



FREEMANTLE BAPTIST CHURCH
Testwood Road, Southampton

In focus

January 2025



KING GEORGE VI's
*final words in his 1939
Christmas broadcast were:*

“A new year is at hand. We cannot tell what it will bring. If it brings peace, how thankful we shall be. If it brings us continued struggle, we shall remain undaunted.

“In the meantime, I feel that we may all find a message of encouragement in the lines which, in my closing words, I should like to say to you:

“ ‘And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: ‘Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.’ And he replied, ‘Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be better to you than light and safer than a known way.’ ”

“May that Almighty Hand guide and uphold us all. Amen.”

KING CHARLES III
*from his 2024 Christmas
message:*

“We also think of the humanitarian organisations working tirelessly to bring vital relief. After all, the Gospels speak so vividly of conflict and teach the values with which we can overcome it.

“The example that Jesus gave us is timeless and universal. It is to enter the world of those who suffer, to make a difference to their lives and so bring hope where there is despair.

“As the famous Christmas Carol, ‘Once in Royal David’s City’ reminds us, ‘Our Saviour holy’ ‘came down to Earth from Heaven’, lived among ‘the poor and mean and lowly’ and transformed the lives of those He met, through God’s ‘redeeming love’.



WE sing the words *Jesus our Emmanuel* in the carol Hark the Herald. ‘Emmanuel’ means ‘God with us’. But it is not just for Christmas - it is the whole of our lives. Let us then go forward into 2025 with words that St Patrick penned back in 433AD, that Christ may go . . .

*. . . before me, behind me, in me, beneath me, above me, on my right,
on my left, when I lie down, when I sit and when I arise.*

Welcome

to our **SERVICES** 10.30am

For the first five weeks of this year, we will be looking at the **names of God**

and will be led by Revd Linda Hayes unless otherwise stated

Sunday 5th January

Subject: **King**

Reading: *Psalm 72: 1-3 includes Covenanting*

Sunday 12th

Will Rosie

Subject: **The Lord is my banner**

Reading: *Exodus 17 : 8-16*

Sunday 19th

Subject: **Shepherds**

Reading: *Psalm 23 includes Communion*

Sunday 26th

Subject: **Rock**

Belong Group

Reading: *Isaiah 26:4*

Sunday 2nd February

Subject: **He sees me**

Reading: *Genesis 16:13-14*

Whether this is your first visit or you have been a regular for years, we're **PLEASED TO SEE YOU!**



Light refreshments are served after the Sunday Services

Previous sermons are on our Facebook page

Weekly Meetings

TUESDAYS

Turkish language school 5.00pm-6.30pm

in the church.

Belong 7.00pm-9.00pm

Fortnightly discipleship group exploring aspects of faith.

See Linda for dates




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.



Impact Church

Polish Youth group 6.00pm

SATURDAYS

Impact Church

6.00pm

Polish church

SUNDAYS

Bethel Prayer House

(formerly CBF)

3.00pm

Coming up . . .



Sun 12th
Church New Year Dinner
After the morning service

Mon 13th
Leaders' Meeting

Sat 1st Feb
Repair Cafe
10.30am - 1.00pm

Sun 2nd
Gift Day
See page 8

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



Though the dawn breaks
cheerless on this isle today,
my spirit walks in a path of light.
For I know my greatness.
Thou hast built me a throne
within Thy heart.
I dwell safely within the circle
of Thy care.
I cannot for a moment fall out
of the everlasting arms.
I am on my way to glory.

Alistair MacLean, Hebridean Altars, 1937

Even on the gloomiest days,
we cannot fall out of the
everlasting arms. Rejoice!

David Adam, The Awesome Journey, 2015.

For I am convinced that neither
death, nor life, nor angels,
nor rulers, nor things present,
nor things to come, nor powers,
nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from
the love of God in Christ Jesus
our Lord.

Romans 8 : 35-39

N e w Y e a r P r a y e r s

Be Thou my vision,
O Lord of my heart.
Naught be all else to me,
save that Thou art.
Thou my best thought,
by day or by night.
Waking or sleeping,
Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my wisdom and
Thou my true word.
I ever with Thee and
Thou with me, Lord.
Thou my great Father,
and I Thy true son.
Thou in me dwelling
and I with Thee one.

Riches I heed not,
nor man's empty praise.
Thou mine inheritance,
now and always.
Thou and Thou only
first in my heart.
High King of heaven,
my treasure Thou art.

High King of heaven,
my victory won.
May I reach heaven's joys,
O bright heaven's sun.
Heart of my own heart,
whatever befall,
still be my vision,
O ruler of all.

Irish traditional

For parents with children

LORD GOD, we praise You that You are fully in control of all things. We pray You will protect our little ones. Keep them healthy and help them to thrive.

Thank You that you know every hair on their heads. You know exactly when they rise and when they fall.

Watch over them all in every area of their lives and keep them safe we pray. Amen

Children's prayer

Loving God, fill our parents' hearts with joy and laughter. Let their days be filled with happiness and their spirits be light. Amen.



PATRICK HOUSE

THANK YOU to everyone who donated gifts towards our Reverse Advent Appeal in the first three weeks of December. We were delighted to take eight bags to Patrick House before Christmas.

Here they are underneath our Christmas tree. Staff were extremely grateful and appreciative for the generosity shown.

LANTERN PARADE

IT WAS great to see a hive of activity a week before the 'big day' as folk put their creative skills into making and colouring their lanterns.

Children, mums, dads and older folk then processed to Freemantle Lake Park to congregate under the shelter.

We sang carols and Christmas songs with gusto and Linda rounded off the occasion with a few words and a blessing.

The weather forecast was not promising but the damp air didn't dampen our spirits!



IMPACT CHURCH CHRISTMAS

WHAT a joy it is that our premises are used by two other Christian groups every week. The Impact Church for the Polish community who meet on a Friday and Saturday, held their Christmas event on 21st December.

The church was 'full to the rafters' with folk of all ages. Everyone sat at beautifully laid tables, the children having a corner to themselves at the back. The evening started with a worship song, followed by a Christmas message and a carol to conclude - all of course in Polish.

and Christmas

Les and Anita who were there as guests were able to understand every word! That was not because they're fluent in the language but because two of the ladies acted as excellent interpreters.



The final carol had a chorus which repeated many times, and with words projected on a screen, Les and Anita were able to sing along, having a good go at the pronunciation. By the end they had almost got the hang of it!

The buffet food followed and it was a real feast! Polish recipes both savoury and sweet were delicious and moorish! The two English visitors were made very welcome and felt part of the Impact community during the evening.

CHRISTINGLE SERVICE



WE held this for the first time and everyone made their Christingles under the guidance of Linda. All the elements are symbolic and a visual reminder to take home.

The orange represents the world - there's the countryside, wilderness, deserts, forests, ice, mountains, valleys, rivers, lakes, oceans; then there are animals that live on the earth and eight billion people.

The ribbon wrapped around our world represents the love of God. He loved us so much that He sent Jesus to show what He looked like. He was a teacher, a healer, a feeder and showed us love and justice right to the end.

Four cocktail sticks represent the four corners of the earth, north, south, east and west. Sweets were then put on the sticks, all the gifts God has given us, from family, friends, homes, pets, running water, electricity, mobile phones, transport, food, clothes . . .

And finally placing a candle at the top of the orange and lighting it. This is Jesus being the Light of the World and blessing us with His love, His joy, His peace, His hope. After each element was added we prayed accordingly with the folk around our tables.

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT and CHRISTMAS DAY



Two occasions to sing those well loved carols, hear the Christmas narrative from Scripture, and listen to re-reflections on the wonder of that truly historic event that changed the world we live in. We thank God that Jesus became one of us and then went on to give His life for us and lives with us still through His Holy Spirit.

and on the **LAST SUNDAY** of the YEAR . . .

We were encouraged to reflect and review our year with God . . .

- to thank Him for all He has done for us and to consider answered prayers during this year, and to praise Him.
- to consider some of the ups and downs of your relationship with God. When did He feel most present? When did He feel most distant?
- to consider how God used us this year, whether it's for His kingdom or in the ordinary aspects of life?
- have you changed because of God this year and what word or phrase has He said to you the most this year?

And thinking ahead, we spent some time in quiet prayer and asked God for a word or phrase for 2025.

If you were unable to be with us at that day you may like to use these points to help you reflect too.

Thank you!

... for your financial giving towards the work and witness of this church during December. The amount given totalled £1,414.70.

... to Steve Hayes for putting up the Christmas lights inside and out of the church. And putting them away!

Happy 10th Anniversary!

to Linda Hayes on her Ordination on 24th January

Happy 40th Birthday!

to Haley Stala on 9th Jan

~~~~~  
Angie on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb

### Sunflower Baptist

#### NOTICE BOARD

Sophia would like all the grown ups in the church to know that her pet spider, Rufus, has made a New Year's resolution.

She says that he wants to spend less time on the web.

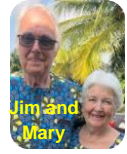




THE SERVING  
AFRICA MISSION  
CALLED TO SERVE

*Here is news from Mary and Jim Smith who we support prayerfully and financially.*

It was over 30 years ago that God called Jim and Mary Smith to begin the mission and they have been totally committed to the work ever since. Some of their time is spent in the UK but the majority in Africa.



*Writing before they travelled home for Christmas:*

SO HERE we are at the end of a very long mission. It's oppressively hot due to the Hammatan\*, and as I write the power is off yet again - it's been off all night. Fortunately, some years ago we bought a generator which keeps our room cool but more significantly keeps the security lights on in our compound.

There's been some significant progress during this mission. We finally paid the complete invoice for the roof on the main school and that roof will arrive at any time. We've also been able to place a contract for the power supply into the main school.

The churches have benefited from consistent ministry - this time on the subject of prayer. The home groups have begun which is a great achievement.

We're finally completing our planning for Glory church. It will start in January in one of our school rooms until we can find the right place for it. This will either work or it will not! This is the risk we have to take.

The training of the young pastors has gone really well. They've had four hard sessions with Jim but they have come through with flying colours. We now know the jobs we want each one of them to do and their real growing will begin once they start. They are young and keen and will be a great asset to us. There are others in our churches who in a few years' time will be the next group to be trained.

**\*What is the Hammatan?**

The Hammatan season lasts from the end of November to the middle of March, beginning of April when the rains come.

It is characterised by north easterly trade winds, hot, dry and dusty, that blow across West Africa from the Sahara Desert and on out into the Gulf of Guinea.

*At the heart of the mission in Ghana is this compound situated in the Medie Valley, north of the capital, Accra.*



Jim and Mary return on 16<sup>th</sup> January. Please remember them and their ministry in your prayers. If you would like more regular updates please speak to Denise.

Some practical everyday ideas you can do to make this a  
**Happier January 2025**

|                                                       |                                                        |                                                       |                                                           |                                                           |                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Write down your hopes or plans for the future         | Ask other people about things they've enjoyed recently | Find three things to look forward to this year        | Make time today to do something kind for yourself         | Do a kind act for someone else to help brighten their day | Write a list of things you feel grateful for and why |
| Take five minutes to sit still and just breathe       | Learn something new and share it with others           | Say positive things to the people you meet today      | Get moving. Do something active, ideally outdoors         | Thank someone you're grateful to and why                  | Switch off your tech at least an hour before bedtime |
| Take a different route today and see what you notice  | Eat healthy food which really nourishes you today      | Get outside and notice five things that are beautiful | Contribute positively to your local community             | Be gentle with yourself when you make mistakes            | Get back in contact with an old friend               |
| Go to bed in good time and allow yourself to recharge | Try out something new to get out of your comfort zone  | Plan something fun and invite others to join you      | Put away digital devices and focus on being in the moment | Take a small step towards an important goal               | Decide to lift people up rather than put them down   |

**Bible verses for Happiness**

- ❖ Happy are the people whose God is the Lord. Psalms 144:15
- ❖ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Romans 15:13

THE ROOF has done well at over a hundred years old and it will be wonderful to have it replaced to see another hundred!



To help with the cost, our Gift Day is being held on **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February** and is the opportunity to make an offering. £10,000 has already been allocated from church funds, a further £18,000 is needed.

Contributions can be in cash, by cheque or bank transfer. Or you may consider making an interest free loan. If you have any questions, please speak to Les.

The new roof will not simply maintain the building but maintain our mission, to continue to spread God's love into the community! So let us all prayerfully consider the amount we can give.

