

FREEMANTLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Testwood Road, Southampton



In focus

February 2026



The **WINTER OLYMPICS** are with us from 6th to 22nd February and for those who enjoy alpine skiing, biathlon, bobsleigh, cross country skiing, curling, figure skating, freestyle skiing and ice hockey, there is a lot to look forward to.



The Olympic Games began in 776BC and continued until 393AD when Christian Emperor Thodosius I banned all ‘pagan’ festivals. The modern Games did not re-commence until 1896.

Controversially, the Paris opening ceremony in 2024 included a parody of the Last Supper featuring a dozen drag queens behind the Leonardo de Vinci famous painting that depicts the sacred occasion when Jesus institutes Holy Communion. We can certainly pray that this time religious beliefs will be respected.

The Games themselves remind Christians that greatness is never achieved without sacrifice, discipline and perseverance. Athletes deny themselves, train daily and endure suffering for a medal that will one day fade. Christ calls us to a similar commitment for the crown of eternal life.

When we apply the principles of sport - faithful practice, obedience to the rules, resilience after failure, self-control, discipline and trust in a great goal - to our spiritual lives, then our discipleship is strengthened and our soul is made stronger and better prepared to meet God.

The Olympics can inspire us to strive not only for human achievement, but for the lasting victory found in Christ. The apostle Paul writes:

“Everyone who completes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.” (1 Cor 9: 25)

Les Pike

Source: Bishop Thomas J. Paprocki

Welcome

to our **SERVICES** 10.30am

We commence our Sunday mornings with prayer in the church between 9.45am and 10.15am.

You are very welcome to join us.

We continue our sermon series entitled **Covenant people** until 15th, then our focus turns towards **Peter**.

The services will be led by Revd Linda Hayes unless otherwise stated.

Sun 1st February

Subject: **A united community**

Reading: *Phil 2 : 5-11*

Sun 8th

Subject: **A hopeful community**

Reading: *Romans 8 : 8-30* Revd Dr Rachel Watson

Sun 15th

Subject: **A loving community**

Reading: *1 Corinthians 13*

Sun 22nd Lent 1

Subject: **Jairus daughter** Les and Anita Pike

Reading: *Mark 5:21-43*

Sun 1st March Lent 2

Subject: **Declaration**

Reading: *Mark 8:27-30*

You are very welcome to join us any Sunday morning

All ages welcome. Activities available for the young at heart.

Light refreshments are served after the Service.



Previous sermons are on our Facebook page

Coming up . .

Sun 1st

Prayer Breakfast

9.00am - 10.00am
Prayer led by Yann

Sun 8th

Church Lunch

Bring-and-share
12.30pm approx

Mon 9th

Leaders' Meeting

9.30am

Sat 14th

Quiet morning
Preparation for Lent

9.30am - 11.30am

Tues 17th

Pancake Party

3.30-5.00pm

Weekly Meetings

TUESDAYS

Turkish language school 5.00pm-6.30pm

Belong 7.00pm-9.00pm
Fortnightly discipleship group exploring aspects of faith.

WEDNESDAYS

Sunflower Café

12.30pm - 3.00pm

Livewires

3.30pm - 4.30pm

 For Key stage 1 children with parents +carers; older and younger siblings welcome.



FRIDAYS

Flowerpots

10am - noon
Baby and toddler group.



SATURDAYS

Impact Church 6.00pm

Polish church

SUNDAYS

Bethel Prayer House 3.00pm



Mon to Fri



Tel: (023) 8078 4969

pp7@paintpotsnursery.co.uk

Contacts: Revd. LINDA HAYES Mob:07963 803884 or linda@dizzyanddaisy.plus.com
Anita Pike Administrator and hall bookings 07814 445929 or calm.pike82@gmail.com



Rhythm

GOD of the regular rhythm of the sun and the moon, God of the seasons and the tides, sometimes we simply cannot fathom Your ways.

You have created a diverse people with different ideas and personalities.

I thank You that everyone else is not like me!

I am wonderful and uniquely designed to give glory back to You.

May I never be too busy to remember that You are God, that Jesus is Your Son, that Your Spirit is with me - minute by minute, breath by breath.

That is an amazing and humbling thought. Thank You, God. Amen

Source: Prayer's beautiful messiness - Methodist Church

F
E
B
R
U
A
R
Y

P
r
a
y
e
r
s



Father, hear the prayer we offer: not for ease that prayer shall be, but for strength that we may ever live our lives courageously.

Not for ever in green pastures do we ask our way to be; but the steep and rugged pathway may we tread rejoicingly.

Not for ever by still waters would we idly rest and stay; but would smite the living fountains from the rocks along our way.

Be our strength in hours of weakness, in our wanderings be our guide; through endeavour, failure, danger, Father, always at our side.

Love Maria Willis



Let me live with **LOVE** in my mind.
Let me live with **FORGIVENESS** in my heart
Let me live with **HUMILITY** in my steps.
Let me live with **COMPASSION** in my alms.

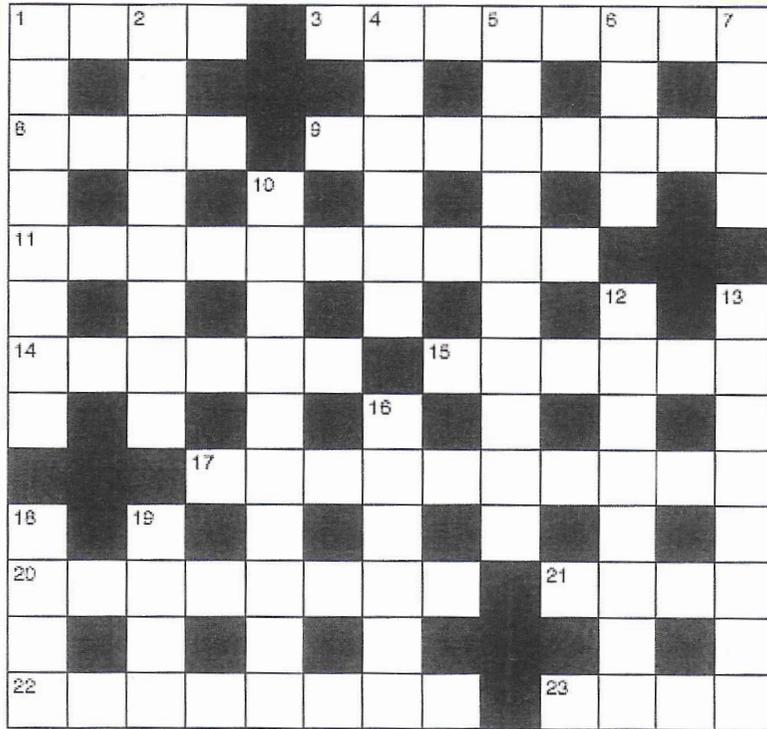
Jonathan Cushnie

A Bible verse for all ages

1 John 3 : 22

Do those things that are pleasing in the Lord's sight.

C₃ R₁ O₁ S₁ S₁ W₄ O₁ R₁ D₂



THIS year *Lent*, which always falls in the seventh week before Easter, begins on Ash Wednesday, 18th February. Lent is widely observed by Christians as a time of fasting and focus on God.

The day before is *Shrove Tuesday* or *Pancake Day* when, down through the centuries, many Christian housewives would clear out their larders immediately before the fast of Lent. The simplest way of using up all their eggs, flour and milk was to make pancakes.

Putting on ashes on oneself as a symbol of repentance stems from the Old Testament. When the early church began to observe Lent as a

Continues page 5

Across:

1. Made from the fruit of the vine, symbol of the blood of Christ (4)
3. *'You are to set an ambush behind the city. Don't go very far from it. All of you be on ___'* (Joshua 8:4) (3,5)
8. Sleep (4)
9. Celebrated by Jesus on the night of his betrayal (Luke 22:15) (8)
11. One of the supposed sites of Christ's burial place in Jerusalem (6,4)
14. *'A city on a hill ___ be hidden'* (Matthew 5:14) (6)
15. He inherited Elijah's mantle (2 Kings 2:12-13) (6)
17. Where Jesus prayed *'Not as I will, but as you will'* (Matthew 26:36, 39) (10)
20. *'Only in his hometown and in his ___ is a prophet without honour'* (Matthew 13:57) (3,5)
21. Sail (anag.) (4)
22. How Jesus was punished before his crucifixion (Matthew 27:26) (8)
23. Eye sore (4)

Down:

1. Can't grow (anag.) (5,3)
2. A servant girl to Peter, *'You also were with that ___, Jesus'* (Mark 14:67) (8)
4. Well-being (Proverbs 3:8) (6)
5. Pentecostal denomination, _____ of God (10)
6. One of the 'obvious' acts of the sinful nature (Galatians 5:19,21) (4)
7. *'I preached that they should repent and ___ to God'* (Acts 26:20) (4)
10. *'___ ___, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me'* (John 14:19) (6,4)
12. He betrayed Jesus: Judas _____ (Luke 6:16) (8)
13. *Jesus to Peter: '___ of my sheep'* (John 21:16) (4,4)
16. The centurion said, *'Surely this man was ___ of God'* (Mark 15:39) (3,3)
18. Baked bread (Mark 8: 14) (4)
19. *'Blessing and honour, glory and power, be ___ Him'* (Handel's Messiah) (4)

Solutions on page 6

Continued from page 4

period of preparation for Easter, repentance played a key part. Therefore, the wearing of ashes was adopted as a proper external sign of this inward attitude.

Although in the Baptist tradition, we do not observe Ash Wednesday, our Quiet Morning is an opportunity to make space to seek God and begin to walk with Jesus along the road to the cross.



A Covenant Church: Mission

AT THE beginning of the year we started a sermon series entitled Covenant People and on the 25th January we focused on Mission; it was good to hear folk come to the front of the church and speak about the Missions we support and are engaged in.

When it was Linda Hayes turn to speak, she stressed that prayer is the vital foundational and driving force of Christian mission to align with God's purpose and power. The apostle Paul integrated prayer and mission, inseparable components of his ministry.



There are five elements to pray for: protection, strength, guidance, opportunity and the unreached. Prayer is using the Spirit of God to impact people as we pray for folk in our community; some we know well, some a little and some not at all, but we pray for them all to come to faith and know of the joy of Jesus in their lives.

In the next few issues of *In Focus* each of the mission groups we support will be highlighted. This month it is the **Southampton City Mission** with its *Basics Bank* project.

The Basics Bank work through trusted referral partners and an electronic voucher system, to provide emergency food and clothes for those who fall through the gaps in the benefit system or are struggling with one of life's crises.

Whether you come on a Sunday or during the week, bringing a tin or packet or an item of clothing each week is a simple and practical way of helping those on our doorstep. Just pop your contributions in the basket at the back of the church.

URGENTLY NEEDED are:

Tinned Hot Meat - Curry, Pies, etc
Tinned Cold Meat - Ham, Spam, etc
Coffee - Small Jars
Cook-In Sauces - Jars & Packets
Jams & Spreads
Tinned Sweetcorn
Tinned Peas
Tinned Carrots
Tinned Potatoes
Tinned Macaroni Cheese

Toiletries to include:

Toilet Rolls, Male & Female Deodorant, Soap & Shower Gel, Shampoo, Toothbrushes, Toothpaste.
UHT Milk
Sugar - small bags



Solutions from page 5



Pancake Party



Tuesday 17th February

3.30-5.00pm

Please come - everyone is welcome

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to **Angie Marchmont**
on 1st February and
Anita Pike on 15th

Sunflower Baptist

NOTICE BOARD

Aarya, from our church's Young Lives group would like to share a joke with you.



My mum and Dad's two radios were married last year on Valentine's Day.

The reception was amazing.



... for your financial giving towards the work and witness of this church during January which came to £1,304.41, a weekly average of £326.02

The Moon is exactly 400 times smaller than the Sun and exactly 400 times closer to Earth. That is the only reason eclipses look perfect. In a random universe that would be a mathematical impossibility. So, who put it there?



From the archives



This was how the church looked just before the false ceiling was put up in April 1982

Spot the differences:

- the organ
- central aisle
- pulpit under the cross
- wooden chairs
- single glazed windows



New Year's Dinner

The servers



... four of the receivers

THE FOCUS on the first Sunday in January was our prayer breakfast and Covenant Service: a time when we recommit ourselves to God and each other at the beginning of the New Year.

The second Sunday was our New Year's Dinner. A huge thank you goes to those who prepared, cooked and served the food: roast beef, turkey, nut roast, with all the veggies and trimmings, followed by Christmas pudding, crumble and fruit salad. It was good to be in a friendly atmosphere with such agreeable and sociable company. Those not well enough to come had 'deliveroo' in the form of Les and were extremely grateful.

Wish you'd been there? Fret not, unless the Lord returns between now and then, there could well be another one next year!

Make this Valentine's Day one to remember



Listen to the world-renowned

LONDON COMMUNITY GOSPEL CHOIR

as you marvel at the stunning 'Helios' art installation.

Sat 14th Feb, 8pm-10pm

£16.25 - £36.25



www.winchester-cathedral.org.uk