



The **HIGHLANDER**

July 2021

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

11:00 am Sun 4 th	Morning Worship Café Church	Kathy McCullough
11:00 am Sun 11 th	Morning Worship Communion	Rev Clifford Newman
11:00 am Sun 18 th	Morning Worship Followed by General Church Meeting	Deacon Sarah McDowell
11:00 am Sun 25 th	Morning Worship United Service	Jane Fulford

These services are scheduled to be held live in Highlands Church and may also be transmitted on Zoom to anyone who cannot attend.

For the live services, please wear facial covering (unless exempt), observe distancing and reserve places. If, as is likely, there are changes, these will be notified by email or on Facebook.

 Highlands (Leigh) Methodist Church



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

All telephone numbers are '01702' unless stated

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From Your Minister



When we look at what seemed important to Jesus in the Bible; seeking out the 'undesirables' of society; the sick, the leper, the sinner, it was all very much 'people'

issues. Bearing this in mind then, it might come as bit of a surprise how concerned Jesus was with how much cash people paid to the kingdom of God. Was Jesus too spiritual to be concerned about such material things? Well, on at least one occasion whilst in the temple, Jesus sat near the treasury and watched intently as people made their contributions.

Luke 21:1-4;

While Jesus was in the Temple, he watched the rich people dropping their gifts in the collection box. Then a poor widow came by and dropped in two small coins. 'I tell you the truth,' Jesus said, 'this poor



widow has given more than all the rest of them. For they have given a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she has'. [NLT]

He was intensely interested in what was taking place on that occasion. And Hebrews 13:8 tells us that...

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. [NLT]

So, He was interested in the offerings of both the rich and the poor back then, and He continues to be interested in our gifts today,

because (as that reading confirms) He doesn't change.

It's said that 'money talks'. If so, nowhere does it speak louder than when we are faced with an opportunity to make an investment in God's kingdom.

- † Our gifts indicate our love for God.
- † Our gifts indicate our interest in extending His kingdom.
- † Our gifts indicate where our treasure is; whether God or money comes first in our lives.
- † Our gifts are also an indication of our obedience to God.

The word 'tithe', literally translated, means 'tenth'. 10% of our first fruits belong to God. Well actually, everything we own belongs to God! Psalm 24:1 reminds us;

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it.

So, God isn't asking us to give Him something we own, but a tenth of what we don't own. Because it already belongs to Him!

We can make this easy, that's 10% of your take home pay. So, if you take home £250.00 a week, God is asking for £25.00 per week. If you take home £600.00 per week, God is asking for £60.00 per week. If only £10 per week, then it's only £1.00 and so on.

Now, your first thought might well be: 'I can't afford to do that!'

My response would be: 'Can we afford not to?'

Malachi 3:10 tells us:

'Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do,' says the Lord of Heaven's Armies, 'I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the

test!' [NLT]

I have seen this happen on numerous occasions where people have starting tithing, or increased their giving, and have said to me; 'I haven't been out of pocket at all!' I have yet to see a faithful giver get into financial difficulty because of their tithing.

So why do some of us hesitate to tithe? Well, we've talked about one of the first reasons; sometimes we just don't trust God enough to provide for us. And if that's the case, He never will... until we let Him! How can God provide for us when our aim is to provide for ourselves?

Maybe some of us don't tithe because we love what we already have. Thinking that money and material things is what life is all about. But Jesus tells us that real living is not found in an abundance of things.

Luke 12:15:

Then [Jesus] said, 'Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own.' [NLT]

Or maybe it's because we have a natural human tendency to procrastinate, causing many of us to delay tithing. We hesitate to do something which requires discipline and sacrifice.

Or maybe it's because we think the church doesn't need our money. Well, if that's your thought, think again. I'm astounded by the cost of running our physical building. I know we've been absent from our churches for many months due to the pandemic, but the bills still keep coming, even though our income has diminished.

God says He will bless you who tithe.

Malachi 3:10b:

'I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test!' [NLT]

We can do literally that, because His promises are as sure today as they were then. If you are a consistent tither and God has blessed your heart in doing so, then when the opportunity arises, give your testimony to this fact and this will give strength to those who need encouragement in trusting God more fully in their financial lives.

If you have not yet discovered the joy of being a tither, I challenge you to become one. If you don't have faith to make the full decision in one big step, then gradually take small steps in the right direction, and begin by increasing your regular giving.

Again, God says; "I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! [NLT] So, the question isn't, 'Can I afford to tithe?' Rather it is 'Can I afford not to?'

Below are Highlands' bank details. Whether you'd like to start giving on a regular basis or make a one-off donation, the details are:

Sort Code: 40-28-11
Account Number: 01514725

Your giving is, and will be, greatly appreciated as we find our way out of this pandemic and continue to undertake God's mission for His church.

Every blessing,
Pastor Steve, May 2021
01702 483827



We pray for our friends who are ill, housebound, or bereaved and for those in residential care: particularly *Doll Edwards in The Cedars*. Our thoughts and prayers are with them and their families.

Rev Julia Monaghan has been in touch. She is still undergoing chemotherapy treatment for ovarian cancer. Side effects as you probably know are severe and constant, so please pray that these will not deflect her from prevailing over the disease. Grandson Leon is helping to keep her spirits up – so he needs your support in prayer as well.

Our sincere condolences to the family of **Jonathan Moore** who died on Friday 4 June. Remember in your prayers his wife Ria, his children Joshua, Jude and Isabella. his mother Jane, stepfather John and sister Emma. Rest in peace Jonathan.

Vicky and Ian are due to become Mr & Mrs Nicholson-Goodhew on Saturday 17 July at Highlands. The church will be full to COVID capacity but hopefully a live stream will be available. Please join me in praying for no change in rules that might affect this.

From the Editor

During my recent wanderings in Northumberland I devised a quiz question. It's fairly easy, so do have a go before you read on to the answer.

What do the following places have in common with Northumberland?

- ❖ *Belfast*
- ❖ *Berlin*

- ❖ *Jerusalem*
- ❖ *Hebei Province, China*

The answer of course is that they all have (or once had) a famous wall running through them. This got me pondering on different types of wall and the reasons why people go to all the trouble and expense of building them. So here is a list of reasons. You might think of others. Some walls are multi-purpose.

1. To protect. Historically, walls were built round important settlements for the security of the people who lived there. You can still see them in English cities like York and Chester whose city walls (unlike most) are almost intact.
2. To assist cultivation. Walled gardens create a microclimate allowing us to grow flowers and fruits that would otherwise succumb to the weather. Retaining walls keep the soil where we want it using rocks that we don't want.
3. To exploit water. Dams are walls that help us to manage water to provide both power and water to drink.
4. To mark boundaries. Proverbially 'Good fences make good neighbours'. Sometimes walls are just decorative. There are many examples in Leigh.

5. To control the movement of people, animals, goods, information and opinions from one side of the wall to the other.

Now, I'll allow that 1, 2 and 3 are a Good Thing. But I'm not at all sure about 4 and 5. I think that a 'good fence' must be one that both parties agree, and one that doesn't also fit into 5. Because it's clear that walls that are in category 5 can give rise to bad things such as crime, violence, repression and human misery.

But I have good news for you. The walls across Northumberland (Hadrian's) and Berlin and China have largely crumbled. The fragments that remain are preserved as monuments and snapped by tourists. Even President Trump's much-vaunted, and much-vaulted wall has now been ditched (sorry!). It only ever covered about 36% of the length of the US-Mexico border, and most of it was built before 2016.



The inevitable fate of walls is that God knocks them down, or they fall. The prophet Isaiah knew this 2,700 years ago.

Isaiah 25:12

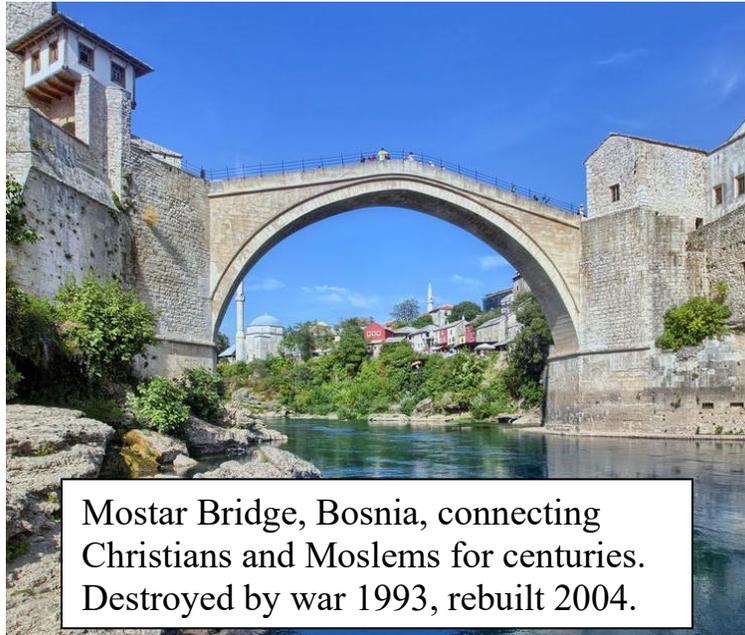
He will bring down your high fortified walls and lay them low; he will bring them down to the ground, to the very dust.

But if walls are bad, then what can we build that brings people together and is worthy of our efforts? Pope Francis gives the answer. Here is a quote:

Those that build walls end up being prisoners of the walls that

they have built. The bridge is for human communication. This is most beautiful, and I have seen it here in Morocco. Instead, walls are against communication; they are for isolation, and those who build them will become prisoners.

There are two references there to 'prisoners'. They are crucial and they ring with truth. I think that Francis is referring not to walls and bridges of stone, brick and mortar. Rather he is thinking of the virtual walls and bridges we create in our minds when we interact with somebody who is different to us;



someone we might find difficult and threatening. In these cases, walls can create conflict and hatred, whereas bridges might promote harmony and understanding.

I think it clear that Jesus was a builder of bridges rather than walls. So, when we have a really difficult decision, we too need to decide whether we wish to create a wall that will keep us prisoner until eventually it crumbles; or a bridge that will last, and set us free.

Andrew

Snippets

Tuesday Chatter

Due to the present COVID conditions we will not, unfortunately be meeting at Highlands until 20 or 27 July.

However, we are very grateful to Jackie who has enabled us to meet for coffee and tea in her lovely garden. We'll be announcing future plans as soon as possible.

HARP

The HARP charity furniture stores has now moved to 84 Southend High Street (formerly the old Moss Bros store) from the old location in Westcliff and is experiencing good turnover now that shops are beginning to open. If you have any surplus furniture, give them a ring on 01702 617115.

In these difficult times HARP has also been helping to roll out the COVID-19 vaccinations.

Serving the Homeless

StH is holding its Summer Raffle to raise funds so that we can continue to contribute to HARP and YMCA projects. Tickets for our 'Hamper Bonanza' are now on sale, with the draw taking place at the beginning of September. Tickets can be purchased from any of our Committee members.

Meanwhile we hope for a return to more freedom of movement and are looking to fix dates for future fund raising events including the popular Sunday lunch at Chalkwell Park Rooms at the end of January. Watch this space.

Thank you for your prayers and support. Please remember the HARP charity shops when donating or buying. We also hope to be able to receive donations at the back of church when unrestricted

services begin again at Highlands.

The Wesley Sanctuary Café – Café for the Community.

The café is now open at Wesley on Fridays from 8:30 am-12:00 noon and Saturdays 9:00 am-12:00 noon, serving teas, coffees, homemade cakes, biscuits and soft drinks and providing a relaxed atmosphere for the whole community to enjoy; with a play area and buggy park for those with young children, a quiet space for private reflection and prayer, and a social space to meet up.



Christian Aid

A huge thank you to all who so generously donated to Christian Aid, raising the sum of £489.24 in these difficult times, also for £268.71 in Gift Aid which adds £67 to our total and is so appreciated.

Special thanks to Janet and Andrew S for doing a street collection in difficult times and to Steve who took a collecting box to work. Also Lesley who took boxes to our shops and to Janice who has faithfully collected every year. I met her at the hairdressers, and she promptly wrote a cheque to Christian Aid. Finally, thanks to everyone who swelled the generous church collection.

Well done, from Christian Aid. Thank you for your support. Your donations will help families facing poverty and injustice around the world. And every gift helps to stop the climate crisis.

Eating In

Easy ice cream



We have just found some wonderful ice cream recipes that don't need an ice cream maker. Nor do you need to worry about making a custard that 'splits' as soon as you take your eye off the mixture. The trick is to use condensed milk, which doesn't form ice crystals that affect the texture.

It is really easy to make soft, creamy ice cream that you can eat straight from the freezer. (Editor note – I did it so it must be simple). Doing some research, I found that the method has been around for some years but we'd not come across it before.

Honeycomb ice cream

150g caster sugar
2 tbs golden syrup
1 tsp bicarb

300 ml double cream
150g condensed milk
(sweetened variety)

First, make your honeycomb. Melt the sugar and syrup in a pan and simmer for 3 minutes until it turns golden (like a crunchie bar).

Remove from heat, add bicarb and watch it grow. Then pour onto a sheet of baking parchment and leave it to set. Once it's cold, bash with a rolling pin (I put mine in a plastic bag first) into small pieces.

Whip the cream to soft peaks, add the condensed milk and beat until soft peaks form again. Fold in honeycomb crumbs and then simply put into a container and freeze. Allow 6 hours freezing



Jobs for the garden **From our Special Gardening Correspondent**

You will have taken annuals and half-hardy perennials outside – they shouldn't need protection from the cold. However now they will need regular watering and feeding to maintain the nutrient content of the soil once the initial compost stores have been depleted. It is important to cut sweet peas to encourage further flowering and snip off any seed heads that have appeared surreptitiously to ensure that all the energy goes into providing those gorgeously scented flowers for you.

Spring bulbs will have long faded now, and their leaves should have died back. So, you can tidy away the spent foliage and (if you choose to) lift the bulbs. Once lifted, leave them to dry for 24 hours before netting them up and storing them somewhere cool and dark, ready to plant out again in Autumn. If you are happy to leave them in the soil then simply clear away the faded foliage and, perhaps, plant up the space left with some annuals, taking care not to damage the bulbs underneath. You can



also divide any large clumps of bulbs such as bluebells, snowdrops and daffodils now.

Climbing and rambling roses will benefit from being horizontally tied-in to promote new, flowering shoots for an abundance of these beautiful, traditional favourites. You can tidy up and lightly prune clematis and wisteria this month. The flowers should have faded but if not, leave this job until they've gone.

Keep on top of the weeds if you can – your favourite plants shouldn't have to compete for space, nutrients and water. Hoe the weeds in the borders on hot and sunny days so that they shrivel and die on the soil surface. Others can be dug out or pulled when seen. Check for signs of snail or slug damage and use grit around susceptible plants such as Hosta. Slug pellets are effective, but certainly not wildlife friendly. Any slugs you do find will be a welcome free snack for birds or hedgehogs if you are lucky enough to have them resident. Keep looking for lily beetle or cabbage white butterfly eggs on the undersides of leaves. They're hungry too!



SGC

Music Matters

From our Special Music Correspondent:

More recent hymns

There are innumerable modern additions which have become part of the standard repertoire of hymns in many churches. But what do we mean by modern? Twentieth century? The last few years? Many of our favourites were actually composed in the first half of the twentieth century and many melodies and words from the nineteenth century are no longer sung.



Among the more beautiful newer contributions is *Be Still for the Presence of the Lord* (STF 20). The writers of the verses and of the melody are still living. The gently lilting, subtle melody accompanies the words

admirably and the simple harmonisation also works well. *Give Me Joy in My Heart* (STF 76) is also another hymn with simple language and a melody (the origin of which seems to be unknown) which is memorable and easy for congregations to pick up. *Born in the Night* (STF 193), sung at Christmas, is also a newer tune by Geoffrey Ainger which captivates the atmosphere of the words.

However, some modern compositions are in my view problematic. In most hymns with regular rhythm, there are generally one or two notes to each syllable, and each beat generally bears a new syllable. In many newer hymns there are often syncopated rhythms as in jazz (i.e. syllables not falling on the beat), accompanied silences and long notes to hold. A good example of what I mean is *Your Love is Amazing, Steady and Unchanging* (STF 98) and parts of *Light of the World* (STF 175). It occurs to me that such tunes were probably composed with a solo singer with microphone in mind and do not adapt well for congregational

singing. They are not easy to sing accurately and especially difficult to pick up if not previously known. I have to confess, that whenever I play and feel it is necessary, I 'regularise' syncopated rhythms, which I hope benefits the congregation.

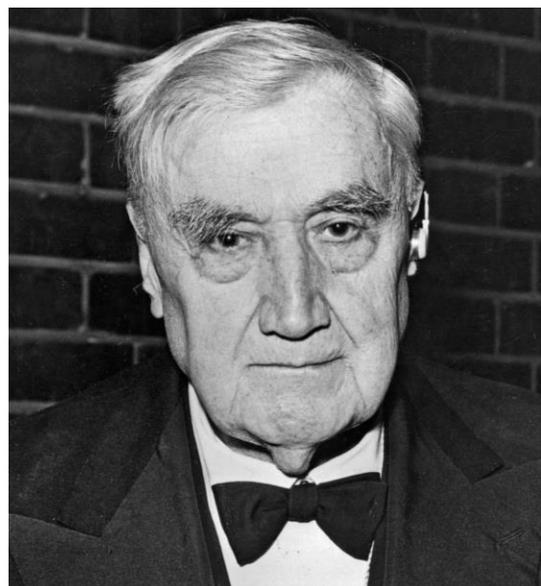


Nevertheless, we must not be dismissive regarding new music for the church, whatever our personal tastes. This was brought home to me when I asked a fellow churchgoer what she thought might be a

way of attracting more young people into the church. She said undoubtedly it would be through the music and she meant modern, popular-sounding, gospel music. She had a good point, and whilst popular music is not to the taste of many older churchgoers, and certainly not an idiom on which I feel qualified to comment, it may well be the answer. Churches need to think hard on this, I believe, if they are to avoid constantly diminishing and ageing congregations. Many churches have bands and music groups and thrive because this corresponds to the experience of most young people. Some would benefit from two kinds of service to suit the maximum number of people.

Famous names

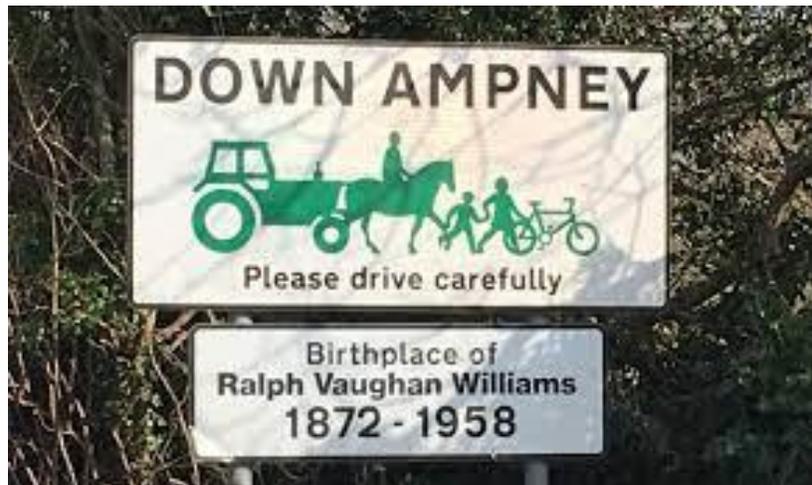
Some famous names, which one does not always readily associate with hymn tune writing, have made a major contribution to the hymns we sing today. In the early twentieth century there was a significant contribution by the composers Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), John Ireland (1879-1962) and Gustav Holst (1874-1934) of *The Planets* fame. In many, many cases these composers arranged and



harmonised traditional melodies, such as English folk tunes, which Vaughan Williams, together with Martin Shaw and Cecil Sharp, collected in the countryside at the turn of the century, or folk tunes from abroad, French and German in particular.

Two very well-known examples of English folk tunes are the melodies to *An Upper Room* (STF 569, O Waly Waly) and *Deep in the Shadows of the Past* (STF 463, Kingsfold). Words were then written for these tunes and they thenceforth became hymns.

Incidentally, all hymn tunes have a name, as in these two examples. There are some particular original melodies and arrangements that deserve note: the tune to *Come Down, O Love Divine* (STF 372) was composed and harmonised by



Vaughan Williams. The tune is called 'Down Ampney', named after the Cotswold village in which he was born; the accompaniment to *Long Ago Prophets Knew* (STF 178, Theodoric) was arranged by Gustav Holst. His particular imprint is the descending 'thumping bass' that introduces the hymn.

John Ireland's beautiful contribution is the tune to *My Song is Love Unknown* (STF 277, Love Unknown), to seventeenth-century words. The melody seems, again, to capture the atmosphere of the words, with its curves and turns, suggestive of sighs, longing and hope. Martin Shaw, just mentioned, belonged to a family of Anglican church musicians including his father and brother, Geoffrey Shaw. Their contribution is beyond significant but the names appear little known today. It is Martin Shaw to whom we owe the melody to *Hills of the North Rejoice*, also named after a village, 'Little Cornard'.

Composers of hymn tunes have also included C H H Parry (1848-1918), composer of the choral hymn 'Jerusalem', based on a poem of William Blake, and the more recent melody to *Dear Lord and*



Father of Mankind; Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900, of Gilbert and Sullivan) who wrote the hymn tune *Lux Eoi*; and John Stainer (1840-1901) who also wrote the oratorio *The Crucifixion*. Stainer's music often feels typically Victorian; slightly pained, with rich, chromatic harmony, often rather sugary. The alternative

melody to *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* – the usual one being 'Blaenwern' – is Stainer's. But there have been many others, each contributing something to this rich corpus of melody.

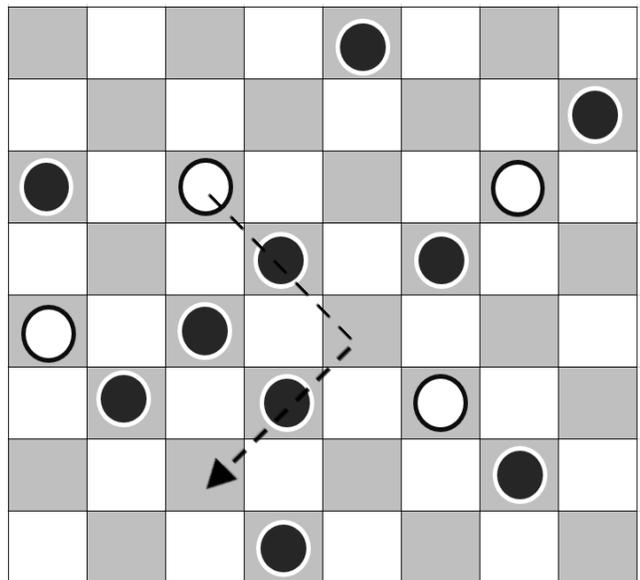
SMC

(continues next month)

Puzzle of the Month Solution

The keys to this puzzle are to note that

1. there are 10 black pieces, so 2 of them need to be taken
2. there is a column with three black pieces, so that is where we need to take them from
3. there is only one white piece in a position to take 2 black pieces in that column



A Poem for July

This is another poem penned by our Highlands laureate. It has as its subject something that has been a largely ignored problem during the pandemic. The RSPCA website (www.rspca.org.uk) tells us that:

The past 12 months has made it trickier for us to rehome dogs, especially those with complex needs.

Amazing Mazie

Irene Downing

Why do you hate me? What have I done?
I just want you to love me, and us to have fun.
What did I do to you that was so bad?
Now I am thrown out and I feel so sad.

I have nowhere to go and nothing to eat.
I just wander around and dodge people's feet.
I shelter each night from the cold damp air,
And say to myself, 'Is there no-one to care?'

All alone and dejected, I'm
feeling so weak.
Fleas biting, fur matted, I
must look a freak.
Whoever would want me?
No passer-by!
I think I'll just lie here, give
in, and die.



Someone is coming, a kind voice I hear
Whose hand is now stroking my flea-ridden fur.
I'm lifted up gently, as best as he can,
And laid in a cage at the back of a van.

This must be heaven. Angels in white!
But they have no wings, so that can't be right.
They're shaving my fur and washing my skin.
How lovely it feels to be clean once again.

I'm put in a pen with a nice warm bed,
Kind people to tend me and see that I'm fed.
This is all that I wanted, I asked for no more,
But my owners didn't love me and showed me the door.

I'm feeling much better now – I've recovered.
I'm glad I didn't die; glad I was discovered.
These people have looked after me as best as they can,
And restored the lost faith that I once had in Man.

Now I've a loving home, whose people really care.
They feed me, love me, hug me, make me happy there.
We play together, go for walks, and really do have fun,
And when they show me the door, we go out for a run.

My message now is sent to those who really want a pet.
Think long and hard about it before you go and get.
Will you make a happy home, with kindness and emotion
In return for nothing more than just true love and devotion?

Humour Corner

Patient: *Can you help me doctor? I have a recurrent dream where I turn out to be the real author of The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit. What's going on?*

Doctor: *I think you're probably just Tolkien in your sleep.*



**HOLIDAYING
AT HOME
HIGHLANDS METHODIST
CHURCH**

**THURSDAY 26TH AUGUST
10.30AM TIL 3.30PM**

**COST £10 PER PERSON
TO BOOK YOUR PLACE TELEPHONE JULIE ON 01702 479804**

**This not for profit event has been planned for the older people of Leigh on Sea by the
Older peoples worker for Highlands Methodist Church**

SERVING the COMMUNITY 7 Days a Week

Children and Young People

Fellowship Groups

Services to the Community

Social and Recreational

These services are suspended at the moment. We now feel confident that they can be restored soon.

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 August 2021 issue should be emailed to andrewghyde@aol.com before Sunday 20 July. No email? Don't despair; just telephone 473111 to arrange an alternative.



Hainault, looking over London. The 'Shard' is easily spotted