

INFORM



URC
VAN ROAD
Caerphilly
April 2018

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 ...

Easter is the heart of Christian faith: a story of suffering, death, then new life. It is not any easy journey.

Good Friday – ‘How can it be good?’ is the question many people ask. ‘How can it be good when an innocent man is killed?’ And descriptions of a wrathful God sacrificing his only son for the sins of us all, to placate ... himself ... God ... has turned some completely away from Christianity. (This is a theory known as ‘penal substitution’, a phrase which sounds as coldly legalistic as the theory it describes.) What sort of God would do that? And then the miracle of Easter Day – new life, resurrection. It is what many hope for. But it is not our experience of being human. People die of old age or of disease, people are killed, people starve; we grieve and mourn, but are left only with hope that that somehow the ones we love are in God’s presence.

Does understanding God as Trinity – Father, Son and Spirit – maker, saviour, companion – help us? God was not remote, manipulating Jesus to act as a sacrifice. God is there in the rejection, the pain, the tragedy of Jesus’ death. So perhaps it helps to see God as walking with us in Jesus, God the creator lifting the burden of all that is wrong and painful and tragic in our world. And the Spirit of God, is a constant presence, from

breathing order into chaos in the beginning, to a companion who dwells among people through their lives. In scripture we see God delights in creation – ‘It is good’ – but God is grieved and angered by evil, but is also merciful..

In scripture, there are various ‘theories’ of how the death of Christ sets us free from sin and evil.. It is probably a mistake to magnify just one of them to the exclusion of others. So often, in scripture, we find as many questions as answers as people tried to convey the mystery of God’s love. Certainly, St. Paul uses the imagery of sacrifice for sin, something which was familiar to him as a strict Pharisee, but Paul also offers a picture of Christ participating, sharing in human life, in order to rescue creation from sin and evil.



The scholar C.S. Lewis wrote these wise words:

‘Of course you can express this in all sorts of different ways. You can say that Christ died for our sins. You may say that the Father has forgiven us because Christ has done for us what we ought to have done. You may say that

Christ has defeated death. They are all true. If any of them do not appeal to you, leave it alone and get on with the formula that does. And, whatever you do, do not start quarrelling with other people because they use a different formula from yours.'

(C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity, Glasgow 1975)



And then Easter Day – a day of hope and joy – but beyond our physical experience. It is tempting to try and explain what happened but we cannot. The disciples did not immediately assume that all was suddenly fine again, on that first Easter morning. They doubted and questioned and were afraid. But the life of the disciples was gradually transformed, and a new community began to grow, as they experienced the love of God in Jesus, still with them. They saw resurrection in their own lives, release from slavery to sin and self, the love of God changing people into a new way of being alive. And we can see echoes of resurrection today when the life of Christ sets us free from the spiral of selfishness and ignorance, revenge and pride. But we still go wrong, and we still live in a world where there is so much suffering and hurt and injustice. The Kingdom of God has

come in Jesus, but the Kingdom of God is also the future for the whole of creation. It is now and not yet. We rightly celebrate Easter at the heart of our faith. Yet there is mystery and wonder here. It is a puzzling and awe-inspiring faith, which brings us together in the acclamation:

'Alleluia! Christ us risen.

He is risen indeed.

Alleluia!'



Stephen

EASTER ACROSTIC

ETERNAL

AMAZING

SENSATIONAL

THRILLING

ENLIGHTENING

REJOICE!



EASTER WORDSEARCH

R	E	M	E	E	D	E	R	Y
U	G	O	D	E	P	M	F	O
O	J	U	T	C	B	P	M	J
I	E	A	R	I	M	T	L	N
V	C	L	U	O	O	Y	E	E
A	I	L	T	J	T	S	P	W
S	T	E	H	E	I	E	B	L
J	S	L	V	R	A	M	P	I
E	U	U	S	C	A	U	B	F
P	J	I	E	L	L	O	V	E
O	E	A	S	T	E	R	B	F
H	F	O	R	G	I	V	E	N

HE IS RISEN

ALLELUIA

REJOICE

EASTER

REDEEMER

EMPTY TOMB

NEW LIFE

SAVIOUR

FORGIVEN

HOPE

LOVE

JOY

PEACE

JUSTICE

TRUTH

LAMB OF GOD

An elder writes

A Decision for Lent

Traditionally, Lent has been a time for sacrificing whatever we find enjoyable, chocolate for example. However some now decide to add to their lives rather than give up a chosen pleasure.

I decided this year that I would add to my life rather than subtract, but what?

Each morning I look forward to Daily Devotions which arrive on my laptop between 05.59 – 06. 04. Our co – ordinator the Revd. Andy Braunston announced that for Lent we would be studying the Book of Job, under the guidance of the Revd. Dr Janet Tollington. Sundays would be brightened with a psalm.

Did I want to study Job? I had already studied this Book with Mair (thank goodness), did I want to do it again? It is long (42 chapters), sad, and can be a bit monotonous. On the other hand, it is informative, beautifully written, no doubt by the Shakespeare of the day, and has a happy ending.

Let us look at a rather potted version of Job.

Job is a good, upright man. He has a wife, some rather hedonistic children, servants , a vast amount of livestock, including five hundred donkeys. He has found favour with God who sings his praises in the heavens. This annoys Satan who wants to challenge Job's goodness. God allows the challenge.

Poor Job loses his children, livestock, some of his servants, keeping only his wife and a few old retainers.

However Job remains loyal to God, refusing to denounce Him for his losses.

God continues to set Job on a pedestal, annoying Satan, who sets up another challenge. This time poor Job is covered in boils, sores and a rash all over his body.

Job is now unhappy. He had been loyal to God, but these terrible things had happened to him. Why? He would like an explanation.

Along come his friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. They blamed Job for bringing his misfortunes on himself, citing sin as the most obvious cause. They each had plenty to say on the matter, but Job's comforters they are not.

Along comes young whippersnapper Elihu, who reckons youth is definitely on his side. He tells Job that he may not have sinned, but he has no right to question his fate, just accept it. After all God's universe is endowed with immortal power.

Eventually God speaks to Job, not to comfort him but to challenge him. Where was Job when God created the universe for example.

Job is humbled and accepts that as a mortal he cannot understand everything. He becomes reconciled to his experiences, and gets on with life, acknowledging the

Eventually God restores Job's life, giving him double the riches he had before. He had many more children. His livestock now included a thousand donkeys. Job lived to enjoy a grand old age.

As I write , I have fast forwarded my rations of Daily Devotions, Lent not being over. The Revd. Dr Tollington has given us many wise reflections to accompany the

Readings. Both the study of Job and the reflections have certainly offered me a good discipline for Lent. I am glad that I decided to add rather than take away a meaningless luxury. Thank you Daily Devotions for inspiring me.

One reflection reminded us that God holds all the power. The power He uses to bless and protect us throughout our lives. By trusting Him for blessings and protection, we can go forward with our chosen disciplines and discipleship, looking always to Him for guidance.

Margaret Craig



EASTER HAIKUS



**A new dawn breaking
Jesus set free from the tomb
The cross stands empty**

**Suffering no more
Mary's joy and wonderment
Love everlasting**

**Christ is arisen
He triumphs over death
Alleluia, Rejoice!**

Together in Prayer.

Please pray for -

1st April - St. John's with Bagillt URC, Flint and Reynaldston URC

- China, Hong Kong and Macao

8th April - Hebron URC, Mostyn and Templeton URC, Narbeth

- Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore

15th April - Rivertown URC and Shotton Tabernacle URC, Pembroke

- Timor, Indonesia and Philippines

22nd April - Libanus with Barham URC, Ebbw Vale and St. John's Methodist/ URC, Tenby

- Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Taiwan

29th April - Tabernacle URC, Newport and St. David's Presbyterian Church of Wales URC, Aberystwyth

- Djibouti, Somalia , Somaliland



Pulpit Supply

April

1st, 10.30am Mr Robert Moverley
Easter Sunday
Communion

8th, 10.30am Ms Lynda Jones

15th, 10.30am Mr Lewis Lewis-Head

22nd, 10.30am Rev. Stephen Lewis

29th, 10.30am Mrs Margaret Craig and
Ms Lynda Jones

3.30pm **Worship 'and More'**
Mr Lewis Lewis-Head

Mid Week Communion

Wednesday 11th March
10.30am
Rev. Stephen Lewis



Son Rise Service on Caerffili Mountain

April 1st, 7.30am

Caerphilly Food Bank Request

Presently the food bank is quite well stocked but can always use UHT milk, tinned fruit and rice pudding and orange juice / squash as these are not donated very often. Toiletries are also needed.

Cash donations are also welcome.

Thank you!

YOUNG WIVES

April

Mondays 7.30pm

2nd No Meeting

9th No Meeting

16th BUSINESS and BISCUITS

23rd MRS VICKIE MORGANS – ‘ARTICULATE’

30th REV. PETER NOBLE



The VAN-guard Centre

Charity Registration number 1109193

April 2018

VAN-guard Centre activities.

News from groups.

Goldies Cymru-time change. In order to help the residential homes that bring residents to the group we shall be starting 30 minutes later at 11.00 a.m. as of April. This will give carers little longer to get medication administered and get residents prepared to come out. New people continue to join the group.

University of the Third Age (U3A) As of April the group will go back to meeting upstairs because of the increased numbers attending the monthly sessions.

Concert Diary Dates 2018 completed at time of writing 28th February Lunchtime Piano Recital by Dan Phelps.

This was an excellent concert by the young musician/ composer. The pieces played were all his own compositions and CD's and some of his CD's were available to purchase. He enjoyed his time with us and expressed a wish to come again which we are working on.

Sunday 11th March at 7.00 p.m. A Concert for Mother's Day 'Rediscovered Beauty'

Artists: Ryan Ross, Baritone; Sian Cameron, Mezzo Soprano; Alison Shone, Soprano and Accompanist Nicola Rose. This was a superb concert by accomplished professional performers. Some of the pieces composed by the Viennese Composer Julius Burger were given their first public performance.

Concert Diary Dates 2018 yet to take place at time of writing.

Lunchtime Concert at 1.00p.m. Wednesday 21st March Tickets £5.

Baritone Recital with Matthew Tilley

Matthew's programme is likely to contain some pieces by Mozart and Puccini, songs from musicals and some Folk Songs - something for everyone. This will have been Matthew's first visit to perform at 'VAN-guard'.

March activities also included

Saturday 10th March 10.00 a.m.-12 noon - A. M. Constituency Surgery

Friday 23rd March 18, 2018 9.30 a.m.- 12.30 p.m.-Half Day Conference organised by CCBC.

Friday 23rd March 10.30 a.m. VAN-guard Centre Management Committee.

Saturday 24th March

GAVO ONE BEAT 9.30.a.m.- 12.30a.m. at Caerphilly Library

Saturday 24th March 3.00 p.m. Spring Concert with Caerphilly Community Chorus.

Forthcoming event

Sunday 15th April at 2.00 p.m. 'YoungStars' Perform' their Spring Concert

The young singers once again perform for their families and friends. David and Angharad extend a warm welcome to any members of the Church and VAN-guard who wish to attend.

Also

Saturday 12th May at 7.30 p.m. Operatic Tenors' Concert with Lee David Bowen and Richard Lee Thomas. This will be their first performance at VAN-guard.

Saturday 23rd June at 7.30 p.m. Caerphilly Community Chorus - Summer Concert

Saturday 15th December at 7.30 p.m. Caerphilly Community Chorus - Christmas Concert

If you are not on the VAN-guard Centre e mailing list and wish to be included, please pas your e mail address on to John and you will then receive details of events directly. Also refer to the 'VAN-guard Centre website www.vanguardcaerphilly.org

July

Saturday 14th The David Hawthorn Memorial Gala Concert –evening performance

The Noteworthy Mixed Choir is in great demand. We are pleased therefore to have been able to get them for this event. There is a great deal of talent among the choristers as well as with their accompanist Stewart Roberts and their Musical Director Ryan Wood. Ryan is well known to us at

'VAN-guard' through his involvement with Cantare, Only Men Aloud etc. The Concert Compere will be David Fortey.

Mair.

Tel. 029 20 866578 / e mail: mairjohn365@gmail.com



Alleluia! Hallelujah!

Diane and I were discussing the spelling of the word "Alleluia" the other day, and it got me thinking, "What is the difference between the words "Hallelujah" and "Alleluia?" So I looked it up and came across the following article by someone called Sherril Clontz (the Internet is a wonderful thing!)

..... "I overheard a discussion among some of the band members about the difference between the words "Hallelujah" and "Alleluia." So I wanted to share a bit of history about the words. "Hallelujah" is Hebrew and means simply "Praise Yahweh." It comes from "Hillēl" which means "to praise" and "Yāh" which means Yahweh. Sometimes you will see it spelled "Halleluyah" Alleluia is the English translation and is derived from the Latin and the Greek. So either word can be used in place of the other. In fact, if you look up the word "Alleluia" it is defined as "Hallelujah" and both are used in music and liturgy (the words and actions that are used by the church to worship God) in praises to God.

"Hallelujah is the most common form of the word. But Alleluia appears frequently in music. Since many pieces of church music throughout the ages were written in Latin, Alleluia would be a common choice for many traditional hymns and songs. And of course, contemporary Christian songs are generally written in English—thus Alleluia is used most often.

"While the term Hallelujah comes from our Jewish worship roots, both Hallelujah and Alleluia are used most often in Christian worship in relationship to the resurrection of Jesus. And in many Christian churches, they are not said or sung during Lent.; in fact, some churches have a ceremonial burying of the Alleluia at the beginning of Lent and then "resurrect" its use for Easter. "

Rob

Don't forget NY Ako will be performing their unique mixture of music, song and dance and sharing something of life in Madagascar at:

Van Road Sat 2nd June 2:00 p.m.

We hold in our prayers -

Vernon Holland

Bill and Jean Mutter

Dorothy Banfield and family

Tony Moore

Phyllis Colwell

Russell and Carole Boothe

Barbara Lloyd



Christian Aid

Many thanks to those who collected at Tesco's,
£380 was raised.

'Just Take 5'

The number of volunteers collecting for Christian Aid in Caerffili has gone down significantly in recent years. Unlike many areas in Wales and the UK, the churches in Caerffili have just about abandoned house to house collections. (Nationally, house to house collections bring in more money than other fund raising ventures.) House to house collections give an opportunity to engage with people outside of church circles, it is mission in action. There are numerous reasons for this decline but if every member of the congregations in Caerffili take 5 envelopes in Christian Aid Week and ask family, friends and neighbours to contribute, this would make a huge difference and would give the opportunity to engage with people outside of their own congregations.

So please, this Christian Aid Week ...

'JUST TAKE 5!'

Lectionary Readings



April

- 1st April 1st Easter Day
Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:6-9;
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11;
John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8
- 8th Number 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22;
Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21
- 15th Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12
Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33
- 22nd Isaiah 15:4-9a; Psalm 31:6-16;
Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 14:1-15 or
Mark 15:1-39 (40-47)
- 29th Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31;
1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8

CHURCH WEBSITE

Our website is now 'LIVE.'

www.vanroadurc.org

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

APRIL

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Wed 4th, 10.30am | Coffee with Enfys |
| Thurs 5th, 10.30am | Fellowship and Bible Study |
| Sat 14th, 6pm | Concert for Patagonia Visit |
| Sun 15th, 2pm | Young Stars Concert |
| Thurs 19th, 10.30am | Fellowship and Bible Study |
| Fri 20th, 7pm | A quiz with Morgan James |

Saturday 14th April

Morgan James is presenting a concert to aid his quest to go to Patagonia. This will be a varied programme. Please come along to support him.

Looking Ahead

Christian Aid Week

12th May a.m. –'The Big Brekkie' at Van Road

Details to follow

ROTAS

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| April | May |
| Stewards | Stewards |
| Margaret Baldwin | Dorothy Woodward |
| Cathy Vernalls | Chris Harling |
| Communion | Communion |
| Enfys Hawthorn | Margaret Craig |
| Lynda Jones | Cathy Vernalls |

If unable to steward or serve
Please ask ANOTHER to cover

Flowers for April

1st	EASTER
8th	Chris Harling
15th	The Moverleys
22nd	
29th	

Thank you to all who donate flowers for worship

Sunday Afternoon Service & More

On Sunday the 29th April 2018 at 3:30pm we welcome everybody for our afternoon Sunday Service.

In addition to our morning services at 10:30am we want to reintroduce our afternoon service, at the moment this will be on a monthly basis. We wanted to do more than offer just a service of worship but also to cater for everybody who might feel that they want more than just a service.

At 3:30 pm the service will start and last for approximately 30 mins and from then we offer you to stay and take part in a further activity till around 5pm. Worship takes many forms and sometimes we seek different ways to enjoy God's presence. Maybe we just want to pray, to sing, to learn or just sit down for conversation. Thinking about this we want our afternoon worship to be able to address all the needs we can. So after our service we invite you to take part in what *you* would like to do:

Singing: A time just to sing, to learn new tunes and remember old ones. Let your voice fill the sanctuary and enjoy the benefits that music can give you. You don't have to be able to sing because God doesn't rate you on your vocals.

Prayer: Sometimes we all feel that we need just to be connected in prayer. A time to be quiet in thought and aloud in talking to god. A time to remember the week past and the week ahead.

Learning: The Bible is a never ending book, it's not just about what is written but also about what it means. What does it mean to us to be a Christian? Many questions to be discussed!

Fellowship: Being you is important to God. If you don't want to do any of the above, then just join us for a chat and a drink. Many great things come from chatting to others.

We hope you can join us on the 29th April, if you just want to come for the service or to our groups later then we would be so glad to see you.

All ages are welcome, younger children will have plenty to do and the older youth are most welcome to join in the groups as they add a great deal to our worship.

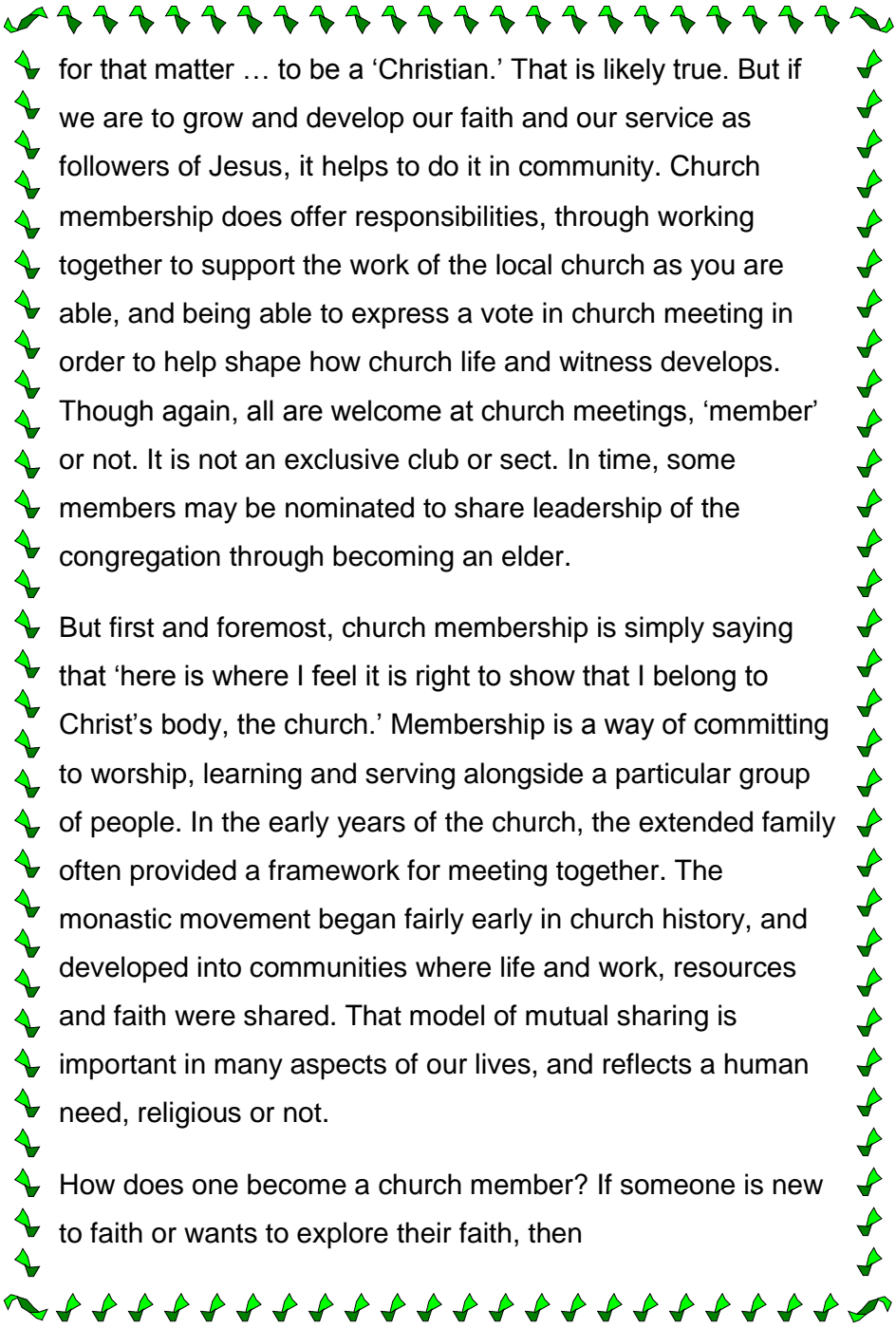
Our invite goes out to everybody, we ask that you share this invitation to anybody who you think would like to join us.

Lewis

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP –

What is it? What isn't it?

- In the United Reformed and Presbyterian traditions, as well as other non-conformist churches, our local and practical Christian commitment is shown through becoming a member of a local church.
- Church is not a club, so being a member does not give you special rights. It is a sign of service, of putting your lot in with other Christians in a particular time and place. I often hear it said, 'You don't have to go to church ... or be a church member to get a place in heaven! It does not give you status



for that matter ... to be a 'Christian.' That is likely true. But if we are to grow and develop our faith and our service as followers of Jesus, it helps to do it in community. Church membership does offer responsibilities, through working together to support the work of the local church as you are able, and being able to express a vote in church meeting in order to help shape how church life and witness develops. Though again, all are welcome at church meetings, 'member' or not. It is not an exclusive club or sect. In time, some members may be nominated to share leadership of the congregation through becoming an elder.

But first and foremost, church membership is simply saying that 'here is where I feel it is right to show that I belong to Christ's body, the church.' Membership is a way of committing to worship, learning and serving alongside a particular group of people. In the early years of the church, the extended family often provided a framework for meeting together. The monastic movement began fairly early in church history, and developed into communities where life and work, resources and faith were shared. That model of mutual sharing is important in many aspects of our lives, and reflects a human need, religious or not.

How does one become a church member? If someone is new to faith or wants to explore their faith, then



Conversations can happen to help this decision. It is not unusual for people to feel their faith isn't 'strong enough. Well that is true for each one of us.

After a conversation with the minister and the blessing of church meeting, normally reception into membership happens in a Communion service. A new member is asked to affirm their faith in God, Father, Son and Spirit, (a simple 'I do') and to promise to live out their Christian life in the wider community, rooted in this local congregation.

There is nothing frightening about the process. It can be helpful to affirm your faith and intentions through membership. If you are interested in church membership, please talk to the minister.

Stephen

He is not here; He is risen just as he said.

Matthew 28 v6



CHURCH ELDERS

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
Mrs Emma Fitzgerald	02920851525

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)

Website:

www.vanroadurc.org

