



FREEMANTLE BAPTIST CHURCH
Testwood Road, Southampton

In focus

May 2026



BIRTHDAYS are great! Well, I suppose it depends whether you're six, sixteen or sixty-something! But I like my birthday, I like the thought of planet Earth travelling round the sun one more time, back to the position it was in the day I arrived. I don't mind anyone knowing that's now happened sixty seven times! It is what it is, and I am who I am, grateful for each new day God gives me.

May is a good month for church birthdays (see page 8) and it also marks the birthday of the church itself.



It happened this way: Jesus died and rose again at the Jewish festival of Passover. Forty days later He ascended back to heaven. Fifty days later was the festival of Pentecost and the disciples were waiting in Jerusalem as Jesus had instructed them. The dramatic account related in the Bible (Acts 2:1-4) describes what happened . . .

The house, where the apostles were staying, was filled with a sound, a sound from heaven, a sound like a violent wind, and

they saw what appeared to be tongues of fire which separated out and rested on each one of them and they were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

This power transformed the apostles: they became courageous, bold, with no doubt that their mission was to tell everyone that they were witnesses to Jesus' death and resurrection and that believing in Him brought forgiveness for the past and new life

for the future. On that day of Pentecost, Peter preached to the crowd and three thousand people believed and were baptised.

The Church of Christ was born and the Spirit lit the flame are words we sing in one of our worship songs, because since then the earth has gone round the sun nearly two thousand more times and Christians are still empowered by the same Spirit, and each day new believers come to know the joy and hope that Jesus brings.

Please do come and celebrate with us on May 24th - I think I can feel a cake coming on! Anita Pike

Welcome

to our **MAY SERVICES 10.30am**

Our **Sunday mornings** start with **prayer** in the church **between 9.45am and 10.15am**.
You are very welcome to join us.

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

Sun 3rd May

Subject: **How to live faithfully in a hostile environment**

Reading: 1 Peter 2:11-17, 3:8-12

Sun 10th

Subject: **Living for God** *Les and Anita Pike*

Reading: 1 Peter 4:1-11

Sun 17th

Subject: **Elders and young**

Reading: 1 Peter 5:1-11

Sun 24th *New Series for PENTECOST*

Subject: **Who is the Holy Spirit?** *Denise and Ian Ward*

Reading: Genesis 1:1-2

Sun 31st

Subject: **What does the Holy Spirit do?**

Reading: Eph 1:17-18, 2 Cor 3:18

Sun 7th June

Subject: **Being filled with the Holy Spirit**

Reading: John 7:37-39

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.



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

Previous sermons are on our Facebook page



Happy
Ascension
Day

Thursday
14th May



on Sunday 24th May

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A prayer for this church

A prayer for those taking GCSE's in the summer term

Lord Jesus Christ,
Head of the Church,
Good Shepherd of
Your people,

Lord, we remember that
this is Your church, not ours.
Free us from anxiety about
getting everything right.
Free us from pride when
things go well.
Free us from fear when
decisions feel heavy.

Give us listening hearts.
Teach us patience with
one another.

Help us recognise Your voice
above our own opinions.

Where we need wisdom,
give it.

Where we need courage,
strengthen us.

Where we need humility,
shape us.

Make us leaders who serve,
servants who love,
and a church that reflects You.

Gather us, guide us,
and send us for the sake of
your kingdom. Amen

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LORD, as this exam season unfolds, we lift up all those teenagers facing this time of pressure and hard work.

I pray for along with his/her friends and for other students as they balance studies, work and life, that they will know You and Your peace during this time.

Give them clarity of mind, strength through the long, tiring hours and a sense of Your presence walking alongside them each step of the way.

We pray that they will remember that their worth is always found in You, not just in their grades or results. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen

A prayer for those taking A Levels and further education

Father God, we pray for those taking A Level exams and making decisions about pathways for their future.

Give them wisdom as they study, clarity and guidance as they think about their next steps.

Help them to trust You and the plan You have for their lives, knowing that You hold them and their future securely in Your hands. Amen.

Easter Reflections

Reflections from church folk over the Easter period.



FIFA World Cup - topics I have zero knowledge of or desire to learn! - and opted for Lent.

I figured I had at least some foundation there, but as the date approached, panic started to set in. I realised my "subject knowledge" was mostly limited to why we eat pancakes and my own habit of giving something up for the season.

To my immense relief, Denise [Ward] agreed to co-lead the assembly with me. She was wonderful, completely unfazed by the 400 children and 13 teachers watching us.

We covered everything from pancakes to the "why" behind the 40 days, but the most moving part was the response.

It opened a door for children to talk about their own faith to me afterwards, and it even softened the heart of a sceptical colleague, who told me that hearing Denise talk about "knowing Jesus as a friend" offered her a view of Christianity she hadn't considered before.

As for my own Lenten challenge this year? I gave up social media. It was a struggle at first, but it broke my habit - I'm back online now, but with a much healthier sense of balance.



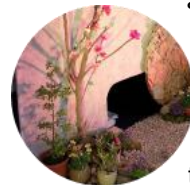
Anita Pike pens

JOHN'S gospel tells us, *Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb . . .*

As I cycled along Testwood Road without lights before 6am on Easter Day, those words crept into my mind. 'Today, that's me,' I thought, 'I am coming to the tomb while it is still dark. But I haven't come to anoint a body but to bring the garden to life.'

As I busied myself, attaching the paper blooms to the bare branches, my mind kept turning to Mary and how beyond her wildest dreams Jesus met her there.

And as I knelt at the front of the church, considering, adjusting, arranging the moss, the stones, the plants, to gain the best effect, so this focus became my act of worship . . .



and there in the garden, Jesus lovingly met me too.

I ALWAYS like to follow the events leading up to Easter, that we call Holy Week, in real time as it were.



- Palm Sunday:** Jesus entered Jerusalem
- Monday:** Jesus cleansed the temple
- Tuesday:** Jesus taught at the temple
- Wednesday:** Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver
- Maundy Thursday:** The Last Supper
- Good Friday:** Jesus crucified and darkness covered the earth
- Saturday:** Jesus rested in the tomb
- Resurrection Sunday:** Jesus is Risen! His death, burial and resurrection paid for our sins and gives all who believe in Him eternal life.

The time we spent together was very worthwhile on the Thursday, Friday and Sunday, as once again our minds were focussed on the most central, historic and pivotal weekend in world history.



And it was great to see the church packed out for our family friendly Easter Party with all the youngsters listening attentively to Linda retelling the Easter story - plus all the mums out of the picture.

Another couple of events that were highlights: firstly, to hear the St John's Singers give a quality rendition of John Stainer's *The Crucifixion* as we sat with them in the choir stalls of Salisbury Cathedral.

And on Easter morning joining with around forty other folk, outside in the bright spring sunshine, in a big circle at Lakeside Country Park for the 7.00am Son Rise Service morning. Alleluia!

Coming up . . .

<p style="text-align: center;">Sun 3rd May Prayer Breakfast Prayer: 9.00: Led by Les Followed by Breakfast: at 9.30am</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Thurs 7th Local Elections 7.00am - 10pm in the church</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Sat 9th Litter Pick 9.00am Please bring your own gloves. Followed by refreshments in the hall</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Sun 10th Church Lunch Bring-and-Share. Approx 12.30pm</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Sat 23rd Quiet morning 9.30am - 11.30am</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Sun 24th Pentecost Sunday 10.30am</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Wed 27th Swift Party 3.30pm - 5.00pm</p>

A letter from 7 year old Sohodev

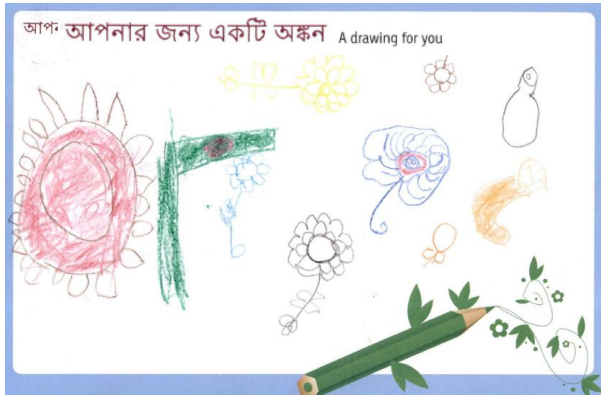
Dear Freemantle Baptist Church,

Take greetings and love from Sohodev and his family. He hopes you are doing well with God's blessing.

He is also doing well with his family. Thank you for your financial support.

Please pray for him so that he can stay well. May God bless you. Stay well. Loving Sohodev.

Written by his Social Worker



who finished his working life on 30th April.



Caption Competition



From the church meeting on 26th April.

Entries to Les please no later than 24th May

Fire Trinity Evangelize Holy Spirit
 Gifts Easter Tongues Power

*A meditative poem as we approach
Pentecost by Amy Carmichael*

Make me Thy fuel

From prayer that asks that I may be
sheltered from winds that beat on Thee,
from fearing when I should aspire,
from faltering when I should climb higher,
from silken self, O Captain, free
Thy soldier who would follow Thee.

From subtle love of softening things,
from easy choices, weakenings,
not thus are spirits fortified,
not this way went the Crucified,
from all that dims Thy Calvary,
O Lamb of God, deliver me.



Give me the love that leads the way,
the faith that nothing can dismay,
the hope no disappointments tire,
the passion that will burn like fire,
let me not sink to be a clod:
make me Thy fuel, Flame of God.

Sunflower Baptist

NOTICE BOARD

7 year-old Adam, from Kingdom Kids, would like to share a joke with everybody, that he thinks is very funny!

*Why does life feel so chaotic
at this time of year?*

*Because it's the month
Mayhem.*

May's Bible verse

Let the word of Christ dwell
in you richly. Colossians 3 : 16

WELCOME BACK

IT'S this time of year when we welcome back those incredible migratory birds from Africa.

Swallows don't just fly in a straight line – they navigate by instinct, using the position of the sun, stars, and the Earth's magnetic fields to guide them. They can find their way back to the very same places they nested before.

House Martins travel up to 5,000 miles to return to the UK each year which involves a lot of stamina, navigating changing weather patterns, and finding safe spots to rest during their travels.

Swifts make the longest migration of the three species, flying an astonishing 8,000 miles each year. They prefer nesting in holes or crevices of tall buildings, often congregating in colonies. This is a species that needs our support, as they have very specific nesting requirements.

Installing a swift nest box on your house can make a huge difference for them.

Source: wigglywiggles.co.uk

*Let us thank God for the
wonder in His creation.*



Our *Swift Party* is on
Wednesday 27th May
3.30 - 5.00pm

Easter Gallery



WEDNESDAY - Easter Party. Folk engrossed in craft activities.
Inset: Stacey and Linda sorting out the party bags.



THURSDAY - Linda leading our Maundy Thursday supper and service



GOOD FRIDAY



EASTER SUNDAY



Decorating the cross during the
Easter morning service.

Thank you!

... for your **financial giving** towards the work and witness of this church during April which came to £1,346.57 a weekly average of £336.64

... to **Linda** for leading our Holy Week services and events

... and **Anita** for providing our focal point with the Easter garden and tomb.

... and **Steve** for the lighting effects on the Easter garden. Also for sorting out the finance app on the church laptop.

... to **Gary** for his work in the church front garden.

... to **everyone** who attended the church meeting.

... to **those** who read the Scriptures and lead our intercessory prayers on a Sunday morning.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Michaela Dowse
Caroline Villeneuve
Joanne McNeil
Denise Ward

on 19th
on 19th
on 22nd
on 25th