

INFORM



URC
VAN ROAD
Caerphilly
April 2019

Minister

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From our Minister

This month we journey through Holy Week and Easter.

In our modern world, what is the use of Christianity?

Some are uncomfortable with a message that seems to lead to failure – argument, rejection, and for Jesus, death by crucifixion. So they concentrate on words that express confidence that God will give us what we want. Sometimes this is called ‘prosperity gospel’ – characterised by an absolute certainty that when we pray God will give us all the good things we desire. The problem is that often our prayers – the well-meaning as well as the misguided – are often not answered. There are people who say, if someone is ill and you pray hard enough, God will heal them. If you need money to repair the church building, just pray hard enough and some benefactor will come along. But what if the prayers are not answered? Well, the answer from someone convinced by ‘prosperity gospel’ is that you weren’t praying hard enough. That seems a cruel, and a cruelly distorted theology, unrealistic and a denial of how human life actually happens.

Yes we pray and hope, but our prayers recognise that our lives are limited by time, and we can’t have everything to suit us. Jesus was born into the change and chance of this world. His teaching and his healings often brought him into conflict with people who did not want their cast-iron ways of seeing the world, disturbed. At the start of Lent we read how Jesus was tempted in the desert, to use short-cuts, a personality cult, tricks, to manipulate people into following him. Instead, he chose the slow and hard way, of meeting people face to face, where they were, as they actually were.

His growing awareness that to do God’s will, would take him to his death, was not what his disciples wanted to hear. And in the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed that things could be different, ‘But not my will but yours, be done.’ Holy Week shows us that God is beside humankind even in failure, even in the worst that can happen. The story of Jesus’ life offers us a theology which acknowledges failure.

We are not left in despair. Easter is mysterious, and we cannot explain how these things happened, but the disciples met their Lord, their friend, and knew he was alive again. Resurrection affirms the wonder of the human spirit that can believe, and hope, and love, even when our lives are broken. Resurrection affirms the love of God which made us in the image of God, and which is for all creation. At the same time, we must acknowledge that there are people whose experiences are so horrific they cannot see hope in this life, but we pray that in God’s presence, they too will find healing and new life.

So at this time of year, we live through the heart of the Christian Gospel, and remember that God is with us, in the good times and the bad, and that love is stronger than all the pain and hurt and cruelty and even death. And we look forward to the acclamation of Easter morning:

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

SPI



PULPIT SUPPLY

APRIL

7th, 10.30am **Rev. Stephen Lewis**
(Communion)

14th, 2.30pm **Rev. Stephen Lewis**

21st, 10.30am **Rev. Stephen Lewis**
(Easter Day)
(Communion)

28th, 10.30am **Rev. Robin Wood**

Midweek Communion Service

Wednesday 10th April

10.30am



Stephen's Letter to the Pastorate

12th March 2019

To the members and friends of the three churches in the Valleys Pastorate.

Dear Friends,

This is a difficult letter to write and I wish I could speak in person to you. But I need to communicate with all three churches at the same time.

I came to you following the ending of my marriage. It was a time of transition and change, but I hoped to settle for some time. You have helped me and given me time and space to reflect on this new stage of life. I have appreciated the support and care given to me, and the kindness of the people in the churches.

However, for my personal well-being, I do need to seek to move to an area where my established friends are. Perhaps the next best thing to actual family is to be in easy reach of very close friends who share a long history with you. As you probably know, much of my holiday time has been spent in Greater London. It is no fault of the churches here but I have felt very isolated at times, particularly during the school holidays when the social activities I take part in are not running.

A pastorate in South-west London has called me to be their minister and I have accepted. The two churches are at Hampton Hill and Twickenham Green, within two miles of each other. There is also a Synod role involved, working with churches in that area of London. As well as being closer to friends, it will be easier for my children to visit me there.

I do not know the exact time scale at the moment but I will continue as your minister for at least three months.

I realise that the churches in the Valleys Pastorate have waited through long vacancies and that you will feel disappointment that this ministry has been brief, and leaves you again in a time of transition. I am sorry for this, and I do value the friendship I have found here, but hope you understand my reasons for moving.

SPI



From the editor

I am sure I am not alone when growing up, to hear a parent say'You don't know how lucky you are.'

And perhaps we only appreciate how fortunate we are as we become older.

We cannot fail to be moved and horrified by recent events, one based on hate, that is the murders and maiming in New Zealand and one due to a natural phenomenon, a typhoon in South East Africa. We see horrendous suffering in places such as Yemen and Syria and cannot comprehend how people are treated so appallingly. For me, these issues put all our frustrations regarding Brexit into perspective.

But people care!

This is demonstrated by the response to communities coming together to give support in New Zealand. People from around the world give money to aid agencies to help allow them to alleviate suffering and hunger,

At Easter we think of Jesus' suffering. We read again his thoughts and actions during, 'Holy Week', finding it hard to contemplate unfairness and cruelty but yet rejoice in His resurrection.

In our world of trials and tribulations we hold on to Christ's message of peace and reconciliation. We continually pray for those who are not , 'as lucky as we are.'

May you find joy and peace at Easter.

Diane

USED POSTAGE STAMPS

Please can you collect postage stamps and pass them on to Marion Bevan. She is collecting them for the Macular Society. Thank you!

Some thoughts on being Saints a bible study from the March Synod by John Procter URC General Secretary

Saints are people like us called to be a witness to the world.

Sainthood comes from outside—it is received. It is borrowed—like the moon reflects the sun.

Saints are holy. Holiness is not natural, it is a touch of another world.

We borrow God's holiness. It cannot be captured in the reality of this world. It is not quite natural.

In the old testament holiness was linked to the physical whereas in the New Testament it becomes personal. So as we move from old to new, places as holy recede and people as holy come to the fore. It is not about stories it is about souls.

Holiness is plural—the best way to get close to God is to get close to other Christians in fellowship.

Holiness is practical—if Jesus can enflesh the life of God in a carpenter's shop we can in everyday lives.

Saints are not for stained glass but for the streets.

We hold in our prayers -



Vernon Holland	Jean Mutter and family
Tony Moore	Phyllis Colwel
Barbara Lloyd	Phyllis and Frank Frayling
Roland Lewis	Rev. Malcolm and Barbara Shapland
Diana Hibbert	Roy Collins
Phil Harris	Gwyneth Jones
Cathy Vernalls	

YOUNG WIVES



April

Mondays 7.30pm

All ladies welcome no matter what their age.

1st Rev. Peter Noble

8th Fish and Chip Supper

15th No meeting

22nd No meeting

29th Business and Biscuits

Lectionary Readings



April

- 7th **Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126;
Philip 3:4b-14; John 12:1-83a**
- 14th **Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16;
Philip 2:5-11; Luke 22:14-23 or Luke 23:1-49**
- 15th **Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 36:1-11;
Hebrews 9:11-15; John 12:1-11**
- 16th **Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 71:1-14;
1 Corinthians 1:18-31; John 12:20-36**
- 17th **Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 70;
Hebrews 12:1-3; John 13:21-32**
- 18th **Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19;
1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-17, 31b-35**
- 19th **Isaiah 52:13-53; Psalm 22; Hebrews 10:16-25;
Psalm 98; John 18:1-19, 42**
- 20th **Job 14:1-14; Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16;
1 Peter 4:1-8; Matthew 27:57-66**
- 21st **Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24;
1 Corinthians 15:19-26; John 20:1-18**
- 28th **Acts 5:27-32; Psalm 150;
Revelation 1:4-8; John 20:19-31**

The VAN-guard Centre

Charity Registration number 1109193

Review of recent events:

Groups update: The Wednesday Drawing Class with Jenny John has begun after a delayed start. The other groups continue to flourish.

Febrillator month: February was designated the month in which to promote the need for defibrillators in public places. Margaret Craig, Stephen, John and I attended a photo shoot at the Tommy Cooper Statue at the end of January. We were invited as recipients of a defibrillator from the Society. More recently John and I represented VAN-guard at the Tommy Cooper Birthday lunch. Held at the Scholars' Restaurant at Ystrad Mynach College, we joined with supporters and fundraisers for the Society from Caerphilly, its surrounding areas as well as some members of the Gloucester group.

The guest speaker was Richard Lee, the paramedic who demonstrated to us how to use the defibrillator. We congratulated Richard on his recent promotion to the post of Head of St. John's Ambulance U.K. But never off duty, he attended to the restaurant manager, who was taken poorly, and checked him over before he went to hospital. Also at the lunch as a guest was Eddie Large, of 'Little and Large' fame. He spoke of his friendship with Tommy Cooper and the happy times he had spent in Caerphilly, appearing at the then Double Diamond Club and staying at the Corbett's Hotel. He was very pleased to be back in the area. He found the gathering an appropriate occasion at which to share the fact that he had received a heart transplant 16 years ago.



Other activities at VAN-guard.

In late February Adult Learning Wales (the old WEA) held a Regional Forum here and were impressed with the facilities.

In February Only Men Aloud held some of the rehearsals for their current tour with the Cory Band.

In April, Lee David Bowen, Helden Tenor, plans to make a recording. Like other performers he has found the acoustics to be very good.

The VAN-guard Concert Series 2019

Updates: Unfortunately the performance of Brahms's Requiem by the Serenata Singers on 2nd March had to be cancelled as a number of the choristers were ill. We hope to find room to fit it in later in the year. Similarly the Clarinet and Flutes Group with Nigel Jones was cancelled in February due to a double booking. Hopefully this concert will go ahead in the summer.

Continued 2019 Concert Series.

April

Saturday evening 13th April Evening Concert at 7.30 p.m. Tickets £10 & £8.

Performers: Emma Cayeux and Giordano Ferla. Piano;

Soloists Nicole Boardman and Camille Cappuis.

May

Saturday 4th May at 7.30 p.m. Tickets £10.

The Champagne Quartet will perform excerpts from Handel's Messiah and other Operatic Favourites. This will be the third visit by four very talented young singers who seem to love coming here.

Saturday 25th May at 7.30 p.m. Tickets £10.

A Night at the Theatre: Musical Theatre and Opera Classics.

Lee David Bowen, Helden tenor; Richard Lee Thomas, tenor;

Angharad Watkeys, soprano; accompanist Nicola Rose.

Lee David Bowen said they have found a hidden performance gem here while Nicki Rose, an experienced and well regarded accompanist, is so supportive of what we do in bringing good music into the community at prices people can afford..

June

Sunday afternoon 2nd June 'Cantare Vocal Duo Summer Concert' with our friends David Fortey of OMA, Angharad Morgan WNO Chorus and their accompanist Ryan Wood. More details to follow.

Sunday 9th June early afternoon concert – 'The Young Stars Summer Concert.' Church and VAN-guard members have an open invitation to attend this concert when the young people perform for their families and friends.

Wednesday 12th June lunch time concert at 1 p.m. Tickets £5.

Piano Recital by Conal Bembridge-Sayers featuring works by composers born in or influenced by Wales. This concert is part of a South Wales tour that Conal is embarking upon.



Saturday 29th June a lunchtime concert by 'All Strung Out' Guitar Duo.

A recital by Chris Fry and Andy Mulligan. More details to follow.

It will be a busy month with the church's participation in the Flower Festival also happening on the third weekend.

Advance Notice

**The Annual David Hawthorn Gala Memorial Concert
Saturday evening 20th July. Tickets £15.**

The Llantrisant Male Voice Choir will be joined by Meriel Andrew, soprano, WNO Chorus. The concert will be in aid of the Alzheimer's Society. More details to follow. Ordering tickets will be advisable.

Other events and concerts have already arranged for later in the year.

Please tell your family and friends about the concerts as word of mouth is the best publicity.

Also at VAN-guard: Caerphilly Community Chorus Concerts 2019

Friday 5th July at 7.30p.m. 10th Anniversary Concert

Mair.

e mail: mairjohn365@gmail.com

[www. Vanguardcentreaerphilly.org](http://www.Vanguardcentreaerphilly.org)

FOOD BANK

**Thankyou to all who donate to the food bank.
At present we would particularly welcome
tinned fruit, rice pudding, UHT milk and
toiletries.**

Easter chocolate is also welcome.

Many thanks!

Lent Lunches 2019

Date	Venue	Churches
05/04	Wesley	Mount Carmel Bethel Penyrheol
12/04	Wesley	Benefice

Together in Prayer

April

Please pray for

- 7th Hebron URC, Mostyn and Templeton URC,
Narbeth

Brunai, Malaysia, Singapore
- 14th Rivertown URC and Shotton Tabernacle URC,
Pembroke

East Timor, Indonesia, Philippines
- 21st Libanus with Barham URC, Ebbw Vale,
St John's Methodist/URC, Tenby

Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Taiwan
- 28th Tabernacle URC, Llanvaches,
St David's Presbyterian Church of Wales /URC,
Aberystwyth

Djibouti, Somalia, Somaliland



EASTER WORDSEARCH

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

CHRIST IS RISEN NEW LIFE EASTER LOVE
 RESURRECTION EMPTY TOMB HALLELULIA
 MARY LIGHT DISCIPLES ANGEL JOY
 SAVIOUR HOSANNA HOLY WEEK
 CRUCIFIXION SACRIFICE HEAVEN CALVARY
 JESUS HOPE CROSS

'NEXT MEAL'

There are lots of places offering free meals and subsidised meals across the UK.

Visit: Nextmeal.co.uk

However, there are only 3 listed close to Caerphilly, all in Cardiff.

- 1) Paradise Soup Run - Charles St., Cardiff. Open every evening from 7.30pm-9.30pm
- 2) Huggard Centre-Hansen St., CF10 5DW. Open every day 8.30am-4pm
- 3) The Wallich-Cathays Park, CF10 3NP (Big bus outside Cardiff Museum) Every day from 6.30pm-8.30pm. Please pass on this information to anyone you feel would appreciate it.

Stephen 'Moving On'

Our minister, Stephen, has taken the decision to move to a new pastorate; we understand his reasons for so doing and say thank you for his ministry with us and wish him all the best for the future. He will be in our thoughts and prayers.

ROTAS

April

May

Stewards

Hilary Ackerman

Stephen Ackerman

Communion

Rob Moverley

Diane Moverley

Stewards

Enfys Hawthorn

Dorothy Woodward

Communion

Emma Fitzgerald

Margaret Craig

If unable to steward or serve

Please ask **ANOTHER** to cover

FLOWERS FOR APRIL

7th	The Moverleys
14th	Palm Sunday -Van-Guard
21st	EASTER
28th	

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 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



HE IS NOT HERE!