



The **HIGHLANDER**


April 2025

The monthly newsletter of Highlands Methodist Church, Leigh on Sea

These are services at Highlands for April 2025

10:30 am Sun 6th	Morning Worship Café Church	Deacon Maureen Spinks
10:30 am Sun 13 th	Morning Worship Palm Sunday	Rev Heather Simmons
7:00 pm Thu 17th	Maundy Meal at Belfairs	Rev Steve Mayo
10:30 am Fri 18 th	Morning Worship Good Friday US at Wesley	Rev Steve Mayo
10:30 am Sun 20 th	Morning Worship Easter Sunday Communion	Rev Heather Simmons
4:00 pm Sun 20 th	All-Age Worship & Praise	Matt Bunkall
10:30 am Sun 27 th	Morning Worship	Rev Heather Simmons



 Highlands (Leigh) Methodist Church

www.highlandsmethodist.org.uk

The **Highlander** is published by Highlands Methodist Church, Sutherland Blvd, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 3PT. Highlands Methodist Church is a member church of the *Southend and Leigh Circuit*, 34/10, which is part of the Beds, Essex and Herts District.

**These are services at
The Fishermen's Chapel for April 2025.**

9:30 am Sun 6 th	Morning Worship Communion	Rev Steve Mayo
7:30 pm Sun 13 th	Gospel Service	Rev Heather Simmons
7:00 pm Thu 17 th	Maundy Meal at Belfairs	Rev Steve Mayo
10:30 am Fri 18 th	Morning Worship Good Friday US at Wesley	Rev Steve Mayo
9:30 am Sun 20 th	Morning Worship Easter Sunday Communion	Rev Heather Simmons
7:30 pm Sun 20 th	Evening Worship Anchored	Rev Heather Simmons
7:30 pm Sun 27 th	Evening Worship Mindfulness	Rev Heather Simmons





Highlands Methodist Church

Hospitality in the Midst of our Community

All telephone numbers are '01702' unless stated

Minister	Rev Heather Simmons heather.simmons@methodist.org.uk	07879 232231
Secretary to Church Council	David Watson	557702
Minutes Secretary	Vanessa Mayes	473787
Church Stewards	Andrew Hyde Donald Mayes Lesley Hyde Jean Edmonds	473111 473787 473111 801517
All Age Community Builder	Matt Bunkall mattbunkall@gmail.com	07305 769086
Church Treasurer	Steve Watson	07543 905641
Children's Worker	Ros Bryant	478631
Pastoral Co-ordinator	Jean Edmonds	801517
Church Flowers	Jean Edmonds	801517
Lettings/Use of Premises	Sam Watson highlandslettings@gmail.com	07510 808519

From Your Minister

Dear Church Family,

For Lent I have given up rushing around, which is much easier said than done (I wish now I'd chosen the 'no sugar' option).



The same number of things still need to be done but I am trying to stay present, be mindful of my surroundings, engage fully with each person I speak to, and above all be aware of God's presence in my interactions with people and nature. Even as I write this, I am noticing a smile emerging because the act of slowing down and looking for God is life-giving.

In my reflections I am giving time and prayer to our 3rd Service of the month at 4:00 pm Easter Sunday 20 April. We have had two of these services now and Matt, who leads our worship, is really giving his all. He loves Jesus so much and his enthusiasm to share that love flows out of him.

I have been reflecting on why we chose to have this service. It came, if you remember, from our Mission Day and wanting to grow Highlands. We wanted to meet families where they are in their lives, rather than expect them to fit into our ways of "doing church". We also wanted to serve our community and meet its needs, for example loneliness and eating alone amongst the older generation.

So, we are prayerfully and gradually evolving our Community Service: finding which bits work and which to improve upon. We have the gifts of Matt's singing and playing and his relaxed creativity. We have the great fortune of food to share with one another. Perhaps we need to work on being able to see clearly the

worship lyrics on the screen and more chance for discussion. Perhaps the food needs to be at the end of the worship so people can partake or not? If the time is a little later people will have not had their lunch so soon and might be ready for supper. So how about 4:00 – 5:00 pm worship and then 5:30 pm supper? People can arrive a little earlier too if they fancy tea and biscuits before we start the worship. You see, what I am inviting you to think about is this is not a 'Sunday morning, 1 hour' service. Rather it's a time of worship and fellowship on a Sunday which meets the needs of families who have football/clubs in the morning and who might like a break from cooking in the evening. This is also a time when our older members who live and eat on their own can come and be with us in a warm place, have a time of singing, praying, chatting, deepening their faith, and eating together with friends. This style of worship won't be to everyone's taste, but I do hope that if you do go elsewhere in the morning (and we are connexional church, so I actively encourage that) that you also support and encourage Highlands to grow by inviting friends and family to join us in this new community service. We can only try! I would really value your reflections on this new venture and how we can shape the time in worship to be really serving you, our members and friends.

That's not all that is new at Highlands Methodist Church! We are also starting a *Lectio Divina* Zoom on 16 April which will be weekly from 7:30-8:15pm. Clive Johnson and I will offer this time of peaceful reflection to deepen our knowledge of scripture, hymns and faith writings. Here are the details you need in order to join the Zoom meeting:

- ✦ <https://zoom.us/j/95347433390?pwd=VTY50eEye9ZE3fq0vbHGhjjQT5w8X9.1>
- ✦ Meeting ID: 953 4743 3390
- ✦ Passcode: 498912

We also have a wonderful concert on 26 April at 7:30 pm with Waterside Choirs and The Music Man Project. Tickets (£10) will be available beforehand at the church or on the door. If you love



contemporary uplifting music by an award-winning choir and joyful singing from our famous friends. you will be in for such a treat. There will also be a Zero 0% Bar for refreshments.

But before that we have Easter! The most precious celebration of the year. The celebration that we approach prayerfully, with curiosity, with wonder. Please join us in the Leigh Methodist Churches across all the services we have planned for you, to fully engage as disciples of our amazing Jesus Christ.

I am signing off now as I am due to be with Rev Pete Moorhouse to share in my last "Probationer" oversight meeting before my Ordination, and I want to be fully present in this gift of support and care for my journey.

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

Diary Dates

- Chalkwell MC Raffle and Big Book stall Friday 4 April 10:00 am to 12:00 noon for chat refreshment and various stalls.
- Hobbies Easter Spring Fayre on Saturday 5 April, 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. All are welcome to enjoy a selection of beautiful Easter cards, gifts, floral baskets, along with a raffle, top refreshments, friendship and fellowship with all money raised going to Highlands.
- Safeguarding training is available on Thursday 10 April at Wesley MC 6:30 pm - 8:45 pm. Thursday 10 April 2025. Contact Judy Taylor at judy@wesleymethodist.org.uk to register.

- The first Lectio Divina event takes place at 7:30 pm on 16 April. Fuller details in Heather's letter on page 5.
- The Spoken Words of Jesus. Saturday 19 April (Easter Saturday) 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm. Further detail page 10.
- An Easter Sunday extra – Belfairs MC 6:30 pm 20 April. Led by the 'Worship Band' and others from the circuit.
- Movies are coming home! A first revival will be Friday 25 April. Watch out for a flyer with full details.

And further ahead...

- Labyrinth Walk. Saturday 3 May 1:00 – 1:45 pm
- Church Council 7:00 pm Tuesday 13 May
- Sunday 18 May 7:30 pm at Rayleigh MC - Testimony Service of Rev Agnes Sam and Rev Heather Simmons
- Saturday 21 June 10:00 am - 2:00 pm at Hadleigh MC - Circuit Quiet Day - In the Stillness:
- Highlands Pilgrimage. Sunday 10 August 12:00 noon -1:30 pm

Puzzle of the Month¹

Another maths problem. Select exactly 3 numbers to exactly add up to 50.

$$\square + \square + \square = 50$$

1 5 9 11 21 25

¹ Solution page 13



We pray for our friends who are ill, housebound, or bereaved and for those in residential care: particularly *Sheena Hunter* in *Westerley Methodist Care Home*, and *Peggy Gosling*. Our thoughts and prayers are with them and their families.

We **pray especially for** a number of church members afflicted by long-term illnesses and short-term accidents or recovering from surgery. Especially we remember Jackie Carter and Gill Metcalfe, both recovering from procedures. God grant in each case a speedy recovery.

Also **well done** to Jackie for achieving Level 5 Health and Safety Certification (very difficult I'm advised).

Congratulations to Pamela and Patrick Smith, now proud grandparents of Lawrence.

Finally, as I contemplate the evolving catastrophe of the Myanmar/Thailand I **pray** for all involved.



Snippets

Highlands Toddlers

Our recent Coffee Morning raised £44.60, enabling the purchase of a new ball pool. Grateful thanks to our regular supporters.

Ros and Margaret

Mencap Showstoppers

Southend Mencap's 70th birthday party was like 70 years of fun, dancing and music packed into 90 minutes, with about 170 supporters packed into the hall. I can't wait for their 75th, but I suppose we must. Over £300 was collected.

Hobbies.

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

On 3 April we will be making floral baskets with Jean for the Spring coffee morning. Then on 17 April we will be learning new techniques working on Vellum.



Advance date for 1 May. This will be a favourite activity - card making with die cut découpage. All are welcome.

Bird Boxes.

As you may have noticed, Highlands shares a home with a growing community of starlings, blue tits and sparrows (to name but three species). To encourage these neighbours Marian has obtained and had installed two boxes on the North wall.



Also, the Guides have made some boxes that will shortly be hung up. As yet we have no tenants, but sooner or later we shall. There are plenty of potential occupants around.

Events Led by Clive Johnson

THE SPOKEN WORDS OF JESUS Saturday April 19

This is a 2-hour informal workshop at the church, including a break for coffee. At this sacred time of year, we will hear some of the words of Jesus as those who study Aramaic – the spoken language of Jesus – believe they were likely heard. As we anticipate the day of our Lord’s glorious resurrection, the words we will hear include his promises of reassurance and comfort. Come to hear a beautiful selection of well-known sayings of Jesus as you may never have heard them before, owing to the way that were first interpreted in Greek and later translated into English.



LABYRINTH WALK. Saturday May 3,

Join us on World Labyrinth Day, when people around the world are invited to offer a prayer for peace while walking a labyrinth as “one at one” (at 1 pm in their own time zone). On this day, a beautiful labyrinth, based on a famous one found in Chartres Cathedral, returns to Highlands. Come and hear a little about the mystery of the labyrinth and then, if you can, simply walk. This event is for people of any faith tradition or none and assumes nothing other than you can put one foot in front of another – or if this is difficult, just sit around the labyrinth and bathe in its beautiful energy.



From the Editor

It's nearly Easter! But keep calm. If you've promised to abjure and renounce chocolate for Lent, then so it must be – until Easter Sunday at the earliest.

A strange thing about this time of year is that it's loaded with words that don't crop up at any other time. So I thought that, to keep your minds off chocolate, we might look at how some of them got here.

Shrove Tuesday is the last day before Lent (see below). There are many traditions, such as using up foodstuff that might not be



allowed in Lent. Hence we make pancakes, and other cultures might say goodbye to meat. Hence 'carnival' which means just that.

Another old custom is that the priest might 'shrive' (or shrove) people in preparation for Lent. It's an old word from which we have 'shrift' and it means 'hearing confession'. Leaving Lent aside for a moment, in the days of capital punishment the condemned person would be offered a final shrift. If it was a particularly busy day, the priest would hurry the confessor up, and this would be called – 'giving short shrift' – a phrase still used today.

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, was traditionally marked by a priest sprinkling ash over your head, or using ash to make a cross on your forehead. This is thought to originate from Genesis 3:19 – 'remember that you are dust, and to dust you will return'.



Lent commemorates Jesus fasting 40 days. It derives from an Old English word *lencten*, meaning 'spring season'.

Palm Sunday recalls Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, greeted by a crowd waving palm branches. All four of the gospels mention this event². It is the first day of..

...**Holy Week**, the seven days preceding Easter Sunday

Spy Wednesday recognises the betrayal of Judas Iscariot³. Also called *Ugly* or *Black Wednesday*, because chimneys used to be swept on this day, to be clean for Easter. Traditionally...

...a **Tenebrae** service is held on this day. It just means 'darkness', an omen of the approaching spiritual nightfall

Maundy Thursday commemorates (1) the Last Supper (2) acts of kindness such as Jesus washing the disciples' feet⁴. The name comes from the Latin *mandatum* (command) which references Jesus saying: 'I give you a new commandment'.



Good Friday follows. No-one exactly knows about the name, but scholars tend to think that 'Good' has an archaic meaning of pious or holy. There is a strong link to...

Pesach or **Passover** which is a Jewish festival celebrating the escape of the Israelites from slavery in about 1050 BCE. The last supper was a Pesach meal. Find out more by taking part in the Maundy Meal at 7:00 pm on Thursday 17 April at Belfairs Church.

² Matthew 21:8 - Mark 11:7 - Luke 19:35 - John 12:12

³ Matthew 26:14 - Mark 14:10. Notice that the text just contains the facts and does not judge. Whatever we think of Judas's betrayal, it is essential to the narrative.

⁴ John 13:4

Easter Sunday is the third day after Good Friday. Its name derives from *Ēostre*, a Germanic spring goddess in whose honour the Anglo-Saxons celebrated lustily. But why is it always on a different day?

The answer is that it was so decided by the Council of Nicaea in 325 CE. Located at what's now the modern Iznik, Turkey, the meeting also agreed the Nicene creed as a basic assertion of Christian belief. Easter, the meeting decided, would be celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after 21 March (which itself is roughly the spring equinox. This looks complicated, but was intended to accommodate the various calendars then used across the Christian world. 1,700 years later it still works.



And, almost 2,000 years after the first resurrection, forgiveness and a new life are still on offer for everyone and anyone. So it only remains for me to wish you all a very happy Easter 2025.

Anon

Puzzle of the Month Solution

It's another one where you need to read the question. Many of many of you must have realised immediately that you'd never ever make three odd numbers add up to an even number. So the solution must involve reading the question again. Sure enough – it doesn't ask you to select '*from the list below...*' So for example:

$$21 + 25 + 4 = 50$$

would be a perfectly good solution (along with many others).

Sorry!

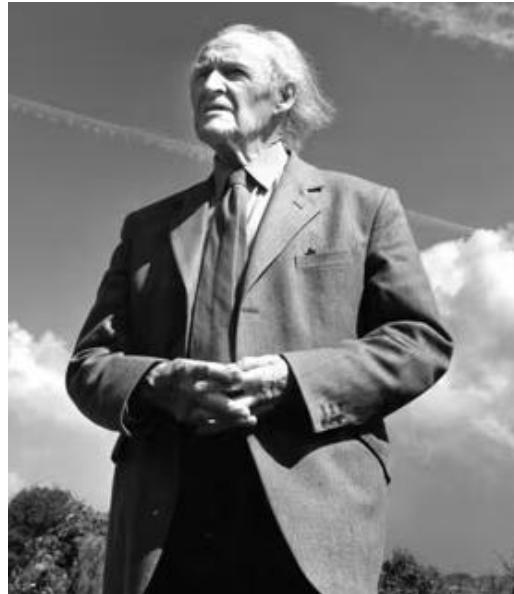
Poem of the Month

An Anglican minister, born in Cardiff and always serving Welsh parishes, Ronald Thomas's work is not always easy to understand. This poem celebrates Christ's resurrection as 'a stone...rolled from the mind' - an accessible metaphor for a simple mind like mine. It needs to be read out loud, more than once, to bring out the rhythm.

Resurrection R S Thomas 1913-2000

Easter. The grave clothes of winter
are still here, but the sepulchre
is empty. A messenger
from the tomb tells us
how a stone has been rolled
from the mind, and a tree lightens
the darkness with its blossom.

There are travellers upon the road
who have heard music blown
from a bare bough, and a child
tells us how the accident
of last year, a machine stranded
beside the way for lack
of petrol, is crowned with flowers.



Do you have a favourite poem? If so, contact the editor and we'll print it. If it's a long poem, maybe an excerpt. Either way we'd love to hear from you a few words about the poet, and the poem, and an explanation of why you like it. None of this is essential, and we won't even identify you if you prefer not.

Dining In

Granola. Whenever youngest comes to stay (+ family) this breakfast treat disappears rapidly, and without any help from their labrador retriever. This batch will make 12 servings that will keep 3 days in an airtight container (or freeze). Theoretically at least. We've never been able to test it.



Ingredients

75g pecan nuts	40g sultanas (golden if poss)
75g pistachio nuts	45g light brown sugar
50g flaked almonds	40ml warm water
125g jumbo oats	60g unsalted butter (cubed)
40g dried cranberries	45ml honey

Method

- Preheat oven to 180°C / 160°C fan / gas 4
- Coarsely chop the pecans, pistachios & almonds and bake for 8 minutes then transfer to a large bowl (leave oven on)
- Add the cranberries & sultanas to the bowl and stir in
- On medium heat bring the sugar & water to the boil and cook it to a hot, golden bubbling caramel then remove from heat
- Add the butter & honey then swirl and warm for 2 mins until silky smooth
- Pour the caramel over the fruit & nut mix & stir so that everything is coated
- Spread mixture on a small baking sheet lined with parchment
- Bake for 5-6 minutes then turnoff* and leave to cool in the oven for an hour or so. (*alternatively at this point, removing and cutting will make bars as in the photo)

Humour Corner

A few more mistakes from similar publications to this...

- 2 members were present at the church meeting held at the home of Mrs. Marsha Crutchfield last evening. Mrs. Crutchfield and Mrs. Rankin sang a duet, The Lord Knows Why.
- The choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir.
- The meeting will be gin with prayer
- At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?". Come early and listen to our choir practice.
- Today's Sermon: How Much Can a Man Drink? with hymns from a full choir.
- A poster near a school read: "DRIVE CAREFULLY PAST SCHOOL. DON'T KILL A CHILD." Underneath, in a childish scrawl: "WAIT FOR A TEACHER.
- Miss Charlene Mason sang "I will not pass this way again" giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.
- The church will host an evening of fine dining, superb entertainment, and gracious hostility.
- Ushers will eat latecomers.
- Weight Watchers will meet at 7:00 pm. Please use large double doors at the side entrance.
- Potluck supper: prayer and medication to follow.
- Next Friday we will be serving hot gods for lunch.

Bon appetit!

SERVING the COMMUNITY 7 Days a Week

Children and Young People

Group	Time	Contact
Scouts	Thu 7:30 to 9:00 pm	Jack Reeve 07847 355859
Cubs	Thu 5:45 to 7:15 pm	Jordan Rutherford 07804 065933
Rainbows	Wed 4:00 to 5:00 pm	Julie Griffiths 07834 321724
Brownies	Wed 5:30 to 7:00 pm	Teresa Thompson 07809 219729
Guides	Fri 7:00 to 9:00 pm	Jacqui Hendle 07961 545037
Rangers	Thu ⁵ 7:00 to 9:00 pm	Jacqui Hendle 07961 545037
Toddlers	Mon 9:30 am to 11:30	Ros: 478631 Margaret: 557512

Fellowship Groups

Group	Time	Contact
Prayer	Tue 9:00 to 10:00 am	Andrew Hyde 473111
Chatter	Tue 10:00 am to 12:00 noon	Rosalie 478631

Services to the Community

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

Social and Recreational

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

⁵ Every fortnight

A yellow flower is positioned in the upper center of the image, partially overlapping the text of an open book. The book's pages are filled with Latin text, including words like 'Naz'a-reth', 'he is risen', and 'Pe'ter'. The overall composition is a promotional graphic for a lecture series.

LECTIO Divina

**Every Wednesday starting
16 April (730-830pm)
on ZOOM**

Zoom meeting ID: 953 4743 3390

Passcode: 498912


**Every lectio stands alone,
so come to one or many!**

WALK THE LABYRINTH!



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

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

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 May 2025 issue should be emailed to me andrewghyde@aol.com before the **deadline of Thursday 24 April**. No email? Don't despair; just telephone 473111 to arrange an alternative.

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

A Final Image

Until 27 April 2025, over 100 egg sculptures decorated by the likes of Mr Doodle, Jimmy Choo, Anya Hindmarch and Fortnum & Mason will be scattered around London. This image shows a typical male egg-hunter struggling to find any eggs.

