

INFORM



David with
Non, his
mother

URC
VAN ROAD
CAERPHILLY
March 2026

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A Message from our Pastorate Minister, Rev. Clare Nutbrown-Hughes

Annwyl ffrindiau,

Dear friends,

An unexpected bonus of having four children is that at four times in my life I got to step back from my usual pattern of life and work and discover a new perspective. Four lots of maternity leave meant that I had to put things down and rediscover who I was, what was needed of me, how I wanted to use my time, what brought me life in that new phase.

I remember walking through the town where I worked on a midweek morning early in my first maternity leave and realising that there was a whole community of people that I had never noticed or thought about before - some of whom were pushing prams just like me. I was conscious then and I'm conscious now that - the sheer exhaustion and relentless responsibility of caring for a new baby aside - it was a gift to be able to get off the gravy train and ask different questions, see life a different way.

Would I have stopped and taken stock as I did? Probably not. It's hard ordinarily to step back from the pattern of life and the need to pay a mortgage to take the time to check in with ourselves about how we feel and think.

This is why I think Lent is an important time. I fully hear how Lent is celebrated more by other church traditions than our own and how its association with penitence doesn't sell it to everyone. But I also think that taking time out, even if it is simply for five minutes a day in Lent, to check in with God and ourselves with honesty, to step back and reflect on where we are, who we are, on our relationship with God and place in creation, is a precious thing. It can feed and nurture us, it is an opportunity to peel back some layers and get to what is underneath, to ask questions that we are too preoccupied to ask in the usual rhythm of life. Far from its associations with austerity,

Lent can be a time that allows new perspectives, deeper reflections to emerge and can be rich and creative.

Here's wishing you the chance to pause and reflect this season - without needing to have a new baby to do it.

Pob bendith

Clare



An elder writes

As many of you know, John Wade and I are part of what we call a Nurture / Theology Group that meets at Llanfair Penrhys on a Monday morning. We have studied various aspects of Christian thinking in the time I have been going, including the works of Alan T Dale (Winding Quest and New World - his interpretation of the biblical text for Secondary Schools) and Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan to name a few.

This year we have moved on to looking at the 'Illuminations' that are contained in the St John's Bible. The St John's Bible is not to be confused with John's Gospel. The St John's Bible is a bible that was hand written using traditional methods of calligraphy by a team brought together by the artist Donald Jackson. It uses the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible as the basis of the text.

Donald Jackson is an internationally renowned calligrapher who was the former calligrapher to Queen Elizabeth II. He is based in Monmouth. It had been his life's ambition to be able to produce a version of the bible using the techniques used by monks from many centuries ago. His wishes were met following a teaching visit to the St John's Seminary in Minnesota which is run by the St John's Monastery - a Benedictine community of monks. They were looking for a project to celebrate the Millennium and agreed to fund the production of the Bible.

The 'Illuminations' is the art work that is integrated within the Bible to bring out a deeper meaning in the text. Donald Jackson's team of artists worked with a team of theologians from the monastery to determine how these Illuminations should be incorporated into the text. The project took 7 years to complete and the finished Bible is broken down into 7 volumes. The original is held in the St John's Monastery but it is possible to buy (new or second hand) printed copies. Also, 299 'Heritage Editions' were produced and have been distributed around the world. Three are in the UK - one in Durham, one in Canterbury and one in St David's.

You can read more about the project at <https://saintjohnsbible.org/>

This is a link explaining about the St David's edition: <https://stdavids.churchinwales.org.uk/en/pobl-dewi-september-2024/igniting-the-spiritual-imagination/>

If you'd like to have a look at what the Bible looks like up close, John Wade has all 7 volumes. He also has a BBC Wales DVD that was produced in 2003 which has interviews with Donald Jackson and others and shows the processes he went through to produce the bible. It is really interesting.

By studying some of these Illuminations it has helped me gain a deeper understanding of the depth of the narrative that is contained in what is often such familiar texts that we find in our Bibles. I would certainly recommend taking a look.

Rob



From the editor ...



Do you have difficulty praying? I do!

I made a commitment for Lent to look at the news each day and ponder prayerfully on it. First of all, there is so much to pray for, am I being too selective when there are so many people and situations that need prayer?

One of my difficulties is concentration. I start off well but find my mind wandering. I then admonish myself for being so impolite. If I am talking to friends, I wouldn't normally 'drift off' so I certainly shouldn't do so when speaking to God.

The other difficulty I have is what I call the 'Shopping List' prayers. It can be difficult not to just commit prayers to a list of concerns and that list can seem never ending.

It is wonderful to listen to others' thoughtful prayers identifying with the words and sentiments. Written prayers in books and orders of service can also be moving and / or thought provoking.

I have been in gatherings however, when people are invited to pray and we are inundated with what I now call. 'We just' prayers. It can be quite draining to continually hear the words, 'Lord, We just..' in almost every sentence no matter how sincere the person is.

So I have to persevere and ask God to help me stay focused (and keep apologising when my mind strays.)

Diane.



Pulpit Supply



March

**1st, 10.30am St David's Day
Mr Lewis-Lewis Head**

**8th, 10.30am Mr Edmund Plummer (HHI)
Health Help International**

**15th, 10.30am Mothering Sunday
Rev Clare Nutbrown-Hughes**

22nd, 10.30am Ms Maggie Kirkbride

**29th, 10.30am Palm Sunday
Mrs Sophie Lemon
Leprosy Mission**

Friday 6th March

World Day of Prayer

10.30am

Wesley Methodist Church



Lectionary Readings



March

- 1st** Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121;
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17
- 8th** Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11;
John 4:5-22
- 15th** 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23;
Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41
- 22nd** Ezekial 37:1-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11;
John 11:1-45
- 29th** Holy Week, Palm Sunday
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Matthew 21:1-11

Young Wives

Mondays 7.30pm
All ladies, any age, welcome



March 2nd Business and Biscuits

Van-guard Concert by Dan Phelps and friends

A Fund raiser for Cancer Research
on

Sunday March 22nd at 2:00 pm

featuring

Dan Phelps composer & pianist
Lee Bowen, Tenor
Matthew Tilley, Tenor
David Forte and Angharad Morgan
Caerphilly Community Chorus

Including the premiere of Dan Phelps' piece,
In Memory of . . .'

Admission Free with retiring collection for
Cancer Research



Classically Caerphilly

at The Vanguard Centre

Showcasing the talents of emerging student musicians
from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama

Thursday March 19th at 1pm

Blaize OCallaghan - Soprano

Ava Shaw - Soprano

Christian Guo - Countertenor

Joshua St Quintin-Griffin - Baritone

Nicola Rose - Piano

Admission is **FREE**

United Reformed Church

Van Road,

CF83 1JZ



 **VANGUARD**
CENTRE CAERPHILLY

ROYAL WELSH COLLEGE
OF MUSIC & DRAMA
COLEG BRENHINOL
CERDD A DRAMA CYMRU

 **darkley**
trust.

March Eco Suggestions from A Rocha

Take part in a local litter pick or beach clean during, 'The Great British Spring Clean' (Friday 13th—Sunday 29th March.) The nation's biggest mass-action environmental campaign, Litter picking benefits the environment by removing rubbish that can be hazardous for wildlife and helps bring people together.

Perhaps do a litter pick after church on a Sunday,

Pray for your local area as you do a litter pick and ask God for opportunities to share why you are doing it .

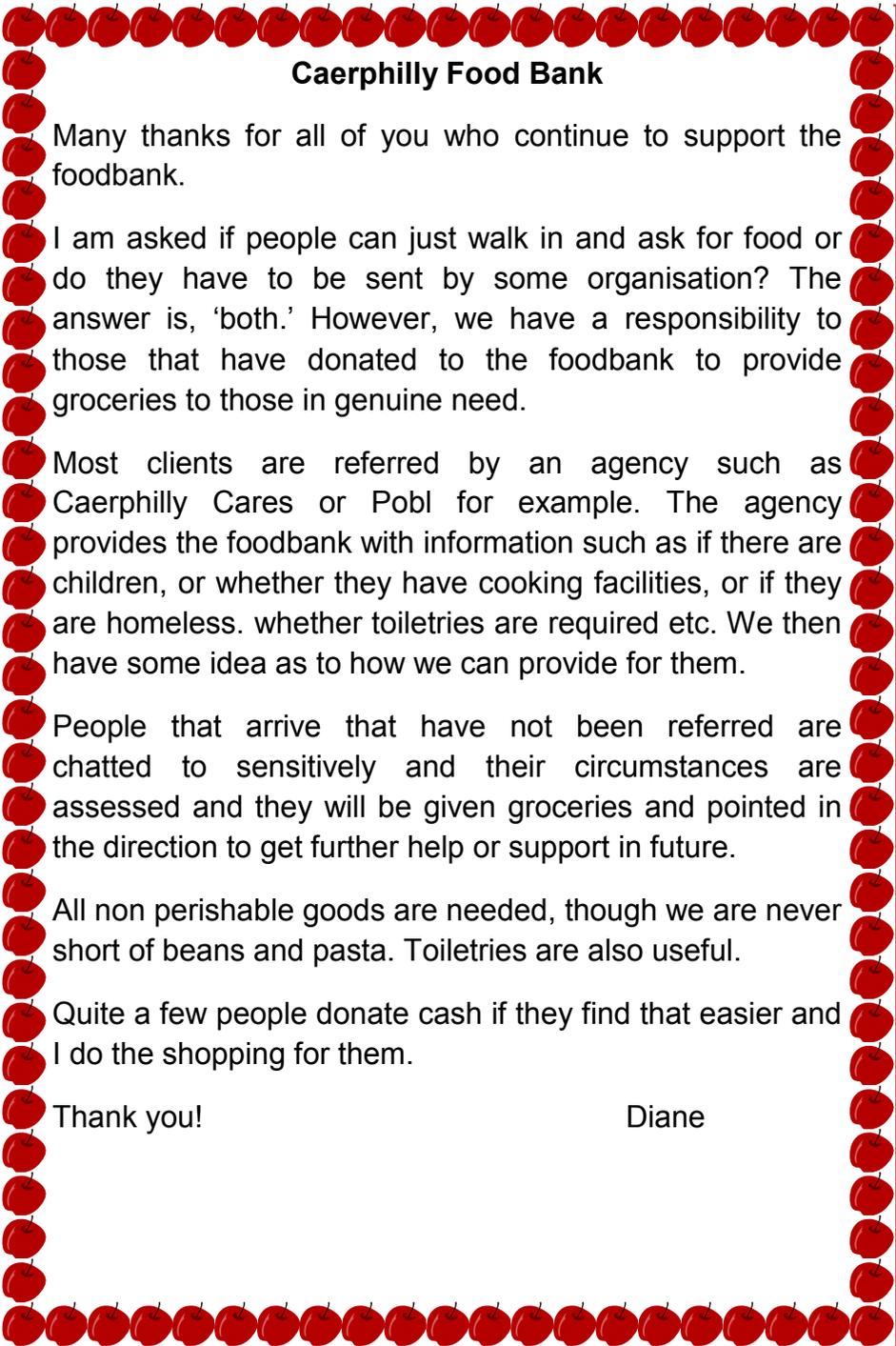
Find out more and pledge to pick up a bag at

keepbritaintidy.org/our-work/eliminating-litter/great-british-spring-clean



DYDD GWYL DEWI HAPUS





Caerphilly Food Bank

Many thanks for all of you who continue to support the foodbank.

I am asked if people can just walk in and ask for food or do they have to be sent by some organisation? The answer is, 'both.' However, we have a responsibility to those that have donated to the foodbank to provide groceries to those in genuine need.

Most clients are referred by an agency such as Caerphilly Cares or Pobl for example. The agency provides the foodbank with information such as if there are children, or whether they have cooking facilities, or if they are homeless. whether toiletries are required etc. We then have some idea as to how we can provide for them.

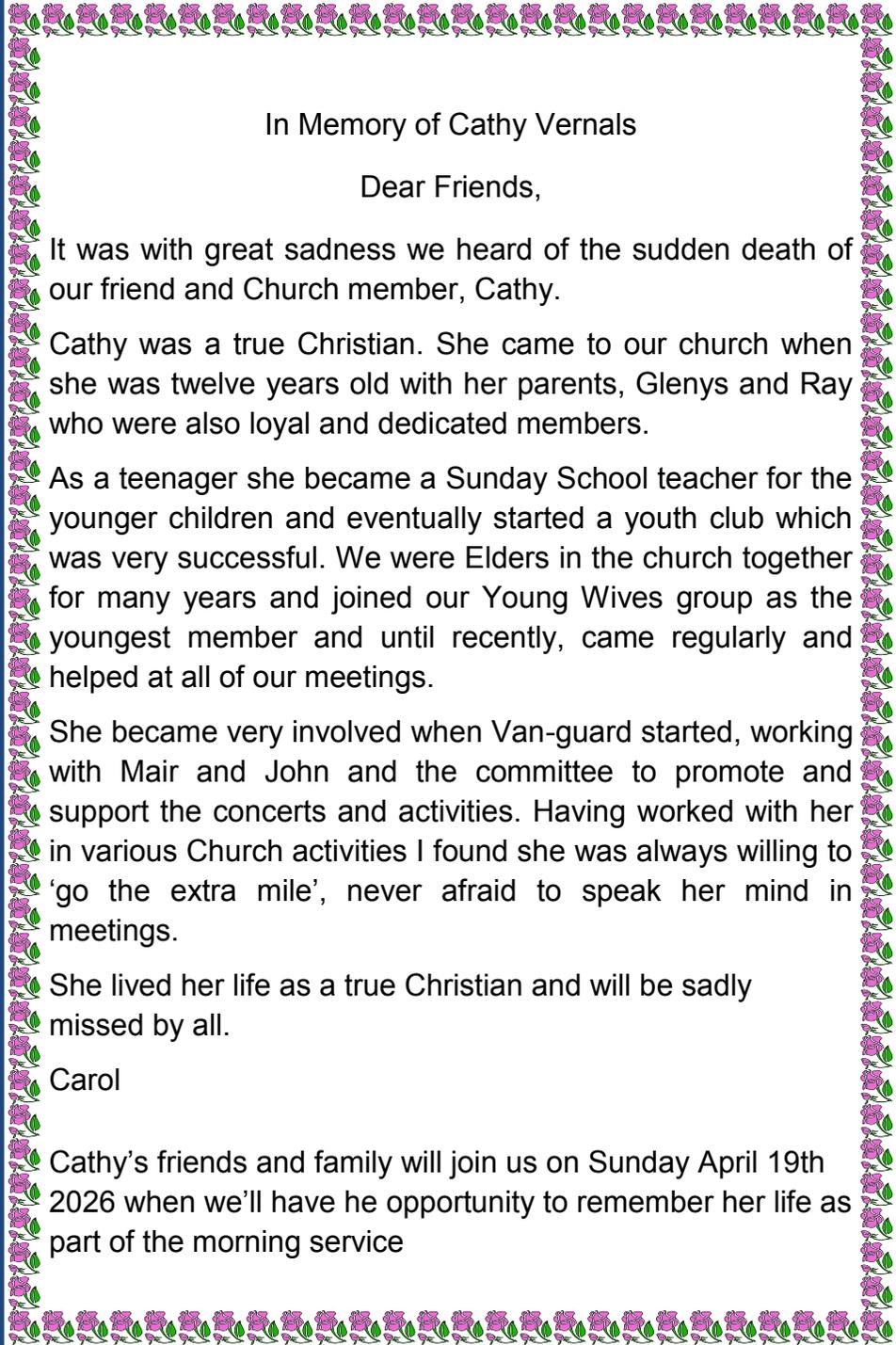
People that arrive that have not been referred are chatted to sensitively and their circumstances are assessed and they will be given groceries and pointed in the direction to get further help or support in future.

All non perishable goods are needed, though we are never short of beans and pasta. Toiletries are also useful.

Quite a few people donate cash if they find that easier and I do the shopping for them.

Thank you!

Diane



In Memory of Cathy Vernalis

Dear Friends,

It was with great sadness we heard of the sudden death of our friend and Church member, Cathy.

Cathy was a true Christian. She came to our church when she was twelve years old with her parents, Glenys and Ray who were also loyal and dedicated members.

As a teenager she became a Sunday School teacher for the younger children and eventually started a youth club which was very successful. We were Elders in the church together for many years and joined our Young Wives group as the youngest member and until recently, came regularly and helped at all of our meetings.

She became very involved when Van-guard started, working with Mair and John and the committee to promote and support the concerts and activities. Having worked with her in various Church activities I found she was always willing to 'go the extra mile', never afraid to speak her mind in meetings.

She lived her life as a true Christian and will be sadly missed by all.

Carol

Cathy's friends and family will join us on Sunday April 19th 2026 when we'll have the opportunity to remember her life as part of the morning service

Lent lunches

Fridays 6th, 13th, 20th

at Wesley Methodist Church

12-1pm

Proceeds to Christian Aid

**Van Road, Windsor Road and St Helen's serving on
6th March.**



We hold in our prayers -

Rev Malcolm Shapland

Enfys Hawthorn Margaret Baldwin

Carol Booth Family and friends of Cathy Vernalls

Hilary and Steve Akerman

Phyllis and family Marian Bevan and family

Barbara Stewart Diana Hibbert

Dave Jenkins and all the family

**The people of Gaza, Israel and Palestine and the fragile
peace.**

All those without a home or warm shelter.

**Those countries facing hardships, particularly in
Madagascar, 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.

**World leaders that they make sound, fair and just
decisions particularly in the USA new administration.**

Permanent peace in Gaza and a just peace in Ukraine.



Van-guard April event not to be missed.

Saturday 11th April

2.30pm £12

Songs of Love and Travel

**Featuring Schumann's 'Dichterliebe' and
Vaughn Williams', 'Songs of Travel'**

**Caleb Mock, Tenor, John Liddington, Baritone,
Joshua McDade, piano**

**Caleb and John have just graduated from the RWCMD
having started with 'Only Boys Aloud' when in school.**

**Come and support these talented young men at the start
of their careers.**

Calendar of Regular Events in the Church

- Coffee Morning, 10.30am First Wednesday each month
 - Communion service 2nd Wednesday each month, 10.30am
 - ‘Only Boys Aloud’ rehearse Every Monday, 6.30,
 - Caerphilly Chorus rehearse Every Friday, 7pm,
 - University of the Third Age (U3A) First Friday each month
1.30pm (usually)
 - U3A singing group Thursdays fortnightly, 2pm
 - ‘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. Please check for any changes to this list.



Coffee Morning

Wednesday 4th March

10.30am

Raising funds for RNLI



SPRING

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

DAFFODILS PRIMROSES BLUEBELLS DAISY
 TULIP BLOSSOM CATKINS CROCUS BUDS
 SNOWDROPS SUNSHINE SHOWERS BIRDSONG
 PUSSY WILLOW NARCISSAU CAMELIA SHOOTS
 DAWN

CHURCH ELDERS

Ms Lynda Jones 02920 884022

Mr Robert Moverley 02920 866336

Dr Peter Speakman 02920 883968

Mrs Phyllis Frayling 07870 752306

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



***Be joyful, keep the faith and do the
little things you have seen me do.***

Dewi Sant