

New Horizons

April 2026



THE CORNERSTONE



Bournemouth Park Road,
Southend-on-Sea, SS2 5JL
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use SS2 5HR no 59)

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Email:

CornerstoneReception@outlook.com

WORSHIP AND ACTION

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

Coffee and tea will be served after Morning Worship
Please stay to talk with each other in an informal atmosphere.

Tuesdays at 11.30 am is a special Time of Prayer together for: the Fellowship, those with special needs, our neighbours, and our worldwide Christian Family. All are welcome to join with us.

Church Meetings are held on alternate months. It is the decision of the Church Meeting that they shall be held after Sunday Morning Worship during the winter but revert to Thursdays at 7.30pm in the summer. This may change so the actual dates and times will be published in this magazine and announced in Church.

What's on in the week

Tues	10.00 am	THE HUB
		Starting with Tea and Coffee in the Foyer
	11.30 am	Followed by Prayer Meeting
		with fellowship and activities
		on 1 st and 3 rd Tuesdays or as announced.
Thurs	6.00 pm	Beaver Scouts and Cub Scouts
	7.45 - 9.15pm	Scouts
Thurs	7.30 pm	Elders' Meeting (1 st Thursday)

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 contact the Church Secretary for details.

Easter Greetings to the Fellowship



**Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, should die for me**

The church magazine has traditionally been issued on the first Sunday of the month, but with technology I know many of you see it before that.

Nevertheless, I am sticking with the first Sunday which this year is Easter Day, so after six weeks of Lent without alleluias, here we go:-

Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

So why no alleluia during Lent?

You may not be surprised to learn, this dates back to a decree of Pope Alexander II in the early 11th century intended to fix the heart and mind of the Christian on the penitential nature of the period of Lent, which was continued by the Church of England.

As non-conformists we do not need to follow this pattern but in practice many do, reasoning that it builds anticipation and renders the joy of Easter that much more relatable. On this matter I do not have firm feelings either way, but do acknowledge there is something comforting in the familiar pattern of the solemnity of the Lenten period immersing oneself in the passion scriptures, the outright hope and praise of Palm Sunday; then on to Jesus' gift to his people of the Last

Supper, then the despair of Gethsemane, the utter loss of the events at Calvary. The mourning on the sabbath.

**He left His Father's throne above,
So free, so infinite His grace;
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race;
'Tis mercy all, immense and free;
For, O my God, it found out me.**

Then comes the joy of Easter morning, the empty tomb discovered by the women, Mary's encounter with 'the gardener'; the click when the disciples remembered Jesus saying he would rise again on the third day, how exciting that must have been. From being closeted up in doom and gloom, there was something to hold on to. Maybe just maybe everything will be OK.

**Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou abide with me.**

You can tell I draw a lot of inspiration from the lyrics to hymns, so with thanks to Charles Wesley, Henry Francis Lyte, and George W Kitchen, I leave you with this wonderful verse that, even if the language is somewhat outdated, I know I cannot express better

**Saved by the cross whereon their Lord was slain,
The heirs of Adam their lost home regain.
Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
Till all the world adore his sacred name.**

A very happy and blessed Easter to you all.

Ruth Dixon

Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed, Alleluia!

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 our fellowship as we live in these worrying times of financial worries, natural disasters and war.



We keep in our thoughts any of our fellowship who are unwell, in hospital, undergoing surgery/treatment or having tests. We pray for their return to good health.

Please remember in your prayers those in our fellowship who mourn the loss of a loved one. Give them peace of spirit and the knowledge that God hears all their prayers.

Father, hear our prayers **Amen**

Time flies, but how does it work?

Have you ever looked into the back of a clock and seen all of the wheels, levers, springs and spindles? Most of us don't know how it all works but we do expect it to keep time.

The springs, weights and batteries provide the power. All of those moving parts somehow work together to make sure that the face that we see, shows the correct time.

However, if a spring breaks, a lever gets stuck, some cogs get broken or dirt gets in. Then, the best we can hope for is that it all slows down. At worst, it stops, all is still there, but the face has nothing to show.

A vital lesson for the Christian Church is it not? All must work in harmony using the power given to us, oil the works, engage the cogs and send the message through its big face and our small clocks!

Lord, we pray that we may work in harmony together to show Your face!

SECRETARY'S NOTEBOOK



It's been an odd month for me, not being able to do very much while the hand is healing and itching to get out into the garden to tackle the weeds that survived the mild winter. If you know me at all, you will realise the strain! The better gardening news is that all the rain means a bumper crop of wild garlic and three-cornered

leek, so we are having that with just about everything and looking for ways to preserve it before it dies back.

We did manage to get to Dorothy's very first dance show on a very cold Saturday, and she seemed to enjoy performing. A long way to go for just five minutes of dance, but delightful to see nonetheless.

It was a pleasure to get the cast off my arm and start to flex the wrist. It is a slow process because of my underlying condition but, as long as I can regain typing speed and the ability to peg out the washing when the weather improves, I will be content. Sadly, due to me being unable to drive and Mary's continued ill health, The Cornerstone was not represented at the Synod Meeting on 14th March, but will keep an eye out for the Minutes to share when they arrive.

Work continues to maintain the premises to a high standard, and I thank those who devote time to this. Obviously, there are things that require outside expertise that has to be paid for - a good example being the issues with the Central Avenue automatic door. Perhaps our biggest intended expenditure this year is replacing the wooden fence around the artificial grass with railings. The fence has served us well since 2011 but has come to the end of its useful and safe life. We could replace like for like but have opted to future proof with railings and an additional long-life coating. This is likely to happen in the summer holidays at a cost of around £6.5K; we are proposing to allocate the funds received from Jan Fox's estate towards this.

As I write, the Manse is going on the market and we hope for a swift sale, not the least to ease the burden of weekly visits required by insurers, most of which have been undertaken by Roger and Ann, thank you both. After much to-ing and fro-ing over a date the Mission

Pastorate Vacancy Group will meet on 20th April to move things forward. Before then I am planning a few days' R&R with my niece in Spain.

At worship, our services have been led by John Amos, me for Church Parade, Neil Keeble on Mothering Sunday, Roger Brett for Communion and Rev Celia Whitman on the final Sunday of March which included the belated Induction of Elders Victor Crowhurst and Clive Goodhew.

Some of us attended the service of thanksgiving for the life and witness over 133 years of Southchurch Park URC, on 28th March. It was a moving service conducted by Rev Lythan Nevard, Synod Moderator. Our thoughts and prayers are with the few remaining folk as they continue to meet for worship, temporarily at least, in the Scout Hut.

At the Annual General and Church meeting on 29th March the usual round of reports was received, the accounts for 2025 were approved as required and Officers and post holders appointed. We spent some time discussing the calling of ministers to the Mission Partnership, and what qualities and characteristics would be preferred in potential Ministers. As Roger mentioned, the timing of Moderators' meetings and introductions will not always fit our normal pattern of meetings, and it may well be necessary in the future to call a meeting at short notice. The Interim Moderator for the Mission Partnership is Rev, David Coaker, formerly of Grays URC, who is currently the Eastern Synod Clerk. The church meeting also confirmed the admission of Melanie Diji to membership, the date of the ceremony to be arranged.

There is a Partnership-wide getting to know you event, at Christ Church Rayleigh on the afternoon of Saturday 25th April 2 pm. Parking at Christ Church is limited, so I would recommend car-pooling where possible and if need be, park in the Websters Way public car park.

Kings Road invites anyone who would like a daytime Bible study session to join them fortnightly on Friday afternoons -further details on notices sheet.

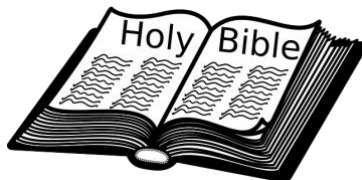
If, like me, you are enjoying Alison's regular contribution to this magazine, do have a think about what stories or knowledge you can

share, there is always room for more and who knows? We may all learn a bit more about each other in the process.

Ruth Dixon

BIBLE STUDY

Well, they say things are sent to try us,
but last month seemed a real trial.

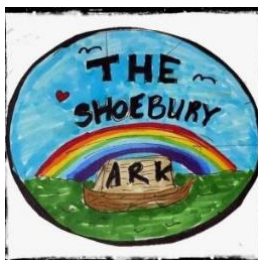


We finally managed to master the technology of setting up the meetings, then our internet started giving us problems. That is now in the process of being fixed and our April meetings are on Mondays 12th and 26th when Ann will be covering some of the people in the New Testament

All are welcome to join, no obligation to speak.

Have a word with Michael Wardle or Ann Thorp for details

Faith in Action – See below



Collection Point - Blue trug at Reception Desk

**Timeless lessons
learned over a lifetime.**



1. People forget what you owned. They remember how you treated them.
2. Health is a foundation. Without it, everything else loses meaning.
3. Most fears never happen. But the stress still steals real time.
4. Grudges don't protect you. They keep you stuck.
5. Love isn't a feeling. It's steadiness when life turns hard.
6. Children need your presence more than your presents.
7. Silence can solve what shouting only spreads.
8. You can't control everything that happens to you, but you can control how you respond.
9. Positive thinking is like a muscle that gets stronger with us. Stay positive.
10. The best moments are often the simplest: meals, laughter, hugs.

Harvest Weekend 2026



Sunday 27th September 2026 will again see our morning worship led by Alan Barnes, with our Scout Group and other young people in attendance

But before this; Friday 25th September will see the return of Friday night is Music Night. Fish and Chips to start followed by Big Screen fun, frolics and music.

Make a note in your diary. More to come later.

Rocks and stones and more

When introducing a new topic at school we were always told to start where the children were, with the knowledge and experience they had and develop it from there.

When we moved into our present house the garden was a muddy patch with lots of broken concrete slabs making stepping stones down the area, and a lot of rubble and stones. We didn't mind as it was to be the first chance to develop our own garden having lived in tied accommodation all our working lives. The stones were collected together, and a rough wall about a foot high made a barrier along a raised area to be made into a bed for plants.

This got me thinking about how stones and rocks had to be cleared from land designated for cultivation and farming. I have roots in Yorkshire and I have great admiration for the builders of the stone stalls around the fields in the Yorkshire Moors. In England these are known as Dry Stone Walls. Often called by other names, for example in Scotland they are Dykes and the builders are Dykers.

Wherever they are built there is a basic structure, and once built correctly the wall will stand for hundreds of years. These walls are remarkably resilient in the face of harsh weather, attack by animals and even mechanical means.

The earliest carbon dated examples in the British Isles are in Ireland, covered now by layers of peat laid down over millennia. These are dated to 3800BC, there are walls in Orkney thought to be 4000 years old and some built by the Vikings.

Middle age walls survive intact in many countries and can be seen in Greece and Bosnia today enclosing the same fields as they did in the original farms, following the tradition of dry stone walling in the Bronze Age.

Much more recently walls were built to enclose areas of private land between 1750 and 1860 after the Settlement Acts. The actual skill of dry stone walling is dying out as farmers take the easy option of repairing broken walls by laying modern wire fencing. Fortunately there is a Dry Stone Walling Association that encourages new students in the craft and there is a graded skills set from the Initial Beginner level, to the Master Craftsman. There are some very interesting articles written by Masters online, well worth reading if the topic interests you.

Building the walls follows a basic pattern. The wall is known as a Double Wall with two rows of stones parallel with the base stones bedded into the subsoil to give stability. The row sides are built up in 'courses' and every foot or so of height tie stones are laid across from side to side adding strength. As the wall gets taller the two rows are angled towards each other and the resulting slope is called the Batter.

Once high enough, flat stones form the top layer, and the final layer is angled stones sloping against each other. The final top sloping stones are called Coping Stones and stop the animals climbing on the wall. The gap between the two rows is filled with smaller stones carefully laid in a form packing system. Nowhere is there any cement, ever.

Along the length of the wall there are gates and also smaller built in gaps to allow the sheep to move from field to field, also other animals can gain access across the land. Gaps up to 8 inches high are called Bolt Holes, 24 to 30 inch gaps are Cripple Holes. There are specific holes which are controlled by the farmer with movable fences so they can move their flocks.



Another gap can be seen near old monasteries where the monks used to bring their Bee Hives into protect them in the winter in the base of the walls. These of course are called Bee holes.

A modern wall, and some are still being built, will be expected to last at least 300 years without needing repair. A Master Craftsman can build or repair between three and four metres of wall in a day.

So next time you dig into your garden and hit a stone with your spade think of those miles of Dry Stone Walls built where the conditions are too harsh for plant hedges to survive.

Alison Shanon

All I need to know I learned from The Easter Bunny



Don't put all your eggs in one basket

Everyone needs a friend who is all ears

Some body parts should be floppy

Let happy thoughts multiply like rabbits

Everyone is entitled to a bad "Hare" day

Keep your paws off other people's Jelly Beans

DIARY OF WORSHIP AND OTHER ACTIVITIES AT THE CORNERSTONE

April



Thu	2 nd	7.30pm	Maundy Thursday	Ruth Dixon
Fri	3 rd	10.30am	Good Friday worship	Roger Brett
Sun	5 th	10.30am	Easter Sunday worship (HC)	Roger Brett
Thu	9 th	7.30pm	Elders Meeting	
Sun	12 th	10.30am	Morning Worship	Roger Brett
Mon	13 th	7.00pm	Bible Study	
Sun	19 th	10.30am	Morning Worship	John Amos
Sun	26 th	10.30am	Morning Worship (HC)	Rev Celia Whitman
Mon	27 th	7.00pm	Bible Study	

May

Sun	2 nd	10.30am	Morning Worship	John Amos
Thu	7 th	7.30pm	Elders Meeting	
Sun	10 th	10.30am	Morning Worship/Parade Svce	Ruth Dixon
Mon	11 th	7.00pm	Bible Study	

As long as we have memories,
 yesterday remains.
 As long as we have hope,
 tomorrow awaits.
 As long as we have love,
 today is beautiful

The next Issue of New Horizons will be for May 2026



Publication will be on Sunday 3rd May and we ask for your contributions by 9.00am on Thursday 23rd April please.

We always welcome news, views, ideas and anything else that you feel would help others to live a Christian life of love that they seek to share with all.

**Thank you.
Anne and Michael**

Church Flowers

The Flower List is on the noticeboard in the Foyer and if you would like to supply flowers for any Sunday in the future, please place your name on the list or contact Val.



She will be very happy to buy the flowers on your behalf and arrange them or alternatively, you are very welcome to do your own arrangement.

April 5th EASTER

Communion Offerings



These collections are taken at the monthly Sunday Communion Service during the last hymn and are for local charitable organisations outside of The Cornerstone.

Sunday Coffee/Tea Rota

Apr	5 th	Anne Clarke and Val Mead
	12 th	Anne Clarke Val Mead
	19 th	Sandra Russ
	26 th	Melanie Diji
May	3 rd	Anne Clarke and Val Mead
	10 th	Val Mead



If you can help anytime, please have a word with Michael.

Tuesday mornings "Drop in"

Apr	7 th	Stella Duboux
	14 th	Wendy Brett and Val Mead
	21 st	See below
	28 th	Carol Smith and Pat Pates
May	5 th	Stella Duboux
	12 th	Wendy Brett and Val Mead



On the Tuesdays that are in red type, someone will set up in the servery, and we shall then rely on you to help yourself and perhaps assist others if you feel able. Thank you.

WHO TO CONTACT

CHURCH OFFICERS

Minister and Pastor	Vacancy	
Secretary	Ruth Dixon	(01702) 464186
Treasurer	Elizabeth Helm	07973 199759

<u>Envelopes</u>	Ann Thorp	07753 348856
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<u>Scout Group</u>	Lorna Skippon	(01702) 477309
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<u>Use of Premises</u>	Roger Brett	(01702) 479874
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<u>Flower arranging</u>	Val Mead	(01702) 296189
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<u>Editorial Team</u>	Anne Clarke	(01702) 293102
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af.clarke52@gmail.com

Michael Wardle	07592614741
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mjb23wardle@btinternet.com

**Please remember that your Elders are ordained
to give pastoral care to members, friends and anyone in need.**

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