

# INFORM



**URC**  
**VAN ROAD**  
**Caerphilly**  
**May 2019**

## **Minister**

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### From our Minister ....

Everyday proverbs show us a thin slice of wisdom – but often you can quote a proverb which gives the opposite advice. ‘Look before you leap’ but ‘Hesitate and you lose.’ Or ‘Many hands make light work’ but ‘Too many cooks spoil the broth.’

Parables are also snapshots of wisdom – but they need to be thought through and applied in the right setting.

The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. (*Matthew 13.45-46*)

You can imagine the merchant losing no time in clinching the deal, like one of us hearing that something we need or want, is in a sale at a bargain price. You can't get out there quickly enough. In contrast, there are parables about waiting and weighing up evidence.

For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, “This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.” Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. (*Luke 14. 28-32*)

After Easter, the disciples experienced Jesus among them, sometimes meeting the risen Jesus in strange and inexplicable ways. Easter turned their ideas about life and death upside down. And yet they were afraid and doubtful, and needed time to accept and receive this good news of new life. Maybe they felt a

bit like a lover who looks back to the last time s/he saw the person they love, which seems an eternity ago, and eagerly and longingly looks for another meeting. Though possibly, most of the time, they spent simply puzzling and talking over what these quirky, unsettling encounters meant. Jesus had told them to await and expect something special, but the disciples would not have known what to expect or when. Pentecost with the excitement and turmoil of the Holy Spirit bringing energy and faith to the early believers, needed this in-between time of reflection.

We don't really like waiting. Our culture has taught us to expect and demand that we can fix almost anything, and we get angry when we are thwarted. Our nations in the United Kingdom, are waiting and reflecting about our relationship with the European Union. There were hasty words, unmeasured, often manipulative, which swayed emotions three years ago. But relationships are not that simple and cannot be unpicked or improved with shouting and slogans. In contrast, Sir David Attenborough has become a voice for the urgency with which we need to change how we live and how we treat our planet Earth. Climate change will not wait for us to clean up our act. A Danish teenager, Greta Thunberg, has become a voice of young people who will have to cope with the complacency of the fossil fuel generations. ‘Extinction Rebellion’ demonstrators have been trying to get our attention through peaceful protests in big cities. We need to alter our economies and the way we use the resources of the planet, now. Similarly, there are other urgent actions which will make our society just and caring: our Health Service requires funding to respond quickly to the needs of people. And when there are natural disasters, typhoons and floods and earthquakes, we need to act fast to help the people who have lost everything.

Perhaps, the thoughtfulness with which we have to read scripture, helps us to get a sense of proportion and balance in our lives, where God can quietly guide us into a better way of living as followers of Jesus, knowing when to act, when to wait..

## **Channel Relay Swim**

**(17<sup>th</sup> July or during that week depending on conditions.)**



I'm still training for the big swim – and some people have kindly said they would like to sponsor me. All donations will go to the work of Swim Tayka as I am paying the costs of taking part.

I will make paper sponsorship forms available.

You can also give online via Total Giving. All the money donated this way goes directly to the charity. Total Giving will not contact you apart from to confirm your donation.

<https://www.totalgiving.co.uk/mypage/spilewis-swimtayka>



Swim Tayka is a small and fairly new charity, which works in developing countries, alongside local charities as much as possible. Volunteers teach swimming and stewardship of water, and teach local people how to teach these skills.

The charity helps to teach the ability to swim. In our world, someone drowns every 40 seconds. Most of these fatalities are in poorer developing nations, where despite the proximity of rivers or seas, many people cannot swim. And many of the people who drown are children, as both parents are working, and older children have to look after younger ones, and accidents inevitably happen.

The other work Swim Tayka does is teaching about care and stewardship of water. Water courses, streams, rivers and the sea, are vital for our food and health. So they need to be kept clean of refuse and sewage.

Thank you,

SPI.

**God Reigns**

**By**

**William Temple**

**While we deliberate, God Reigns;**

**While we decide wisely, He reigns;**

**When we decide foolishly, He reigns;**

**When we serve him in humble loyalty,  
He reigns;**

**When we serve him self assertively, He reigns;**

**When we rebel and seek to withhold our  
service, He reigns;**

**He reigns; the Alpha and Omega,**

**Which was and which is and which is to come,**

**The Almighty.**





**Please, Please, Please -**

**Support the poor and those struggling in developing countries and war torn countries, not just by donating money yourself but also giving just a little time.**

**Please see it as a mission to drop donation envelopes in your street and also to family and friends. If you use the new envelopes you do not need to go back to collect them but a little effort on everyone's part can make a big difference.**

**Also-**

**Cardiff Road Collections**

**If you can collect for an hour or two on Cardiff Road during the week please speak to Rob Moverley**

**Tesco**

**We have permission to collect at Tesco at Crossways on Friday 17th May**

**Volunteers are needed for this please.**

**THANKYOU!**

## **ALL MUMS SHOULD LIVE**



**Photo credit:** Christian Aid/Tom Pilston

**Caption:** Jebbeh Konneh recently died in childbirth and Jebbeh fears she may be next: 'I'm afraid. I pray, when that day comes, God will help me to deliver safely, so that I can have a bouncing baby and I'll be healthy.'



**Photo credit:** Christian Aid/Tom Pilston

**Caption:** Tenneh and baby Ansumana receive care from nurse Judith at the community clinic.

Sierra Leone is the world's most dangerous place to become a mum. Every day 10 women die from giving birth. In Sawula district, the community struggle with a clinic which has no electricity and only two delivery beds.

Jebbeh is heavily pregnant but as her baby grows, it's not joy that fills her heart, but fear. When Jebbeh's sister Fatmata went in to labour, there were so few ambulances that Fatmata had no choice but to walk for three hours under the baking sun, to the nearest hospital. The journey was long and with every step Fatmata struggled to keep walking.

Jebbeh told us: 'My sister was crying out with hunger. She died on the side of the road. She never gave birth.'

This Christian Aid Week, together, we can make childbirth safe for mums and babies. Through our gifts and prayers, we can help give the world's poorest mums a chance to live.



**Photo credit:** Christian Aid/Adam Finch

**Caption:** Tenneh Bawoh gazes adoringly at baby Ansumana. Tenneh's first pregnancy ended in tragedy but thanks to nurse Judith and medical training you helped to provide, Tenneh's second labour resulted in the safe delivery of her baby boy.

## How You Can Help Sierra Leone

When Ebola struck Sierra Leone, its government had little choice but to accept loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to help it cope with the crisis. Now we're asking our Chancellor to push the IMF to drop Sierra Leone's debt.

The country lacks funds for proper health clinics, health training and enough ambulances. This makes it the most dangerous place in the world to become a mum.

Debt repayments have left Sierra Leone with even less money to provide the healthcare so desperately needed to ensure mums and babies survive childbirth.

The UK Government has a lot of power within the IMF to do something about this.

### You can ask the Chancellor to:

- ensure all Sierra's Leone's debts on the loans it received for fighting the Ebola outbreak are written off.
- take urgent action to prevent new debt crises in developing countries and tackle them effectively when they arise.

You can write individually or sign the petition on the Christian Aid Website-

[Christianaid.org.uk](http://Christianaid.org.uk)



**Diary Dates**

**May**

- Wed 1st, 10.30am      Coffee with Enfys
- Fri 3rd, 2pm              Ecumenical Prayer Meeting
- Sat 4th, 7.30pm          Concert-The Champagne Quartet
- Tues 7th, 6pm            Elders Meeting
- 8pm              Wedding Rehearsal
- Thurs 9th, 10.30am      Fellowship and Bible Study
- Sat 18th, 2pm              Wedding
- Thurs 23rd, 10.30am      Fellowship and Bible Study

**LOOKING AHEAD**

Saturday 29th June

The 'BIG DAY OUT' at Builth Wells



We hold in our prayers -



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

**YOUNG WIVES**



- May**
- Mondays 7.30pm*
- All ladies welcome no matter what their age.
- 6th Sorry, unavailable at time of printing.
- Announcements will be made in church.
- 13th
- 20th
- 27th

## Lectionary Readings



May	
5th	Acts 9:1-6, 7-20; Psalm 30; Revelation 5:11-14; John 21:1-19
12th	Acts 9:36-43; Psalm 23; Revelation 7:7-17; John 10:22-30
19th	Acts 11:1-18; Psalm 148; Revelation 21:1-6; John 13:31-35
26th	Acts 16:9-15; Psalm 67; Revelation 21:10, - 22:5; John 14:23-29

## ORDINATION ANNOUNCEMENT

**Rev Judy Kirby**

**June 22nd, 2.30pm**

**At**

**The Plough, Brecon.**

**All welcome!**



## My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

The crucifixion and the suffering that Jesus Christ went through takes us to the very root of our faith and helps us evaluate the status of our relationship with God and our sisters and brothers.

It is clear that, even as Lord Jesus was tormented, and tortured, he forgave the people who caused his suffering (Luke 23:34). In the midst of his anguish, he listened to the appeals of the criminal who was repentant and contrite and assured him salvation (Luke 23:43). Even in distress, he was concerned for the well-being of his mother after his death and entrusted her into the care of his beloved disciple (John 19:26–27). Just as he was dying, he declared his mission to have been accomplished (John 19:30), and with absolute trust in God, committed his spirit to God (Luke 23:46).

But his humanity was made evident as he expressed his thirst (John 19:28), and his sense of abandonment, as cried out in his mother tongue- Aramaic, 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?' (Matthew 27:46 & Mark 15:34). It is this suffering which he went through and in living out his humanity, even as God incarnate, that makes Jesus close to one and all. Even people who go through indescribable hardships, injustice and suffering, feel the solidarity with Jesus and derive hope and courage from his life, suffering, death and resurrection.

Is the passion week just a historical commemoration of what Jesus went through two thousand years ago? Is the pain and the suffering of Jesus a reality today?

Do I see Jesus crucified in the child who is malnourished, due to neglect and conflict? Do I see Jesus crucified, in the woman abused and hurt by her intimate partner? Do I see

Jesus crucified, in the student who is excluded and victimised because of his or her race, caste, ability, or status. Do I see Jesus crucified in the farmer who is about to commit suicide due to being trapped by and drowning in his debt, due to expensive seeds and fertilizers, marketed by huge multinational corporations?

Do I see Jesus crucified in the indigenous community, displaced and impoverished by a large mining company, which has usurped and stripped the forests where they lived for thousands of years?

If I do not see Jesus in the ones who are suffering today because of our collective greed, insensitivity and sin, I cannot call myself a follower of Jesus. We are all part of the body of Christ. But if one hand of Christ is in the furnace today and the other in water, can we say that on an average, the body of Christ is fine?

Let us, with indignance and empathy, collectively mourn, with those who are crucified today, because of injustice and inequity. But let us not stop there. Let us follow Jesus, to put his good news to practice, sharing burdens and concerns of the world, and overcoming evil and greed, striving for the salvation and the liberation of the world.

Reflection by Manoj Curian from a World Council of Churches blog



## Acknowledgements

**We were greatly saddened at the death of Phil Vernalls. Cathy's family and friends are in our thoughts and prayers.**

### Cathy says ...

She would like to thank all who visited, sent cards, flowers and gave support at the sad time of Phil's death. She would also like to thank all who attended the funeral and supported her on a very difficult day.

### We Remember!

**The deaths of Roland Lewis and Tony Moore were greeted with great sadness. Both had been loyal, well respected and dedicated members at Van Road for many years. Tony played the organ and was also awarded an MBE for his services to music. We were truly blessed to have Roland and Tony with us.**

**We pray for their family and friends.**





## **PULPIT SUPPLY**

**May**

**5th, 10.30am Mrs Judy Harris**

**12th, 10.30am Mr Clive Maslen**

**19th, 2.30pm Rev. Stephen Lewis  
(Communion)**

**26th, 10.30am Lynda and Margaret**

### **Midweek Communion Service**

**Wednesday 8th May**

**10.30am**

**Rev Stephen Lewis**



### **Christian Aid Service**

**Sunday 12th May, 6pm**

**Mr Lewis Lewis-Head**

## **The VAN-guard Centre**

**Charity Registration number 1109193**

### **May 2019 Report**

**Groups update:** Groups return for the Summer Term after a well-earned Easter break.

VAN-guard will prepare for events which will take us up to the end of July. For anyone interested in summer school art classes with Jenny John please see the VAN-guard Notice Board on the ground floor.

### **Review of recent events:**

The 23rd March recital by the **Heulwen Quintet** was a wonderful feast of musical talent. It was a truly aware inspiring concert by post graduate students from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

Many who attended said was the best concert they have attended. The musicianship on display was superb, from young players who will in a year or so be embarking on their careers in the world of music. The members of the Quintet came from the United States, Canada, England and Scotland. All have come to Cardiff to continue their Masters' Degree Studies. Much to everyone's delight they hope to come back some time next year. (If you want a recommendation of their performance ask David Jenkins!).

**In demand.** Before the end of the afternoon two more students asked to come and perform here. One of those will now sing here on 30th August, before her studies end in early September. She plans to bring another soloist with her so that duets and solos will be performed. Further details of this concert have yet to be confirmed. Other interested students have been asked to look at dates from February 2020 onwards.

## Saturday evening 13th April

### An Evening Concert with performers: Pianists Emma Cayeux and Giordano Ferla with Soloists Nicole Boardman and Camille Cappuis.

What a wonderful celebration of musical talent these young people displayed. They were a combination of an undergraduate student, a post graduate student and two performers who had finished their college music education. One regular visitor from Pontypridd couldn't understand how we could give the public such great concerts at such low prices. This is a recommendation in itself of the quality of concerts now being offered by 'VAN-guard'. For those who missed the concert - they would like to come back again, but it will be early next year when they return because of the number of events already in the calendar.

### Other activities at VAN-guard.

#### March: Community to Work - 'Barista Course'

CCBC held a four day training course for about 12 young unemployed people. They were taught how to make coffee with the many coffee beans from around the world in readiness for possible work at the many coffee bars that are found in our communities. The aroma of coffee in the building was wonderful. It was pleasing to see the respect the trainers and young people showed for the building and the way they put everything away at the end of each day. You wouldn't know they had been here.

April Only Men Aloud held another rehearsal session.



## The VAN-guard Concert Series 2019 continued

### In May the VAN-guard Centre offers two concerts of superb music quality viz:

Saturday 4th May at 7.30 p.m. Tickets £10. The Champagne Quartet. Excerpt from Handel's Messiah and operatic favourites. We have received the Quartet's programme and it is really exciting. A feast of good music with half the concert devoted to pieces from the Messiah followed by favourite operatic pieces. We look forward to meeting Erin Alexander, Clare Eccles, Ross Wilson and a new baritone with the group, Thorvald Blough. This will be the third visit by three of the quartet who love coming here to perform. We also congratulate Ross who has just been accepted as a tenor with English National Opera.

### Please note

The concert planned for 25th May has been cancelled due to the prior commitments of a performer.

### June

Sunday afternoon 2nd June at 3.00 p.m. Cantare Vocal Duo Summer Concert 'From Covent Garden to Broadway'. Tickets £10

A superb way to spend the afternoon in the company of our friends David Fortey, tenor, member of the well-known 'Only Men Aloud' Singing Group and; Anghard Morgan, soprano, Welsh National Opera.

Once again they will be accompanied by the popular and talented musician Ryan Wood.



**Sunday 9th June - an 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 - a 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 at 12 noon – a lunchtime Concert ‘All Strung Out’ Guitar Duo.**

A recital by Chris Fry and Andy Mulligan. **Please note: This concert is an hour earlier than our usual lunchtime performances.**

#### **Advance Notice**

**The Annual David Hawthorn Gala Memorial Concert**  
**Saturday evening 20th July at 7.30 p.m. 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.

**Many 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](mailto:mairjohn365@gmail.com)

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

#### **Hughes Acre**

As result of the Caerphilly County Borough Council’s parking restrictions as of 8th April the following action has been taken. It is a joint effort of the Church and ‘VAN-guard’.

The land at the back of the church has been laid with chippings. The material costs have been paid by VAN-guard and the labour paid by the Church. It is intended to assist with parking at particular times when the parking restrictions are in force i.e. during the week days until 6.00 p.m. However, it remains private land and is not a free public parking area for people not using the building.

When unlocking the area please lock the locks to the rings in the concrete posts and store the central post inside the Goodrich Street door.

*John Wade*

## Together in Prayer

### May

#### Please pray for ....

- 5th St David's URC/Church in Wales, Newport, and Cefnybedd Cilmery URC  
Eritrea and Ethiopia
- 12th Crane Street URC / Baptist, Pontypool and Christchurch/Caebach URC, Llandrindod Wells  
Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda
- 19th Stow Park URC /Presbyterian , Newport and Trinity URC/ Presbyterian, Llanidloes  
Kenya and Tanzania
- 26th Dan-y-Graig URC, Newport and Simon Walkling and other officers serving the National Synod of Wales  
Malawi and Zambia



## FLOWERS

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

primrose Bluebell Crocus Snowdrop

Cherry blossom Daisy Buttercup Campian Thrift

Peony Wallflower Lilac Lavender Poppy Azalea

Lily Daffodil Foxglove Hollyhock

## Fellowship and Bible Study

At the recent Church AGM it was suggested that I write something about the sessions that are usually held on the first and third Thursday mornings of the month at 10.30 a.m.

Generally we look at a two of the liturgical readings for the following Sunday. Most folk find this useful as we look for the links between the passages, which might explain why certain passages are chosen for the Sunday readings, and for other special days in the Christian calendar. If anyone has a particular choice of topic or project they would like to study we try to incorporate those ideas too.

Everyone is welcome to join us whether from our church or from another church. The choice of texts is given out in advance, in person or via e mail, usually on the previous Sunday before the next session.

If anyone has any questions about the group please get in touch.

### PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF WEEKS for Fellowship and Bible Study in May

Thursdays 9th and 23rd at 10.30 a.m.

*Mair.*



## ROTAS

May

June

### Stewards

Enfys Hawthorn

Dorothy Woodward

### Communion

Emma Fitzgerald

Margaret Craig

### Stewards

Margaret Baldwin

Phyllis Frayling

### Communion

Lynda Jones

Cathy Vernalls

**If unable to steward or serve**

**Please ask ANOTHER to cover**

### FLOWERS FOR APRIL

5th	Van-Guard
12th	
19th	
26th	Jen Viggers

**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](mailto: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](http://www.vanroadurc.org)



**Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.**

***1 Thessalonians 5:15-18***