

FREEMANTLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Testwood Road, Southampton

In focus

October 2026





WE HAVE just celebrated Harvest, and sung the song *Come, ye thankful people, come.* And it has got me thinking about how thankful I am to God not just for the harvest, but for so many things and not just material things.

This year God has been quietly working things out within me and around me. I wasn't particularly aware of everything He was doing, but this autumn, I find myself different from earlier this year.

And as I look back, I see God's hand in it all, and so today it is easy for me to say thank You to God.

But gratitude is not always easy, is it? Life is often tricky. We often face tricky problems, or situations, that's how life is at times. But we don't have to do life alone. God is with us, and He is working for us. Sometimes we are unaware of what God is up to in the background, or behind the scenes.

Yet He is always working out things for us, for our benefit. Sometimes He is quiet about it, just nudging things our way, and we don't always notice. But sometimes, God changes things for us that are more obvious. Either way, we can always be grateful that God is working for us and is always on our side.

Let me encourage you to say *thank You* to God for everything you have. Also let me encourage you to thank God for all He has done for you, all He is doing and all He is yet to do.

Revd Linda Hayes

Welcome

to our October 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.*

A new series will start on 11th October which is entitled '*Being Baptist*'

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

Sun 4th *October*
Subject: **More than sparrows** *Belong*
Reading: Matthew 10:29-31

Sun 11th
Subject: **God is always on your side!**
Reading: Romans 8:31-37

Sun 18th
Subject: **Solo Christo, by Christ alone** *Will Rosie*
Reading: Ephesians 1:19-23

Sun 25th
Subject: **Solo Fide, by faith alone**
Reading: Ephesians 2: 4-10

Sun 1st *November*
Subject: **Solo Scriptura, by scripture alone**
Reading: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

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

MONDAYS

Alpha Course 1.00-3.00pm
Starting 14th September

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

PaintPots nurseries
Mon to Fri
Ofsted Outstanding Provider
Tel: (023) 8078 4969
pp7@paintpotsnursery.co.uk

Previous sermons are on our Facebook page



A BIBLE VERSE FOR OCTOBER

Serve Him with all your heart, and with all your soul
Joshua 22:5

'We shall need all the wisdom from above that God can give us in this AI age in order to fulfil Christ's directive that we should be salt and light in our society. John Lennox, Christian apologist

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A meditation

Let everything that has life,
let everything that has breath
give all the glory and honour
and praise to the One who
overcame death.

Let every living thing
sing of the mercies of our God.
Let us exalt Him wherever we live
with thanksgiving and joy
in our hearts.

If we don't praise Him,
the mountains will.
If we don't exalt Him,
the rocks will cry out
in our stead,
'God is not dead!'

Let every living thing
sing of the mercies of our God.
Let us exalt Him wherever we live
with thanksgiving and joy
in our hearts.

Source: Northumbria Community - Lawrence Chewning

God, my friend.
Help me to keep company with you.
Help me to pray, not only at special times but all the time.
Help me to communicate richly and deeply.
Help me learn that you never leave me.
Help me to find beauty in the mystery.
And may we together bring healing and hope to the world. Amen

Source: Prayer's beautiful messiness

September Prayers

At meal times

To God, who gives our
daily bread,
a thankful song we'll raise,
and pray that He who
sends us food,
will fill our hearts with
praise.

Mary Rumsey, circa 1840



Jesus the Light

Dear Father God,

Thank you for Jesus, the Light of the World, who shines in the darkness and overcomes it.

Please help us to reflect Your brightness by being kind, helpful, and loving to everyone we meet. Shine Your light through us into our communities every day.

We pray that lots of people will come to our Light Party and that they may realise that there is nothing scary about You, only love. We pray this in Jesus Name. Amen

Harvest Weekend

Saturday

IT was good to get together for two hours at our Quiet Morning on the Saturday of the Harvest weekend.

Our focus was on an old favourite hymn, Come you thankful people come. Revd. Henry Alford wrote the hymn for an autumn harvest festival in Wymeswold, Leicestershire back in 1844, at a time when society relied directly on local agriculture for survival.

The opening verse or stanza calls believers to gather in God's temple and celebrate the "harvest home" - the moment crops are safely stored before winter storms arrive. It acknowledges God as the Maker who supplies all human needs.

The second verse draws directly from Jesus' parable of the wheat and tares in Matthew's Gospel, where wheat (the righteous) and weeds/ tares (the unrighteous) grow together in the world until maturity. It includes a prayer that humanity may grow into good grain, wholesome and pure.

In verse three, the hymn looks ahead to the end of the age, comparing the final judgment to a harvest. It describes God sending angels to separate the bad from the good - casting away what is offensive and storing the fruitful "in his garner [storehouse] evermore".

The final stanza is an eager prayer for the Lord's return to gather His people into a final state of peace, free from sin and sorrow.

It's all good stuff! And when George J Elvey wrote the tune twelve years later, the words and melody gelled and have remained together to be heartily sung ever since.

1: What is the name of the long-running BBC Radio soap opera set in a rural farming community that frequently features harvest storylines?

a) The Archers b) Emmerdale
c) Down a Country Lane

2. What name is given to the full moon that occurs closest to the autumn equinox?

a) The Hunter's Moon
c) The Heavenly Moon
b) The Harvest Moon

3. Where was the first modern UK church harvest festival celebrated in 1843?

a) Hambledon, Hampshire
b) Morwenstow, Cornwall
c) Taverstock, Devon



The preparations

Following our reflections our floral arrangers got to work in patiently decorating the six windowsills and main focal display at the front of the church. On completion there was an air of heartfelt satisfaction and pleasure at the aesthetically pleasing, greenery, flowers and fruit and vegetables, all pointing to God's bounty and provision.

Sunday

When the doors were opened for our prayer time at 9.45am on Sunday morning, the aroma from the earthy produce greeted us, putting smiles on faces ready to sit and pray and later for our time of worship.



The first half of our service was in gratitude and praise to our Lord for his goodness to us once again. It is also a time, when we think of those who are less fortunate and locally the produce will go to the Southampton City Mission's Food Basics Bank and our offering overseas to BMS's harvest project in Sierra Leone.

We then concentrated on the verse from Zephaniah 3:17 where it says, 'The Lord Your God . . . will take great delight in you'.

A great weekend, with our focus on God's provision, responding to the need around us, and for ourselves in reflecting, praising, growing and moving on in our journey of faith.

Les Pike

Coming up . . .

Sat 3rd Oct	Sun 4th	Mon 5th	Sun 25th	Sat 31st
Repair Cafe	***Prayer Breakfast***	***Monthly Leaders' Meeting***	***Church Meeting***	***Light Party***
10.30 - 1.00pm In the hall	Prayer: 9.00 Breakfast: at 9.30am Led by Denise		After the morning service	5.00- 6.30pm *See page 8*

Fringe in the Park



IT was a pleasure, along with other clubs and societies, to be part of this event in Freemantle Lake Park on 6th September.

We had our usual gazebo with craft activities for anyone to get involved, which led to good conversations with mums and dads while the children coloured, cut and glued.

An added bonus was the pleasant sunshine - not too hot, not too cold, but just right!

Picnic in the Park





A WEEK later a group of us went to Romsey Memorial Park for a church picnic. It was a relaxing time with chatting, eating, ice creams and a giant dominoes game, a good walk.

Here we are, all smiling at the camera, and left, is our dominoes champion Eve Hulse.

There was no band in the bandstand serenading us this year as it was too late in the season, but it was nice to enjoy the quiet peacefulness.



Jean Hulse 20th
Karen Eaves 28th



. . . for your financial giving towards the work and witness of this church during September which came to a weekly average of £350.56

. . . to Steve Hayes for installing the dishwasher and all the electrical and plumbing work involved.

. . . to all those who took part in the fire drill after our morning service. You all passed with flying colours!

Sunflower Baptist

NOTICE BOARD

The Revd. Humphrey Timewell will explain at our *Changing Seasons Club* why a sundial is going to be the hardest clock to put back at 2am on 25th October.

Angie Marchment writes

The Story behind the Hymn

HYMNS are more than songs; they are expressions of faith and spiritual reflection. They serve as a vehicle for worship, allowing us to express devotion, gratitude, and longing for God through music and lyrics. Hymns often convey deep theological truths in an accessible way, helping us reflect on spiritual concepts such as grace, redemption, and divine guidance.

Hymns also preserve the legacy of their composers, linking modern worshippers to the historical and cultural context in which the song was created. They provide a narrative of faith across generations.

Amazing Grace was written by *John Newton*, a former slave trader, after surviving a violent storm at sea. The hymn reflects themes of redemption, grace, and spiritual transformation.

Rock of Ages by *Augustus Toplady* was inspired sheltering from a storm in the cleft of a rock face in the Mendips, symbolising God as a refuge in times of trouble and life's storms.

How Great Thou Art originated from *Carl Boberg's* awe of the Swedish wilderness, celebrating God's creative majesty.

It Is Well with My Soul by *Horatio Spafford* arose from personal tragedy, including the loss of his daughters at sea, reflecting faith and peace amid suffering.

Singing hymns collectively fosters a sense of unity and shared faith, connecting individuals to both the present moment of worship and the broader Christian tradition.

In essence, hymns are prayers set to music, blending personal testimony, theological reflection, and communal worship, making them enduring expressions of faith and devotion.

When I was looking for songs to go alongside a service I was preparing, I used Google to help me and came across a guy called Rev. Luke Powell. A click of a button took me to his You Tube channel *Friday Classics*, where I was able to delve into the background and the meaning of the hymn Rock of Ages.

I've turned to *Friday Classics* many times since to find out more about some of my favourite hymns. He has recently started to focus on not just the older classical hymns but also on more modern worship songs so I now know more about another favourite of mine, **In Christ Alone**.
(Rev. Luke Powell's website: lukepowellministries.com/friday-classic-hymns)

If you are interested in learning more about 'the story behind the hymn' put those words in your search bar and you will find a wealth of suggested sites you can explore.

THANK YOU for coming to our

COMMUNITY AFTERNOON

on 19th September

A BOUNCY castle kept the young, energetic ones amused in the hall, with the more gentle pursuits in the church, including a swap shop of clothes, books and toys, crafts and the prayer corner. A host of quality home baking provided refreshments aplenty.

Everything was free but welcome donations were split between Southampton Street Pastors and local homeless charities.



Congratulations to our two competition winners:

Rachel (left) won the Fairtrade hamper for the most correct answers in the Quiz. Olivia, Rachel's daughter, is holding the quiz paper - she, though, was more interested in playing on the bouncy castle!



Hannah (right) won a box of sweets after guessing the nearest number of in the container.



We have a new acquisition!

Following a generous donation, a dishwasher has been installed in the church kitchen which is now in full service!

'Cleanliness is next to godliness'

is not in the Bible. It was first recorded by the Methodist founder John Wesley in a 1778 sermon.

ANSWERS TO QUIZ ON PAGE 5

1. The Archers 2 Harvest Moon 3. Morwenstow, Cornwall



Trick or Treaters especially welcome

Drop in any time on

Saturday 31st October

between 5.00pm and 6.30pm

at **Freemantle Baptist Church**

● Games ● Drinks

● Hot dogs ● Craft activities