

INFORM



URC

VAN ROAD

CAERPHILLY

DECEMBER 2021/ JANUARY 2022

CHURCH OFFICERS

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An Elder writes

THE GATE OF THE YEAR

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:
Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.”
And he replied:
Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand
of God.
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a
known way.”
So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly
into the night.
And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in
the lone East.

"The Gate of the Year" is the popular name given to
a poem by **Minnie Louise Haskins**. The title given to it by
the author was "**God Knows**". The poem, written in 1908
and privately published in 1912 caught everyone's
imagination when George VI quoted the words in his
Christmas message at the start of the Second World War in
1939.

In John, "Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the
light of the world. Who so ever follows me will not walk in
darkness but will have the light of life."

In the Bible, light has always been a **symbol of
holiness, goodness, knowledge, wisdom, grace, hope,
and God's revelation**. By contrast, darkness has been
associated with unhappiness, sin, and despair.

Christmas is a time of light; flickering candles,
twinkling fairy lights glowing on our Christmas trees and
spectacular festive displays in our streets and shopping
centres. Caerphilly has its own "River of Light".

We have lived through almost two very difficult years.
Let us hope that we can now take the Hand of God and
walk in the light during 2022.

I wish you all a peaceful and joyous
Christmas and new year.



Lynda.

CAROL SERVICE AT VAN ROAD: Sunday 12th December at 10.30am

This will be an informal service where people may remain
seated throughout. We shall sing selected verses from a
wide range of carols key scripture verses interspersed. I am
arranging a small group of singers to give us two or three
rehearsed carols and we may have a soprano soloist to
help us out and a flautist to provide variety. The carol
verses and order of service will be printed in a booklet so
that the service may flow without the need for frequent
announcements. Given that there will not be a sermon or
lengthy spoken passages, this service would be suitable for
all ages including children. What a pleasure it would be if
church members could persuade family, friends and
children to join us (there will definitely be one 10 year old
boy coming) ! I am looking forward to this joyful Sunday.

Peter

From the Editor

I can remember a children's address given many years ago where we were encouraged not to have YOJ in our lives but Joy, which we would have if we put -

Jesus first

Others second

Yourself last

We are mindful, particularly at this time of year, of trying to follow this. Since my grandmother's time, each year, I have continually heard the refrain -

'The meaning of Christmas is lost; it is too commercial etc.'

It is difficult to argue otherwise as we witness the pressures of advertising and the hype in our towns and cities.

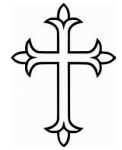
However, let's ensure that we don't let ourselves be overcome by cynicism, Just like the Christmas lights in our homes and streets, we can feel Christ's light in our lives as we still experience the joy of Jesus's birth.

There has been and continues to be, hardship and suffering in our communities and in the world, yet by persevering to try to put the needs of others before ourselves, to endeavour to do what we can for others, and with the love and support of family and friends, we can have joy.

Wishing you joy and peace at Christmas and the New Year.

Diane

Worship



December

5th, 10.30 am

Rev. Malcolm Shapland
(Communion)

12th, 10.30am

Dr. Peter Speakman (*Carol Service*)

19th, 10.30am

Rev. Val Fernandez

24th, 5.30pm

Rev. Malcolm Shapland

25th, 10am

Rev. Peter Noble

26th,

NO SERVICE



Mid-month Communion

December 15th, 10.30am

January

Rev. Malcolm Shapland

January

2nd, 10.30am

Rev Malcolm Shapland
(Communion)

9th, 10.30am

Mrs Sally Ball

16th, 10.30am

Mrs June Maxwell

23rd, 10.30am

Mr Rob Moverley

30th, 10.30am

Mr Lewis Lewis-Head

Together In Prayer



December

Please pray for:

5th Bethany, Ystrad Mynach, Moderator, staff and churches of East Midlands Synod

Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal

12th Hall Street Church, Llanelli, Moderator, staff and churches of West Midlands Synod

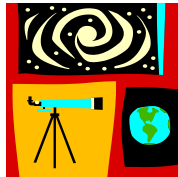
Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Togo

19th Hill URC, Mount Pleasant, Swansea, Moderator, staff and churches of Eastern Synod,

Ghana and Nigeria

26th Tabernacle URC, Mumbles, Moderator, staff and churches of South Western Synod

Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordon, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories



Lectionary Readings



December

5th Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79

12th Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

19th Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:39-45

24th **Christmas Eve**
Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Luke 2:1-20

25th **Christmas Day**
Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1:1-12;
John 1:1-14

26th 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148;
Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

CHRISTMAS CRINGES

· What did the stamp say to the Christmas card? Stick with me and we'll go places!

· How is Christmas exactly like your job? You do all the work and some fat guy in a suit gets all the credit.

- Why did no one bid for Rudolph and Blitzen on eBay? Because they were two deer!

- What did the snowman say to the customer?

Have an ice day!

Lectionary Readings



January

2nd Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20;
Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:1-18

6th **Epiphany**
Isaiah 6:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14;
Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

9th Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17;
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

16th Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10;
1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

23rd Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19;
1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11

30th Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6;
1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30

GIFT IDEAS

1) Lots of lovely things to be found at **Fair Do's**,
10, Llandaff Road, Pontcanna, Cardiff.

What to buy for someone 'who has everything' -

2) Go online to purchase charitable gifts -

charity-gifts.christianaid.org.uk
and make a difference to someone's life!

Come and See—With the Shepherds

The star shone bright
In the dark sky that night
Over Bethlehem's new pride and joy
In a manger lay a baby boy.
The cold, dark fields
where the shepherds kneeled
Societies' outcasts, not at all special
Less than ordinary, not really essential.
The sky shone bright
Over the cold fields that night
More angels appeared, a heavenly choir
Singing and praising God as their song flew higher.
"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
And on earth, peace and goodwill to all."
On the dark night
Bethlehem shone bright
No longer outcasts or just ordinary
The shepherds were special, important and merry.

*Poem extracts from the URC's Children's Advent and Christmas
Activity Box.*

VAN-guard Centre

Charity Registration number 1109193

We are pleased that 'Only Boys Aloud' started back after Half Term. The 'Caerphilly Community Chorus' also resumed rehearsals the same week. Hopefully the 'University of the Third Age' group will be able to return in February. So slowly and carefully community groups are returning to VAN-guard and working within current safety requirements.

The VAN-guard Centre Committee sends good wishes for Christmas to all at the church and hope that 2022 will be a much better year for everyone. In the meantime, we are mindful of all friends and families for whom the coming festive season will be very different and difficult. *Mair.*

DEAR SANTA,
I have been very good
for the last week or so.



'Tis The Season

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

CHRISTMAS	SANTA	DECORATIONS	NATIVITY	
PEACE	GOODWILL	WONDER	JOY	HOPE
PRESENTS	EPIPHANY	HOLLY	LOVE	LORD
SHEPHERDS	WISE MEN	CAROLS	MARY	LORD
JESUS	JOSEPH	ANGELS	SAVIOUR	GOD

Homeless News

This year, the churches will not be organising any Night Shelters as there is an expectation that local authorities provide accommodation for anyone who is homeless. That said, the churches have been asked to be involved in a rota to provide an evening meal for guests during the winter months spread across Blackwood and Caerphilly. If you are interested in being involved with this, please speak to Margaret Craig, Margaret Baldwin or Cathy Vernalls.

Young Wives

We are still hoping to meet on Monday 6th December.

We will meet safely and within the law which means masks must be worn and hand gel will be available. Track and trace details must be recorded.

It would be helpful if you could let Carol or me know if you are able to come in order that we can arrange the chairs accordingly.

Looking forward to seeing everyone— in the meantime, stay safe!

Every blessing,
Carolyn.



We hold in our prayers -



Frank Frayling

Roy Collins

Rev Malcolm Shapland

Diana Hibbert

Vernon Holland

Barbara Lloyd

Carol Booth

Margaret Webb

Dorothy Woodward

Judy and Rod Jarman

John and Mair Wade

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.

Teachers and children. The people of Haiti.

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 organising and administering the vaccines.

Those countries facing conflict particularly in Afghanistan and all those desperate for their safety and future.

Those people helping to welcome and settle refugees.

The decisions made by the attendees of COP 26.

CHURCH ELDERS

Mrs Enfys Hawthorn 02920 866840
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)



**And wise men came from the
east to worship Him.**

