

INFORM



URC
VAN ROAD
CAERPHELLY
Dec 23/Jan 24

CHURCH OFFICERS

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An Elder Writes

We are entering the magical seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany as we honour the baby whom Isaiah described as the Prince of Peace. But, yet again, we are witnessing a world which is far from peaceful. It is easy to signal good intentions by calling for peace wherever there is conflict but history, including that recorded in the Old Testament, shows us that unless both sides in that conflict yearn for , there will be no peace with honour and justice.

President Zelensky has insisted that calls for a ceasefire and talks with the Russian invaders would mean, in reality, Ukraine's surrender and the subjugation of the Ukraine nation. Had Churchill in 1940 agreed a ceasefire and peace talks who can doubt that the whole of Europe and Britain would have ended up under the rule of Hitler's evil regime?

I have no doubt that life is a battle between good and evil which regularly and disastrously results in wars between nations. Like you, I do not control the levers of power and do not take military decisions. However, all of us face a battle with demons that can enter our hearts and minds. Even the baby in the manger on reaching manhood had to battle in the wilderness against the temptations of the devil and there was to be no surrender to evil.

His ministry was opposed by corrupt Jewish Church leaders who were an impediment to the proper worship of God. Again, there was to be no surrender to the ungodly principles of those whom Jesus labelled as hypocrites.



We always face this struggle between Godliness and Sin. I know that if I am guilty of any of the seven deadly sins (pride, greed, wrath, envy, lust, gluttony and sloth) then I am only paying lip service to the baby in the manger when really my thoughts and actions are contrary to God's will. I may delude myself that I am at peace but this is peace with dishonour.

May I wish all of us a happy and peaceful Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. With God's gracious love to protect us from temptation may we truly find peace with honour as we honour the baby in the manger.

Peter



Food Bank

Christmas Food, gifts, chocolate etc. would be appreciated please.

From the editor

It can be difficult at times to give a positive message when there is so much war and suffering in the world. We pray and give money, as and when we can, to help the aid agencies continue their challenging work and also give our time and energy ,as we are able, to help and support those closer to home.

It sometimes seems, however, that this is not enough. We hear the Christmas message of joy and peace and justice but it must seem hollow to those who are facing such fear, hardships and sorrows.

But we must not despair.

We must catch the love and joy that knowing Jesus brings whenever we are able. We must remind ourselves and others that our Saviour feels our and the world's pain.

We must hold tight to the hope and blessing of Christmas.

A Child's Prayer

O, Lord Jesus, who for love of us lay as a baby in a manger, we thank you that by your coming you brought joy to the world. Help us at this glad time to try to make others happy for your sake. *(From the Lion Book of Children's Prayers.)*

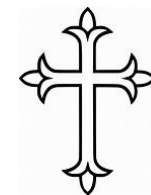
AMEN!

Blessings to you all for Christmas and the New Year.

Diane.



Worship



December

- ★ **3rd, 10.30 am** **Mr Robert Moverley**
First Sunday in Advent
(Communion)
- ★ **10th, 10.30 am** **Mr Lewis Lewis-Head**
- ★ **17th, 10.30 am** **Mr Dave Clarke**
- ★ **24th, 10.30 am** **The Eldership (Christmas Eve)**
- ★ **25th, 10.00 am** **Mr Lewis Lewis-Head**
(Christmas Day)
- ★ **31st, 10.30 am** **Ms Lynda Jones**

Mid-month Communion TBC
Wednesday December 13th, 10.30am
Rev Malcolm Shapland



Worship

January

**7th, 10.30 am Epiphany
Rev. Malcolm Shapland (TBC)
(Communion)**

14th, 10.30 am Mr Lewis Lewis-Head

21st, 10.30 am Dr Peter Speakman

28th, 10.30 am Ms Maggie Kirkbride

**Mid-month Communion TBC
Wednesday January 10th, 10.30am
Rev Malcolm Shapland**



Bible Study

We will be holding our final Bible study of 2023 on Thursday 30th November at 10:30. I would like to thank everyone who is supporting the Bible Study since we resumed in September. We hope to restart Bible study on Thursday 4th January 2024 at 10:30. We are currently studying the Jacob narrative.

God Bless you all,

Lynda.

Coffee Morning for Christian Aid

Friday 15th December, 10.30am

At

Rob and Diane's

53, Lon y Gors, CF83 1DP

All Welcome

No set charge, give what you like and get a free raffle ticket

Church Activities, What's On!

November 27th, 28th, 29th Christmas Unwrapped

December

Saturday 2nd Caerphilly Craft and Food Fair

10am-4pm Live Nativity (see below)

4.15pm Carol Service at the Bandstand

**Sat and Sun, 10am-4pm Christmas tree Festival
St Martin's Church**

**Sunday 3rd, 6pm Mulled wine and mince pies and
Advent Singalong, St Martin's Church**

**Tuesday 12th, 7.30pm Carols by Candlelight
An ecumenical Service,
Wesley Methodist**

All Day - Live Nativity



We will be looking for adults to be willing to help us by dressing up as characters from the Christmas story through out the day on rota basis. If you can let you church know and then ask them to contact me I will coordinate the "cast" over the day. NO Acting required they just need to be willing to stand in the Nativity scene dressed a character. It was great fun last year and a great oppertunity to talk to people about the real Christmas story. We invite people who are passing by to come and get dressed up and join the Nativity scene and take a selfie!

Steve

Van-guard Concerts for December

Saturday December 2nd, 2pm

MUSIC FOR CHRISTMAS

Angharad Morgan and Francesca Saracino

Accompanied by Sian Davies

£10 Pay on the door

or pre book on 02920 866578

Friday December 17th, 7pm

SNOW IN CONCERT

Caerphilly Community Chorus

Special Guest Rhys Archer –Tenor

£5 on the door, children free

Saturday 16th, 2-3pm

CONCERT FOR CHRISTMAS

Caerphilly Wind and Strings

(Refreshments, tea, coffee, mince pies)

£5 on the door, under 15s free

General Assembly Resolutions

As I mentioned in Church Meeting, there were a number of resolutions that were approved at this year's General Assembly of the United Reformed Church that local Churches should be aware of. Here is a summary of the resolutions:

The Synod Moderators Report

The Synod Moderators Report raised a number of questions for local Churches to consider as they reflected on 50 years of the United Reformed Church, both reflecting on our relationship with the wider Church and also looking at being Church moving forward. We may take up some of these questions in a future Cafe Church.

The Communication Strategy

In response to the resolutions on a Communication Strategy we agreed in Church Meeting to order 2 copies of the Reform magazine each month and make them available for people to read.

Poverty and Inequality in the UK

General Assembly was concerned at the many significant changes in the nature and extent of inequality in Britain over the last decade, e.g. through austerity, Covid-19 and the recent cost of living crisis. A resolution that expressed concern, and called on political leaders to work to eradicate structural poverty in the UK and challenged the Church to reflect on how it could better demonstrate its commitment to people experiencing poverty and marginalisation was agreed.

Illegal Migration

General Assembly expressed deep concerns about the Illegal Migration Bill and In response invited churches and members of the URC to write to their MPs and prospective Parliamentary candidates expressing their opposition to the Bill and urging them to support the development of safe and legal routes for those seeking asylum.

More detail about these and other resolutions and discussions at General Assembly can be found on the United Reformed Church's website.

All About This Time of Year

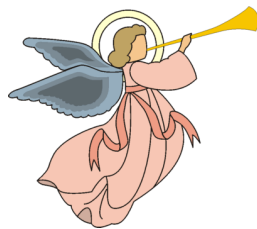
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SAVIOUR STABLE WISE MEN NOEL LORD
CHRIST MARY JOSEPH JESUS SHEPHERDS
BETHLEHEM BIBLE HEROD PEACE JOY
TRUTH JUSTICE ANGEL MANGER HOPE
STAR EAST KING SON LIGHT LOVE

After Christmas

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flocks, the
work of Christmas begins,
To find the lost,
To heal the broken, to feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among people,
To make music in the heart.

(Words by Howard Thurman.)



CHURCH COFFEE MORNINGS

WEDNESDAYS

December 6th for 'Tree of Life'

January 3rd for Caerphilly Foodbank

10.30am

ALL WELCOME!



Van- guard

**The concert given by Beverley Humphries and
accompanied by Ryan Wood was well received
and enjoyed by all who attended it.**

**Beverley also enjoyed her time and is very
happy to return in the future.**

Lectionary Readings



DECEMBER

- 3rd** **Advent Sunday**
Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19;
1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37
- 10th** **Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13;**
2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8
- 17th** **Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126;**
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28
- 24th** **CHRISTMAS EVE**
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26;
Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38, 46b-55
- 25th** **CHRISTMAS DAY**
Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14;
Luke 2:1-7

JANUARY

- 7th** **Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14;**
Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12
- 14th** **Isiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11;**
1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42
- 21st** **Isiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:1, 4-9;**
1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23
- 28th** **Micah 6:1-8; Psalm 15; 1**
Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:13-20

Young Wives

Mondays 7.30pm

All ladies, any age, welcome

December

4th **Carols and Mince Pies**

11th **Christmas Meal**



No further meetings until February

Calendar of Regular Events in the Church

Coffee Morning, 10.30am **First Wednesday each month**

Prayer Time, 5pm **Every Tuesday**

Communion service **2nd Wednesday each month, 10.30am**

'Only Boys Aloud' rehearse **Every Monday, 6.30,**

Caerphilly Chorus rehearse **Every Friday, 7.30pm,**

University of the Third Age (U3A) **First Friday each month**
1.30pm (usually)

'Goldies' **2nd Monday of the month, 11am-12.**

'Young Wives' (All ladies welcome) **Every Monday 7.30pm**

Bible Study, 1st and 3rd Thursdays in the month, 10.30am

NB Some activities stop during school holidays.

CHRISTMAS CRINGES

Why was the turkey in the pop group?

Because he was the only one with drumsticks!

What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck?

A Christmas Quacker!

What goes "Oh, Oh, Oh"? Santa walking backwards!

Why was the snowman looking through the carrots?

He was picking his nose!

Why does Santa have three gardens?

So he can 'ho ho ho'!

What is the best Christmas present in the world?

A broken drum, you just can't beat it!

What do snowmen wear on their heads? Ice caps!

What happened to the man who stole an Advent Calendar? He got 25 days!

Who delivers presents to baby sharks at Christmas?

Santa Jaws!

What do they sing at a snowman's birthday party?

Freeze a jolly good fellow!

What do Santa's little helpers learn at school?

The elf-abet!

What kind of motorbike does Santa ride?

A Holly Davidson!

We hold in our prayers -



John Wade and family

Rev Malcolm Shapland

Diana Hibbert

Vernon Holland

Carol Booth

Hilary and Steve Akerman Judy and Rod Jarman

Frank Frayling Shelagh Pollard and family

All those affected and / or helping in Libya

All those working in the NHS and in Social Care.

Those who have lost their employment and those fearful for their jobs and struggling with the rising cost of living.

Those countries facing hardships, particularly in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Somalia, Iran, Sudan and Yemen and all those desperate for their safety and future, particularly the people of Ukraine.

Those people helping to welcome and settle refugees.

Charities such as Christian Aid as they set about helping those in need.

Those affected by wild fires and particularly Tahiti and the island of Maui. Flooding in Pakistan and Libya.

The leaders and people of Gaza and Israel.

CHURCH ELDERS

Ms Lynda Jones 02920 884022

Mr Robert Moverley 02920 866336

Dr Peter Speakman 02920 883968

Mrs Phyllis Frayling 02920 862285

Mrs Margaret Baldwin 02920 867027

Mrs Cathy Vernalls 07527 598127

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

to



Mrs Diane Moverley

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**We have seen His star in the east
and have come to worship Him.**