

Give thanks to the  
Lord for he is good;  
His love endures for  
ever  
Psalm 106 v 1



# CORNERSTONE

## NEWS

## FEBRUARY

## 2026

Love the Lord your God  
with all your heart  
and with all your soul and  
with all your strength.  
These commandments that I  
give you today are to be  
upon your hearts.

Deuteronomy 6 v 5-6



 Hythe United Reformed Church  
**Cornerstone**

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[joy@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk](mailto:joy@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk)

For pastoral care offers or needs please contact one of the elders or  
email [pastoral@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk](mailto:pastoral@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk)

For church information please contact Richard Hall 023 8084 0191  
[secretary@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk) or Craigmore, Roman Road,  
Dibden Purlieu SO45 4QJ

Please contact your home-group leader, Elders and Team Leaders or  
any trusted Christian for any spiritual support and guidance at this time.

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## **MARCH NEWSLETTER**

**The deadline for the March issue is Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February**

The Editor would be very grateful to receive items and messages for the next issue of our newsletter, which will bless others in the church at this time, so please send such items to

E-mail: [newsletter@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk)

Items can be sent by post to

Diana Sandy, 38 Knightwood Road, Hythe, Southampton, SO45 6JL

Telephone : 023 8084 2745

# Letter from the Elders



Dear Friends,

As I write this it is cold, very wet and dreary, and as we know, February can be one of the bleakest months of the year. The days are still short and not a lot appears to be happening.

How easy it is to allow our faith to become dormant too. Well, you say; no one wants to know when we speak about our faith in Jesus. So my prayer for you all, for 2026 is :- Philemon 1 v 6

*"I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ".*

As I said earlier, February is bleak and dormant; but when you look closely at the world around you, the heads of daffodils and other early flowering bulbs are raising their heads above ground. Catkins are growing long in vibrant creams and yellows. Signs of swelling buds and blossoms can be seen on fruit trees and bushes. Who can forget the sticky buds of the horse chestnut (Conker) tree, in jam jars, that graced our homes and schools. It is a memory that brings a smile to our faces.

So as the days get warmer and longer, bring a smile to those you meet. Be a listening ear for someone who just needs to be listened to, and help them if you can, and offer to pray for them.

Also this month at long last, there is the opportunity to meet a prospective new minister. On Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February from 6.30pm to 8.30pm we will be able to meet him/her as they introduce themselves at a social gathering. As you know, as a church we are very good at being social with lots of tea/coffee and possibly cakes and biscuits.

On Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February our candidate will conduct a worship

service, starting at 10.30am. This will be followed by a soup lunch, with time afterwards to ask questions. If it helps, write down a question as you think of one, before like me you forget what you wanted to ask; and whilst we are happy to have questions from both members and non-members, only members present on Saturday will be able to vote. So please do try to come if you are able,

I shall finish this letter with another quote from Philemon 1 v 7  
*“Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, sister, have refreshed the hearts of saints”.*

May God’s grace and peace be yours in abundance.

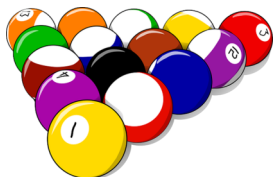
*Wendy Axton*

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY		
Date	Speaker	Theme:
1 <sup>st</sup>	Revd Mike Shrubsole	Bear Fruit <b><i>Service includes Communion</i></b>
8 <sup>th</sup>	Revd David John (video)	Talk about Jesus
15 <sup>th</sup>	Dave White	Receive the Spirit
Sat 21 <sup>st</sup>	Preach-with-a-View service led by candidate Minister (not streamed)	
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Prayer and Praise Service	

## **YOUTH CLUB**

For 11 to 18 Year Olds

**7.30 pm to 9.00 pm  
alternate Fridays**



For further details and programmes please contact  
Dave Symmonds

Email : [youthclub@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk](mailto:youthclub@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk)

**We will be meeting on Fridays 6<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> February**

## **YOUTH BIBLE GROUP**

**7.00 pm to 9.00 pm - alternate Fridays**



We meet in the Youth Lounge for chat, Bible study and prayer. There's hot chocolate and slush puppies as well.

This is for young people 13 to 18, who want to learn more about being a Christian through studying God's word together in a relaxed and fun way.

**We will be meeting on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February**

**Half-term holiday 14<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> February**

**For more details please contact Dave Symmonds**



## WORSHIP AT CORNERSTONE

**Morning worship at Cornerstone starts at 10.30 am every Sunday and all are welcome.**

**Services are also streamed live via our YouTube channel <https://bit.ly/CornerstoneHytheURC> and the recording of the service will be available on YouTube afterwards.**

Most Sundays all parts of the service will be live, but occasionally the sermon will be a recording shown on the screen. Singing is a full part of our worship with a mix of songs and hymns accompanied mostly by videos shown on the big screens or by organ and piano or occasionally by a small worship band.

After the service, **Coffee and Tea** will be served in the main hall where people enjoy fellowship together.



# QUIZ NIGHT



**SATURDAY 28<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY at 7pm**  
(doors open 6.30pm)

*Teams of up to six.  
Come as a team  
or join with others  
on the night.*

*Bring your own drinks  
and nibbles.  
Tea and coffee provided  
during interval.*

Tickets £6 per person (under 18 £3)  
from the church office Tel: 023 8084 5005  
E-mail: [office@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk](mailto:office@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk)

*Proceeds to Cornerstone Building Repairs Fund.*

Cornerstone Hythe URC  
New Road, Hythe, SO45 6BR  
Charity No. 1141707





## WOMEN'S GUILD

You will be very welcome to join us at any  
of our meetings at Cornerstone on  
**2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday afternoons**  
**from 2.15 pm to 3.30 pm**

### FEBRUARY PROGRAMME

**12<sup>th</sup>** My Art Journey - Peter York



**26<sup>th</sup>** Scripture Market and our Bring and Buy Table

For further information please contact  
Joy Funnell on 023 8084 3404  
or e-mail [guild@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk](mailto:guild@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk)



## PICNIC LUNCH

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February**

On the second Sunday of each month there is  
a get-together picnic lunch in the hall, after  
worship and coffee for all who would like to stay  
and enjoy a time of fellowship together

## POSSIBLE NEW MINISTER

A Minister is coming to Cornerstone and Immanuel Southbourne on the weekend of 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> February to Preach-with-a-View. This is the procedure and opportunity we have to meet the Minister, share in worship with the Minister leading and preaching at the service, and then at a Church Meeting to discern through discussion and prayer and a secret vote by Members on whether to call the Minister to come and be our Minister. Everybody, whether a Church Member or not, is encouraged to participate in all of the programme below, though only Church Members may vote.

**The programme is currently as follows:**

### **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February**

#### **“Meet the Minister” Social evening at 6.30pm - 8.30pm**

The Minister introduces him/herself, then chats with small groups. (Hopefully a summary profile will be available on paper to members and regular attendees on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February)

### **Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February – Worship at 10.30am**

Worship led and sermon preached by the Minister. (The service will NOT be streamed)

**This will be followed by:**

- Coffee/tea and a Soup Lunch with opportunity to talk with the Minister.
- Church Meeting after lunch (chaired by the Interim Moderator - Revd Andy Hall)
  - ◆ Question Time: questions to and from the Minister. Some questions in writing will be welcome.
  - ◆ Minister departs
  - ◆ Prayer, discussion, reflection
  - ◆ Secret vote by Church Members who were at the service on whether to issue a Call to the Minister. The voting papers will be sealed until the Immanuel Southbourne Church Meeting has voted on the Sunday afternoon.

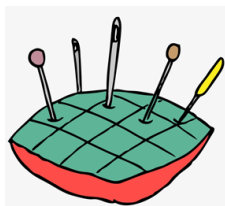
The above programme is then repeated at Immanuel Southbourne with a Social evening on the Saturday evening, Worship on Sunday morning, followed by a Church Meeting with the vote on the Call by Church Members.

The counting at the two churches will then be done concurrently. The threshold of 85% of members present and voting is required to sustain a call both in total and from each church. The result of the voting at each Church will be announced and the Minister informed. The Minister will subsequently decide whether or not to accept the Call and may take as long as needed to do this.

At **Cornerstone on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February** there will be a **“Prayer & Praise” service at 10.30am** followed by fellowship with tea/coffee.

Please pray for this whole process, for the Minister in preparing for the weekend and being guided as to what and how to share at the services and for Cornerstone and Immanuel churches that we will be able to clearly discern whether or not to call the Minister.

*Richard Hall*

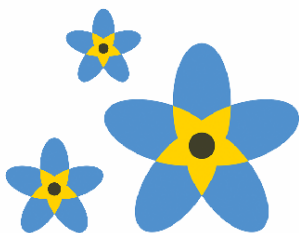


## **PINS AND NEEDLES**

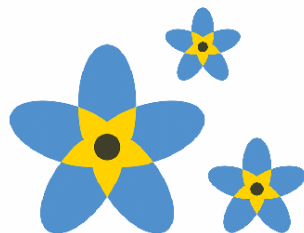
**10.00 am to 12 noon**

**Every Friday morning in the Foyer**

We are a friendly group who meet for two hours on a Friday morning in the Foyer as we knit, sew and crochet. Tea, coffee and pleasant conversation are always available.



**Families  
Matter**  
at Hythe URC



# Hythe Huddle

**Drop in support group for people  
living with dementia and their carers**



## Entertainment

**4<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

**Amanda Parson**

**4<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

**Easter Craft**

**Meet first Wednesday of each month**

**2 - 4 pm**

**Cornerstone United Reformed Church, Hythe**

Refreshments kindly donated by **TESCO**

**For more information contact us on:**

**023 8020 7623    [office@families-matter.org.uk](mailto:office@families-matter.org.uk)**





## FLOWERS AT CORNERSTONE

It is a pleasure to organise the church flowers for another year and I hope that everyone is enjoying them.

I am still taking names for the 2026 rota. People donate the flowers for many reasons: in memory of a loved one, a birthday or anniversary, a celebration, or just to give thanks.

The average cost is £25 to £30 but please do not be put off by this amount. You can always share with someone else. Just contact me and I will help you.

I can be contacted at church in person, by telephone on 023 8084 3249, or e-mail: [pamela@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk](mailto:pamela@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk).

## FLOWER ROTA FOR FEBRUARY

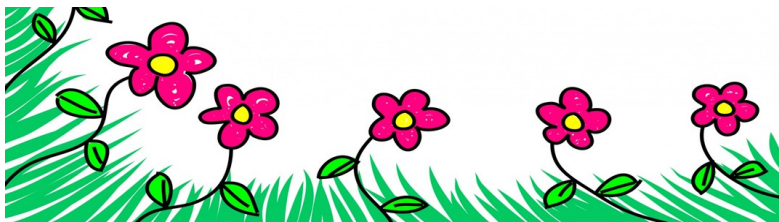
1<sup>st</sup> - Donations

8<sup>th</sup> - Deborah and Brian Rogers for family

15<sup>th</sup> - Donations

22<sup>nd</sup> - Helen Roissetter for family

Thank you and take care,  
*Pamela Bridge*





## BIRTHDAYS IN FEBRUARY

### **Congratulations to:**

Mary York who will be 80 on the 1<sup>st</sup>

Sue Ruddock who will be 83 on the 1<sup>st</sup>

Anne Sanders who will be 94 on the 4<sup>th</sup>

Helen Roissetter who will be 87 on the 18<sup>th</sup>

Anne Lester who will be 101 on the 27<sup>th</sup>

If you are over 80, or turning 80 in 2026 and are not already included on the newsletter birthday page, but would like to be, please let Joy Funnel know. She is in church on most Sunday mornings or you can send her an e-mail:

[joy@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk](mailto:joy@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk)



## **HYTHE ACTIVE EXERCISE GROUP**

**We meet on Thursdays at 10.00 am in the Hall at Cornerstone for exercise and fellowship.**

Why not come along and try? You can do as much or as little of the exercises as you choose, and some attendees remain seated. It's an enjoyable time, and there is good evidence that strength and balance exercises reduce the risk of falls in older age.

## PRAYER POINTERS FOR FEBRUARY



**During the week there are opportunities  
to pray with others**

Before the service on Sunday  
in Room 1 at 10.15 am

After the service on Sundays  
an opportunity to receive prayer

On Monday mornings in Meeting Room 1  
from 10.00 am to 11.00 am

On Wednesday mornings  
in the Foyer from  
8.30 am to 9.30 am

At Homegroup meetings fortnightly



## PRAYERS FOR FEBRUARY

### **Mondays**

For the World: For peace in conflict zones, justice for the oppressed, provision for the poor, and healing for the planet.

John 3 v 16 presents bible readers with what is likely the purest, most straightforward summary of the good news of God's saving love that Jesus Christ brings to the world: *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."* Jesus, speaking with the Jewish Pharisee Nicodemus, continued: *"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him"* (John 3: 17).

### **Romans 10 verses 14 and 15.**

*"How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"*

### **Meanings**

**Hearing & Belief:** Faith requires hearing the message of Christ.

**Preaching & Sending:** People can only preach if they are commissioned and sent by God.

**Beautiful Feet:** This phrase (from Isaiah 52 v 7) celebrates the messengers who bring the Gospel, signifying the vital role of evangelism in salvation.

In essence, Romans 10 v 14-15 emphasizes that God's plan for salvation involves both divine commission (sending) and human proclamation (preaching) to reach people with the Gospel. You receive salvation by putting your faith in Christ (a gift of grace), and good deeds flow from that saving faith, proving its reality.

Heavenly Father, You are the Alpha and Omega of our times. We ask for your love that conquers all.

You are our help through ages past, our hope for years to come, Be thou our guard while troubles last, and our eternal home.

May our world leaders receive wisdom and guidance by Your spirit so that Your light (which is brighter than the noonday sun) shines through the darkness bringing peace through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



## **Tuesdays**

For the Church/Faith Communities: For guidance, unity, spiritual growth, and effective proclamation of the Gospel.

*"Thou shall have no other gods but me"* is the first of the Ten Commandments from the Bible (Exodus 20 v 3).

**Our church's Statement of Faith** - *We are a fellowship who believes in one God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the Bible as our authority. We believe that Jesus Christ died and rose again for us and that the Holy Spirit is at work on earth so that everyone who through faith asks for forgiveness will receive it. Those who do will have eternal life with God.*

When teaching from this, focus on core Christian doctrines like the Trinity, Jesus Christ (deity, humanity, crucifixion, and resurrection), and the Bible as God's Word, salvation by grace through faith, the role of the Holy Spirit, the Church, and the return of Christ, explaining these essentials clearly to build unity and guide members' lives and actions in glorifying God. Use the statement as a framework to define our church's identity, protect doctrine, and equip believers for service and witnessing.

Dear Lord, thank you for our Church and its rock of stability through all the changing times we have experienced together. May we be as beacons of light by God's grace drawing many into fellowship here as we seek to follow you Lord in all that we do. We lift our prayers to you now as a refreshing divine fragrance bringing peace in our Community.

## **Wednesdays**

For Leaders and Nations: For wisdom, integrity, and just governance for those in authority. Matthew 5 v 16 (NIV) *"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."*

Church leaders should lead by example, embodying Christ-like character (humility, love, integrity) while serving the congregation, focusing on a clear vision, fostering spiritual growth through Scripture, and empowering others, all grounded in prayer and dependence on God. Key actions include emphasizing biblical truth, communicating clearly, developing other leaders, and making decisions with momentum.

Thank you Father for your great wisdom and integrity and we ask that leaders will be gifted in such ways as to:-

Build Your kingdom here, Let the darkness fear,  
Show Your mighty hand, Heal our streets and land,  
Set Your church on fire, Win this nation back,  
Change the atmosphere, Build Your kingdom here, we pray. Amen.

### **Thursdays**

For those suffering: for the sick, lonely, grieving, anxious, or those in mental distress, asking for comfort, healing, and hope.

Isaiah 53 verse 5 says: *"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."*

Jesus was wounded for our rebellions and crushed for our iniquities, allowing us to be healed and made right with God through His sacrifice.

Father, we pray for all those who are suffering in whatever way, that your healing hand will touch them and bring a sense of well being and a heart of praise. Blessed be your name on the road marked with suffering, when there's pain in the offering, blessed be your name. Amen.

### **Fridays**

For our communities: for neighbours, friends, families, and those known to the worshippers, asking for mutual care and peace.

In John's Gospel Chapter 13 Jesus washed the disciples' feet.

Jesus washed His disciples' feet to provide a powerful example of humble, sacrificial service and love, teaching them to serve one another as he served them.

The core verse for *"love your neighbour as yourself"* is found in Leviticus 19 v 18 in the Old Testament and is famously emphasized by Jesus in the New Testament, particularly in Matthew 22 v 39 and Mark 12 v 31, as the second greatest commandment after loving God. It instructs you to extend the same care, respect, and concern for others as you naturally have for yourself, fulfilling the law through active love.

Heavenly Father we pray that we may receive the gift of compassion and knowledge to bring your help to our neighbours that Your will may be done in all our ways. Through Jesus' mighty love, Amen.

### **Saturdays**

For ourselves: for courage to live out faith, use gifts, and be instruments of love and generosity.

Galatians 5 v 22-23 (NIV) *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."*

The Apostle Paul describes *“the fruit of the Spirit”* as *“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control”* (Galatians 5 v 22-23). These qualities reflect God’s character and the behaviour of those living according to God’s Spirit.

When we participate with God, we’re like new branches that are grafted into a living vine, which begin to yield the fruit of that vine (see John 15 v 1-11). So if God is loving, patient, and always emanating peace, then as we participate with God, we will bear that same spiritual fruit, like love, patience, and peace.

Help us, dear Father to have strength and wisdom to be able to *stand up for whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, we should think about such things*, according to Philippians 4 v 8. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

## Sundays

Conclude with a prayer for all people and for guidance.

Matthew 6 v 9 - 13. This, then, is how you should pray:

*“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” For thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, for ever and ever, Amen.*



## MEN'S BREAKFAST

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March at 8.30 am**

More information in the Weekly Notice Sheets.

For details please contact Dave Symmonds -

call/text 07747698910 or e-mail:

[mensbreakfast@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk](mailto:mensbreakfast@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk)



# **WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**

**March 6<sup>th</sup> 2.00 pm  
at St Andrews,  
Dibden Purlieu**

**I WILL GIVE YOU REST, COME**

**Prepared by Christian women of Nigeria**



**Our Nigerian sisters call us to come closer  
to God and find rest in him.**

**Come and pray with and for people all  
round the world.**

**Everyone welcome.**

**Refreshments served after the service.**



**The next Table Top sales are on Tuesdays  
10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> February - 9.30 am-12.00 noon**

Don't miss them!! There'll be a great selection of:

- Electrical items
- Jewellery
- Collectables
- Kitchenware
- Tableware
- Glassware
- Bags
- Toys
- Jig-saw Puzzles – great variety and sizes
- Paperback Books – extensive library!
- CDs and DVDs.

New goods are arriving all the time, so it's a great opportunity to get a good bargain!

Of course, it's also a great time for fellowship with coffee, tea and biscuits always available in the Foyer! All proceeds go to the Cornerstone Building Repairs Fund. So don't miss it!



*Hello dear friends*, I hope you all had a good start to the year. Last year ended on a high for me and 2026 has started in the same way with regard to the services. I think it's fair to say that our Nativity service went remarkably well. I am proud of our young people who stepped up to deliver a really grown up and thought provoking service. I would also like to

commend the members of our choir who are organised by Leander and Naomi. I was deeply moved to hear them sing in our Nativity service and I hear that they were equally as spellbinding in our Carol service. I am delighted to say that I have been able to secure their on-going input for the A<sup>2</sup> services although it won't be every month.



I am not going to apologise being an exceptionally proud mum. I am writing this on the Monday after our January A<sup>2</sup> service which as some of you may well have worked out, was led by my son Bobby. This was such a huge deal for him to take on as I don't think he had realized quite how much was involved behind the scenes in organising a service. However he stepped up to the challenge and in my very biased opinion did an amazing

job. I was particularly impressed with his Message. He took us through the bible reading line by line and explained his take on the meaning of each verse. I loved his brutal honesty and how he related each of the points raised to his own personal journey. Now usually at this point I explore the Bible passage covered in our services in a little more depth. However this time I don't think I need to because I truly believe that Bobby was able to cover it beautifully. I will however remind you of some of the questions that he posed, in particular the one in his summary. Jesus told his disciples if they truly believed in him that they would be able to work miracles just as he had done. Bobby's question to you all was, do you have the same faith in Jesus that his disciples had? Bobby honestly said that he didn't think he had the same depth of faith which got me thinking, how much do I truly trust God?

Sunday was a perfect example of when I was putting my faith into action. I spent time with God handing the whole of the service over to him before I even got out of bed in the morning. I asked friends of mine to pray with me before we came to church. When it came to our pre-service



prayers, I asked a few friends to join us who wouldn't normally have been involved because I felt a need for as many people as possible to be praying for Bobby and the rest of the team. The prayers spoken then were absolutely beautiful and I truly believe they were God's word. It felt to me as if someone was able to articulate what was going on inside my heart which I could not express. So in that time I had absolute faith that God would look after us and that whatever happened in the service would be God's will not ours.



You know me, I always come up with silly ideas. Which is probably the best way to describe my idea of a blindfolded conga around the church. I thought this was a good way of showing people how God can lead us and how we sometimes need to have blind faith that He will do the right things for us. As a summary of the activity, I questioned whether or not we rely more on God during the straightforward

walks in our life or do we turn to him more in the challenging times. I think yesterday showed me that I definitely can turn to God easily in the challenges. Which got me thinking whether or not I try and connect with him throughout my day-to-day living. Because surely if I did, then I would become a much more efficient carrier of God's message. I wouldn't just be carrying it on a Sunday morning in church and on a Friday evening during the Youth Bible Study. Instead I would be carrying it every minute of my day, while I'm walking the dog, talking to friends or phoning up about an invoice which is incorrect. All of these are opportunities for me to carry God's message. God's message isn't complicated, in fact it's really simple. In Matthew 22 v 37, Jesus states that we should '*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.*' It is that simple. All I have to do is love God and then everything else falls into place. All my worries and insecurities disappear. All my fear and anger is removed. Realistically I don't live in the little bubble with just God to focus on although at times I wish I did. I live in the real world. Quite often life steps in and distracts me from my connection with God. So maybe I need opportunities like our service to remind me that God is always listening and what I need to do is to reach out and pray.

In February we will not be having an A<sup>2</sup> service. I am sure you are aware that on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February, a Minister will be coming to "preach with a view" to becoming our new Minister. On Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February, we will have a social event where we get to meet

the 'candidate' for the first time and have a natter with them, (not sure if that is the correct term to use but I could not think of anything else!) Then on Saturday they will be delivering a service for us which will be followed by a lunch and another opportunity for discussion. This will all culminate on Saturday afternoon when members are able to vote on whether or not they feel this is the right minister for our church. Only church members are able to vote. However for me personally, it is really important that I get to hear everybody's thoughts before I cast my vote. So regardless of whether or not you are a member please be involved in this process as it's really important to our church that we hear everyone's point of view. This is a really challenging time for us as we have managed to flourish as a church without a minister. I don't know about you but I personally find any change really difficult which is why it's really important for me to be part of this process. Whilst I know there is no perfect minister and one person is not going to be able to tick everybody's boxes, I do believe when we come together as a church family we will be able to tune ourselves into God's will and to make the right decision.



It's time for me to sign off now. I usually give you at least some random idea of what we're doing in the next A<sup>2</sup> service but because we have literally just less than 24 hours ago delivered our latest service, I genuinely haven't got a clue. What I do know is that Bobby is happy to continue on his journey carrying the Message and we also have some other talents flourishing within our church. So dear friends take care, enjoy and trust that God will always have your back.

*All my love, Emma and*

**The A<sup>2</sup> Team**

### **A POPPY**

The poem on the next page was written by Michael Rolph for the Remembrance Service last November. Many people have said that they would like to hear it again.



## A POPPY

Poppies are quite beautiful, a delight unto the eye  
How sad that that same beauty inclines mankind to cry.  
In so many ways they symbolise what mankind use them for  
We use them to remember all the men who fell in war.  
When one sees a poppy, thoughts swiftly come to mind  
The need to recall those fallen men that duty left behind.  
The petals of each blossom stand proud and bright and red  
Unlike the wartime fallen who sadly, now lie dead.  
The stamens in real poppies are numerous and yellow  
I think that represents the fear that assails the average fellow.  
The fellow who bravely went to war, the man who we all cheer  
The man prepared to give his all regardless of his fear.  
Down below the stamen you'll find a darker part  
It makes me think of the darkness inside the tyrant's heart.  
The leaves of the poppy plant are shaped something like a blade  
Serrated like a weapon of war, they make me afraid  
For I now think of war, of guns and bombs and blood  
Of fallen men, of pain and hurt, of misery and mud.  
But, a poppy causes me to think not only of the loss  
But also of the wondrous Lord who died upon the cross  
A petal of the poppy so vibrant and curly  
Much like our Lord's blood, shedding far too early.  
All the men who fell in war, fathers, sons, and brothers  
Did they, like Jesus on the cross give their life for others?  
So when I look upon this flower, especially today  
It reminds me of the need to act, to bow my head and pray  
I ask God to remind mankind of the impact of division  
May forgiveness and a love of justice become our new ambition  
May God bless those impacted by war, those who have to mourn  
May governments and rulers feel the need for a peaceful dawn.  
Lord bless war's survivors, may they forget what they went through  
May they seek God and know his love, Lord bring them all to you.  
A poppy is a symbol of remembrance, hope and love  
May it help us think of the fallen, but also of God above.

**A Poppy! written by Michael Rolph**

## **ELDERS ELECTION at the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

At our Annual General Meeting we have to consider the **Election of Elders**, who are also Trustees. In our church structure the government of our church rests with the Church Meeting, whose members elect Elders to share with the Minister (when in post) in the leadership of the local church. Elders are normally elected for a **four-year term** and will then be eligible for re-election for a further term of four years, following which they will not be eligible for re-election for one year.

This year there will be **one vacancy** in the team of nine elders. By the AGM, Margaret Yapp will have served the four years of her initial period of service, and so will be eligible for re-election.

The Elder's job description is given below so that you can see what is required of someone who is to be an Elder. There is also a booklet "They've asked me to be an Elder" with more detailed information. This is available in the Church Office or also at <https://urc.org.uk/your-faith/joining-the-ministries/become-an-elder/>

An elder is also a **trustee** of the church charity. This has always been the case, but was formalised when the church became a registered charity. A further document "Elders as Trustees" provides a short guide about what it does and doesn't mean to be a trustee. This is also available from the church office. However, please also speak with myself or other elder about any aspect of being an Elder.

It is both exciting and challenging to serve God in this way and we thank Him for the way He has been with and guided the Elders over many years and pray that He will guide us all in the election in March.

To be nominated as an Elder a Church Member must have been in membership for a minimum of two years. Nomination forms are available from the church office. The nomination form includes a space for a statement about the candidate to be made by the nominating Church Members. **The closing date for nominations is Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March.** Please pray about this and use the nomination form if you feel led to propose someone to serve as an Elder.

I ask you to make it a priority to attend the **Annual General Meeting on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March after morning worship and lunch together**, and to prayerfully consider who we should elect to this key role.

*Richard Hall* (Church Secretary)

## **JOB DESCRIPTION OF AN ELDER**

### **Key role**

- ◆ Share in the spiritual oversight and leadership of the church's mission, life and vision.
- ◆ Act on behalf of the Church Meeting insofar as it has entrusted its authority to the Elders to do so.
- ◆ As an Elder, you are also a **trustee** of our church charity and are responsible for the general management and control of the assets of the church.
- ◆ As a trustee also ensure that the church operates within the terms of its governing document, complies with charity law and meets the requirements of the Charity Commission.
- ◆ Collectively, elders are responsible for overseeing all aspects of safeguarding - ensuring everyone within the life of the church is kept safe.
- ◆ Collectively to support and provide pastoral care for all Ministry Leaders by receiving reports from Ministries and taking any action required.
- ◆ Collectively provide pastoral care of the church fellowship, and individually keep pastoral contact with a small number of the fellowship.
- ◆ Meet regularly at Elders Meetings to oversee the life of the church.
- ◆ Together act as an executive if decisions need to be made and it would be impracticable to do so at the Church Meeting.
- ◆ Share in the various Elder's duties that are necessary on a regular and occasional basis.

All, except the last of the above elements, would also be shared with the minister when in post.

# **ON-GOING FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND GIVING TO CORNERSTONE**

We are very grateful to you for your continued financial support to our church and its life and mission and here is a reminder of possible ways of giving:

## **1. On-line banking**

For those of you who use on-line banking, the Church's General Fund bank details are as follows:

Account Name: Hythe United Reformed Church  
Sort Code: 40 52 40 Account No: 00016303

If you wish to give to the Outreach Fund the bank details are as follows:

Account Name: Hythe United Reformed Church  
Sort Code: 40 52 40 Account No: 00021634

## **2. Card payment**

We now have a card payment facility available. Please speak to Nick Tustian or Richard Hall if you would like to make a payment by Debit or Credit card.

## **3. Cheques**

We are happy to accept cheques, which should be made payable to "Hythe United Reformed Church". Please write on the back of the cheque whether it is for the General Fund or Outreach Fund and pass it to the Treasurer, Nick Tustian or place it in the Offering Box on a Sunday morning.

## **4. Cash**

Cash offerings may be placed in the Offering Box on a Sunday morning.

## **5. Gift Aid**

In addition, if you are a UK taxpayer and would like the Church to be able obtain a further 25% Gift Aid from the Government please see Nick Tustian or Richard Hall for details.

If you're not sure what to do please email Nick at [treasurer@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk) or give Nick a call on 07554 443254.



**Helen and Andy Turnpenny** write: "Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers delivered to us recently, we really appreciated the beautiful colours and brightness on our windowsill."

**Diana Sandy** writes: "I would like to thank everyone for the beautiful flowers I received in December, delivered by Bev. When people asked me where they came from, it gave me the opportunity to tell them about the love and fellowship I get from Cornerstone Church."

**Jeanette Allen** writes: "To receive lovely flowers after I had received some sad news really lifted my spirits. They are beautiful and remind me what a caring church family Cornerstone is. Thank you to whoever delivered them. I wish I had been here to say "thank you" to you personally."

**Bev Eyres** would like to thank the church for the flowers that were delivered. She found them on the doorstep after coming home from her Mum's funeral and so were a lovely surprise. Thank you to whoever delivered them.

**Jo and Terry Pearce** say "thank you" for the flowers and kind thoughts following Jo's minor surgery, the wound is healing nicely.

**Diana Sandy** would like to thank Stacy Prince and her team from Cornerstone for the delicious meal she received on Christmas Day. Special thanks to Jonathan, Stina and Lexi for giving up their time to deliver it to my home.



# FEBRUARY 2026 CALENDAR

**Cornerstone Cuppa is open Monday to Saturday - 10.00 am - 12 noon**

<b>SUNDAY</b>	1	10.30am Morning Worship with Communion
Monday	2	<b>HOMEGROUP WEEK</b> 10.00am Daytime Prayers
Tuesday	3	
Wednesday	4	8.30am Early Morning Prayer : 10.00am Toddler Group : 2.00pm Hythe Huddle
Thursday	5	10.00am HytheActive Exercise Group
Friday	6	10.00am Pins and Needles : 7.30pm Youth Club
Saturday	7	
<b>SUNDAY</b>	8	10.30am Morning Worship followed by Picnic Lunch
Monday	9	10.00am Daytime Prayers
Tuesday	10	9.30am Table Top
Wednesday	11	8.30am Early Morning Prayer : 10.00am Toddler Group
Thursday	12	10.00am HytheActive Exercise Group : 2.15pm Women's Guild
Friday	13	10.00am Pins and Needles : 7.00pm Youth Bible Group
Saturday	14	
<b>SUNDAY</b>	15	<b>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</b> 10.30am Morning Worship
Monday	16	<b>HOMEGROUP WEEK</b> 10.00am Daytime Prayers
Tuesday	17	
Wednesday	18	8.30am Early Morning Prayer
Thursday	19	10.00am HytheActive Exercise Group
Friday	20	10.00am Pins and Needles : <b>Preach-with-a View Weekend</b> 6.30pm "Meet the Minister" social evening
Saturday	21	10.30am Morning Worship led and preached by potential new Minister 12.30pm (approx.) Soup Lunch and chat with Minister 1.15pm (approx.) Church Meeting
<b>SUNDAY</b>	22	10.30am Prayer and Praise Worship
Monday	23	10.00am Daytime Prayers
Tuesday	24	9.30am Table Top
Wednesday	25	8.30am Early Morning Prayer : 10.00am Toddler Group
Thursday	26	10.00am HytheActive Exercise Group : 2.15pm Women's Guild
Friday	27	10.00am Pins and Needles : 7.30pm Youth Club
Saturday	28	7.00pm Quiz Night (doors open 6.30pm)

# REGULAR CHURCH ACTIVITIES

**Cornerstone Cuppa is open Monday to Saturday  
from 10.00am-12.00 noon except Bank Holidays**

## **SUNDAY**

- 10.30am Morning Worship with  
Light Years (4-11 years) and Grid (11-18 years)
- 10.30am Holy Communion:  
(1<sup>st</sup> Sunday usually - see Worship notice)

## **MONDAY**

- 10.00-11.00am Prayer Time at Cornerstone

## **TUESDAY**

- 9.30am-12noon Table Top Sale (Alternate weeks as advertised)

## **WEDNESDAY**

- 8.30-9.30am Early Morning Prayer
- 10.00-11.30am Toddler Group\*\*
- 7.30pm Church Meeting (2<sup>nd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday quarterly)

## **THURSDAY**

- 10.00am-12noon Hythe Active Exercise Group
- 2.15-3.30pm Women's Guild (2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays)

## **FRIDAY**

- 10.00am-12noon Pins & Needles Group
- 7.00-9.00pm Youth Bible Group\*\* (Alternate weeks) (13-18 years)
- 7.30-9.00pm Youth Club\*\* (Alternate weeks) (11-18 years)

## **SATURDAY**

- 08.30-10.30am Men's Breakfast (as announced)

**HOMEGROUPS** meet twice a month on various days, at various times, and various venues.

\*\* Except School Holidays & Bank Holidays

## **Valentine's Day,**

Also called **Saint Valentine's Day**  
or the **Feast of Saint Valentine,**

is celebrated annually on February 14<sup>th</sup>

It originated as a Christian feast day honouring a martyr named Valentine, and through later folk traditions it has also become a significant cultural, religious and commercial celebration of romance and love in many regions of the world.

## **Origins of Valentine's Day**

Valentine's Day is named after **Saint Valentine**, a Christian martyr who lived during the Roman Empire in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. There are several legends associated with him, including one where he defied Emperor Claudius II's ban on marriages for young men, believing that single men made better soldiers. Valentine continued to perform secret marriages for couples, which ultimately led to his arrest and execution. Another legend suggests that he healed the blind daughter of his jailer and sent her a letter signed "From your Valentine".