

INFORM



URC
VAN ROAD
Caerphilly
June 2018

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From our Minister ...

You may or may not know that at the end of April / start of May, there was a four day URC Ministers' Gathering in Staffordshire. It was the first event of its kind and all URC ministers in England, Scotland and Wales were invited. So in place of the individual summer schools within each Synod which happen annually, there was one big event.

The theme was discipleship and helped us to think about the new URC resources which are called: 'Walking the Way – living the life of Jesus today.' That's the strap-line ... I wonder if you've heard this yet? Churches spend so much time worrying about structures, buildings, programmes, how to share out fewer ministers among churches where there are fewer members. All this can become quite dispiriting and depressing. So the aim is to help us all in our faith and discipleship – friends, members, elders and ministers—not with a programme to follow, but with resources, and with encouragement!

A disciple is a learner. That's what the word means. We learn about God as we follow Christ's way. And learning never stops. We don't fill our brains and hearts, then stop, put a lid on our learning as if we've become complete human beings. Perhaps our system of schooling might tempt us to think like that – we do exams, we get qualified, and we get on with life. But we would be suspicious of a doctor or an airline pilot or anyone for that matter, who did not keep revising and updating their learning. As Christians, our learning does not stop either, but sometimes we get stuck at different places along our life's journey, maybe as early as Sunday School!

One of the keynote speakers was Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, and now master of Magdalene College Cambridge. He told the stories of three women who

were active in the last century. Each one started off as an atheist, but rediscovered their faith, and became radical disciples, in very practical ways.

Maria Kobstova was a Russian who ended up in Paris, where she gave hospitality to refugees and homeless people. She would scour the markets at the close of the day for cheap food. She also helped Jewish people escape the Nazi persecution by giving them identity papers which described them as Christian. Mother Maria – she was eventually made a saint of the Orthodox Church – taught by her actions and her words that Church should be a model of togetherness and solidarity. Church is not there to possess the bodies or souls of people, but to live beside people with mutual respect, whether people are Christian or not. Mother Maria died a martyr at the hands of the Nazis.

Dorothy Day (not Doris!) worked in the USA, in New York during the Great Depression and through the war and then the time of MacCarthyism, when anything that looked slightly socialist was squashed and persecuted. She rediscovered her Catholic faith and started the Catholic Workers' Movement. Dorothy Day spent her days with the poorest and broken, and often it was dangerous. She took the words of St. Theresa of Avila seriously, who long ago wrote that 'Life is a night spent in a disorderly inn.' Life is not clean and organised and perfect, and for most people it is like a night spent in a noisy, unruly inn, where all sorts of people rub shoulders, the kind, the violent, the generous, the pickpocket, the friend, the stranger. The point being, we cannot, as disciples of Christ, hide away somewhere safe and pretend that the mess and the muddle of the world doesn't exist or doesn't matter. Later on, Dorothy Day joined protests against racism and the wars which the USA was waging across the world.

The third example of a practical life of discipleship was from a French woman called Madeleine Delbrel, who became head of social services in a French city and showed a way of being a disciple in the ordinary work and structures of a city. She also wrote a great deal. We can work within the parameters of our society, though we will find that we probably have to push the boundaries.

The point of the URC Ministers' Gathering was to get away from gloomy navel-gazing. There were workshops we could take part in – anything from a creative space (an art workshop where I tried my hand at lino-cut printing) to information about the new training being offered to potential lay preachers and lay leaders, under the name 'Stepwise'. (I have some information about this.) There was also a comedian, Paul Kerensa, who happens to be Christian and apart from running workshops, on the last evening there was a comedy cabaret. Another main speaker, Peggy Kabonde, is the first woman moderator of the United Church of Zambia, and she talked about how discipleship is encouraged in her country where lay leadership is vital given the time and distances between churches.

So the point of this all was to deflect our anxieties about falling numbers of members, few if any children or people in their middle years, and too many and difficult buildings to maintain, and help us to look to the centre of faith – to the Jesus who calls us to be disciples. It is not that the problems are not important and they will just go away. But it is a healthy reminder that following the way of Jesus is at the heart of our hope. Faith grows, often slowly, and obscurely, - which is often how we meet God in the stories of scripture. Often there seem to be three steps back for every step forward. We live in tricky times for the Church. Jesus' disciples are prime examples of how easy it is to get

things wrong, to misunderstand, or to run away when things get difficult.

We are called to have a critical faith, a faith which asks questions and doesn't get stuck either in complacency or despair. At the centre of meaningful and faithful lives, is where Jesus is. But ... in our society, the centre may be something quite different – consumerism, power, greed, prejudice. So we may well need to move our focus to the edges of society, to uncomfortable places, where people do actually live and struggle. Rowan Williams also offered the challenging thought that God does not need the Anglican Church or even the URC. Denominations, like local church buildings, come and go and have done through the millennia. We may find that thought disturbing, but the URC was formed in order to die, to become part of a great ecumenical movement of Christians working together in trust. Tragically, that vision was lost across most church traditions in the UK, and I wonder if we've given up on the vision as well. We seem to be in a time when each denomination is busily trying to keep itself going, come what may. But simply, we can start by trying to be disciples who want to make the world an easier place to be good, a place where it is natural to be kind.

'Walking the Way – living the life of Jesus today.' It's quite a challenge.

SPI



From the editor ...

Seeing Things In A New Light.

While putting together this edition I heard a loud thud. I knew immediately what it was; it was the sound of a bird hitting a window. When I looked out of the conservatory window I saw a starling slumped on its chest on the seat of the bench. It didn't move. Not sure if going to see it would cause more distress, I stood and watched as it started to 'come around.'

We have a feeding station for the birds and enjoy seeing a wide variety of species and it is only recently that we have observed 3 starlings in the garden. We have never seen starlings here before. I have always thought starlings to be quite dull, speckled birds, who in large flocks, make wonderful swirling patterns in the sky before settling to roost. However, watching this starling as it recovered I saw it 'in a new light,' literally.

The sun's rays reflected on its feathers so that they shone turquoise and purple. They were really lovely. As the starling started to look around the colours shimmered, and changed, chameleon like. After about 15 minutes it shook itself and to my relief, it flew away.

If we take time and care, we are able to experience new insights that challenge our preconceptions. For example, whatever our thoughts and opinions on refugees and migrants hopefully the 'Uprooted' Exhibition (see page 22) will help us see people and situations 'in a new light'.

Diane

Pulpit Supply

June

3rd, 10.30am Rev. Stephen Lewis
Communion and Baptism

10th, 10.30am Mr Alun Williams

17th, 10.30am Mrs Judy Harris

3.30pm Mrs Sarah Edwards
'Theology Through Film'

24th, 10.30am Mr Lewis Lewis-Head

Mid Week Communion

Wednesday 13th June
10.30am
Rev. Stephen Lewis



Together In Prayer

June, please pray for ...

- 3rd Bailey Street Uniting Church, Brynmawr
Tabernacle URC, Rhayader

Botswana and Zimbabwe
- 10th Caersalem United Church, Ebbw Vale,
Penuel URC

Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland
- 17th St. David's Ecumenical Church, Cardiff
New Street Presbyterian Church of Wales
URC Welshpool

Angola and Mozambique
- 24th St. Mellons Local Ecumenical Partnership
Samau URC

Brazil



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

June

Mondays 7.30pm

4th TBA

Leprosy Mission Money in Please

11th TBA

18th Summer Meal

25th Mrs Linda Thomas – Quiz



Ny Ako  concert

Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow
IN HIS HANDS



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

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

The VAN-guard Centre

Charity Registration number 1109193

. June 2018

News from groups. The Drawing Class with Jenny John has finished for the summer but will return for a new session at lunchtime on 19th September.

Calendar of future events in 2018

Saturday 23rd June at 7.30 p.m.

Caerphilly Community Chorus - Summer Concert.

Sunday 1st July at 2.00 p.m.

'Young Stars Perform'

Invitation extended to Church and VAN-guard members.

Thursday 5th July at 1.00 p.m.

Matthew Tilley - Baritone Recital. A welcome return visit.

Wednesday 18th July at 1.00 p.m.

Nigel Jones - Clarinet Recital with accompanist,
Ceri Gifford-Berry.

Wednesday 8th August at 4.00 p.m. A Summertime
Recital and a Strawberry Tea.

Dan Phelps, pianist and Kate Fox, cellist.

Wednesday 19th September at 1.00p.m.

Recital by Conal Bembridge- Sayers, piano and
Grant Jameson International Euphonium soloist.

Saturday 29th September at 7.30 p.m.

Tenor and Soprano recital

with Lee David Bowen, Helden, tenor;

Angharad Watkeys, soprano;

Richard Lee Thomas, tenor and Nicola Rose accompanist.

Friday 2nd November at 7/7.30 p.m.

Serenata Choir –mixed choir from Cardiff.

Saturday 15th December at 7.30 p.m.

Caerphilly Community Chorus - Christmas Concert.

More details about all performers will be available near to the date of the concerts



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.

This charity concert will be the second **DAVID HAWTHORN MEMORIAL CONCERT** and will be performed by the 'NOTEWORTHY' CHOIR'.

This is a mixed choir from Maesteg. It has a prestigious reputation and is in great demand. It's Musical Director, Ryan Wood is well known here for his superb accompaniment for 'Cantare' and other performers. The choir's accompanist is Mr. Stewart Roberts, Musical Director of Pendyrus Male Voice Choir.

The ticket price includes light refreshments at the end of the performance. Please reserve your tickets with Mair to avoid disappointment.

NEW DATE: **The GAVO ONE BEAT**

This event will now take place on **SATURDAY 9TH JUNE** in the Library in Caerphilly from 9.30 a.m.-12 noon. This is a display of many of the Voluntary Organisations and other groups in the locality. The Church and VAN-guard will be participating in the event. Please come and see us and support the event. Much useful information is always available to the public on these occasions.

Mair

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

Happy event:

We are pleased to announce the birth of Benjamin William Fortey on 11th May. We send our congratulations and all best wishes to Angharad and David on the birth of their first child.

A Very Big Thank you -

to Enfys and Sally for helping Rob and me with collecting on Cardiff Road last week.

We raised £158.11

Not all the CA money has been collected and counted as yet from the envelopes.

Thankyou so much if you took on the 'Just Take 5' challenge-you are stars!

We will give an update either in the next Inform or in September to let you know how much Van Road and Caerffili has raised.

Diane

Lectionary Readings

June

3rd 1 Samuel 3:1-20; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18;
Deuteronomy 5:12-15; Corinthians 4:5-12;
Mark 2:23-3:6

10th 1 Samuel 8:4-20; Psalm 138; Genesis 3:8-15;
2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1; Mark 3:20-35

17th 1 Samuel 15:34-16:13; Psalm 20;
Ezekiel 17:22-24; 2 Corinthians 5:6-13;
Mark 4:26-34

24th 1 Samuel 17:1a-11, 19-23, 32-49; Psalm 133;
Job 38:1-11; 2 Corinthians 6:1-13;
Mark 4:35-41



CHURCH WEBSITE

Our website is now 'LIVE.'

www.vanroadurc.org

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.

They have come so far, they deserve our support.

We hold in our prayers -

Vernon Holland Bill and Jean Mutter

Tony Moore Phyllis Colwel

Russell and Carole Boothe

Barbara Lloyd



'God Bless the NHS'

As part of the celebrations of the 70th Birthday of the National Health Service, Revd Phil Wall and some friends from St David's Uniting Church Pontypridd, are walking across wales from Rhyl to Cardiff in early July. They may be joined by a few others along the route.

On the morning of Tuesday 17th July, the last section of the walk, open to all, will start around 10.30am, from the Aneurin Bevan statue in Cardiff, down to the Bay and the Senedd.

This is a great example of how local council, health boards, churches and communities, can work together to celebrate what is good in society. The walk also echoes our URC initiative of 'Walking the Way.'

There are conversations about a joint celebration among the Churches Together in Caerphilly but nothing definite as yet. Watch this space!



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

JUNE

Fri 1st, 2pm	Ecumenical Prayer Meeting
Sat 2nd, 2pm	Concert with Ny Ako
Wed 6th, 10.30am	Coffee with Enfys
Thurs 7th, 10.30am	Fellowship and Bible Study
Tues 12th, 7pm	Elders Meeting
Thurs 14th, 7.30pm	Caerphilly Council of Churches (Windsor Road)
Thurs 21st, 10.30am	Fellowship and Bible Study
Sat 23rd, 7.30pm	Concert Caerphilly Community Chorus
Tues 26th, 6pm	Big Cheese Planning Meeting
Thurs 28th, 5.30pm	Messy Church

FLOWER FESTIVAL

Friday 22nd – Saturday 23rd – Sunday 24

**Volunteers needed to Meet and Greet
and Serve Refreshments**

‘UPROOTED’

**An exhibition from Christian Aid will also be on
display downstairs during the Flower Festival.**

ROTAS

June	July
Stewards	Stewards
Margaret Baldwen	Phyllis Frayling
Enfys Hawthorn	Cathy Vernalls
Communion	Communion
Phyllis Frayling	Emma Fitzgerald
Diane Moverley	Margaret Craig

If unable to steward or serve

Please ask ANOTHER to cover

Flowers for May

3rd	
10th	Sally Ball
17th	Cathy Vernalls
24th	Flower Festival

Thank you to all who donate flowers for worship

Remembering With Love.

We were sorry to hear of the death of one of our oldest members Dorothy Banfield who was a faithful member of our church. As her health deteriorated she was looked after by her husband, Aneurin. Unfortunately, his health later failed and she moved into a nursing home. We think of Katherine and her family at this time, but most of all, Gwyneth Jones, who has lost a devoted sister.

May God bless you all.

Dorothy Lewis

Patagonia Trip

I would like to thank all my friends at Van Road Church for the support they have given me in arranging and attending the fundraising concerts and the quiz night I organised for my visit to Patagonia. I am also very grateful for the many donations I received. I have already exceeded my target of £2575 which is amazing and the generosity of Van Road has contributed greatly to this achievement.

Thank you all.

Morgan.

UPROOTED

Sharing stories of Internally Displaced People from Kenya, Iraq and Syria.

An exhibition at Van Road (downstairs) during the Flower Festival weekend.

“Every second someone in the world is displaced from their home by conflict, violence or natural disaster but is unable or unwilling to cross a border and thus are unprotected by international agreements on refugees. They are largely ignored by the international community and denied official protection– but Christian Aid is highlighting their situation now because the United Nations negotiations on refugees and migrants will take place this year.

This exhibition will give you the chance to discover first-hand the stories of some of these displaced people on the move.”

Please take time to view this exhibition and encourage family and friends to see it as well.

INFORM

Hopefully there will be an edition of Inform that covers both July and August.

If this is not possible then essential information will be produced and circulated.

Thank you for your patience.

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



Loving God,

You see right through me,

And your knowledge of me sets
me free.

(Sue Brown—Prayer Handbook)