

INFORM



URC
VAN ROAD
Caerphilly
October 2017

Minister

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From our Minister ...

The last Sunday in October is designated as Reformation Sunday. Of course, our churches in the Valleys Pastorate, are part of that great Reformed family, which shapes our United Reformed and Presbyterian denominations, with emphases on scripture and faith and the independence of the church from the secular state.

There were certainly problems and abuses which the Reformation addressed some half a millennium ago. But there were also deep traditions of Christian faith which were rightly retained and treasured. In our ecumenical era, the Reformed churches recognise that we are both Catholic and Reformed, that God is bigger than the changing understanding of human beings, and the Church of Christ is much more than our local and temporal understanding. Church did not begin at the Reformation, even if the churches which broke away from Rome, sometimes acted as if they were the only true church.

There is a Latin slogan which has long been used among the Reformed churches – ‘semper reformanda’ which means ‘reformation must always carry on.’ This is good advice for churches like ours which call themselves Reformed, because it is so easy to get stuck in our habits, in what makes us feel comfortable. Especially in our world today, faith has to engage in new ways, where knowledge, culture, society, politics, national identity, technology, all of these things, are changing so rapidly,

Where is the faithfulness of God in all this? Perhaps we can take comfort and advice from the words of St. Paul in his letter to the Christians in Thessalonica: ‘test everything; hold fast to what is good’ (1 Thessalonians 5.21). Perhaps we can also take comfort and inspiration from a time of defeat and upheaval for the Jewish people long ago, when God’s word was spoken to them: ‘See, I am doing a new thing’ (Isaiah 43.19). God does not abandon us and we can look forward in hope.

Let’s take a look back over the shoulder, to last month, and the centenary of the ordination of the first woman minister in a major Christian denomination. Constance Todd applied to study theology at Mansfield College, Oxford, in 1913. Mansfield was an entirely male institution, with no provision for women as there was not any expectation that a woman could be ordained, although the question was being discussed in the Congregational Union. The College Principal, W.B. Selbie, was convinced of Constance’s call and accepted her for the four years of training. In the Congregational churches, the call of a minister was the complete responsibility of the local church meeting, and so it seemed not impossible that Constance could fulfil her vocation. As the Great War raged, on September 17th 1917, Constance Todd was ordained to the Congregational ministry with the laying on of hands and the singing of the ‘Veni Creator Spiritus’ (Come Holy Spirit). She was ordained with her fiancé, Claud Coltman. They were married the next day, before

starting ministry together in a mission among a deprived community in the east end of London.

The ministry of ordained women has energised other major Christian denominations since then: Methodist, Baptist, Anglican and others. In the story of Constance Coltman, we see the testing and keeping hold of what is good, the new things that God is always doing in the world.



Rev. Constance Coltman



In Christ, Stephen

We hold in our prayers -

Those affected by the bus tragedy in Madagascar

Vernon Holland Bill and Jean Mutter

Dorothy Banfield and family

Tony Moore Phyllis Colwell

Russell and Carole Boothe Margaret Baldwin



Background Information with regard to Llanfair, Penrhys Malagasy Volunteers.

As you probably know, Llanfair Church in Penrhys is supported by 8 denominations. Currently Rebeca is a missionary doing wonderful work there with Miara, her husband.

John and Nora Morgans, during their time at Penrhys, set up a programme whereby volunteers could come to Penrhys for a year from all over the world for example, Hungary, Germany, South Korea.

For many years Penrhys welcomed 2 volunteers annually from Madagascar. One would be from FJKM (The Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar) and one would be a resident of Akany Avoko Ambohidratrimo (the orphanage.) These brave volunteers contributed greatly to life in Penrhys and in return their experience helped with their own personal development.

Rebeca is from Mizoram in India. She met and married Miara when she worked in Madagascar at Akany Avoko Ambohidratrimo. Hence she had known a number of the volunteers before they had come to Wales. Ony also worked with her and was responsible for organising the volunteer programme (and our Madagascar tour.)

Wales is very dear to people in Madagascar as it was Welsh missionaries who brought them Christianity 200 years ago. The first missionaries being David Jones and Thomas Bevan. The anniversary of their mission will be celebrated in Wales and Madagascar next year.



From our Madagascar correspondents

Our time in Madagascar was both full on and enjoyable, thanks to our hosts and programme organisers - Rebecca, Miara and Ony. We have been touched by the hospitality shown to us by Miara and Ony's families and the generosity of spirit of so many people we have met over the last 5 weeks.

Ambohidratrimo - the town where Miara lives, (and particularly Miara's house!) seems to us to have been a hub of creativity for dealing with some of the issues facing local people. Not only have we been helping Miara deal with a number of issues stemming from the bus tragedy, particularly how to get money collected by churches in the U.K. over to Madagascar, but a number of other issues have also cropped up. For example, how to support the local church leaders who have been given responsibility for the FJKM Mission School in Ambohidratrimo. The building is in a dreadful state, and without immediate action it could close. This school is important as it provides a much needed education to children of very poor families in the surrounding area.

We met with the Director of the Scripture Union, along with Dede and his wife from Ny Ako, as they are in the early stages of planning a visit of about 50 Malagasy people to Wales next year to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Welsh Missionaries arriving in Madagascar

We met the President of FJKM and were able to personally hand over a letter from Peter Noble requesting his support for the extension of Rebecca's term until 2020. It was a very positive meeting and he committed to write the letter to give the necessary support. It was strange to think that a couple of weeks after this meeting the President was in



Cardiff attending a CWM meeting and we were visiting the church in Madagascar on the site where Thomas Bevan and David Jones arrived 200 years ago. And then we saw pictures of him visiting Llanfair Church as part of his stay.

We have seen first hand, the work carried out at Akany Avoko Ambohidratrimo and Akany Avoko Farhafodria supporting young women (primarily) who have been referred by the courts, either because they are waiting to go to court, or because of particular social concerns in the family. We undertook some craft work with the children in both venues.

We helped out at a school holiday project supported by Ankizy gasy, a foundation set up by 2 Polish ladies who were former volunteers at Akany Avoko, Again, this project offers education for some of the poorest children in the area.

We have been delighted to be reunited with many of the Malagasy people who have been volunteers at Llanfair over the years, and it was good to hear what they have been doing since their time in Wales. Each has a good story to tell. When we visited Akany Avoko Ambohidratrimo we met up with Naomi and Dominique. We met Hanta, Dahny, Lova, Hanta and Hertine during our visit to the FJKM offices.

We then met a number of the former Akany Avoko volunteers (Sahondra, Erstine, Gabrielle and Naomi) together with some of their families and also Elysee the following day. We were touched that each had taken time out of their busy lives to come and see us to hear news of Wales, Llanfair and its friends. Dahny even made an excursion on his way to the airport so he could meet us a





second time and give us the opportunity to meet his family. In between times we also met up with Tsara - he just jumped in the car we were in and travelled with us for 10 minutes before getting out on a busy main road to walk home - and Nicolas, who very generously gave us a tour of the chocolate factory where he works as an export manager.

On our last day, a number of ex volunteers spent the day with us visiting the Queen's Palace in the city. We had lunch together. Later that day another volunteer, Hanitra caught up with us and just before we left for the airport the following day, yet another volunteer, Gabrielle, came to wish us well.

We were also delighted to find out that our tour driver / guide is married to an ex Penrhys volunteer, Manowan and we were welcomed in their home.

We have been overwhelmed and very moved by all these encounters.

Who would have known all this resulted from our association over the years with the church at Llanfair, Penrhys? There is so much more to tell, but for now here are some thoughts from Dahny written on a thank you note to us.

"What you do at Llanfair is not limited to the people of Penrhys only. It has a global impact and affects the lives of individuals, families and churches in a far away land - Madagascar. On behalf of my people I thank you".

Rob and Diane



The VAN-guard Centre

Charity Registration number 1109193

October 2017

I produced a newsletter which covered the summer's activities and hope everyone received a copy. If not please ask for one.

As autumn arrives we welcome all our groups to the new term and we wish them a successful and happy time at VAN-guard.

Review

Saturday 16th September at 6.00 p.m. An evening recital with Neil Parker, tenor.

We enjoyed a very lively recital by Neil who has a powerful tenor voice. His Journey through Musical Theatre was well received by an appreciative audience. It was a great start to our autumn programme and we hope he will come again and perform for us.

Forthcoming events.

Wednesday 4th October at 7.00 p.m. Tickets £6. Aber Valley Male Voice Choir and guest artists Megan Jones, soprano and Jack Cox, tenor.

This concert is in aid of Parkinson's Disease.

Saturday 28th October at 7.30 p.m. Tickets £8 and £6 concession.

A Recital by Andrew Randall, baritone. Accompanist Conal Bembridge- Sayers.

We welcome Andrew to his first concert at VAN-guard and look forward to his performance. The programme will include Liszt sonnets for Voice and Piano, Liszt Solo Piano pieces, English, German and French songs.

Conal Bembridge-Sayers is a very accomplished pianist who has recently been appointed Musical Director of Caerphilly Male Voice Choir. He has appeared at VAN-guard on previous occasions with the Serenata Singers. We are delighted to welcome him back.

Monday 18th December at 7.00 p.m. Tickets £10.00
An evening performance of 'Cantare at Christmas'.

This has become a regular Christmas delight when David, Angharad and Ryan always provide a superb programme of festive music. This will be an evening not to miss.

Ticket orders are already being received for these concerts. Let me know if you wish to reserve any.

Exhibition
14th-24th November -The 5th VAN-guard Centre Annual
Arts, Crafts and Literary Exhibition.

Opening times- Weekdays and Saturday-11.00.a.m. to 3.00 p.m. Sunday 12.00 noon to 4.00 p.m. Please pass on the details to friends who might be interested in submitting items for the exhibition. Submissions will be received on:

Wednesday 8th November between 3.00-6.00 p.m.
Maximum 3 items per person, submission fee £1.00 per item.

The next Management Committee Meeting will be held on
13th October at 1.00 p.m.



Lectionary Readings

October

- 1st Genesis 8: 15-22; Psalm 65;
Matthew 13:24-33; Revelation 14:14-18
- 8th Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20;
Psalm 19; Isaiah 5:1-7;
Matthew 21:33-46; Philippians 3:4b-14
- 15th Exodus 32:1-4; Psalm 6106:1-6;
Isaiah 25:1-9; Matthew 22:1-4;
Philippians 4:1-9
- 22nd Exodus 33:12-23; Psalm 99;
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10;
Matthew 22:15-22
- 29th Deuteronomy 34:1-12;
Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17;
1 Thessalonians 2:1-8; Matthew 22:34-36
- 31st Reformation Day
Jeremiah 31:31-34; Romans 3:19-28;
Psalm 46; John 8:31-36



Pulpit Supply



October

1st, 10.30am Lynda and Margaret
 8th, 10.30am Rob Moverley
 15th, 10.30am Mr Alun Williams
 22nd, 10.30am Rev. Judy Jarmen
 29th, 10.30am Rev. Stephen Lewis

Mid Week Communion

Wednesday 11th October
10.30am

Rev. Stephen Lewis

CONGRATULATIONS

To

Mair and John on their 25th Wedding Anniversary
last month.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

October

Wed 4th, 10.30am

Coffee with Enfys

7pm

Aber Valley Choir Concert

Thurs 5th, 10.30am

Fellowship and Bible Study

Thurs 20th, 10.30am

Fellowship and Bible Study

Fri 6th, 2pm

Ecumenical Prayer

Sat 7th, 10.30am

Coffee Morning /Brunch

Tues 17th, 7pm

Defibrillator Presentation

Thurs 19th, 10.30am

Fellowship and Bible Study

7.30pm

Caerphilly Council of Churches

Sat 21st, 10am

Worship Meeting

Sat 28th, 7.30pm

**A Recital by Andrew Randall,
(baritone)
Conal Bembridge- Sayers.
(accompanist)**

Looking Ahead

November 14th – 24th Art and Crafts Exhibition

**CHURCH CLEANING
ROTA**

**Please volunteer to clean the church by
signing the book at the back of the sanctuary
or speak to Diana Hibbert.**

Thank you!



Christmas Choir

Anyone who would like to form a choir for our Christmas services, please speak to the minister.

We proved we can do it last year! We will start rehearsing in November.

YOUNG WIVES

October 7.30pm

**2nd 'Songs from the Shows'
Mrs Irene Burrows**

9th India - Mr and Mrs Roger Lewis

**16th Nantgarw China Works –
Mrs Gwen Griffiths**

23rd Origami –Mrs Jen Viggers

30th Half Term –no meeting



HARVEST LUNCH

Fundraiser for the Victims of the Bus Crash in Madagascar

We have been asked to thank everyone for contributing to the Harvest Lunch collection. The £300 collected was much appreciated and will be of practical help to those families that are bereaved and / or still recovering from injuries. Funds are currently being spent for example, on healthcare, seeds, tools, schooling, legal costs.

The money and your prayers have been really appreciated by those affected.

October

ROTAS

October

November

Stewards

Stewards

Phyllis Frayling

Dorothy Woodward

Cathy Vernalls

Chris Harling

Communion

Communion

Enfys Hawthorn

Diane Moverley

Margaret Craig

Rob Moverley

If unable to steward or serve

Please ask ANOTHER to cover

Flowers for October

1st	Dorothy Lewis
8th	
15th	Chris Harling
22nd	Carolyn Jenkins
29th	Margaret Baldwin

Thank you to all who donate flowers for worship

News of a special donation.

We are delighted to receive the donation of a defibrillator from the Tommy Cooper Society on Tuesday 17th October at 7.00 p.m. This will be an official presentation arranged with the Tommy Cooper Society. A representative of the Wales Ambulance Service will be in attendance to explain how it works and explain that it will be registered on their computer, so that help can be arranged if the defibrillator is activated. There will be a 'Tommy like' performance by some members of the Tommy Cooper Society and light refreshments will be available at the end of the event. We hope that as many people as possible will come along and support this event.

Restoration work Phase 6.

The church has been awarded a Welsh Church Act Fund Grant of £2,000.00. Together with the CCBC's Community Regeneration Grant of £14,343.00, and VAN-guard's donation of £500.00, a total of £16, 843.00 has been raised toward the restoration costs of the church office. We are very grateful to have received the majority of the money for this latest phase of restoration work. The VAN-guard Centre will also pay for a blind for the room. **Mair**

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)



Front cover—The church at the location of the first Welsh missionary, David Jones.