published so I will not repeat them here.

Elders continue to consider if and when it is safe and appropriate to reintroduce some of our other activities. The URC requires a risk assessment to be approved by Elders for each and every organisation/meeting so if you are a group leader now is the time for you to be thinking about this. There is advice and guidance, plus a risk assessment template here:

<https://urc.org.uk/latest-news/3365-urc-issues-coronavirus-advice-to-its-churches.html> If you need any help with this do ask.

You may have seen some news reporters suggesting “Christmas is cancelled” this year, to which my reply is an emphatic “No it isn’t”. As Christians we will continue to mark the birth of our Lord, and if all the large gatherings, fripperies and excesses are absent, it ought to get us closer to the awesome simplicity of the stable. The restrictions on our behaviour may not be quite the same as the obligation to participate in a vast census, but I get the feeling it gives us a greater-than-ever-before opportunity to demonstrate and tell what Christmas is really about.



Finally, we are keenly aware that isolation from one another is not good for our individual and collective wellbeing. In years gone by people kept in touch by letter, then by telephone. Now we have email, social media and conferencing software all of which can be a blessing in times such as this. Take up of our regular Tuesday Zoom meetings has dropped off as the weeks pass. Is this because you are too busy, or hope that physical meetings will be back soon? Until they do, you are welcome to participate, about an hour of general chat as you would in coffee morning. As someone once said “It’s good to stay in touch”.

Ruth Dixon

From one of the editors

Note for Ruth. Communion was excellent, as was the Singing Group.

Note for all others. Felt totally safe. Thanks to all.



Peter's Piece

Hope

What do you hope for?

A holiday? A new car? To do well at school, college, or new job? Perhaps a little bit more personal - To get married? Have a baby? For a loved one to recover from a serious illness?

Can you be certain that whatever is hoped for, will happen? - No, that's what 'hope' is all about. The Bible warns us not to be self-confident of future events, from the OT King Solomon, the wisest man that lived, "*Don't brag about tomorrow, since you don't know what the day will bring.*" Proverbs 27:1 NLT to NT James 4:13-17, where our proposed ventures are to be subject to *God willing*. (Often abbreviated to DV.) In the abrupt onset of COVID19 earlier this year when, to say the very least, many hoped for holidays, had to be suddenly and disappointingly cancelled, we witnessed the truth of these words.

In our English Versions [EVV] of the Bible, the Greek word *elpis* is translated as 'hope' which, according to the late W E Vine, a highly respected theologian and Greek scholar, says Bible hope in contrast, is 'a favourable and confident expectation' [see his Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words; which can be viewed free on-line.]

In the beginning when God initially created us humans *God created man in his own image*, Genesis 1:27 *crowned with glory and honour* Hebrews 2:7. But due to Adam's sin, which, we all inherit, we *fall short of the* (crowning) *glory of God*. Romans 3:23 no matter how hard we may try.

Furthermore, because of this, we are all under a death sentence, for God said, through the OT prophet Ezekiel, *The one who sins is the one who will die*. Ezekiel 18:20. Can then the glory, which God initially crowned humans with, be restored? Is there any hope at all for us humans?

When we say, I hope there is life after death in heaven, do we know this to be a favourable and confident expectation or is it just, a sincerely expressed, cherished desire; or perhaps, a popular comfort thought, to ease the *fear of death*.

The anonymous writer of the Hebrew letter 6:20 says *We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. ---Jesus ---*. Jesus died in our place so that those who put their faith and trust in him may know that *Christ Jesus in you, is the hope of glory*. Colossians 1:27 Jesus himself promised *I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am*. John 14:3.

May you, by faith in Jesus the Christ who died for you, know this *hope of glory*- as a favourable and confident expectation.

Digging Deeper

Thanks to Coronavirus we meet on Zoom on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 7.00 pm. DV. On 12 October Sohail is leading us on the last of the gifts of the Spirit, the gift of Mercy. The series will conclude on 26 October when Robert is to lead us, from the verses Romans 12:6-21 which follow the list of the 7 Gifts of the Spirit, on 'Love in action,' as we, each, use the gifts God has given us. Romans 12:6. *We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us*.

We warmly welcome all who would like to join us on Zoom to contact either Sohail or Peter so you can be sent the access code.

Revised Common Lectionary

October/November 2020

October 4, 2020

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20
Philippians 3:4b-14

Psalm 19
Matthew 21:33-46

October 11, 2020

Exodus 32:1-14
Philippians 4:1-9

Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23
Matthew 22:1-14

October 18, 2020

Exodus 33:12-23

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Psalm 99

Matthew 22:15-22

October 25, 2020

Deuteronomy 34:1-12

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17

Matthew 22:34-46

November 1, 2020

Joshua 3:7-17

1 Thessalonians 2:9-13

Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37

Matthew 23:1-12

November 8, 2020

Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Psalm 78:1-7

Matthew 25:1-13

Breaking News

- A strange thing happened during a performance of Elgar's Sea Pictures at a concert hall in Bermuda tonight. The man playing the triangle disappeared.
- Everyone at John Lennon airport in Liverpool has to be quarantined!! Imagine.....all the people.....
- A man who has trained his dog to play the trumpet on the London Underground said he went from Barking to Tooting in just over an hour.
- Due to Santa having to quarantine for 14 days when he arrives in the UK, Christmas is now going to be in mid January.
- News has just broken that the King of Spain has been quarantined on his private jet. That means the reign in Spain stays mainly on the plane.



The Baby Belsham Mystery

Another Essex story, this time from the Police files which are a very interesting source of past history and how much modern techniques with forensics have changed the outcome of cases before the courts.

We start this story with a snippet from a letter written to one Stephen Dean by his supposed wife Elizabeth Belsham. She wrote “I write to say that the child is no more, it dide (sic) last night.”

I say supposed because none of the family attended a wedding of Stephen and Elizabeth although her mother did receive a slice of wedding cake after the event. They did live together in Moulsham in Chelmsford but when Elizabeth was due to give birth, Stephen dismissed her from their home and Elizabeth went to the home of her mother in Southminster, where she gave birth to a son on the 16th June 1844. Three weeks later a police investigation began when a baby was found in the Chelmer River in Chelmsford, twenty miles from where the child was born.

Stephen James Belsham was the deceased baby named at the Coroner's Hearing and his verdict was that the baby died as a result of suffocation, due to drowning, and that there was a case to answer by the mother as to how this event had occurred. The charge was one of wilful murder and such was the interest in the case that the jurors had to fight their way through the crowds of onlookers to get to their place in court.

The case started in July 1844 and Mr Clarkson, for the Crown, admitted that the evidence was circumstantial, but serious enough to try a young woman for her life and so the evidence should be presented. The big question which was to be considered was how had a baby born in Southminster come to meet its end in Chelmsford, twenty miles away?

Starting with Stephen James birth, which was far from easy, the nurse who attended Elizabeth said that the mother had been very

disturbed in the time following the birth. Then Elizabeth's brother Richard, died just a week after the birth which upset her even more.

The baby was baptised on the 22nd of June in the church of St Leonard Southminster, and the parents are recorded as Stephen Dean, shoemaker, and Elizabeth Dean. Nineteen days after the birth, Elizabeth left her mother's home, taking the baby, a parasol, and a basket. She took the mail cart to Chelmsford hoping to find a wet nurse for the baby, as she herself was unable to suckle him. She also hoped to meet the baby's father and go to the house they were sharing in Moulsham. The cart stopped at the Saracen's Head pub, where Elizabeth was seen to try feeding the baby with some biscuit but she did not give it any of her ale.

At nine that night they arrived at the Beehive pub in Baddow Road where she had arranged to meet her husband, but she was seen to leave at ten not having met anyone. The next evidence said she was seen around eleven o'clock at the King's Head in Chelmsford High Street without the baby but carrying a paper parcel. The serving girl, Sarah Digby, gave evidence that she saw steam rising from Elizabeth's stockings as they dried by the fire and as she took the lady's boots she saw the monogram E.D. Inside them, and on the soles was fresh gravel.

Elizabeth went to the room she had booked and in the morning, she asked for paper and pen and wrote the letter we started with. It was backdated to July 4th, and it was sent from Latchington several miles away and not from Chelmsford. Next it was stated that she went to Writtle to see her friend Sarah Oliver, arriving there at the same time as the baby's body was being found in the river in Chelmsford.

A Physician called to give evidence reiterated that the baby died from drowning, that there were biscuit fragments in the stomach but no river water. The clothing worn by the baby was identified as its own by the grandmother. There was also evidence that the baby in the river had a birthmark which was not recorded in the delivery of the baby of Elizabeth, was the identity secure?

After all the evidence had been presented, Mr. Ryland, Elizabeth's solicitor took up her defence and was very strong in his words about

her husband, decrying a man who could turn out the woman who was carrying his child so close to her time.

He then said that Elizabeth had not eaten for some time on the fateful day nor had she drunk water, and as such was possibly not in a frame of mind to know exactly what her actions had been. She was not aware of trying to drown her baby. It may have slipped from her grasp into the water in her exhausted state. He picked up on the possible mis-identification regarding the birthmark and that the gravel could have been imprinted into her boot soles from any street in Chelmsford. His words had such an effect on the jury that it only took them twenty minutes to bring back a verdict of not guilty, much to the crowd's enjoyment.

Did she do it? Was it her baby? If not where was Stephen James? Were all the witnesses telling the truth or their version of the same, having heard lots of gossip in the crowd?

What would modern techniques have been able to do to shed light on the evidence, certainly DNA would have helped, so would the work on the clothing, the feeding and the place the gravel had come from. We will never know and perhaps next time I will bring you another case from the archives.

Alison Shannon

ELDERS' ELECTION 2020
Nominations now open



As you know, we elect Elders annually to serve for a three-year term, and in normal circumstances the ballot takes place at our Church Meeting in November. At the present time it is not known whether we will be able to have a church meeting in November and if so what form it might take, however Elders feel it is important to continue with an election and that a valid election can be achieved by modifying our usual practice as follows:

Usual practice	Modification for 2020
Nominations during the month of October, in writing with proposer, seconder and nominee signing a single form	Nominations during the month of October. For each nominee the proposer, seconder and nominee may consult with each other and notify the secretary separately by email ruthandfrank@blueyonder.co.uk or telephone 01702 464186
Nominations close 12 noon Sunday 1 st November 2020	No change
Ballot and declaration at November church meeting	<p>1. Week beginning Monday 9th November the secretary will send out ballot papers</p> <p>a) by email</p> <p>b) by post to those members without email</p> <p>NB if you have email but no printer please request a hard copy</p> <p>2. Members will vote and return a HARD COPY of the ballot paper to reach the Secretary BY POST (for confidentiality) by Friday 20th November.</p> <p>3. The secretary will count the votes accompanied by Alison Shannon</p> <p>4. In the event a church meeting is held on 26th November (whether physical, virtual or hybrid) the result of the ballot will be declared at that time. In the event there is no church meeting the result will be promulgated by the Secretary by email/magazine</p>

For your information,

- the Elders retiring after three years at the end of 2020 are Stella Duboux who is eligible for re-election and Robert Wiseman, who is eligible, but has intimated he is moving away from the area and therefore does not wish to be considered.

- In addition, to redress an imbalance arising from previous vacancies Ann Thorp will stand down after one year and is eligible for immediate re-election for a full three year term
- Mary Goodhew retired at the end of 2019 and is also now eligible for re-election.
- There are four vacancies to be filled at this election.

NEWS FROM THE FELLOWSHIP

Thank you for all the good wishes and prayers during my various stays in hospital over the last couple of months, following my fall. I count myself lucky that I had no obvious effects from being COVID positive and hope I am on the way to better health now.

It has been good to watch some of the services online.

Andy Anderson

STOP PRESS. News just in! Thank you for your harvest donations which amounted to five crates and £245. The Storehouse are very pleased and say “thank you”.

SERVICES AT THE CORNERSTONE

October

Sun	4 th	10.30 a.m.	Morning worship	Peter Hunt
Sun	11 th	10.30 a.m.	Morning worship	Our Minister
Sun	18 th	10.30 a.m.	Morning worship	Roger Brett
Sun	25 th	10.30 a.m.	Morning worship With Holy Communion	Our Minister

November

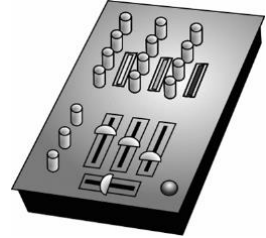
Sun	1 st	10.30 a.m.	Morning worship	Robert Wiseman
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Remember to contact Ruth if you want to attend

Clocks go back on Saturday night October 24th

Recording of services

We are now live-streaming and recording every Sunday service so, if you are in church and do not wish to be seen, then please speak to anyone at the sound and vision desk before the service starts.



If you would like a copy for yourself, or for someone who could not be with us, please ask Vic Crowhurst.

Or perhaps to give to someone to listen to how well we sing!

Action?

Think something ought to happen?

Don't wish for it to happen!

Don't wait for it to happen!

Just make it happen!!

Would you believe it?

- ❖ The oldest computer was owned by Adam and Eve. It was an Apple with very limited memory. Just 1 Byte and everything crashed.
- ❖ I used to dread walking under horse chestnut trees in the autumn. But after therapy I've managed to conker it.
- ❖ My mate bet me £100 that I couldn't do a Butterfly impression. I thought, that's got to be worth a little flutter!
- ❖ I don't think much of those 'cold relief tablets'. I've taken the whole box and I'm still freezing.

Some thanks from the editors

Whilst we have not been at church, Ruth, our secretary has been busy printing the magazine and making sure it gets out to those who cannot receive it by email. Our thanks go to her for her hard work in doing this and also for printing and distributing the newsletter which Alison has been compiling. Thank you, Alison.

Also, our thanks to the recipients who have made a donation towards the cost of printing and postage. Happy Treasurer!



The next edition of New Horizons!

The next magazine might be published on Sunday 1st November or it might be a week later on the 8th.

It all depends on this dreadful COVID-19. If Michael and Brenda get away on their holiday at the end of October, then it will be the 8th. If they have to stay at home, then it will be the 1st.

Usual time for our contributors to send the Editors their items though **by 9.00 a.m. on Thursday 22nd October please.**

All contributions welcomed as usual, from reports, stories and thought-provoking articles.

A large print version of this magazine is available.

Please ask an editor if you would like one.

Alternatively, you can view it on line.

See the website address on the front cover

To thrive in life
You need 3 bones.
A wishbone.
A backbone.
And
A funny bone

Grandpa's face

A little girl was sitting next to her grandfather as he read her a bedtime story. From time to time, she would take her eyes off the book and reach up and touch his wrinkled cheek. She touched her own cheek after she touched his.



After a little while of thinking she asked, "Grandpa, did God make you?"

He looked at her and said, "Yes, sweetheart, God made me a long time ago."

She paused for a few seconds and then asked, "Grandpa, did God make me too?"

He replied, "Yes, indeed, God made you just a little while ago."

Feeling their respective faces again, she whispered to him, "God's getting better at it, isn't he?"

Everything happens for a reason.
Sometimes it hurts.
Sometimes it's hard.
But in the end, it's all for the best.
Never stop trusting
God and His plan for your life.

**They're telling me the virus is everywhere.
I told them so is GOD**

WHO'S WHO?

Minister	Rev Sohail Ejaz MA (01702) 580879 <u>tcsscp@yahoo.co.uk</u>
Secretary	Ruth Dixon (01702) 464186
Treasurer	Ann Blackwell 07753 348856
Envelopes	Mike Mead 07802 749912
Gift Aid	David Osborn (01702) 611337
Preachers List	Mary Goodhew (01702) 467512
Junior Church	Ruth Dixon (01702) 464186
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Pilots	Derek Goodyear 07863 208914
Prayer Fellowship	Peter & Zoy Hunt (01702) 864814
Digging Deeper	Peter Hunt (01702) 864814
C'Stone Toddlers	Mary Goodhew (01702) 467512
Scout Group	Lorna Skippon (01702) 477309
Christian Forum	Alison Shannon (01702) 464737
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**Please remember that your Elders are ordained
to serve our members and friends
who have pastoral concerns.**