



The **HIGHLANDER**


October 2025

**The monthly newsletter of Highlands Methodist
Church, Leigh on Sea**

These are services at Highlands for October 2025

10:30 am Sun 5 th	Morning Worship Café Church	Deacon Maureen Spinks
10:30 am Sun 12 th	Morning Worship Communion	Rev Heather Simmons
4:00 pm Sun 19 th	All Age Community Worship & Praise Harvest Thanksgiving	Matt Bunkall
10:30 am Sun 26 th	Morning Worship Church Anniversary	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 October 2025.

9:30 am Sun 5 th	Morning Worship Communion	Rev Heather Simmons
7:30 pm Sun 12 th (Refreshments from 7:00)	Gospel Service	Rev Heather Simmons
11:00 am Sun 19 th	Morning Worship Harvest Thanksgiving Parade	
7:30 pm Sun 19 th	Evening Worship Taizé	Rev Heather Simmons
7:30 am Sun 26 th	Evening Worship Mindfulness	Rev Heather Simmons



As you'll see above, the 'Anchored' service for the third month is again a 'Taizé' service. Taizé is based on worship practised by the French Taizé community, typically including simple harmonised songs, interspersed with readings, prayers and periods of silence.

On the fourth Sunday (eg 26 Oct) *Mindfulness* continues as before.



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	555702
Minutes Secretary	Vanessa Mayes	473787
Church Stewards	Andrew Hyde	473111
	Donald Mayes	473787
	Lesley Hyde	473111
	Jean Edmonds	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

We are often grabbing the last chance of summer sun in far off places or even wishing for an 'Indian summer' here, not quite ready to get into our jumpers. So it made me think of holding on.

What are we holding on to? Perhaps if we lived more seasonally, we'd be more willing to let go. For example, if we *embrace* knowing that summer comes to an end, with its assurance of returning next year, we're likely to move into Autumn with a little more grace.



So why have we stopped living seasonally? With our foods coming from abroad, we have got used to things being available all year round. With heating, we can stay warm all year. With long-haul holidays, some can escape the winter months. We expect in the western world to have whatever we want, when we want it. This is neither realistic nor good for our mental or physical health, because it is not what God intended. Seasons help us to have and have not. They teach us how to be patient and adaptable. They remind us that there is a time for rest and snuggling in the warm, there is a time for new growth, a time for family and sunshine and a time for change and appreciation of colour.

I invite you then to think about the seasons. What are the wonderful things about each one? and therefore what do we have to let go of as each one passes into the next.

We also have seasons of life that bring their unique challenges and joys. Whether we are in a season of joy, sorrow, or growth, it's

important for us to recognize that each season is a part of God's plan. These experiences help build our character and deepen our faith. We experience a time for laughter, a time for grieving, and a time for building relationships. Through these seasons, we learn more about ourselves and our relationships with others, growing closer to God along the way.

Let us read again, together, the Book of Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3, Verses 1 to 8. There is much to unpack in this scripture; it is not comfortable, but we live in uncomfortable times, as did Jesus. Jesus approached these uncomfortable times with love, sacrifice and healing. I invite you to notice what is of love and what is not. Experience these feelings and see where the Holy Spirit leads you. What can we let go of, in order that we can live in peace together?



A Time for Everything

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:

*a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,
a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,
a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,
a time to search and a time to give up,
a time to keep and a time to throw away,
a time to tear and a time to mend,
a time to be silent and a time to speak,
a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.*

So, beautiful brothers and sisters of our Highlands Community, may God continue to bless you with seasons and may we all open our hearts and minds to see them and experience them more clearly, so we all have hope of peace.

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

Diary Dates



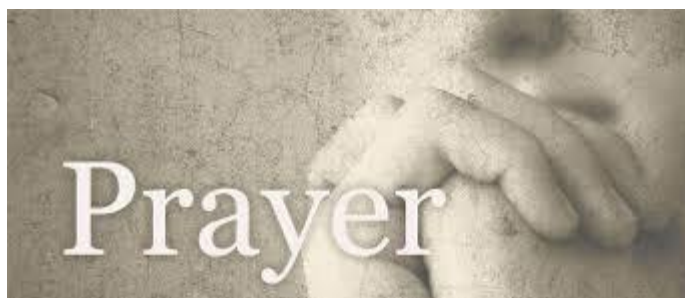
Harvest Thanksgiving will be on Sunday 19 October in the afternoon, led by Heather and Matt. The harvest celebration starts around 2:00 pm when donations for HARP may be delivered to add to the display. Worship begins at 4:00 pm and ends at 4:45 pm.

Our celebration will include a scarecrow competition. The scarecrows can be made at the coffee

morning, Saturday 18 October from 10:00 until 12:00 noon. Then they will be on display from 2:00 pm the next day, Sunday 19 October.

Everyone is welcome to take part. More details from Matt Bunkall if you need them.





We pray for our friends who are ill, housebound, or bereaved and for those in residential care: particularly *Peggy Gosling* in Westcliff Lodge, *Irene Downing* and *Doreen Morby* in Brambles. *Glenda Green* in Legra and *Marion Chapman* in Chalkwell Grange. 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.

Finally **thanks** to Lesley Hyde for 25 years of putting up with the editor...



Flowers

Here are details of flower donations for October

- ❖ 12 Sept - Donated by Sylvia Cornwell in memory of Ellie
- ❖ 19 Sept - Donated by Sheila Whitelegg in memory of Ged

Table Tennis

We have now purchased a beautiful blue folding table tennis table and we thank John (carer at Showstoppers) for putting it together. The next games morning will be the second Thursday of the month 9 October from 10:00 am-12:00 noon.

All are welcome.

Christian Aid

Donations of £80 (of which £50 was gift aided) were very gratefully received in aid of the emergency appeal for Afghanistan.

Poppies for the Pier.

Over 130 poppies were blessed at our service on Sunday 12 September. A big thank you to the ladies of the Chatter group and others who knitted and crocheted a beautiful selection of poppies.

These will be delivered to Leigh Library to be added to the huge collection that will be displayed on the pier in November.

Showstoppers Cabaret

Our wonderful friends at Showstoppers are performing their *Cabaret* celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the Society, at Highlands on Thursday 16 October from 1:00 pm until about 3:00 pm. All the community of Highlands are invited to this joyful performance.

Hobbies.

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month in Room 1, from 10:00 am until 12:00 noon. The cost is £3 including refreshments. All are welcome, and this is what we'll be doing

- 2 October. Die cut découpage Christmas cards. We need to start early to prepare for the Christmas coffee morning.
- 16 October. Harvest floral arrangements with Jean to decorate the church for the Harvest Thanksgiving service. Also we will be making a scarecrow for the harvest display. That will be fun! Marjorie

Highlands Toddlers

For updates, see the Highlands website for details (www.highlandsmethodist.org.uk) or contact Ros (478631) or Margaret (557512).

From the Editor

If like me you are a cricket fan (or a very good player) you will know the expression 'nervous nineties'. It describes the state of mind that governs how a batter plays when his/her individual score is approaching 100 runs - a century! – a ton!

Suddenly, a display of elegant batsmanship and powerful smiting gives way to careful prods and tentative snicks. Nobody wants to be 'out' for 99.

It is however quite common for a batter to be dismissed for 101, 102, 103 or thereabouts. The explanation is simple enough. At the time of attaining a glorious century, celebrations of the achievement take place. Often, they spoil the batter's concentration and inevitably – OWZAT?

As Highlands Church approaches a glorious and graceful century (1926 – 2026) I see no sign of the nervous nineties. The scoreboard now shows '99 not out' and a quick single will be enough. Already, members of Highlands have met to discuss ways of celebrating. A long list exists. Soon the list will be filtered out, and the next step will be to approach people to make things happen – involving as many people as possible.



or

Looking forward twelve months, Highlands could easily make the same mistake as a careless batter who has just chalked up a century and immediately afterwards has been clean bowled...

The focus and concentration of everyone at Highlands now has to be on the next 100 years. Reminiscing has its place. It is interesting and comforting, but we need to apply the lessons that the past teaches us, whether those lessons are comfortable or not. Bringing back old friends in person or memory is also enjoyable, but the future lies in welcoming new friends to Highlands, impressing them with what God has done with the place and giving them reasons to come back.



So, if you are approached to help, don't hesitate. Get stuck in! Doing this will surely see Highlands heading for a double century. Otherwise, expect a shorter innings.

Amareu

The photo above is a tribute to cricket umpire Harold 'Dickie' Bird OBE (1933-2025) whose raised finger pointed an estimated 1,500 international batters to the pavilion. The other photo is of course Dr W G Grace. Just for the record, I once scored a 50 (including one '6') but it was against some dreadful bowling on a bone-hard pitch.
Ed



Puzzle of the Month¹

I have 3 quick number puzzles for you. They are easier, then medium, then harder...

PUZZLE 1

Your parents have four sons including you, and each son has one sister. How many people are in the family?

PUZZLE 2

$$2 * 1 * 6 * 6 = 48$$

Replace each asterisks with any of the four main arithmetic signs (+ - x /) to make the equation correct. You can use any order of operations, and use the same sign more than once if you like.

PUZZLE 3

2 0 5 8 3

0 7 4 4 5

1 8 3 9 1

1 5 4 7 ? What number should replace the question mark?

(Cryptic clue – this is rather a mean puzzle)

Humour Corner

When I first met my wife, she recommended to me that I sign up to be an organ donor. That's when I realized she was a girl after my own heart.

¹ Solution page 13

Dining In

Pear Upside Down Cake

If you've spent time recently in the English countryside you've probably noticed that it's a great year for fruit. The blackberries are all but gone, but the sloes (blackthorn fruit) are everywhere. Other plum relatives such as mirabelles



and damsons are quite easily found and used in wondrously sweet crumbles. There is also an abundance of small sweet apples and pears.

Sloes are popular (or so I'm told) for the production of sloe gin, wherein a great deal of sugar has to be added to make them palatable. Pears of course have no such requirement. They can be eaten raw. But if you prefer to add more sweetness, here is a great way to use a few of them up.

Ingredients

Three ripe pears, peeled cored
& quartered
220g unsalted butter, softened
120g golden caster sugar
100g light brown soft sugar
3 eggs
100g soured cream
220g plain flour

1½ tsp baking powder
¼ tsp bicarb of soda
2 tsp ground cinnamon

For the caramel

75g caster sugar
75g butter
3 tbsp maple syrup

Method

1. Heat oven to 180°C/160°C fan/Gas 4. Line the base of a deep 20cm springform with a circle of parchment that goes up the side by about 1cm to hold the caramel.
2. To make the caramel, sprinkle the sugar into a small frying pan, then warm over a low heat until the sugar starts to melt, swirling the pan until it starts to turn golden brown. Once it does, swiftly whisk in the butter, syrup and a pinch of salt, then pour into the base of the tin. Now arrange the pear quarters on top in a circle.
3. Put all ingredients for cake – butter, sugars, eggs etc – into a bowl, or preferably mixer, and beat gently until smooth.
4. Spoon the cake mixture over the pears, gently smooth and bake for 1 hour (or until skewer comes out clean).
5. Leave in tin to cool completely – then enjoy. Yum.

Puzzle of the Month Answer

PUZZLE 1

There are 7 in the family – 2 parents, 4 sons, 1 daughter. If you said 10, you counted the daughter 4 times...

PUZZLE 2

$$2 \times 1 + 6 \times 6 = 48$$

This works from left to right. There may be other solutions

PUZZLE 3

2 0 5 8 3

0 7 4 4 5

1 8 3 9 1 The correct number is 3. Each number on the bottom row
1 5 4 7 3 is the average ('mean') of the numbers directly above it

Poem of the Month

City Fox

By Ruth Fainlight (1931 -)



Ruth Fainlight FRSL is an American-born poet, short story writer, translator and librettist. Living in the UK since she was 15, she was a close friend of Sylvia Plath and married to Alan Sillitoe until he died in 2010. I like this poem because it reflects how people feel about urban foxes – yes, they are vermin and should not be encouraged. But like us they are God's creatures and so familiar on our streets (about 10,000 live in London) that we're quite relaxed with them. Indeed we rather admire the opportunistic attitude that this poem explores.

City Fox

Ruth Fainlight

It makes me glad to watch a fox
cross the road as I drive at night
through the city after a party.

I admire how much she seems at home,
her confident pose as she
trots toward
a black plastic garbage bag,
and
notice that she or another fox
has been there already:
kitchen waste
and peelings strewn across
the pavement.

She noses through what's
there: empty
beer cans, cartons stained with sauces,



but nothing's tempting enough.
Hopeful,
she goes in search of another
cache.
Is this a first sign of social
breakdown, nature dominating
the city's infrastructure?



Yet surely that fluffy-haired cub I saw
a few minutes later could not be
a harbinger of anarchy? Although
maybe he is. He certainly did
not look both ways before crossing
the road, nor take in how close that car,
turning the corner, came to him.

For the moment, though, everything
works as usual, and I assume
that they, like me, got safely home.

Humour Corner

Me: *I see that you've taken the
shell off your racing snail to
make him a bit lighter. Has it
made him any quicker?*

Not Me: *No, not really. If
anything it's made him a bit
more sluggish...*



October 2025 Calendar

Wed	1 st	7:30 pm - 8:15 pm Lectio Divina with Clive Johnson on screen
Thu	2 nd	10:00 am - 12:00 noon Hobbies
Fri	3 rd	Classic Film and ice-cream 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel
Sat	4 th	Coffee 10:00 am – 12:00 noon
Sun	5 th	Café Church 10:30 am -11:30 am
Mon	6 th	9:30 -11:30am Toddlers
Tue	7 th	9:15 am prayers in church 10:00 am -12:00 noon Tuesday Chatter
Wed	8 th	7:30 pm - 8:15 pm Lectio Divina with Rev Hev and Clive Johnson on Zoom
Thu	9 th	Table Tennis 10:00 am -12:00 noon
Fri	10 th	
Sat	11 th	10:00 am Coffee morning
Sun	12 th	Morning Worship (Communion) with Rev Hev
Mon	13 th	9:30 -11:30am Toddlers 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm House group in the Snug
Tue	14 th	9:15 am prayers in church Tuesday Chatter 10:00 am - 12:00 noon Lunch Club 12:00 noon Church Council 7:00 pm
Wed	15 th	7:30 pm - 8:15 pm Lectio Divina with Rev Hev and Clive Johnson on Zoom
Thu	16 th	Hobbies 10:00 am -12:00 noon
Fri	17 th	10:00 am Coffee morning
Sat	18 th	10:00 am -12:00 noon Coffee morning & Scarecrow making
Sun	19 th	Harvest Thanksgiving 4:00 pm
Mon	20 th	9:30 -11:30am Toddlers
Tue	21 st	9:15 am prayers in church 10:00 am -12:00 noon Tuesday Chatter House Group/Bible Study 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm
Wed	22 nd	7:30 pm - 8:15 pm Lectio Divina with Rev Hev and Clive Johnson on Zoom

Thu	23 rd	
Fri	24 th	
Sat	25 th	10:00 am -12:00 noon Coffee morning
Sun	26 th	10:30 am – 11:30 am Put clocks back! Morning Worship (Church Anniversary) with Rev Hev
Mon	27 th	
Tue	28 th	9:15 am prayers in church 10:00 am -12:00 noon Tuesday Chatter
Wed	29 th	7:30 pm – 8:15 pm Lectio Divina with Clive Johnson on Zoom
Thu	30 th	
Fri	31 st	

Meanwhile, down the road at Wesley, a new initiative is coming soon; details below.



Harvest Thanksgiving

Our harvest goods are going to HARP this year. HARP is a homeless charity based in Southend that provides housing, advice and support to over 1,000 people each year. There will be someone from HARP at our service, talking about the work that they do and how our gifts will help.

Below, is a list of food and toiletries that would be most appreciated:

- Tinned meat, fish and vegetables
- Staples such as pasta, rice
- Toilet rolls, tissues, kitchen rolls
- Vegetable oil
- Cereals – without too much sugar (eg Weetabix)
- Basic cleaning goods, personal or domestic
- Basically, anything nutritious, not perishable

ABRSM²

ABRSM are holding music exams at Highlands on the dates below:

Sat 8 November Sat 15 November Wed 19 November
Thu 20 November Sat 29 November

Usually the sessions run all day from about 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, but we find it easier for people to act as a volunteer steward for just half a day at a time. If you could spare the time to act as a steward for any of these dates please contact Janet on 07751 316594. It's a really important role. Many of the candidates, especially Grade 1s, will be apprehensive children (always with an adult) and look to you as a source of welcome and reassurance. And of course it makes money (which you don't have to handle) for Highlands.



² Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music

Phone Users Please Note

Last week, I was targeted by a gift card scammer.

I received a message by email (apparently from a friend at Fishermen's Chapel), saying she'd broken her leg, and she needed me to buy a £250 gift card from Amazon as a birthday present. She couldn't do it from her hospital bed and she'd reimburse me, of course.

I was nearly taken in, but the language wasn't quite right, and it all seemed a bit unusual.



A quick check revealed that my friend was absolutely fine, but her phone had been hacked. Needless to say, I sent nothing back.

So don't ever, in these circumstances, buy a gift card from Amazon or similar to send to a 'friend'. Check with whoever the message is supposedly from, or their relative. The phone-hack is typical of this sort of criminal activity, because for a short time, until the rightful owner reports what's happened, the criminal has control of the phone and access to the data on it

If in doubt, don't send money. And if you think your phone might be compromised, contact your provider, who can instantly close the scam down if necessary.

Lesley

Humour Corner

Me: *What's the book you're reading?*

Not Me: *It's all about helium. I can't put it down*

SERVING the COMMUNITY 7 Days a WeekChildren 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	Chloë Nuttman ³ 07570 040085
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 ⁴ 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

³ Chloë is a temporary contact while Jordan is on a break

⁴ Every fortnight