

INFORM



URC
VAN ROAD
Caerphilly
December '18
January '19

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 our present days, for some people, one of the few times they sing 'religious' songs (maybe apart from christenings, weddings and funerals) is at Christmas. Singing was part and parcel of life in chapels and churches, plus there were the male or female or mixed voice choirs in many communities, and of course children sang in school regularly. Sadly, we don't sing so much now.

So people who don't normally sing, can and do, try out their voices at Christmas carol services. Last year, I heard about an old Welsh tradition called 'Plygain', which was a carol service which took place in churches between three and six o'clock on Christmas morning. Yes, when it was still definitely very dark! (There are various possibilities about what the word 'Plygain' actually means. Possibly, it derives from a Latin word 'pullicantio', which means the cock crow at dawn, or it might come from the Welsh 'plygu', to bend or stoop, suggesting how people bow in prayer.)

In a Plygain carol service, people would walk through the darkness to the church in a procession, carrying candles, and then some hours of singing followed. Traditional English Christmas carols nearly always focus on the birth of Jesus, the holy family, the angels, the shepherds and the magi bringing their gifts. Plygain carols, which often had many verses, as well as singing his birth, would always refer to the death of Jesus and the resurrection as well. There are a few English carols which do this.

Sometimes I used to take a wooden recorder with me when we stayed with family, and once, when I started to play hymn tunes, someone who had been rendered speechless by a stroke, started to sing the words of the hymns which were familiar to her all life-long. She still couldn't speak, but the

music helped the lyrics of the hymns to flow for a short time. Music is so deeply rooted in us, and connects body, soul, mind and spirit. There is a theory that human language evolved from singing, as our distant ancestors intoned their feelings of joy, grief, pain, wonder or love. I like that idea, as so much of our language, our thoughts and words, are all tied up with feelings. We are not really as cool and rational as we like to believe. I also like the idea of Plygain - singing into the darkness, singing words of hope. Music is something church communities can offer as a gift this Advent and Christmas season, and not just at this time, but throughout the year.

Singing expresses so many emotions – not just joy but sadness - in a rainbow of colours. Singing is a language which can express God's love in so many nuanced ways that words can often struggle to do justice.

Should we try a Plygain service some time? Let me know!

In Christ, SPI.

Advent Candles



This Advent, our Advent candles which mark our journey towards Christmas, will be placed around the church, at points of the compass, with the Christmas, 'Christ candle' at the front. Each service will begin with singing some of the hymn 'Hills of the North rejoice', to the stirring tune 'Little Cornard.' It is likely a hymn you know from school days. The hymn takes us around the points of the compass, around the globe. (The hymn has been criticised in recent years for being imperialist in tone, and amended words have been written, though we will be using the original version. Make you own

judgement!) Starting on Advent Sunday, you are invited, if you are able, to process around the church to where the candles are, as they are lit, one more each successive Sunday, as we sing, and then listen to the prayer for that day. On Christmas Day, we shall process to all four points of the compass and then return to our seats for the lighting of the Christ candle.

If this sounds complicated, it isn't really! But this is just a quick 'heads-up' so that we are prepared. Isn't that what Advent is about?

In non-conformist worship, there is rarely any movement. Our worship became very static and passive over the generations, to a point where the minister did and spoke nearly everything and the only time the congregation moved was to stand and sing. Deacons or elders would bring round collection plates, and distribute bread and wine at Communion. We seemed to be stuck to our pews! We are starting to move more – such as when we share 'the peace' with each other in Communion.

Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Methodist and Pentecostal traditions all have far more movement in their worship and something to teach us. There are processions around churches or the local community, for special times of the year. And rather than sit, people go to the altar-table to receive the bread and wine.

You don't have to process if you are not able or feel uncomfortable. But this action reminds us that Advent is a journey –through time, taking us from and to different places, the journey of faith and life, towards God's kingdom – and that we are together 'Walking the Way'.



Stephen

Love, joy, peace

Information From the Christian Aid website.

Christian Aid's Christmas Appeal theme is Peace

Bishop Paride is a UN peace prize winner and member of the South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC). Together with Christian Aid, he and the SSCC have been calling for peace in South Sudan. Bishop Paride, who is featured in the CA church resources, believes that peace is something you practise and every day he repeats 28 words for peace starting with 'Love, joy, peace'. He says, 'If all put these words into their hearts, and every day they repeat them, there will be peace in South Sudan.'

Stand with peacemakers like Hamza this Christmas

Hamza Essa's family was ripped apart by the conflict in Syria. They were forced to flee their home in Yarmouk refugee camp for Palestinians when fighting made it too dangerous to remain.

Hamza, one of seven children, misses his brothers and sisters, who are displaced across several countries. He hasn't seen one brother in nearly five years. Now, after receiving training from Association Najdeh, he volunteers at the centre, working to bring hope and joy to other young refugees.

'Now I help the teacher in her class. When I see someone crying, I tell them not to cry and tell them that they should stay strong,' he says.



Psychologist Diana helps children recover from conflict in Lebanon. Wessam, a young Palestinian refugee, takes part in a life-skills session at the centre where Diana works.

Photo: Christian Aid

Thanks to people like Hamza and Diana, peace is possible – but they need our help.

Please support the Christian Aid Christmas Appeal either directly or by attending our coffee morning on December 14th at 53 Lon Y Gors, 10.30am.

Amidst all the hustle and bustle of the season let us practise peace in our daily lives and pray for an Epiphany for those who suffer, or cause suffering, in our troubled world.

Have a blessed Christmas and New Year!

Diane

Information on the Night Shelter

Night Shelter Programme:-

December Emergency Shelter if the Cold Weather Plan is implemented

January & February St. Helen's Sunday Evening, Night, & Monday morning.

March some shelters but the same contingency plan as December if necessary.

December and maybe March the homeless will be accommodated in a central location and Shelters will be asked to supply volunteers.

Full details week Tuesday

Therefore I am looking for volunteers who would be available at short notice to travel to a shelter, the shifts will be exactly the same i.e. 6pm -10pm, 10pm - 6am, 6am -9am. If transport is a problem just let me know. (It's not a problem)

Appeals

No Clothes, but I can direct to places that will take them.

Tents 1man/2 at the most, are needed to ensure the homeless have some protection, any offers please contact me.

Just Giving

This is a site on Facebook where you can direct Monetary donations to the Caerphilly Churches Night Shelter, in place of offers to donate i.e. Food, Clothing etc.

Many Thanks to you all,

Cliff Bray cliffsan@sky.com 02920860921

CHRISTMAS OUTREACH STALL

We are looking for volunteers to man the Churches' outreach stall at the Caerphilly Christmas Market on Saturday Dec 8th from 10:00-4:00, and for people to help set up and clear up the stall. Passers-by will be invited to dress up in nativity costumes and have a photo taken. Last time this led to lots of opportunities to talk about the Christmas story.

Also needed are:

- Adult nativity costumes
- A clothes rail
- A manger

We will be putting together a leaflet with details of Christmas services in, so if you have services or events that you would like to invite people to, please let me know by Saturday December 1st.

Also, please let me know which hour long slot you would like to volunteer for :-)

Set up	
10:00-11:00	
11:00-12:00	
12:00-1:00	
1:00-2:00	
2:00-3:00	
3:00-4:00	
Clearing up	

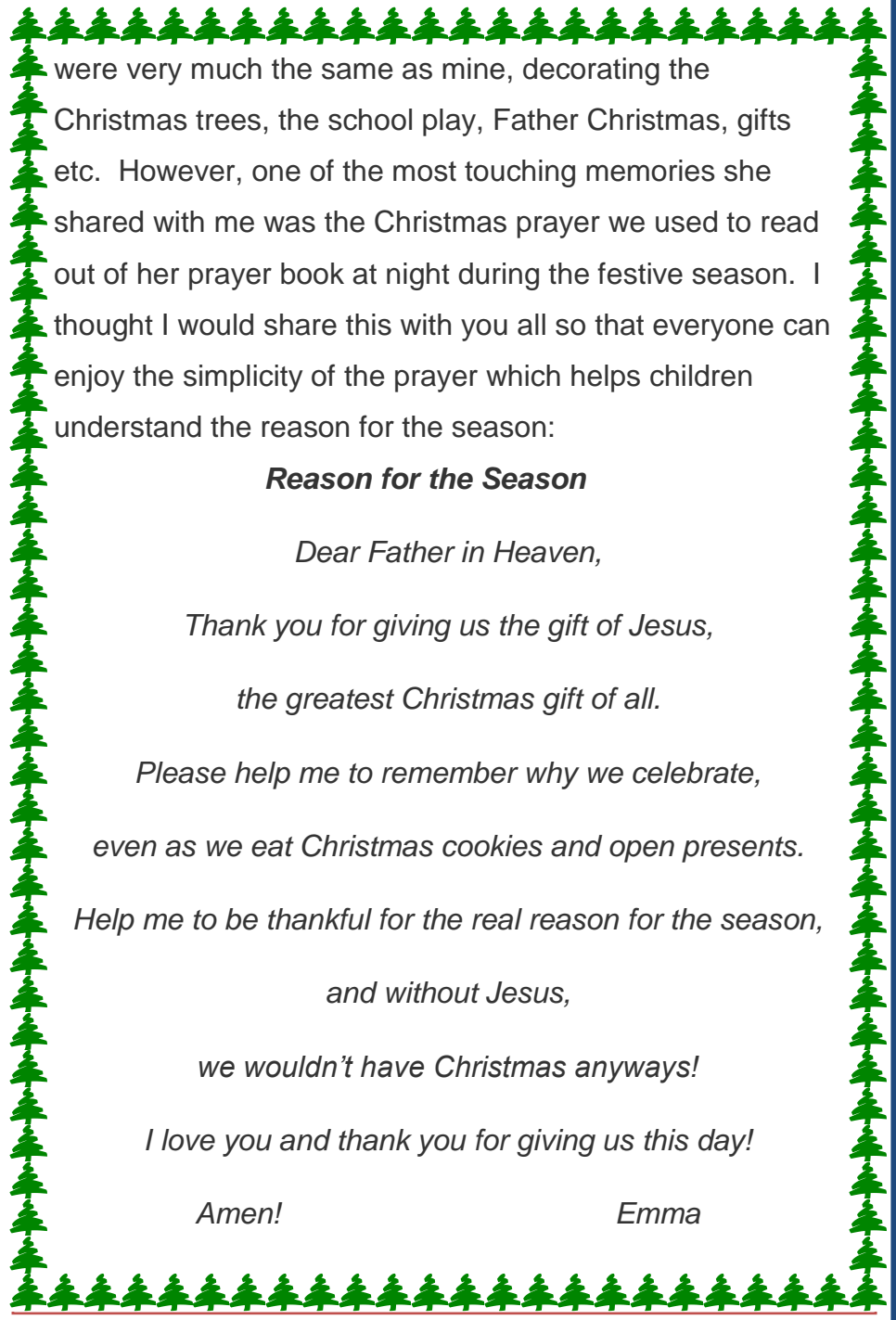
Any questions, please contact Alyson Godfrey (alysongodfrey@gmail.com).

Love in Him,
Jenny

An Elder writes

Christmas is one of the most blessed times of the year. I have recently been reflecting on my Christmas memories as a child, and was left wondering whether my daughter is experiencing the same joy in this modern-day Christmas. I remember traditions such as helping put the decorations on the Christmas tree, the twinkling Christmas lights, the nativity scene that came out each year, Christmas carols sang with the brownies, Christmas nativity plays with school, visiting family and friends. Christmas cards and of course waking up early on Christmas morning to see if Father Christmas had been. Most importantly, I remember as a child that I was celebrating the birth of Jesus.

Today it is so easy to get all caught up in the business of the Christmas season. While we are out shopping for trivial things like presents and decorations. We often forget why we are celebrating and we have almost forgotten what's most important. With the above in mind I spoke to my daughter and asked her about her Christmas experience and the traditions she enjoyed. To my surprise, with all the technology available and the influences all around her today, her much loved traditions



were very much the same as mine, decorating the Christmas trees, the school play, Father Christmas, gifts etc. However, one of the most touching memories she shared with me was the Christmas prayer we used to read out of her prayer book at night during the festive season. I thought I would share this with you all so that everyone can enjoy the simplicity of the prayer which helps children understand the reason for the season:

Reason for the Season

Dear Father in Heaven,

Thank you for giving us the gift of Jesus,

the greatest Christmas gift of all.

Please help me to remember why we celebrate,

even as we eat Christmas cookies and open presents.

Help me to be thankful for the real reason for the season,

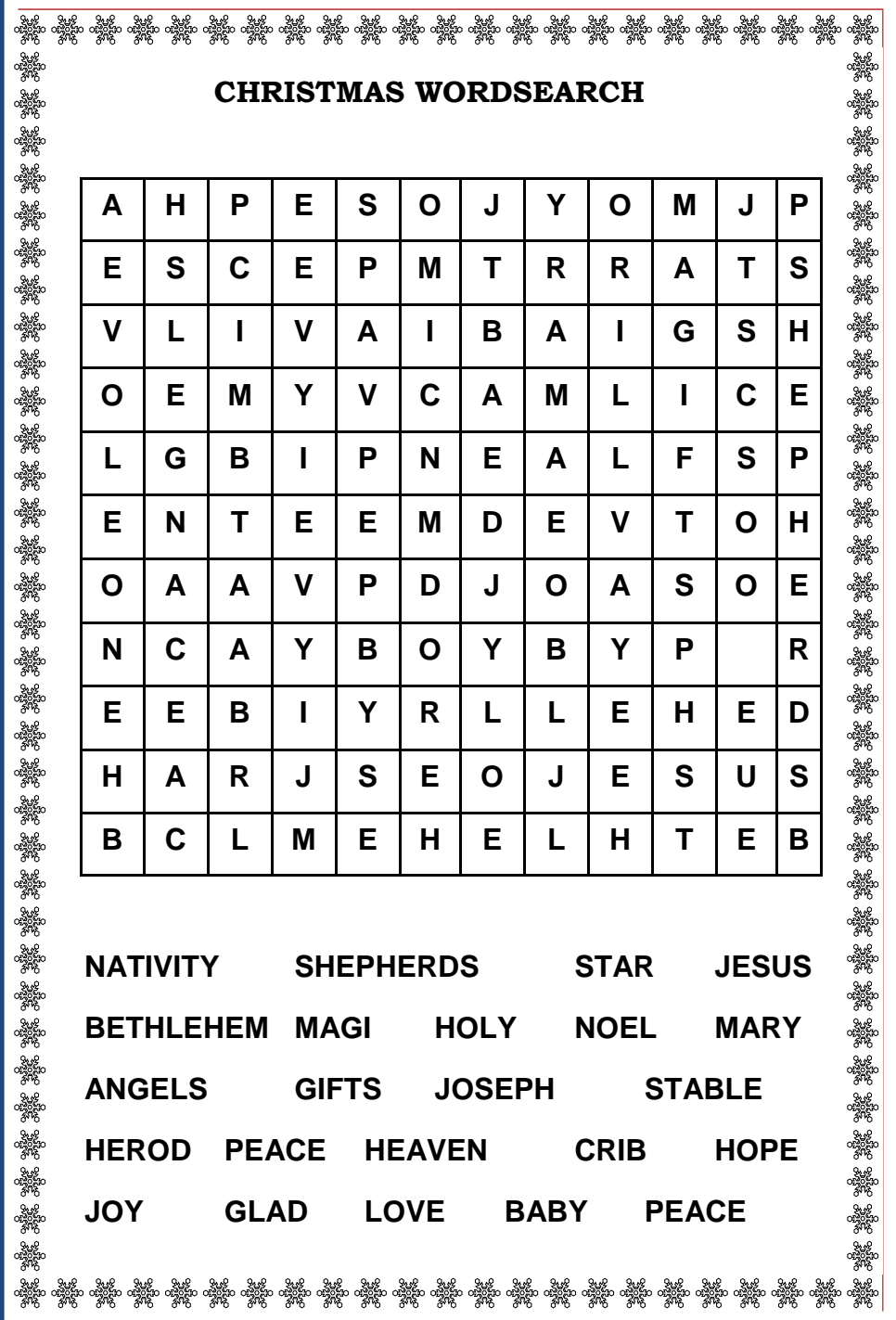
and without Jesus,

we wouldn't have Christmas anyways!

I love you and thank you for giving us this day!

Amen!

Emma



CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH

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

- NATIVITY SHEPHERDS STAR JESUS
 BETHLEHEM MAGI HOLY NOEL MARY
 ANGELS GIFTS JOSEPH STABLE
 HEROD PEACE HEAVEN CRIB HOPE
 JOY GLAD LOVE BABY PEACE

Calling Caerphilly Churches

Volunteers Needed

To support the Night Pastors at the weekends. See Sally Ball for more information.

A Message From Nina

I had a lovely surprise last Friday. Enfys delivered a beautiful potted Orchid on behalf of elders and church members for my 'toilets cleaning work'. I'm disappointed that I have had to pass this task on .

A big thank you. God bless,

Nina x

We hold in our prayers -

Vernon Holland	Bill and Jean Mutter
Tony Moore	Phyllis Colwell
Barbara Lloyd	Roland Lewis
Ruby Jones	Margaret Craig



Pulpit Supply

December

2nd, 10.30am
(Advent 1)

Rev. Stephen Lewis
Communion

9th, 10.30am
(Advent 2)

Mr. Lewis Lewis-Head

16th, 10.30am
(Advent 3)

Rev. Stephen Lewis

23rd, 2.30pm
(Advent 4)

All age service followed by tea.
Rev. Stephen Lewis

24th, 10am

Christmas Day Service
Rev. Peter Noble

30th, 10.30am

Ms Lynda Jones

Mid Week Communion



Wednesday 12th December
10.30am
Rev. Stephen Lewis

Christmas Service with Rainbows and Brownies

Thursday December 13th at 5.30pm
All Welcome

Pulpit Supply

January

6th 10.30am Rev. Stephen Lewis
(Epiphany) Communion

13th, 10.30am Mr. Trevor Grant
from The Leprosy Mission
(followed by lunch.)

20th, 10.30am Mrs. June Maxwell

27th, 10.30am Mr. Lewis Lewis-Head

Mid Week Communion



Wednesday 9th, 10.30am
Rev. Stephen Lewis

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

January 18th -25th

Sunday 20th, 6pm at Wesley

Includes re-dedication of Street Pastors

The VAN-guard Centre

Charity Registration number 1109193

December 2018 Report

Review of recent events:

27th October Recital by Angharad Morgan. The Recital raised £617.00 for the Alzheimer's Society, and Angharad was pleased with the generosity of people who attended. This brought to an end her fundraising campaign for Alzheimer's for 2018. It was great to see and hear her back on form after the birth of Benjamin.

2nd November. We were pleased to welcome back the **Serenata Singers** who gave an evening of varied music which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Tuesday 6th November Goldies Visit to Port Talbot

This was an epic bus journey of over 2 ½ hours each way as we collected 'Goldies' members from Caerphilly, Coedpenmaen, Newbridge and Ebbw Vale before getting to Port Talbot. On the way back we did the reverse journey. However it was a fantastic day with over 350 Goldies gathered at the Princess Royal Theatre in Port Talbot. We were entertained by local primary school pupils. In the morning the pupils came from the Central Primary School in the town. The afternoon performance was given by the pupils from Thornhill Primary School in Cardiff. Both schools illustrated the amount of excellent work that is being carried on in the schools as the children had been well prepared in their music and knowledge of WWI. Thornhill Primary School had won a Welsh National Lottery Prize for the cantata they performed, all of which was the work of the children. Superb was the only way to describe their work for which they received a standing ovation from

a very appreciative audience. We were sorry that Margaret Craig had been unable to join us.

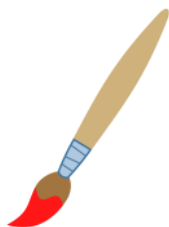
Friday 9th November our Goldies Group went to Ffynnon Wen Primary School in Taffs Well to spend an afternoon singing with the pupils. They even performed as a small choir to sing for the gathered audience of children, staff and the families of some pupils. By our session on the following Monday they were sung out!

13-23rd November- VAN-guard's Annual Arts, Crafts and Literary Exhibition.

This year's event has been a great success. We received a combined total of 133 exhibits in all the disciplines. Some entrants are old friends; others have come here for the first time. The consensus of opinion by visitors is that the standard this year is higher than in previous years and the variety of subjects and techniques more varied. As I write the exhibition has not ended therefore I cannot report on the recipients of the awards. I will however thank all who have been involved; the submitters, adjudicators, those who have assisted with meet and greet and refreshments. I also wish to thank John who made all the display boards. Without his determination and effort there would not have been an exhibition this year.

It is a lot of work to organise each year but well worth it.

Mair



Further events/concerts dates in 2018

Saturday 1st December at 1.00 p.m. 'The Young Stars Christmas Concert'. Angharad and David extend a warm welcome to Church and VAN-guard members.

Saturday 15th December at 7.00 p.m. **Caerphilly Community Chorus Christmas**
Tickets £5.00 payable at the door, under 16's free.

PLEASE NOTE THE EARLIER TIMES OF BOTH THESE CONCERTS

Concert Sunday 16th December at 3.00 p.m. 'Cantare at Christmas'

with David Fortey, tenor; Only Men Aloud; Angharad Morgan, soprano, WNO Chorus; Ryan Wood, accompanist, Musical Director of the Noteworthy Choir and Bridgend Male Voice Choir. A great Christmas treat for all.

Tickets are £10.00. Please let me know if you wish to reserve tickets in advance.

Groups: Van-guard groups will begin to wind down as Christmas approaches, but will be back in the New Year. Restart times received to date are: U3A - Friday 4th January, Art Group -Thursday 10th January, The Chorus - Friday 11th January; OBA - Monday 14th January and Drawing Class - Wednesday 16th January.

The VAN-guard Centre Management Committee wish to thank all those who have worked so hard to support us during 2018 and we appreciate their commitment in what has been another very busy year.

The Committee also wishes everyone at the Church a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

January 2019 Report.

We shall not be planning any concert dates for January. The often inclement January weather means people don't want to come out, and many folk are recovering from a busy Christmas period. Those of us involved in these activities also need a break. We will therefore resume our concert series in February. We have some super concerts booked up until end of May.

2019 Concert Series

Daniel Cushing will be opening the new concert series with a lunch time Organ Recital on Saturday 9th February. He is a frequent guest organist at recitals in Bath Abbey and at Truro Cathedral. Daniel is very busy with all the work he does at his own church, while also studying for his Masters' Degree at the University of Bath.

There is another February concert in the planning stages; more details of that will be included in the February INFORM.

Mair. e mail: mairjohn365@gmail.com
www.vanguardcentrecaperhilly.org



Lectionary Readings



December

- 2nd** **Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10;**
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36
- 9th** **Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79;**
Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6
- 16th** **Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6;**
Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18
- 23rd** **Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:46b-55 or**
Psalm 80:1-7; Hebrews 10:5-10;
Luke 1:39-55
- 25th** **Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14;**
Luke 2:1-20
- 30th** **1 Samuel:2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148;**
Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

January

- 6th** **Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14;**
Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12
- 13th** **Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17;**
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
- 20th** **Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 35:5-10;**
1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11
- 27th** **Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19;**
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a; Luke 4:14-21

YOUNG WIVES

December

Mondays 7.30pm

3rd Carols and mince pies,
Rev Stephen Lewis

10th Christmas Meal

January

7th No Meeting

14th AGM

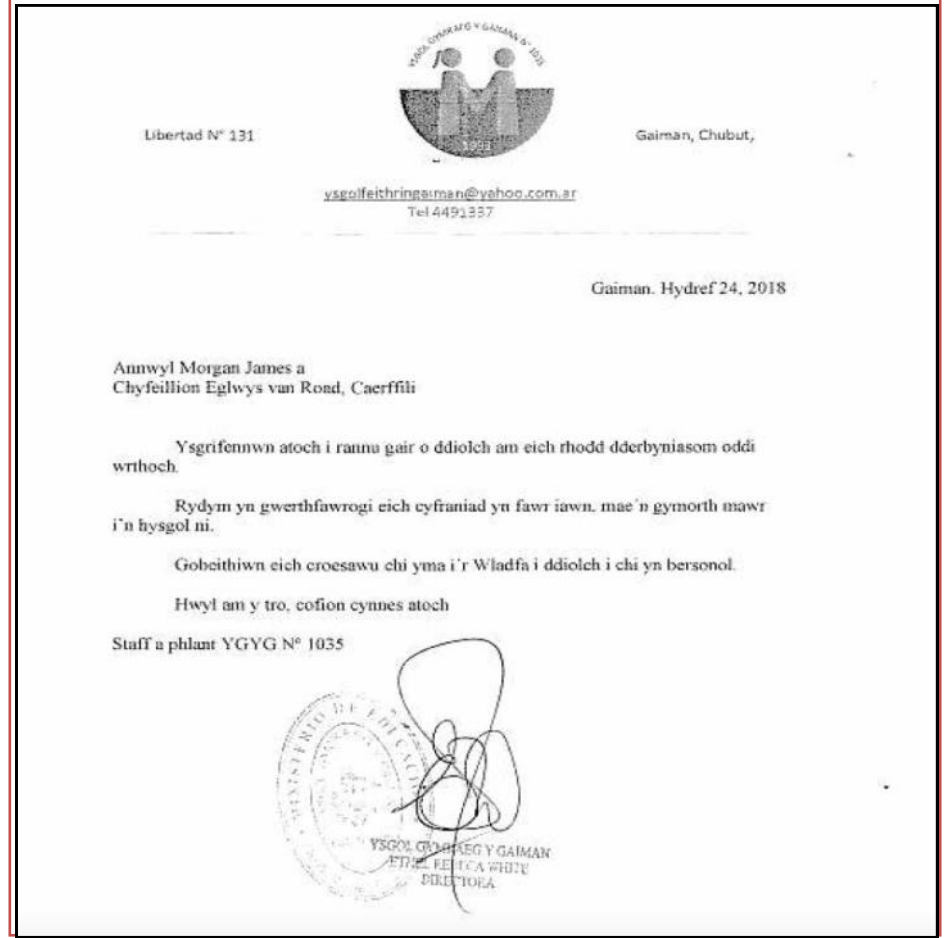
21st Morgan James –Patagonia

28th Chris Harling 28 Degrees North



News from Patagonia

Below is the thank you letter Morgan James received from the staff and children of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Gaiman on his visit to Patagonia. Apologies that it has not scanned very well but it can be viewed in church. It says a very big thankyou for the donation and they would have liked to say thankyou to people in person.





Morgan with members of the congregation of Capel Bryncrwn in Gaiman.

Morgan will be telling the Young Wives all about his time in Patagonia on January 21st.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- November 26th-29th—Christmas Wrapped
 - December
 - Sat 1st, 2pm 'Young Stars'
 - Tues 4th, 7pm Joint Advent Service at St. Catherine's
 - Wed 5th, 10.30am Coffee with Enfys
 - Fri 7th, 2pm Ecumenical Prayer Meeting
 - Fri 14th, 10.30am Christian Aid Coffee Morning
with Diane and Rob
 - Sat 15th, 7.30pm Concert with Caerphilly Community
Chorus
 - Sun 16th, 3pm Concert with 'Cantare'
 - Thurs 20th, 10.30am Fellowship and Bible Study
- Christmas Tree Festival
St Martin's Church,
Saturday 8th December, 9 till 4



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

January

- Tues 1st, New Year's Day Walk
Details to follow
- Thurs 3rd, 10.30am Fellowship and Bible Study
- Wed 8th, 7pm Elders' Meeting
- Sun 13th, Lunch with Trevor Grant of
The Leprosy Mission after service,
- Thurs 17th, 10.30am Fellowship and Bible Study

A BIG THANK YOU!

to

Mair and John and Vanguard for organising the art and craft and literary exhibition again this year. It was very successful. Particular thanks go to John with regard to all his hard work building the display boards; a mammoth task. Thanks as well to all who contributed works and those that stewarded over the 2 weeks.

You did a fantastic job! It is much appreciated!

Together In Prayer

Please pray for

December

- 2nd Hope and Market Square Uniting Church,
Merthyr Tydfil, Moderator, staff and churches of
Yorkshire Synod
- Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger
- 9th Bethany United Reformed Church, Ystrad
Mynach, and the Moderator, staff and churches
of East Midlands Synod
- Liberia and Sierra Leone
- 16th Hall Street Church, Llanelli, and the Moderator,
staff and churches of West Midlands Synod
- Cape Verde, the Gambia, Guinea,
Guinea-Bissau and Senegal
- 23rd Hill URC, Mount Pleasant, Swansea, and the
Moderator, staff and churches of Eastern
Synod
- Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo
- 30th Tabernacle URC, Mumbles, and the Moderator,
staff and churches of South Western Synod
- Ghana and Nigeria

Please pray for ...

January

- 6th Gloddaeth Uniting Church, Llandudno, Temple URC, Swansea, and the Moderator, staff and churches of Wessex Synod
- Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories
- 13th Uniting Church, Sketty, Swansea, and the Moderator, staff and churches of Thames North Synod
- Pray for Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Yemen, Iran and Iraq
- 20th St. Paul's United Church, Penmaenmawr, Christ Well URC, Manselton, and the Moderator, staff and churches of the Southern Synod
- Cyprus, Greece and Turkey
- 27th The United Church in Rhyl, Albany URC/Methodist Church, Haverfordwest, and the Moderator, staff and churches of the Synod of Scotland
- Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Western Sahara and Tunisia



**ENOUGH FOR EVERYONE
CHRISTMAS CAROL**

(Sung to the tune 'The 12 Days of Christmas.')

Every year at Christmas the UK throws away:

12 million carrots

11 million roasties

10 million parsnips

9 million boats of gravy

8 million balls of stuffing

70 million mince pies

6 million jars of cranberry

Oooooooo...what...a..waste

4 million puddings

So many spouts

2 million turkeys

And they are all at the bottom of the bin!

**THE UK WILL BIN 23000 TONNES OF FOOD THIS
CHRISTMAS**

'Waste less. Save money. Save lives.

**(The UK government will match fund all donations to
Christian Aid this Christmas**

Festival of Christmas Trees



Come along & vote for your favourite tree.
Refreshments, Christmas stalls & gifts,
Father Christmas and his elves with free gift,
cooked breakfast from 9-11am, Messy Church
from 2pm and more...

St Martin's Church
Saturday 8th December 2018
9am til 4pm



The Rectorial Benefice of Eglwysilan and Caerphilly
Registered Charity Number 1131172

ROTAS

December

January

Stewards

Stewards

Margaret Baldwin

Carol Jones

Cathy Vernalls

Phyllis Frayling

Communion

Communion

Emma Fitzgeralds

Diane Moverley

Margaret Craig

Rob Moverley

If unable to steward or serve

Please ask ANOTHER to cover

FLOWERS FOR DECEMBER

2nd	
9th	
16th	
23rd	
30th	

Thank you to all who donate flowers for worship

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	02920 862285
Mrs Emma Fitzgerald	02920 821525

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)



***'Peace is not losing a friend and not
making my mummy sad. Peace is seeing
my brother.'***

Hamza (a Syrian refugee child)

