

INFORM



URC
VAN ROAD
CAERPHILLI
MARCH 2021

CHURCH OFFICERS

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: robmoverley@gmail.com

Pulpit Secretary

Ms Lynda Jones

Tel: 02920 884022

E-mail: Lynda.jones58@gmail.com

Website:

www.vanroadurc.org

An Elder writes

Once again we are coming into Spring. It doesn't seem that long ago that we were just at the start of the Pandemic. We didn't really think we would still be in it now. We have seen so many things happen in the past year, some bad, when some of us have lost a loved one. We have heard of people who have had the virus and are thankfully getting better and we have heard of new birth. We have celebrated special birthdays and anniversaries throughout the year.

We are in Lent and looking to celebrate our second Easter in Lockdown. Although we welcome the vaccines as a light at the end of the tunnel, it doesn't mean that the virus has gone away. However, we must all begin to, or continue to, think positively and keep faith in our Lord because I think that positivity might have left us.

I don't believe I am speaking solely for myself when I say that going through the last year we are fortunate to have had a closeness to friends and family and a closer relationship to many people.

I am sitting and glancing through the window as I write this. I am thinking how lovely it is to see the crocuses in flower and all the new buds appearing on trees and bushes.

This is God's world! We know that there are people in the world who don't have a garden to look at so we must keep them in our prayers and thoughts. 'God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform; the crucifixion and resurrection are proof of that.

As we approach Easter we must go forward with faith, hope and love. We pray that the Pandemic will soon end and that we can get back to some sort of normality. Wishing everyone a very Happy Easter and year ahead,

Margaret B.



**Church Services
Worship**



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

However, there is a possibility that we could have a service in church for Easter Day. The Elders will be in touch as soon as anything is decided.

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

From the Editor

I have found that one of the symptoms of not being able to move freely and meet up with friends and family, is having too much time perhaps, for reflecting on the past.

When having a sort out, I found my Scripture Union Exam Certificate from my teenage years attending Charles Street Congregational. (I can still remember the verses we had to learn 'off by heart.')

I found a very old Sunday School Praise hymnbook from my time as a child attending St Mellons Congregational Church, which made me reflect on the tasks, Bible stickers, book prizes and songs we sang in Sunday School.

The collection song was -
'Hear the pennies dropping,
Listen as they fall,
Every one for Jesus,
He shall have them all.'

I, like many others I am sure, was very confused by this. How were we going to get the money to Jesus and if we could, why would he need it?

However, looking back, wallowing in nostalgia, helps me understand what a blessed life I have had in so many ways and with so many memories that —'Warm the cockles of my heart,' as my grandmother used to say.

Lent is a time of reflection; an opportunity to examine the past, present and looking with hope to the future and the wonderment that the resurrection brings.

God Bless!

Diane.

CHRISTIAN AID IN LENT

This is the second year that we have not been able to have the Lent Lunches. Usually this brings about £900 for CA. Developing countries have been very hard hit with the Covid outbreak alongside their day to day difficulties regarding shelter, food, education, work etc.

Please consider donating either on line or Rob would be happy to collect your donation when collecting the weekly offering envelopes.

You might want to get the 'Count Your Blessings' leaflet on line. This helps us concentrate on all the everyday things we take for granted.

'The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.'

(Proverbs 22:9)

Thank you!

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Thank you to those who asked me to make Christmas Cards both for the church and for Van-Guard. I made a total of 50 cards for a few people and this raised a total to share of £34.

Thank you for your support..

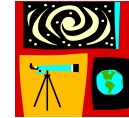
Cathy Vernalls

Psalm 121

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

LIFT MY EYES TO THE HILLS, HEAVEN EARTH
 HELP COMES FROM THE LORD, OVER YOU, DAY
 WATCHES COMING GOING SLEEP
 RIGHT HAND, SLUMBER HARM NIGHT
 EVER SUN MOON KEEP YOU, MAKER

Together In Prayer



Please pray for ...

March

7th Rhos on Sea URC, Colwyn Bay,
Wolfsdale URC, Camrose

Myanmar and Thailand

14th Tabernacle URC, Holywell and Crundale URC

Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam

21st Horeb URC, Dyserth, Zion's Hill URC,

China, Hong Kong and Macao

28th St John's with Bagillt URC, Flint
and Reynoldston URC



Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore



PLEASE BUY FAIR TRADE



This pandemic has caused so many hardships both
 at home and abroad. Developing nations are hit
 worst of all. Buying fairly traded goods goes a
 small way to helping our neighbours in these very
 difficult times.

Thank you!



We hold in our prayers -

Jean Mutter Frank Frayling Roy Collins
Rev Malcolm Shapland Diana Hibbert
Vernon Holland Barbara Lloyd
Carol Booth The Holdsworth Family
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.

Those organising and administering the vaccines.



The Power of Words

Simply a jumble of letters, formed into a string,

Words can either break hearts, or inspiration bring.

Honesty and trust, examples so simple to use,

If said and not meant can easily lead to abuse.

Used by the righteous to define any fight, any cause,

Words can be held responsible for many past wars.

Others may hear a different account of what's said,

Putting a whole new meaning to what's seen or what's read.

When woven together, by a master of the art,

Words can bring hope, inspiration, even a new start.

They overcome obstacles, breaking many a fall,

Equal opportunity – given to each, one and all.

So before using words, ensure that your brain is in gear,

And your message is the one you want people to hear.

It may seem contradictory, not fitting the scene,

That it's oft what you say that

...defines how you are seen.

This poem is very apt these days with some of the news we are seeing in news bulletins. It was written by Hywel Griffiths in July who was born and raised in Caerphilly. He was a Police Constable and dog handler with Gwent Police when aged 32 he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. The poem is to be found in his book entitled "**Poems, Parkinson's, the Police and Me**". It was published in 2014 in order to raise funds for the Parkinson's Disease.

Hywel Griffiths began his career as an Intelligence officer with Gwent Police in 1998 and received two commendations for bravery. The book is endorsed by the then Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent Mr. Ian Johnson QPM. (In his capacity as P.P.C. Mr. Johnson and his wife attended some VAN-guard events). Hywel's book is also supported by the then Chief Constable for Gwent Jeff Farrar, who described Hywel as an officer with a disability rather than as a disabled officer.

Mair



Congratulations

The VAN-guard Centre is pleased to extend congratulations to Mr. Richard Lee from Abertridwr. When we were presented with the Defibrillator by the Tommy Cooper Society, Richard came along that evening to demonstrate how to operate it. He was then Director of Operations for the Welsh Ambulance Service. He had been awarded with the Queen's Ambulance Service Medal in 2016 and holds the Order of St. John. Soon after visiting us he was head hunted to take the position of Chief Operating Officer of St. John's Ambulance which covers the U.K. In the recent New Year Honours List Richard was awarded an MBE for services to healthcare.

Our paths have crossed since that evening at Van Road. He was the guest speaker at the March 2019 Tommy Cooper Birthday Lunch. John and I were at the lunch attended by Richard and his wife. However, even though he was the guest speaker that day, he was last being served lunch, because one of the chefs was taken ill and Richard attended him in the kitchen until an ambulance arrived. Never off duty!

During the pandemic Richard has been volunteering his time and paramedic skills on St. John's ambulances treating Covid patients.

We are delighted to offer our congratulations to Richard on this well-deserved recognition of his work, first across Wales and now covering the whole of the United Kingdom.

Some of the above details have been sourced from The Caerphilly Observer dated 14th January.

Mair

Thanks to Veronica Moverley for showing me this -

17th Century Nun's Prayer

Lord, thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older and will someday be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody; helpful, but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all but thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details, give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others' pains, but help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessening of cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I might be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet; I do not want to be a saint— some of them are so hard to live with - but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people. And give me the grace, O Lord, to tell them so. AMEN!

Lectionary Readings



March

7th

**Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19;
1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22**

14th

**Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22;
Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21**

21st

**Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12;
Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33**

28th

**Palm Sunday-Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29;
Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16**

29th

**Holy Week-Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 36:5-11;
Hebrews 9:11-15; John 12:1-11**

30th

**Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 71:1-14;
1 Corinthians 1:18-31; John 12:20-36**

31st

**Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 70; Hebrews 2:1-3;
John 13:21-32**

Lenten Prayers

We pray for the Church throughout the world: that she may be a sign of God's love for all people and a beacon of hope for all who are in need. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for everyone who is sick or afraid, bereaved or isolated around the world; and we pray for all who support them. May God grant each of them peace and comfort, courage and perseverance. Lord, in your mercy...

Lectionary Readings



April

**1st Maundy Thursday-Exodus 12:1-4, 11-14;
Psalm 116:1-2,12-19; 1
Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-17, 3-351b**

**2nd Good Friday- Isaiah 52:15-53:12; Psalm
22;
Hebrews 10:16-25; John 18:1-19, 42**

**3rd Easter Day-Job 14:1-14;
Psalm 31:1-4,15-16; 1 Peter 4:1-8;**

Mothering Sunday—14th March

A Child's Poem



M Is for the million things she gives me

O Is only that she will grow old

T Is for the tears she shed for me

H Is for her heart of purest gold

E Is for her eyes with love forever shining

R Is for right which she shall always be!!

**Put these letters together and they spell MOTHER,
the word that means the world to me.**

A Reflection

We have all been touched by the words and actions of Captain Sir Tom Moore. Sir Tom's attitude in reminding us that there will be brighter days ahead, to keep calm and to be kind was a beacon of hope that we all needed.

On March 1st we will all be celebrating St David's Day. St David's last words to his followers were:-

"Be joyful, keep the faith, and do the little things that you have heard and seen me do."

The phrase "Gwnewch y pethau bychain"- Do the little things, is still well-known in Wales.

Matthew 25:35-45 says-

'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying - 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them—'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

Jesus tells us that whenever we give food to the hungry, welcome a stranger, clothe the naked, or visit the sick or imprisoned, we act in kindness to Him. So Jesus tells us that by making acts of loving kindness we will be truly blessed. In God's kingdom, no one is hungry, naked, sick or alone.

God Bless, Lynda

A Very Different Year

We have spent most of 2020-2021 in lockdown, one of the precautions to keep us free from the corona virus. This has meant a decided lack of worshipping together. We did manage two services and were grateful to Rob and Lewis for leading worship. Margaret and Phyllis were welcomed back into eldership.

We also had Malcolm's Spare a Prayer, the online Sunday service and other offerings to keep us focussed.

About this time of year I am usually organising an elders election and gathering material for the A.G.M. As these are 'hands on' activities the elders have decided not to hold an election this year, and as neither the church groups or Van-guard have been able to meet, the A.G.M. will be delayed until restrictions are lifted. Cathy is happy to remain an elder at present.

I am sure that we are longing for normal worship to resume and for groups to gather for their activities. For now, we will continue to keep in touch and keep safe.

The World Day of Prayer

The World Day of Prayer is due to take place on March 5th. Headquarters send suggestions for managing the service during the pandemic.

Caerphilly churches have decided to postpone the service until it is safe to worship together. We have had two lovely suggestions for the March 5th. We can light a candle and say a prayer, or, write a prayer to put on The Council of Churches web site.

Margaret C.

Prayers of Intercession

Dear Father, In this season of learning and repentance, growth and healing, we accept your Son's invitation to be ever mindful of the needs of others, offering our prayers on behalf of the community He loved in the church and the world.

We pray for all those whose lives are affected by illness, including the current pandemic, that your healing power surrounds them, so that they recover and praise your Holy name.

We pray for the whole world, tainted by all forms of sin and conflict, greed for power and wealth, that they discover your call to go on loving and serving,

A Prayer of Illumination

God of inspiration, break into the wilderness of our lives -the uncertainty, the confusion and the distractions from your Word with a moment of clarity, grace and understanding that encourages us and moulds us through your Word and by your Spirit in Christ's image.

AMEN!

(Extracts from the URC Sunday Service on 20th Feb.)

Church Building Update

The church now has a new fire alarm system and work has begun on fixing the storm damage in the tower.

CHURCH ELDERS

Mrs Enfys Hawthorn 02920 866840
Mrs Emma Fitzgerald 02920 821525
Ms Lynda Jones 02920 884022
Mr Robert Moverley 02920 866336
Mrs Cathy Vernalls 02920 887112
Mrs Phyllis Frayling 02920 862285
Mrs Margaret Baldwin 02920 867027

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)



*He leads me in the paths of righteousness for
His name's sake.*

Psalm 23