

# INFORM



**URC  
VAN ROAD  
CAERPHELLI  
FEBRUARY 2021**

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## **An Elder writes .....A Feast and a Future**

My last Elder's letter coincided with the start of the first lockdown and I wrote about my walk up the Watford Road to the crossroads. I mentioned the trees beginning to bud and the fact that the seasons would keep turning regardless of whatever else was happening in our world. Little did I know we would still be in the same position one year on.

Suddenly our lives changed completely, churches closed, we all stayed in, we couldn't meet our family and friends, our busy lives changed, and it gave me a chance to slow down and reflect on the last few years and what the new normal would be.

As I reflect on the past year - with all its difficulties, worries and tragic sadness I have been humbled to witness so many acts of courage, kindness and selflessness shown to others throughout the country. My first experience of this was receiving a note through the doors from a young family recently moved in. They offered to add any items we were in need of to their online shop that week, such a kind gesture to neighbours they had yet to meet.

The power of television and social media has brought into our home the armies of volunteers that have worked tirelessly to support and help wherever help was needed. Food banks popped up where the need was greatest, people shopped for the elderly, children were fed during holidays to name but a few. Sir Tom amazed us all raising millions for the NHS swiftly followed by others who have raised money for many different charities.

Those of us not able to help in this way had to find other ways to contribute, contacting friends who live alone, a welcoming chat in a silent day. The power of prayer individually, through Zoom meetings and using Malcolm's Spare A Prayer have given us the opportunity to feel that we are able to make our contribution, never underestimate the power of Prayer!

When this is all over I will keep uppermost in my mind  
Man's humanity to Man, hopefully a legacy that will continue and  
get stronger and how wonderful it will be to be able to meet once  
in church and SING.

## **A feast and a future.** (Prayer Handbook 2010)

I like things familiar:  
words, sounds faces I know

I long for the familiar.  
Somewhere I can stop worrying.  
Somewhere I can get in with doing what I do best.

My boat.  
My beach.  
My sea.  
My fish.  
But now  
not even fish.

We come, when we do not understand.  
We come, when we don't know what to do.  
We come, when all we used to know  
has disappeared.  
We come, and find you,  
Welcoming us to a feast ..... and a future.

Anne Sardenson

Enfys



### From the Editor ....

What a strange Christmas and New Year it has been. I expect that, like most people, we just tried to make the best of it. Rob's mum, Veronica and his sister, Ruth, spent Christmas Day with us and though it was a much quieter day than we are used to, it was still a blessing. We are so grateful for technology which meant we could connect to lots of family members. We know that we were more fortunate than many people.

I have continued to work at the Foodbank one morning a week (social distanced and masked up of course.) The weeks before Christmas were very busy. Most referrals were sent to us via email and we set up the loaded bags ready for council volunteers to collect and deliver them.

We were exceedingly busy with donations from the public, businesses, schools and churches; we were overwhelmed by such generosity. We had difficulty finding storage space for everything and hence, we have plenty of stock at the start of the new year. Thankfully, the shelves are currently very full; gone are the days when we used to run out of specific food items and seeing bare spaces on the shelves. Currently the Foodbank does not need any particular items. The Foodbank website suggests that, if people would like to donate then money, rather than food, would be a good idea. This will be of help in the future as stock may gradually be depleted.

Low income families, those losing jobs and those that are homeless, are just some of the people helped by the generosity of the public donations to the Foodbank. We thank God for the givers and pray for better times to come, particularly for all in need.

Diane.

## Church Services Worship



**There are no services planned for February at the moment due to the current Corona virus emergency.**

**Remember, alternative church worship  
can be found at -  
daily devotions@urc.org.uk**



### Rev. Peter Noble Retires

**Peter officially retired at the end of December after a long and varied ministry within the URC. He was ordained to ministry at The Plough in Brecon before serving at Van Road followed by time spent as a Training Officer and as part of the chaplaincy teams at Cardiff University. He served as Synod Moderator in Wales for 11 years followed by a term as Ecumenical chaplain in Cardiff Bay. He concluded his ministry in recent years at Llanfair, Penrhys, though he intends to continue supporting the folk in Penrhys as best he can.**

**His friendliness, good humour and ministry has been appreciated by so very many.**

**We wish him a long and happy retirement.**

## Psalm 100

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

THANKSGIVING    FAITHFULNESS    PRAISE    NOISE  
 STEADFAST    GIVE    GLADNESS    PASTURE  
 JOYFUL    THANKS    WORSHIP    PRESENCE  
 SINGING    PEOPLE    EARTH    COURTS    KNOW  
 GOD    BLESS    ENDURES    LORD

## Together In Prayer



Please pray for ...

February

7th      St John's URC, Buckley, Mount Zion URC/  
 Congregational Federation Church,  
 Haverfordwest, Moderators of General  
 Assembly

Belgium, Luxembourg and Netherlands

14th      Mold URC / Presbyterian Church of Wales,  
 Keyston URC

Malta, Portugal and Spain

21st      Parkfield Community Centre, Mold, Nolton  
 Haven URC,

Germany and France

28th      Tiers Cross URC

Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Andorra,  
 Monaco and San Marino





**We hold in our prayers -**

Jean Mutter    Frank Frayling    Roy Collins  
Rev Malcolm Shapland    Diana Hibbert  
Vernon Holland    Barbara Lloyd



Carol Booth

Dorothy Woodward    Judy and Rod Jarman

**All affected in any way by Coronavirus in the UK, Europe and in developing nations.**

**All those working in the NHS and in Social Care.**

**Those who have died and their loved ones.**

**Shop workers, delivery people, post people, milk people, transport workers,**

**Teachers and children**

**Those who have lost their employment and those fearful for their jobs.**

**Neighbourhood volunteers, scientists, researchers and makers of testing kits and PPE and vaccines.**

**Those countries facing conflict.**



**Young Wives**

Carol and I would like to wish all the Young Wives a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

As you all know we took the decision not to contemplate meeting until after Easter. At the moment that is very much in question because until the rules regarding social distance change, a meeting is not possible. There is hope with the vaccine on the horizon so we will just have to wait and see what the situation is nearer the time. The most important issue is keeping everyone safe.

As some of you already know, we had some very sad news – Gael Humphries passed away just before Christmas. She was a very faithful member of Young Wives for many years and supplied me with contact details for a great number of speakers. Carol and I had the opportunity of speaking to Gael after her diagnosis. Margaret Baldwin sent her a card on our behalf which she was very pleased to receive. Margaret also sent the family a sympathy card from us. Gael was quite a character and we will miss her!

We hope you all stay safe and well and look forward to the time when we can meet again.

Every blessing,  
Carolyn



## THANK YOU!

Dear Friends,

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the members of our Church Family for all the cards and flowers I received on my 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. It was so kind and thoughtful of you all.

Margaret Craig, very kindly brought a beautiful bouquet from the Church family and Margaret Baldwin brought me a beautiful orchid from Young Wives. I read every card and was very touched by the sentiment written. I was so uplifted, they made me so happy; thank you so much!

We are living in difficult times during this pandemic and to quote C.S.Lewis from. NANIA' -

"We are in the waiting room of the world and what a dangerous world we live in".

Yes we are, but GOD lives with us in this Covid world and as Rev. Malcolm Shapland says when he sends his inspirational prayers to us every day on Facebook, we will eventually come through it.

Happy New Year!

Stay Safe, my friends and God Bless you all till we meet again in God's House.

Carol Jones.



## As St Valentine's Day -

falls in February, the month of February is often associated with love. This year any celebrations will be somewhat subdued.

One of the highlights of the Corvid-19 pandemic has been that we have all been able to know our neighbours a little better.

Mark says:-

**Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' there is no commandment greater than these." Mark 12:30-31**

The command to love one's neighbour is found eight times in the Bible. As loving one's neighbour is not always easy, God made the instruction a command.

What does the Bible tell us how to love our neighbour?

**Loving our neighbour means showing grace.**

Grace helps us to love God. Grace teaches us proper love and respect for ourselves and for our neighbour.

**Loving our neighbour means acting with compassion.**

When Jesus was asked, "Who is my neighbour?" He responded with a story: the Good Samaritan. Even those who have no love for God see the value of this story. What is the most important aspect of this story? Who did Jesus say was being a neighbour? The one who had compassion.

**Loving our neighbour means serving them.**

Serving from the heart is kindness in action. Kindness is one of the attributes of love listed in **1 Corinthians 13**. The odd thing

about kindness, though, is we can do acts of kindness without kindness residing in our hearts. If the kind thing is done out of duty, then it isn't love.

Jesus said He came to serve (**Matthew 20:28**). God, who is love, came to serve. Love serves. For us to **love our neighbour as ourselves**, we must have a heart to serve them.

### **Loving your neighbor means forgiving.**

Forgiveness is the very essence of God. Jesus said that forgiveness is then followed by healing.

Forgiveness is freely given to us and to **love our neighbours as ourselves** means we will pass the forgiveness on. Jesus highlighted this in His story in **Matthew 18** when Peter asks how many times should he forgive.

Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven."

So the next time your neighbour parks in your car space, makes a loud noise or their children break your favourite flowers with their football, to love your neighbour is to forgive them.

Many aspects of our life have currently been cancelled. However, the love of God is never cancelled, God's love lasts forever.

God Bless you!

Lynda



## **Lectionary Readings**

### **February**

**7th**      **Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147: 1-11, 20c**  
**1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1: 29-29**

**14th**      **2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6;**  
**2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9**

**21st**      **First Sunday in Lent**

**Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10;**  
**1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15**

**28th**      **Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10;**  
**1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15**



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**"If I send my prayer as a text message,  
will I get a faster reply?"**

## CHURCH ELDERS

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Any items for the next edition should be  
submitted by the 19th of the month

to

Mrs Diane Moverley

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(or if not on e mail then items can be left  
in the box at the back of the sanctuary)



***I will sing praise to the Lord as long as  
I live; I will sing praise to my God while  
I have being.***

***Psalms 104:33***