

INFORM



URC
VAN ROAD
Caerphilly
May 2017

Minister

Rev. Stephen P.I. Lewis

Tel: 01443 819508

E-mail: spilewis@gmail.com

Church Secretary

Mrs Margaret Craig

Tel: 02920 867487

E-mail: Margaret_craig@hotmail.co.uk

Church Treasurer

Mr Rob Moverley

Tel: 02920 866336

E-mail: robmoverley60@gmail.com

Pulpit Secretary

Ms Lynda Jones

Tel: 02920 884022

E-mail: Lynda.jones@58g.com

From our Minister ...

In the Gospels we read how the first Christians struggled to come to terms with the Easter events, the death then resurrection of Jesus, something beyond their or anyone's experience. At first they seem fearful and joyful in equal measure. In Van Road's Bible study, we looked at the closing chapters of St. John's Gospel. John emphasises that the Kingdom has come in the risen Jesus, who appeared to the disciples and breathed the Holy Spirit on them. St. Luke continues the story of what happened among Jesus' disciples, in the Acts of the Apostles, his sequel to his Gospel; and remember, not only the twelve, but many women and men were following Jesus. In the Christian calendar, the Ascension, (the fortieth day after Easter,) and then the feast of Pentecost, (the fiftieth day after Easter), celebrating the coming of the Holy Spirit, show that it took a long time for the followers of Jesus to adjust to a new way of life. (Isn't faith more of a journey than an event?)

Ascension Day was one of the important feasts in the Church's calendar, though now it is often neglected. The day was marked as early as the 4th century AD. In Great Britain, there are still a few folk customs associated with Ascension Day including 'beating the bounds of the parish', also well-dressing in Derbyshire, and the planting of the 'Penny Hedge' on the mud at low tide in Whitby. Perhaps, observance as a Church festival has declined in modern times because it falls on a Thursday in the week! (And non-conformists were never that keen on strict observance of the Church calendar.) Or perhaps it is because it is such an odd story, the disciples looking up into the skies, as they are parted from Jesus for the last time. The picture Luke gives of Jesus ascending up into the sky, suggests the resurrection body is very different from our mortal bodies. Otherwise, where would a simply physical body go? Floating ever deeper into space? St. Paul helps us to think about the resurrection body, which is 'sown a physical body' and 'raised a spiritual body' (1 Corinthians 15.44).

The Ascension looks forward to Pentecost, a day when the followers of Jesus, who have already grown in number, are changed and filled with the power of God's Spirit. But that's for next month! As we tell the story year by year, we are reminded that our faith often involves times of waiting and searching. Below is a short set of prayers called a 'Novena' which you may like to use in the nine days *in between* Ascension Day (this year Thursday 25th May,) and Pentecost, (this year Sunday 4th June).

Novena is associated with the nine days between Ascension Day and Pentecost.

The ancient tradition of the 'Novena' (from Latin novem meaning nine) is still used in many Roman Catholic churches. Often the prayers are made through particular saints. Below, there are some short readings from Psalm 139 and short prayers, which you may like to use as a preparation for Pentecost.

DAY 1 – 26th May

- ¹ O Lord, you have searched me and known me.
- ² You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
- ³ You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.

*God of all creation, no concern or worry is too small for you.
Help me to remember you, during the course of even a busy day.*

*Guard each of us as we rest and as we wake.
In Jesus' name. Amen*

DAY 2 – 27th May

- ⁴ Even before a word is on my tongue,
O Lord, you know it completely.
- ⁵ You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.
- ⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain it.

*God of mercy,
you understand that my words are sometimes hasty
and my thoughts are better not put into words!
Guide my thoughts and feelings,
so that they are helpful to those around me.
In Jesus' name. Amen*

DAY 3 – 28th May

⁷ Where can I go from your spirit?

Or where can I flee from your presence?

⁸ If I ascend to heaven, you are there;

if I make my bed in Sheol *, you are there.

(*In Jewish belief at the time of the psalms,
'Sheol' was a gloomy place of shadows, where
the dead were.)

*God of all places and times,
I remember those who have died,
both people who are dear to me and people I have found
difficult.
Into your hands and safe-keeping I commend them.
In Jesus' name. Amen*

DAY 4 – 29th May

⁹ If I take the wings of the morning

and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,

¹⁰ even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast.

*God of all people,
I pray for those whose lives are uncertain,
who are uprooted from work or family or friendships,
and have to travel to unfamiliar places.
In Jesus' name. Amen*



DAY 5 – 30th May

¹¹ If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light around me become night',

¹² even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you.

*God of compassion,
in Jesus you stand beside us in the pain and chaos of this world.
For people who are desperate or depressed, and long for
release, I pray.
In Jesus' name. Amen*

DAY 6 – 31st May

¹³ For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴ I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
that I know very well.

¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

¹⁶ Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.
In your book were written
all the days that were formed for me,
when none of them as yet existed.

*God of new life,
thank you for the life you have lent me.
I pray for all who are setting out on the adventure of life,
for children and parents and young people.
In Jesus' name. Amen*

DAY 7 – 1st June

¹⁷ How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!

¹⁸ I try to count them - they are more than the sand;
I come to the end - I am still with you.

*God of wisdom,
you share your wisdom with humankind.
Thank you for the wisdom of older people.
Grant me the humility to grow in wisdom.
In Jesus' name. Amen*

DAY 8 – 2nd June

¹⁹ O that you would kill the wicked, O God,
and that the bloodthirsty would depart from me—
²⁰ those who speak of you maliciously,
and lift themselves up against you for evil!
²¹ Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord?
And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?
²² I hate them with perfect hatred;
I count them my enemies.

*God of justice,
you know how angry I get, (and how angry I can make other
people feel!.)
I bring my prayers for the cruel things that happen in the world,
things that I cannot influence because they are too big or far
away.
I pray for the peace of your Kingdom.
In Jesus' name. Amen*

DAY 9 – 3rd June

²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart;
test me and know my thoughts.
²⁴ See if there is any wicked way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.

*God of life,
as we get ready to celebrate Pentecost,
may your Holy Spirit be welcome in my heart, and the hearts of
many.
May all your people work together with faith and patience,
to shape this world in your everlasting way.
In Jesus' name. Amen*

SPI

WORSHIP GROUP



A reminder – this is open to all – so there are no 'members' and no apologies for absence! Come when you can or if you have something you are bursting to share! We met on 8th April 2017

Next meeting 10 am, Saturday 10th June 2017

IDEAS FOR SERVICES:

a. Christian Aid Week

Sunday 14th May – use Christian Aid service at start of the week.

Sunday 21st May - show short film as part of morning service.

Use the 'Pig Poster' (Christian Aid 'Big Shift' campaign to move the banks from investing in fossil fuels) as part of our intercessions – little pig shapes for prayers, plus news articles about the effect of climate change on the poorest and ultimately on all the Earth.) Use separate board to display the poster.

b. Pentecost

Reading of a psalm in different languages – Welsh, English, French, Greek, Hebrew, Latin, Malagassy, - and ask for any languages known in our church.

Sunday School could also explore ways of saying 'hello' in different languages to link with the adults.

c. 1st Nov 2107 – 7 pm – a service of solace – remembering those dear to us who have died. This is All Saints' Day. Lighting candles?

d. OTHER IDEAS:

a. What is worship?

'It is witness – as we give thanks.'

'The sermon is important and gives new ways of looking at the Word of God in scripture.'

b. Hymn books – an advert has been posted on the Church of Scotland website to request any redundant copies of 'Common Ground', an ecumenical hymn book which we have used a few times.

c. A list of willing and would be readers or those willing to lead prayers of intercession would be helpful. Training in using the microphones and speaking publicly can be offered.

d. A short, reflective ('peaceful') midweek service could be held on a Wednesday in addition to the Midweek Communion, so that there are two midweek services in a month on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays. Worship Group could sometimes plan and lead this.

e. We could write our own hymns – and the children could write hymns. Possible activity for Trefecca? And / or a church activity?

f. The choir / singing group (any good ideas for a name?) could help with singing of less familiar or new hymns, with a Saturday morning practice.

g. Quiet time before Sunday service. An elder could request quiet, light the candle and then go to the vestry for prayers with the minister that day. This would allow a time of prayerfulness before the service begins.

h. A rota for the minister's days in the pastorate during 2018 – we shall use the framework from this year but make sure the minister is in different churches for the festival services.

i. All-age ('All-stage') worship – to welcome children and the uniformed organisations. Possibilities suggested:

- Harvest Festival ('Mud glorious mud' / 'Food glorious food'!)

- Remembrance Sunday

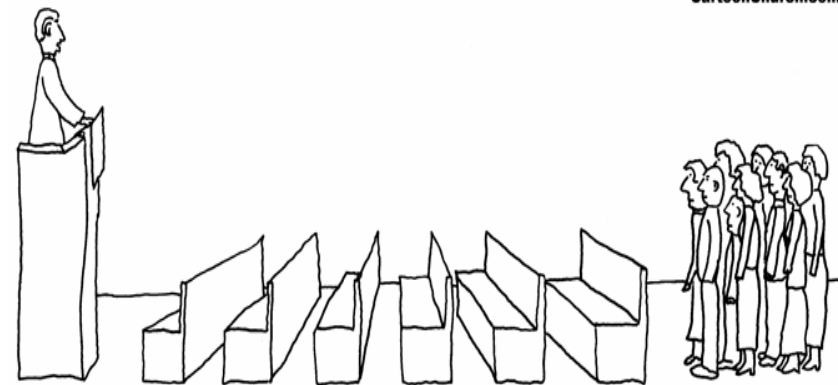
- Toy service (ask Salvation Army for guidance about toys which are needed. Sainsbury's also collect in Cardiff)

- Christmas services

- Sunday nearest 'Thinking Day' 22nd Feb 2019 for Rainbows and Brownies.

(Sometimes the Rainbows and Brownies could prepare contributions for these services, and sometimes they could be invited and the Minister and Worship Group prepare an all-age service which involves everyone.)

j. Special Sunday where we invite children baptised in the church, plus former adult members who may no longer attend, to worship. ('Back to Church Sunday' was also mentioned.) Hymn: 'One more step along the world I go'



BACK OF CHURCH SUNDAY

Pulpit Supply

May

7th, 10.30am Rev. Stephen Lewis
(communion)

14th, 10.30am Rev Robin Wood

6pm Christian Aid Service
at Van Road
led by Rev. Stephen Lewis

21st, 10.30am Rev. Stephen Lewis

28th, 10.30am Lynda Jones
and Margaret Craig

Mid Week Communion

Wednesday 10th May
10.30am
Rev. Stephen Lewis



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

May

Wed 3rd, 10.30am Coffee with Enfys

Fri 5th, 2pm Ecumenical Prayer Meeting

Thurs 11th, 10.30am Bible Study

Sat 13th, 1pm Wedding rehearsal
2.30pm Baptism

Sunday 14th Start of Christian Aid Week

Fri 19th, 3pm Wedding

Sat 20th, 1.30pm Young Pianists Concert

Thurs 25th, 10.30am Bible Study

Looking Ahead

Pentecost celebrations on Sunday 4th June 3pm-4.30pm at the Owain Glyndwr Field. There will be races, games and crafts. The service will be taken by Stephen. Van Road will be responsible for the crafts. Lynda will need help with this. The crafts will be used by Stephen during the service.

Fellowship and Bible Study - Change of dates for May.

I will be moving the sessions to weeks 2 and 4 during May as I am unable to take the session on 4th May. The dates will then be 11th and 25th May at 10.30 a.m. I hope this change does not inconvenience too many of the regular attenders.

Mair

NEJEBAR'S STORY

Nejebbar fled Afghanistan with her family after the Taliban threatened to kill her husband, Noor, who was a teacher. It wasn't an idle threat - the Taliban first blinded, then murdered, another member of their family.

'The last days and weeks in Afghanistan were the hardest,' says Noor. 'When I went to work, my heart was beating harder. I didn't know if my family were going to be alive when I got back.'

Nejebbar's family are stuck in Greece

When the family arrived at the refugee camp in Greece, they thought they would only stay for 10 days. But they've been there six months now and there's no end in sight.

The only protection they have against the wind and rain is their tent. There's no school for their children. Five-year-old Sudai, their youngest, is ill, but Nejebbar and Noor don't know what's wrong with him because they can't communicate with the camp's doctor, who is Greek.

Nejebbar's hope for the future

Nejebbar is the rock at the centre of her family, holding them together throughout all this uncertainty. She has even welcomed Faraidoon and Farzad into the family, two brothers who don't know where their parents are, or if they're even alive.

'We still have some hope for our children's future,' says Nejebbar. 'We only want a peaceful life. We want our children to go to school. The most important thing is our children.' **(Source—Christian Aid website)**

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

May 14th - 20th

We need your help!

People in developing countries still desperately need our help. I am sure, like me, you cannot help but be moved by Nejebbar's Story on Page 13

Every year it gets harder and harder to get volunteers to collect for Christian Aid Week.

We will be collecting at Tesco's, on Thursday 18th May and Cardiff Road on Saturday 20th May.

Also, please 'Take 5!' envelopes from church and ask friends / neighbours to contribute.

Better still, why not collect in your own street?

Diane

CHURCH CLEANING ROTA

May

| | |
|------|-------------------------------|
| 6th | |
| 13th | |
| 20th | |
| 27th | Rob and Diane Moverley |

Thank you to all volunteers

We hold in our prayers -

Bill and Jean Mutter

Denis Woods and family Phil and Cathy Vernalls

Dorothy Banfield and family

Tony Moore Phyllis Colwell

Russell and Carole Boothe

Vernon



The VAN-guard Centre

Charity Registration number 1109193

May 2017

Recent events

Wednesday 22nd March the Caerphilly Ladies Circle and their guests held an enjoyable concert at VAN-guard and seemed to enjoy their first visit here.

27th March Only Boys Aloud Caerphilly was joined with some choristers from the other OBA choirs viz Cardiff, Bridgend and Tredegar. A surprise act was the CCBC Big Band, a group of 16 players, school and college students and they were superb. The 'Boys' as usual were excellent and £965 was raised towards their forthcoming trip to Belgium.

29th March a lunchtime concert was given by two students from RWCMD. Rebecca Marine a mezzo soprano and Nuno Lucas her accompanist' entertained us. They again showed the talent that there is among the students in RWCMD in Cardiff. The audience was smaller than usual, but Rebecca and Nuno said they enjoyed their visit and would come again.

Young Stars Perform 30th April and I hope some of the church members will have come along to hear the young people singing for family and friends. It's hard to believe that they have been coming here for 5 years.

Event this month

Saturday 20 May 1.30-4.30 p.m. The Young pianists' concert and masterclass is open to families and friends. Again Church and VAN-guard folk are welcome to attend

and there will be an entrance fee. The young pianists are tutored by piano teachers from the South East Wales Piano Teachers' Association.

Confirmed Concert dates

Saturday 22 July 7.00p.m. **The David Hawthorn Memorial Gala Concert** 'Cantare and friends' There will be 3 members of Only Men Aloud participating as well as Angharad and a Caroline Carragher, mezzo soprano from Opera Holland Park. Ryan Wood will be accompanying the artists. This concert is in aid of MNDA and is likely to be a ticket only concert. **If you wish to reserve tickets please let me know a.s.a.p. Tickets are £15 each.**

Wednesday 4th October Aber Valley Male Voice Concert in aid of Parkinson's Disease. Evening concert.

Monday 18th December 'Cantare at Christmas'. Evening concert.

Also booked into VAN-guard

Friday 12th May at 1.00 p.m. Dr. Hefin David A.M. Constituency Surgery

Tuesday-Thursday 18th-20th July-3 days of workshops for young opera singers under the tuition of Audrey Hyland from the Royal Opera House with accompanist Nicola Rose. *Private booking.*

Andrew and Delyth Cresswell.

Most people will remember Andrew, who was the first chairman of VAN-guard, and served for 5 years in that capacity before his work with the NHS moved him to live and work in mid Wales. He was also a member of Cwmpas Theatre. Delyth of course was the Musical

Director of Cor Mynydd Y Grug, a choir from Bedwas, that gave a number of lovely concerts here. Last week we discovered that in May they are moving to France to live. Andrew has finished working with the NHS in Powys and is taking up a role as Operations Director for the World Community for Christian Meditation at Chateau de Bonnevaux in Marçay. We have sent them good wishes for this new challenge.

Mair



YOUNG WIVES

May

(7.30pm)

1st No meeting—Bank Holiday

8th Business and Biscuits

15th Rev Stephen Lewis

22nd Mr Roger Foster - Police Service

29th No meeting—Bank Holiday



SINGERS

There's a small and enthusiastic group of singers at Van Road who have helped to lead worship at Christmas and Easter – sometimes we call ourselves a choir!

If you would like to sing – perhaps you have sung in a small group in the past – or would simply like to have a go – please speak to the minister or musicians.

The Hungarian composer, Zoltan Kodaly, believed that anyone can sing given the right encouragement.

The next project is to offer music at Pentecost.

SPRING FAIR

Many thanks to Nina and to all who helped and supported the Spring Fair.

We raised £479.30

CHRISTIAN AID SALE

Llanishen Baptist, Fidas Road

Sat 13th May 9am-12pm

Plants, Bric a Brac, Toys, Books, Refreshments

Lectionary Readings



May

7th

**Acts 2:42-47; Psalm 23;
1 Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10**

14th

**Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16;
1 Peter 2:1-10; John 14:1-14**

21st

**Acts 17: 22-31; Psalm 66:8-20;
1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21**

28th

**Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35;
Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11; John 17:1-11**

URC Daily Devotions

Every morning a reading, reflection, and prayer is sent out by email from the URC. They are written by a team of around 100 people from different places and perspectives and provide inspiration in our inboxes! The devotions are designed to help enrich our discipleship and, whilst designed for personal use, have been found helpful for Bible Study groups, service preparation and devotions at the start of meetings. You can read them all by going to <http://devotions.urc.org.uk> where you can also sign up to receive them yourself using the link on the bottom left of the screen.



ROTAS

May

Stewards

Chris Harling

Dorothy Woodward

Communion

Phyllis Frayling

Enfys Hawthorn

June

Stewards

Carol Jones

Phyllis Frayling

Communion

Rob Moverley

Diane Moverley

If unable to steward or serve

Please ask ANOTHER to cover

FLOWERS FOR MAY

| | |
|------|------------------------|
| 7th | Rob and Diane Moverley |
| 14th | |
| 21st | Wedding |
| 28th | Jen Viggers |

Thank you to all who donate flowers for worship

CHURCH WEEKEND

Trefeca

Friday September 29th to Sunday 1st October

Apology and Correction

Mair at Trefeca regrets that the refurbishment of the rooms did not take place, hence the only en-suite facility is in the room equipped for disabled access.

However, Mair says it is a wonderful time of year to visit so please don't be put off. It is a great opportunity to get away, enjoying fellowship in beautiful surroundings



EDITOR'S NEW E MAIL ADDRESS

dianemoverley60@gmail.com

CHURCH ELDERS

| | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Mrs Margaret Baldwin | 02920 867027 |
| Mrs Diana Hibbert | 02920 831653 |
| Mr Lewis Lewis-Head | 02920 889958 |
| Mrs Enfys Hawthorn | 02920866840 |
| Ms Lynda Jones | 02920 884022 |
| Mrs Diane Moverley | 02920 866336 |
| Mr Robert Moverley | 02920 866336 |
| Mrs Cathy Vernalls | 02920 887112 |
| Mrs Phyllis Frayling | 02920862285 |

Any items for the next edition should be
submitted by the 19th of the month

to -

Mrs Diane Moverley

dianemoverley60@gmail.com

(or if not on e mail then items can be left
in the box at the back of the sanctuary)



*Christ
is
Risen!*

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.

John 3:16, NIV