

Belfairs Methodist Church

Where old friends meet
and strangers feel at home



Issue 239

February 2026

Minister:

Rev Steve Mayo
1 Oakview Close, Leigh on Sea,
Essex SS9 4JN
Tel: 01702 483827
revdstevemayo@gmail.com

Editor:

Mrs. Sue Spaull
E-mail: sue.spaull@hotmail.co.uk



Data Protection Privacy

By submitting an article for publication in the Belfairs Newsletter, you are **consenting** to your name being attributed to the article which is made **publicly available** via the Belfairs Methodist Church Website.

If you do **NOT** want your name to be published, please advise the Editor when submitting the article.

Please read our Privacy Policy for further information. This can be found on the church website or on our church noticeboards.

Thought for the month

Christian prayer is the language of those who choose to live for God in the company of Jesus, whatever is happening in their lives and wherever they find themselves.

The BRF Book of 100 Prayers



Our mission is to provide an open, welcoming and accepting, living place of Christian worship and service in our community, in which we seek to serve and follow Jesus Christ.

www.belfairsmethodistchurch.org.uk



At this time of year, for some of us, the deadline for self-assessment tax has come, and gone! Whilst on the Martin Lewis website, [MoneySavingExpert.com] I noticed an article about what HMRC says are some of the most bizarre excuses for late tax returns that they have received over the past decade.

They are:

1. I was up a mountain in Wales, and could not find a post box or get an internet signal.
2. My dog ate my post. (again)
3. My hamster ate my post.
4. I've been cruising round the world in my yacht, and only pick up the post when I'm on dry land.
5. My mother-in-law is a witch and put a curse on me.

We are assured in the article and none of these excuses were upheld by HMRC as legitimate!

But what excuses do *we* sometimes make when it comes to what we should be doing for Jesus?

- ◆ How often we read our Bibles?
- ◆ How often we pray?
- ◆ How often we serve Jesus?
- ◆ How often we show God's love to others?

But making excuses is no new thing! Many biblical characters made excuses when it came to serving God. Moses is a fine example.

His excuses were;

- ◆ Doubts about his ability to lead.
- ◆ His thoughts of unworthiness.
- ◆ His presumed lack of authority.
- ◆ His fear of what people would say
- ◆ and his physical weakness.
- ◆

But in the end Moses allowed God to use him, he came through for God, but *more* importantly, God came through for Moses.

I wonder what God could do through *us* this year if we would only allow Him?

John 12:26 says; '*If any of you wants to serve me, then follow me. Then you'll be where I am, ready to serve at a moment's notice. The Father will honour and reward anyone who serves me.*' [The Message]

May we all pray verse 4 of hymn 353 from Hymns and Psalms:

*Master, speak: and make me ready,
When thy voice is truly heard,
With obedience glad and steady
Still to follow every word.
I am listening, Lord, for thee;
Master, speak! O speak to me!*

Every blessing,

Revd. Steve

01702 483827
revdstevemayo@gmail.com

Sunday Services February 2026

1st 11.00 a.m. Mr. Mike Spaull

8th 11.00 a.m. Rev. Steve Mayo - Holy communion

15th 11.00 a.m. Mrs. Anne Briant - Parade Service including Girls Brigade re-dedication

22nd 11.00 a.m. Mrs. Eileen Simmons

Other February dates for your diary

7th Coffee Morning - Girls Brigade - Cake Stall

14th Valentines Day

17th Shrove Tuesday

18th Ash Wednesday

26th A.C.T.I.O.N at 2.00 p.m. - All are welcome.



Point of Contact

Below is shown details of the Sunday Stewards, Communion Stewards, Musician, Flower Rota and coffee/tea stewards relevant for this month.

Sunday 1st February

Sunday Steward - Jan Andrews

Musician a.m. - Sue and Mike Spaull/Midi Box

Coffee/tea stewards Ann Kendall & Sue Spaull

Sunday 8th February

Sunday Steward - Phil Gladman

Musician a.m. - Patrick Dromgoole/Backing tracks

Communion Stewards – Jim Halstead & Dawn Howard

Flowers - Hilary le Marie - remembering her Mum - arranged by Jan

Coffee/tea stewards Mike Spaull & Phil Gladman

Sunday 15th February

Sunday Steward a.m. - Mike Spaull

Musician a.m. - Small band

Coffee/tea stewards Jan Pope & Jackie Heinrich

Sunday 22nd February

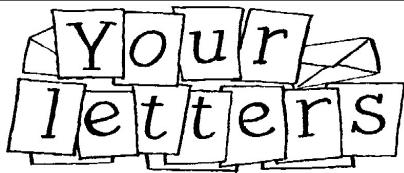
Sunday Steward a.m. - Alan Pace

Musician a.m. - Patrick Dromgoole

Flowers - V A C A N T - arranged by Smitha

Coffee/tea stewards -Sue Spaull & Margaret Bailey

Letters Page/Church family news



This Lent, take part in Climate Steward's Carbon Fast. Lent is a time when Christians traditionally fast and focus on God. The Carbon Fast will help you consider ways to live more simply, give you new ideas to cut your carbon footprint and invite you to focus on God and consider the whole of his creation.

Beginning on 5 March, you'll receive a weekly email containing key facts, suggestions for how you could reduce your carbon footprint and a prayer to lead you through this Lenten season. Each week features a different theme designed to help us take climate action in manageable ways that bear witness to a God who has promised to restore all of his creation.

Find out more and sign up at [Carbon Fast for Lent – Climate Stewards](#)

Tina Gowers



Please remember you are free to put your prayer concerns on the board at the back of the church. If it is not for you, please make sure you have the named persons consent .

Please add your name and date to the request on the reverse of the white cards provided which are by the board. These will be removed after two months, but can be updated if necessary (please make sure you re-date the update).

If you have any questions or queries, please speak to Sue.



Birthdays

For all of you who celebrate birthday/anniversaries, or remember loved ones during this month, the following is for you, although of course everyone can read it!

F rom death to life may God lead you

E ndless be God's blessings upon you

B etween you and each person may there be peace

R icher may you be through the gifts of God

U nderstanding from God's word guide you

A nd the good shepherd bless you

R aising you up, when you are brought low

Y earning for love - may he hold you in his arms.

Ed.

Some of us are approaching 80, some are already there, but for us all, here is
a poem to celebrate it

80 YEARS OF WAITING!!
A baby boomers' ode to 8 decades of anticipation!

1-10

The first decade was easy.
We waited for our food.
We waited to be told to go
Or stay, and don't be rude
We waited to be sent to school
For arithmetic to gel
For playtimes, stories, spelling tests
And waited for the bell.

We played games with each other
On the beach or in the woods
We dug in bomb sites, took Virol,
Wore vests and pixie hoods
We waited for our friends to call
We didn't have a phone
And wandered home when it got dark
And never seemed alone

We waited for our birthdays
And when would Christmas come?
We waited for the holidays
And mostly life was fun
We didn't make decisions
We loved the Coronation.
And waited for the thrilling day
That sweets would come off ration!

10-20

The second decade came along
The waiting carried on
Would we pass the 11+
Would friendships carry on?
Would new teachers like us?
Could we do the work?
How early should we shave our legs?
And simple worries lurked.
We waited as the wars broke out
Korea, Vietnam
We waited for a victory
But peace seemed just a sham
We waited for a 3rd World War
And followed the advice
To shelter underneath the stairs
And bulk bought tea and rice

We waited hopeless, helpless
For boys to take us out,
And fell in love with Elvis,
And the Beatles made us shout
More waiting for exam results
And college choices made
What to wear at interviews
As pros and cons were made

20-30

By decade 3 most of us
Had flown our homely nests
To college, university or jobs
We did our very best
I personally made my way
To land locked Derbyshire
But made a group of lifelong friends
That's lasted 60 years

Throughout our time we waited
To find out how to teach
It never seemed to be made clear
This goal we need to reach.
But many other things were learned
Piaget, Pavlov, Skinner,
What did they mean we asked ourselves
While waiting for our dinner.
During this time there did take place
A world cup football game
We've waited ever since for them
To win the thing again!

Then waiting for job interviews
This made us rather crankie
Some people fancied posh Sloane Square
I ended up in Hackney
And so to work we sallied forth
And waited for our pay
Would it be sufficient to
Pay rent AND eat each day?

We also waited fearfully
For Irish bombs to boom
And waited up all night to see
Neil Armstrong on the moon

30-40

By decade 4 we'd waited
To see which men we'd meet
Where was that blonde Adonis
To sweep us off our feet?
Well some of us were lucky
And some of us were not
And some of us would compromise,
Put up with what we got!

We waited for bank statements
And babies to arrive
And should we move or renovate
And would these children thrive.
We waited for promotion
Or drastically changed course
Or left the job entirely,
Or even got divorced!

40-50

But suddenly in decade 5
A calmness overcame.
We worked and earned and holidayed
And generally kept sane.
The wall came down, uneasy peace
Perhaps no nuclear war
And still we waited, hoped to see
A world cup win once more

But no, the waiting came again
As family worries niggled
We're split between the old and young.
Piggies in the middle.
Our kids were broke, our parents ill
All causing some despair.
And we were in the menopause
But no-one seemed to care!

50-60

In decade 6 retirement loomed
We waited for the news
Of what our pension pot would be
To stop work we could choose.

But suddenly there came the crash
Things were not quite so cool
We waited for the impact
The news seemed very cruel.

Our savings were not quite what we
Had hoped for, sad to say
But better than some people got
To keep the wolves at bay.

That piggy in the middle role
Was getting ever wider
We wait the next catastrophe
'cos we're the care provider
We wait for phone calls, emails, texts
To gallop to their aid
And bale them out with money, time,
Our nerves are somewhat frayed.

And as for us, we wonder why
We lose things all the time.
Why did we go upstairs, what for?
We're searching for a sign.
We check we've locked the door and car
Where did we put the keys
And did we take that vital pill
Or is that why we wheeze?

60-70

We near the end of decade seven
Our 3 score years and ten
The fact we've made it to this stage
It's quite beyond our ken

But now the waiting's more intense
As bits begin to fail
We wait for pills or blood tests and
Appointments through the mail.
For eye tests, physio and teeth,
Replacement hips or knees
For checks on our cholesterol
Blood pressure and our pee!

We wait for workmen to arrive
So many let us down
And as for wretched call centres
Who're all in foreign towns.
We wait on phones for many hours,
Wasting precious time
that we don't have at our age To waste it is a crime!
And then there's new technology
Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter.
We wait for some instruction
We feel we're all a-jitter.

There's constant innovations
Whatever do they mean
We're always getting messages
But cannot see the screen

Our children if we have them
Still think we're forty five
We wait in vain for them to see
We struggle to survive.
Don't want to be a burden
Should we consider care?
And what is Woke? is Trump mad?
It seems normal is rare

70 - 80

Now 80 looms for some of us
You'd think we'd seen it all,
Our world has changed beyond belief
We can't take many more! BUT.....

Just when we thought things might calm down
Another crisis came
A virus hit us on the nose
And didn't play the game
We weathered a Pandemic
Wore masks and stayed indoors
Had jabs galore and washed our hands
And met in 3s or 4s

We followed all the rules and kept
Our distance from each other
While Boris partied, lied to us
We wondered why we bothered

We knew how we could entertain ourselves for months or years
We had box sets, and knitting wool, for us it held no fears.
We did survive, we did come through, we showed the youngsters how
Our years of waiting practice had helped us you'll allow

We lost our Queen, a dreadful blow Her reign we celebrated
And welcomed new King Charles the 3rd A long time HE had waited

So finally we wait for what we know must come to all
But Switzerland's not far away. Why not give them a call!
We could sign up for multi-buy or get a half price deal
An 8th decade in Zurich? It has macabre appeal!

But just a mo, we're not done yet
I have no hesitation
We've lived full lives, done lots of good
We've still anticipation
Life's still much fun, we join our friends
For lunches out and trips
We've got respect, we've earned our stripes
Pour wisdom from our lips

We're confident, we know our minds
A lucky generation,
No great world wars, good education,
Stable jobs and pensions
The NHS has been our friend
As Bevan had intended
And all our pills are on the house
As we have all depended

We know what styles suit us
Don't have to follow tastes
A mini skirt when we were young
But now elastic waists!
Can dye our hair or get false nails
Have massages and spas
Have taxis if we need to
And discount travel pass

For nearly 80 years we've lived
With huge anticipation
We baby boomers, rock and rollers
Full of imagination
We've touched the lives of thousands
Enjoyed many occasions
And made a difference good or bad
Life's really been amazing.

Anthea Meek

ORGAN CONCERT

with

DAVID STANLEY

And

SPECIAL GUESTS

Benfleet Methodist Church

Sunday 15th February

3:00pm

Supporting the Musicman project
to perform their Broadway Dream

Tickets £10 or at the door

For tickets call 07402868667

Refreshments available

**Southend & Leigh Circuit invites you
to our**



**Wholeness &
Wellbeing
Services
2026**

28th January
Zoom

22nd April
Benfleet Methodist
Church

24th June
Benfleet Methodist
Church

All dates are on Wednesdays and services begin at 7:45pm

For more details contact southendandleighcircuit@gmail.com

Foodbank Project Manager – Southend Foodbank

Location: Southend-on-Sea

Hours: 20 hours per week Flexible (includes occasional evenings/weekends)

Contract: Permanent

Salary: £29,250 pro rata for 20 hours



Southend Foodbank is seeking an experienced and compassionate **Foodbank Project manager** to lead the operational, strategic and community-facing work of our charity. As part of the Trussell network and supported by local churches, we provide emergency food and support to people in crisis. This role is central to ensuring our services run smoothly, safely and with dignity for every guest.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership & Governance

- Report to the Board of Trustees quarterly.
- Provide updates on significant events, risks or issues.
- Prepare agendas and reports for trustee meetings.

Operations & Compliance

- Ensure warehouse and distribution centres meet Trussell standards and statutory requirements.
- Monitor key data indicators and maintain accurate records.
- Keep policies up to date and submit the annual Charity Commission report.

Communications & Stakeholder Engagement

- Build strong relationships with referral agencies, churches, schools and community groups.
- Host events for key partners and develop a team of charity ambassadors.
- Oversee the annual communications plan and approve press releases/social media content.
- Maintain a regular presence across distribution centres and the warehouse.

Volunteer & Staff Management

- Support and oversee paid staff and key volunteers.
- Work with the Volunteer Coordinator to ensure adequate staffing and training.
- Lead regular staff and management team meetings.

Development & Innovation

- Identify opportunities for new projects, partnerships and distribution centre improvements.
- Conduct annual assessments of distribution centres and research best practice across the network.

Finance & Fundraising

Work with community fundraiser, trustees and volunteers to ensure sustainable funding.

Person Specification

Essential Skills & Experience

- Experience managing people and projects.
- Experience working or volunteering in a volunteer-led organisation.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Confident using email, word processing and online systems.
- Ability to work independently and manage competing priorities.
- Comfortable interpreting statistical data.
- Access to own transport.
-

Personal Qualities

- Empathy and the ability to work with people facing disadvantage or exclusion.
- Integrity, reliability and alignment with the foodbank's values.
- Comfortable engaging with churches and faith-based partners.
- Flexible and adaptable approach to work.

How to Apply

If you are passionate about supporting people in crisis and have the leadership skills to guide a growing community charity, we would love to hear from you. Send a CV and covering letter to natasha@southend.foodbank.org.uk by the 12th of February. Interviews on the 17th, 18th and 19th.

Let your heart be filled with God's love

Every morning in your waking

Nativity child, crucified man, risen Lord

To God who gave you life, be thanks and praise



Forget who hurt you yesterday, but don't forget those who love you everyday. Forget the past that makes you cry and focus on the present that makes you smile. Forget the pain, but never the lessons you gained.

Don't leave anything for later. Later, the coffee gets cold. Later, you lose interest. Later, the day turns to night. Later, people grow up. Later, people grow old. Later, life goes by. Later, you regret not doing something when you had the chance.

Accept what is.
Let go of what was,
And have faith in what will be.

You come from dust and you will return to dust. That's why I don't dust, it could be someone I know.

One day a man was crossing a bridge in life but was scared so he turned and asked God, "Can I hold your hand so I may not fall?" God said, "No, my child, I will hold your hand". He asked "What's the difference?" God replied, "If you hold my hand and something happens, you might let go but if I hold your hand, no matter what happens, I will never let you go". May the Lord hold your hand tightly in all your ways.

Although no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start now and make a brand new ending.

Be grateful for having a place to live, for having good food to eat, for having people in your life who care, for having your dreams, for having faith and trust, for having hope and values. Life is beautiful when you are grateful.

To your second child.

Your second child is your inner child you never got to be. They are funny, free spirited, strong, and full of life. They are your biggest cheerleader, and as much as they drive you crazy, they make you smile on your darkest days.

BELFAIRS METHODIST CHURCH Eastwood Road North, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

REGULAR WEEKLY MEETINGS :

SUNDAY SERVICES 11.00 a.m. (6.30 p.m. as announced)

Family Crafternoon 3.00 p.m.-4.30 p.m. (Dates as announced)

MONDAY 6.00 p.m. Boys' Brigade Anchor Boys
6.00 p.m. Boys' Brigade Junior Section
7.30 p.m. Boys' Brigade Company Section

TUESDAY 8.00 p.m. Badminton Club

WEDNESDAY 10.00 a.m. Parent & Toddlers
5.30 p.m. Girls' Brigade Explorers & Juniors
7.00 p.m. Girls' Brigade Seniors & Brigaders

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY 10.00 a.m. 'Open House' Coffee Morning - first Saturday of the month

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Thirsty For?? 7.00 p.m. 2nd Thursday
A.C.T.I.O.N 2.00 p.m. 4th Thursday

March newsletter:

Articles are welcomed at any time, but the deadline for last minute items is **15th February 2026**.

Articles can be e-mailed to sue.spaull@hotmail.co.uk or placed in the newsletter box in the front foyer. Thank you