

INFORM



URC
VAN ROAD
Caerphilly
May 2018

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From our Minister ...

Pentecost was the Jewish feast when, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit enlivened and inspired the followers of Jesus. They changed, moved on to new ways of living, sharing their wealth and helping the poorest, praying and praising God, and getting a glimpse of how God's kingdom could start in their time and place.

Early Christians met in ordinary homes, or by rivers, or in synagogues. As the church embraced both Jew and Gentile as followers of Jesus, the church and synagogue split and identified themselves as different religions, often with mutual animosity. The young Christian church did need structures to help it function and adopted many aspects of synagogue worship: prayer, scripture, preaching, singing, elders, then later, an altar table where the Eucharist or Holy Communion could be celebrated. Church buildings and their interior layout were heavily influenced by the model of the synagogue.

Over two millennia there have been churches of all kinds and traditions. We know how many rival churches and chapels there were in the Valleys. Many have closed, as a fast moving modern world, (with opportunities to play sport, social media, easy travel, shopping,) has become more attractive than going to church. Churches of all kinds have seen decline, in members, children, Sunday School, weekday activities, and how they impact on society. Old 'hymn sandwich' styles of worship were very passive, apart from the actual singing of the hymns (singing is another activity which few people do now). The ecumenical movement has reminded us that we are not supposed to be isolated individuals but members of Christ's body, and churches have changed and learned from each other, shared music and liturgy and ideas.

What could a new Pentecost mean for us today? Perhaps, if we trusted each other ecumenically, we would have fewer

buildings, but better used, and a minister/priest in every community. In a town like Caerphilly, there are so many churches in the town centre. Perhaps it would be better to have a building or a few buildings – in the right places. Church buildings are needed for public worship, weddings, baptisms, funerals. Leadership is important, and a minister or priest is ordained to lead and serve a Christian community, but they are not the heart of church. It is the whole community of believers and seekers who constitute the church.

Can church be different? Messy church, café church, forest church, house church – all these are ways of being a Christian community which are not really new any more. There are other ways of being church, less traditional, more rooted in community. 'Intentional communities' are small groups of people who choose to live together, a bit like a monastic community. A large independent church in Bristol has bought houses in the poorest parts of the city where Christians share their lives with the people who live there, often helping with the problems which beset some of those who suffer exclusion because of unemployment, poor education, loneliness, ill health, financial and cultural poverty. Getting to know people and helping with something as simple as filling out a form, or debt and

budgetary advice can make a real difference. These intentional communities usually involve younger people just because they are more flexible and available, but there is no reason why any Christians of any age could not choose to express their faith by being church in a place where there is no church building. Befriending, listening, praying together, reading and learning together in a community house, all these reflect the traditions of worship passed down the ages. It's just that the 'monastery chapel' might be the living room, and the monks and nuns might include married couples as well as single people.

We don't live in a Christian culture any more – and we might question whether we ever really have? Over the centuries, the rules and exclusiveness of church institutions have often seemed so far from the pattern of Jesus the Christ, who welcomed all. Instead we have wrapped up church in a Sunday bubble, a Sunday box. At Easter God gives us resurrection – new life, new shape – and at Pentecost, the strength and vitality, the wisdom and vision of the Spirit. What will church look like as the years role on? Is it time for a new Pentecost?



SPI

A HYMN

**Holy Spirit ,hear us
Help us while we sing;
Breathe into the music
Of the praise we bring.
Holy Spirit, prompt us
When we kneel to pray;
Nearer come and teach us
What we ought to say**

**Holy Spirit, give us
Each a lowly mind;
Make us more like Jesus,
Gentle, pure and kind.
Holy Spirit help us
Daily by Thy might,
What is wrong to conquer,
And to choose the right..**

William Henry Parker, 1845-1929

Together In Prayer

MAY, please pray for ...

6th St. David's United Reformed Church/
Church in Wales, Newport and Cefnybedd
Cilmery URC

Pray for Eritrea and Ethiopia

13th Crane Street URC/Baptist Church,
Pontypool Christchurch/Caebach URC
Llandrindod Wells

Pray for Sudan, South Sudan and
Uganda

20th Stow Park URC/Presbyterian Church of
Wales, Newport and Trinity URC/
Presbyterian Church of Wales, Llanidloes

Pray for Kenya and Tanzania

27th Dan-y-Graig United Church, Newport
and Simon Walkling and other officers
serving the National Synod of Wales

Pray for Malawi and Zambia



An Easter Reflection

We have once more remembered the cruel death of our Lord Jesus Christ and celebrated the glorious news of His resurrection.

In thinking about this special time for Christians I again feel concern for the way in which our secular society, and particularly the media, dismiss this festival as just another break from work.

We live in a multicultural society and it is reasonable that all faiths, religions and cults are tolerated but the whole essence of the development of our society in the past has been based on firm Christian principles.

Are we in the Church in Britain guilty of allowing our natural predisposition to inclusion and tolerance to letting our Faith become an irrelevant, marginalised part of society?

In my estimation it seems that throughout the ages, Christian philosophers and theologians have spent far too much time trying to interpret and explain the meaning of the Gospels and words of Christian writers, rather than accepting the basic tenets that we hope to live by, as learned from the teachings of Christ. As we see in the letters of Paul, even in the early days of the Church, individuals have put their own interpretation on the teachings of Jesus, usually to justify their own behaviour or to satisfy their own human feelings or demands.

During my career I have lived and worked with Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists. I was never afraid to confess my belief in Christ and not to have to justify it to them. They never seemed to question their beliefs and their festivals were sacrosanct. When they needed to pray, they prayed, when they needed to go to the mosque or Temple they went! No apologies, no justification, just 'It's my belief!'

Our culture has now become almost apologetic for our faith. People who go out and evangelise on the streets are treated as though they have a psychiatric illness. Those who attend church are looked at askance by passers-by.

The recent BBC programme about the pilgrimage to Santiago di Compostela very much showed the differences in attitudes to faith. The celebrities' seemed to be 'looking to find themselves' but seemed immune to any religious feeling arising out of the effort and purpose of the experience. I couldn't believe that three of the men wouldn't even go into the Cathedral after all that effort. Were they afraid of contamination or of 'catching' Christianity? Well done Kate for holding her views despite all her grumbling!

Much of this seemed to be based on a fear that accepting Christianity means you have to take on inconvenient commitments and give something of yourselves rather than of 'finding' something.

In the Easter service from King's College the story of Thomas Didymus was read. We tend to forget about him

and for his need to see tangible evidence of the resurrection. Unfortunately, there are too many, even in the Christian Church, who feel the need for some perceptible proof of the stories of Christ rather than accepting His teachings and our Faith in Him.

With all the confusing theological arguments I hear which try to explain the mysteries of our Bible I regularly return to the Gospel of Matthew 5,6 and 7 to remind myself of what Christ really wants of us in order to enter His Kingdom.

David Jenkins



In Case of Experiencing Sudden Pentecost Symptoms:

If you suddenly find yourself caught in an indoor tornado and your scalp on fire, it might be ...Pentecost.

Know what to do:

Notify the front desk.

Fight the urge to stop, drop and roll - You ain't puttin' this Fiyah out!

Make disciples of all nations!

Invest in a toupee. Bald preachers are shady.

(joke from Javacasa.com)

Ny Ako  concert

Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow
IN HIS HANDS



Don't miss this concert when Ny ako share
something of Malagsy life in song and
dance

June 2nd at 2:00 p.m. in Van Rd Church

Pulpit Supply

May

6th, 10.30am Rev. Stephen Lewis
Communion

13th, 10.30am Rev. Malcolm Shapland

6pm Christian Aid Service

20th, 2.30pm Rev Simon Walkling
Pentecost

27th, 10.30am Richard and Sarah Edwards
Trinity Sunday

Mid Week Communion

Wednesday 9th May
10.30am
Rev. Stephen Lewis



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 such as soap, shampoo, toothpaste etc are also needed.

Cash donations are also welcome.

YOUNG WIVES

May

Mondays 7.30pm

7th Bank Holiday - NO MEETING

14th Swan Rescue

21st Mrs Chris Harling

28th Bank Holiday-NO MEETING



The VAN-guard Centre

Charity Registration number 1109193

May 2018

VAN-guard Centre activities.

News from groups.

The Drawing Class has started a summer term cycle of 5 classes as of 25th April.

Concert Diary Dates 2018 completed to date

Luncheon Concert at 1.00p.m. Wednesday 21st March

Baritone Recital with Matthew Tilley

Matthew's programme was varied and most enjoyable. He is a young man with considerable talent and we were delighted to support a young man who comes from Trethomas. For those who missed this concert there will be another opportunity to hear Matthew sing at luncheon on **Thursday 5th July**. (Please note the change of day-it is not the usual Wednesday luncheon concert). Since his concert at 'VAN-guard' in March, Matthew has been performing in Singapore.

The Caerphilly Community Chorus Concert on March 24th

The Chorus' guests were three young ladies known as TREBLE C. Still attending secondary school, they have a wealth of talent and are being tutored by Mr. Nigel Jones. It was a very enjoyable way to spend a Saturday afternoon.

Future activities/events for 2018.

MP Constituency Surgery

Saturday 12th May 10.00 a.m.-12 noon

Concerts

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

Sunday 1st July at 2.00 p.m., Young Stars Perform

Thursday 5th July at 1.00 p.m.

Matthew Tilley - Baritone Rectal. A welcome return visit

Wednesday 18th July at 1.00 p.m.

Nigel Jones - Clarinet Recital with accompanist

Ceri Gifford-Berry

Friday 2nd November at 7/7.30 p.m. *Time to be confirmed*

Serenata Choir –mixed choir from Cardiff

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



Saturday 14th July at 7.00p.m. Tickets £15

The David Hawthorn Memorial Gala Concert.

The Noteworthy Choir.

Musical Director Ryan Wood, Accompanist Stewart Roberts, Host David Fortey.

It is some years since this superb mixed choir, Ryan's choir, performed at VAN-guard. Those of you who attend Cantare Concerts will know of Ryan and his wonderful piano playing. This is an opportunity to see him in another role when he conducts his choir. Ryan is also the Musical Director of Bridgend Male Choir. 'Noteworthy's' accompanist, Stewart Roberts, is also an excellent and well known musician. He plays piano and cello and is currently the Musical Director of Pendyrus Male Choir. There is a wealth of talent among the choristers which will become event on the evening. Our Trustee, David Fortey, will host the evening.

The Charity chosen for this year's Gala Concert is the Tommy Cooper Society's Defibrillator Fundraising Campaign. The Society generously gave us a defibrillator last autumn. Therefore our aim is to raise money for them to buy another one or two defibrillator/s, for another venue or venues in Caerphilly. Please support this event and tell your friends about it. Word of mouth is one of the best ways to circulate information. If you are able to take a poster to advertise the concert we will be happy to provide one.

Ticket orders are now being taken for the concert which is likely to be a ticket only event.

If you are not on the VAN-guard Centre e mailing list and wish to be included, please pass 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

Please note:

Postponements:

GAVO ONE BEAT was due to take place on the morning of Saturday 24th March but was postponed because the lift in the library was not working. We also await a new date for this event. Mid May has been suggested but a date has not yet been confirmed.

Young Stars Perform Concert postponed on 25th April.
NEW DATE: Sunday 1st July at 2.00 p.m.

The Two Tenors Concert on 12th May has been postponed until the autumn, mid-September-to mid-October.

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



NY AKO

NOT TO BE MISSED!

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.

Please tell your family and friends. Entrance is free and there will be a retiring collection and an opportunity to purchase craft works at the end of the concert if you so wish.

We hold in our prayers -

Vernon Holland Bill and Jean Mutter

Dorothy Banfield and family

Tony Moore Phyllis Colwel

Russell and Carole Boothe

Barbara Lloyd



Christian Aid Week

May 13th-19th

'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

May

6th

Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98;
1 John 5:1-4; John 15:9-17

13th

Acts 1:15-17, 21-24; Psalm 1;
1 John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19

20th

Pentecost
Acts 2:1-21 or Ezekiel 37:1-14;
Psalm 104:24-35b; Romans 8:22-27;
John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15

27th

Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 29;
Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17



CHURCH WEBSITE

Our website is now 'LIVE.'

www.vanroadurc.org

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

May

Thurs 3rd, 10.30am Fellowship and Bible Study

Fri 4th, 2pm Ecumenical Prayer Meeting

8th, TBA Evening Concert of Welsh Singing

13th-19th CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Thurs 17th, 10.30am Fellowship and Bible Study

Sun 20th, Tea after afternoon service

LOOKING AHEAD

Saturday 2nd June, 2pm

Ny Ako performance

Notice: No Coffee Morning this month as Enfys has grand parent duties.

ROTAS

May	June
Stewards	Stewards
Dorothy Woodward	Margaret Baldwen
Chris Harling	Enfys Hawthorn
Communion	Communion
Margaret Craig	Phyllis Frayling
Cathy Vernalls	Diane Moverley

If unable to steward or serve
Please ask ANOTHER to cover

Flowers for May

6th	Dorothy Woodward
13th	Van-guard
20th	PENTECOST
26th	Jen Viggers

Thank you to all who donate flowers for worship

TRIBUTE TO HARRY ANDREWS MBE

Mr Harry Andrews, former leader of Caerphilly County Borough Council, died on 27th March aged 80.

Harry twice served as Leader of the Local Council from 2004 - 2008 and 2012 - 2014, when ill health forced him to stand down as Leader and later as a Councillor. In his capacity as Leader he supported the church's applications for funding for the restoration of the building. He was present when we celebrated our first grant from the Heritage Lottery and attended a number of the VAN-guard Concerts. We got to know him in his political capacity through our involvement with the GAVO and Local Authority Voluntary Sector Committees. He always showed interest in and encouraged us in our work at Van Road. John knew Harry well as they worked together for many years and would describe him as a gentleman and a gentle man. Harry was well respected by everyone and will be sorely missed.

Mair and John Wade



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Poverty is an outrage against humanity. It robs people of their dignity and lets injustice thrive. But together we have the power to transform lives.

Will you Stand Together with us this Christian Aid Week (13-19 May 2018) to help families like those of [Vilia](#), [Marcelin](#) and [Jocelyne](#) live full lives, free from poverty?

Poverty is an outrage against humanity. It robs people of their dignity and lets injustice thrive. But together we have the power to transform lives

Vilia sheltered 50 of her neighbours during Hurricane Matthew

Vilia lost her mum and her home when the earthquake struck Port-au-Prince in 2010. Bereaved and homeless, she went back to her home town with her husband and children. But life was a struggle, and they had nowhere safe to live. Christian Aid partner KORAL built her a new home that was strong enough to stand up to natural disasters

Vilia's new home provided a safe haven for her family and neighbours when they needed it most. Will you help build disaster-proof homes for vulnerable people like Vilia in Haiti?

christian
aid
week

Taskmaster
(as seen on
TV)
CHURCH
SPECIAL

FEATURING



Phil
Wall
Castle
Square

Rosa
Hunt
Salem
Baptist

SPI
Lewis
Valleys
Pastorate

Bethan
Walkling
St
David's
Uniting

Phil
Rickards
Capel
Rhondda

Where: St David's Uniting

Church, Pontypridd

When: 7pm, Saturday 19th May

Tickets: £5 *Come help us put the
'fun' in fundraising*



Vilia and her family

[Christian One Liners](#)

- Don't let your worries get the best of you; Remember, Moses started out as a basket case.
- Many folks want to serve God, But only as advisers.
- It is easier to preach ten sermons than it is to live one.
- The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose, but mosquitoes come close.
- People are funny; they want the front of the bus, Middle of the road, And back of the church.
- Opportunity may knock once, But temptation bangs on the front door forever.
- Quit griping about your church; If it was perfect, you couldn't belong.
- If a church wants a better pastor, It only needs to pray for the one it has.
- I don't know why some people change churches; What difference does it make which one you stay home from?

Submitted by Dewey, Pensacola, FL (Emmitsberg.net)

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

