

JUNE 2015
The Magazine
of
UNITING CHURCH SKETTY



Dillwyn Road, Sketty, Swansea SA2 9AE
www.unitingchurchsketty.org.uk

Minister: Reverend Leslie Jane Noon

Senior Elder: Pat D

Senior Steward: Gwen D

Weekly Notices by Friday morning to Lynne W

Sunday Services: 10.30am including regular All-age Worship.

Refreshments in the Wesley Room following morning worship.

Evening at 6.30pm

Adventurers: 10.30am Departments 3-15 years

Creche available on request – please speak to a Church Steward

Baptisms on Sunday mornings by arrangement with the Minister.

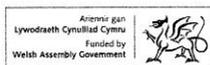
This Magazine is available on tape for the vision impaired and some of our services are recorded on tape for anyone unable to attend whether regularly or on a particular Sunday - please contact Jean K

The Magazine for July will be issued on 28th June 2015.

Items for inclusion should be with Jan T by 12th June 2015.

Redevelopment Fund-raising

Some of the funding we have been granted to assist with the building project, in order to improve facilities for community use, require that we should show the sponsors' logos on certain documents including magazines.



Funded by

The **Methodist** Church 

Dear friends,

Excitement, joy, thankfulness – these are no doubt some of the emotions that we will feel as we celebrate the launch of Uniting Church Sketty on the weekend of 30-31 May. As we celebrate with flowers depicting ‘A journey with God’, as we celebrate in our formal service on Saturday, in our family service on Sunday morning and in our songs of praise service on Sunday evening, we will be praising God for all that is past and thanking God for all that is to come.



And God will see us. God sees our thankfulness. God sees our joy. God sees our excitement. And I am sure, if we listen carefully that we will hear God saying ‘it is good’. But in our celebrations of who we are as we become Uniting Church Sketty, let us not forget the people God calls us to be – people who love and care for the wider world in which we live. And whilst we celebrate, many will mourn and many will struggle... The people of Nepal will be mourning those who have died and all that they have lost; refugees will take great risks to find somewhere safe that they can call home; millions of others will struggle to feed their families. And God sees all this too.

God sees. In the story of Hagar, as told in Genesis 16, Hagar flees her terrible situation. She finds herself in the wilderness, without hope, when an angel of the Lord appears to her. At the end of the conversation Hagar gives God a name – *El Roi*, the God Who Sees.

God sees when we try to flee our circumstances, oppressed by the challenges we face, overwhelmed by uncertainty. God sees.

God sees when we celebrate our new Uniting Church Sketty, overcome by joy and delight that it has finally come to pass. God sees.

This is what holds us together and holds us to God. Our understanding that God sees and God knows. May we see our world with God’s eyes. Thanks be to God.

With love,
Leslie

Uniting Church Sketty Logo, Strapline and Vision Statement

Our logo, designed by Liz Rosser, reflects the two strands of our churches intertwined together, meeting in the cross which is at the centre. It is reminiscent of a Welsh love spoon and symbolises our two churches becoming one. Thank you to Liz' son-in-law who worked his graphic design magic and turned Liz' design into a logo.

Developed in our Lent Faith and Fellowship sessions, when we examined the life of the church, and reflected on the kind of church we would like to be, Uniting Church Sketty also has a strapline and a vision statement. We recognise that such things are in themselves just words and have little meaning or relevance, unless we strive to live them out in our life together

Uniting together, Caring for all, Seeking God

Uniting together

We are ordinary people, living locally, trying to make sense of life, asking questions, seeking relationship with God and the world around us.

Caring for all

We try to be an open and inclusive church, which means: you are welcome whoever you are; you are welcome whatever your lifestyle; you are welcome wherever you may be on your faith journey.

Seeking God

We follow Jesus who showed us that the way we treat one another is as important as the beliefs we hold; that Christians must be concerned with injustice and suffering; that faith means acting with compassion and confronting evil.

Dry Rot in church- IMPORTANT INFORMATION

*The people saw, then cried “oh what!
It can’t be true, we’ve got dry rot?”
But yes, dear friends, dry rot we’ve got,
And dealing with it involves a lot!*

Levity and cringe-worthy poem aside, it has of course been most distressing to discover, so soon after the building was improved, that we have a serious case of dry rot. A small sub-group of our Finance and Property Team (fondly called the Fungus Group), led by Alan and Keith, have not stopped investigating the situation. Calling in experts, dealing with the insurance, getting quotes, treating the spores to prevent further spread.

With blessings, weddings and our celebration launch, it was almost impossible to see how we could get the work done during the month of May. In the event, it took until the middle of May to get quotes finalised and accepted and dates agreed. The work will start on Monday 1st June (immediately after our celebration) as the organ is disconnected and moved. The builders will then start work on Tuesday 2nd June. It is estimated that the work will take between three and four weeks.

Therefore, we anticipate that for the month of June, all our church services will be held in Bethel – our home away from home!

The Commitment for Life coffee morning on Saturday 6th June will now kindly be hosted by Mary J, at her home.

Other groups will be notified as to the arrangements over this period.

Yes, it’s going to be disruptive. And yes, there’s a possibility that if the rot is more extensive than we think, the work will take longer (we will keep you up-to-date). However we have a very good group of people overseeing the whole process, and on your behalf, I would like to thank them.

Leslie

NEW YOUTH GROUP

Mumbles and Sketty are working together to provide a Sunday evening youth group for young people in our two churches. It isn't viable for either church to run their own group, but we hope by working together we can offer something worthwhile. The group is for children in year 6 and above (top year of Juniors) and will meet at Mumbles from 6.30 to 8pm every Sunday evening. A number of people from Sketty have offered to help with the running of the group, and there will probably be at least two leaders from our church every Sunday. These people include: myself, Geoff, Linda, Alan, Les, Jackie, Jon, Eleanor and Elizabeth. The aim of the group is to provide an environment where our young people can have fun and chill out but also explore their faith. Please hold this new venture in your prayers.

Leslie

UNITING CHURCH SKETTY PASTORAL LIST

The Constitution of UCS requires us to keep a list of all congregation members. This is nothing new – both Bethel URC and Sketty Methodist (as all churches) kept a pastoral list. It's a way of ensuring that we can care for one another. The UCS Pastoral List will be maintained by Leslie and kept on her computer in a password protected file. It contains only names, addresses, telephone numbers and email. The only people who will have copies of this information are our church's pastoral visitors and members of the Leadership Team. The information will never be passed onto any outside body. Data protection laws mean that we must seek permission for your information to be held in this way. Please let Leslie know if you do not wish your information to be held for church purposes in this way. Thank you.

Leslie

CHRISTIAN AID SAYS, "WOW, THANK YOU!"

Despite the ongoing financial squeeze, this year, for the third year running, our contributions have increased. **Our grand total of £2411.43 is almost £800 up on last year.** In addition I have given in gift aided slips which will amount to almost another £400! (again a big increase on last year)

Our total was made up as follows:

1. Coffee Morning Sales Table - £171.39
Raffle - £ 34.50
Donations (box) - £ 43.60
Envelopes - £ 505
2. Congregation envelopes (10th & 17th) - £833
3. Cake sales (from Bob & Andy's Thanksgiving) - £88.15
4. Street collections - £685.79
5. Donation from Friday Night at the Movies - £50

I am sure you will agree that the above shows, once again, that by working together we have been able to reassure Loko and Adi and thousands like them that they are not alone and we do indeed stand with them.

So, on behalf of all those people who will benefit from your generosity and effort and from me personally, in appreciation of all your support, a very sincere thank you to each and every one of you.

Jan C

CORRECTION TO THE PREACHING PLAN FOR JUNE, JULY, AUGUST

On the front cover of the new plan under Supernumerary ministers please replace the name John Ellis with Ivor Rees. All of Ivor's other contact details are correct.

John Ellis is the visiting URC Moderator.

Gwen D

UNITING CHURCH SKETTY HAS A BANNER

The Tuesday afternoon craft group have been beavering away to produce a banner to commemorate this very special occasion. We have laughed and almost cried, but we hope you will enjoy looking at it as much as we have enjoyed making it. We spent weeks working on design ideas and eventually forged our final design based upon the following:

The Keystones, represent the building blocks.

The Dove, our symbol of Peace.

The Fish, the recognised Christian symbol.

Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.

The joining of the hands, symbolises inclusivity.

The whole design is then held together with intertwined ribbons signifying the joining of the two churches.

Making the banner has been a very enjoyable experience with members of both churches working together, pooling ideas and developing new skills. If you would like to join us on our next challenge, making banners for Siperire M and Brunswick Church, you would be very welcome. No experience necessary.

Kath D

METHODIST PRAYER HANDBOOK

Advance Notice. The Methodist Prayer Handbook 2015/16, entitled, Pilgrims on a Journey, will be published in August. It is a very useful aid to daily prayer. If you would like to have a copy, I will be taking orders in July. Copies will cost approximately £3.50.

Pat T

COMMITMENT FOR LIFE - BIG WEEKEND

On Saturday, 6th June, there will be a coffee morning from 10 to 12 in support of our church charity, Commitment for Life (Israel and occupied Palestinian territories). Due to the building work at our church, it will be held at my home, All are welcome.

It would be great to see a crowd eating the cakes and learning about the project. Hopefully you will want to follow this with the Commitment for Life Service the following day, Sunday 7th. (Envelope collection for Commitment for Life).

Delyth has written articles over the past few months giving examples of the work of the Christian Aid partners that Commitment for Life is supporting. Below is a personal account of what it's like living in Hebron at present.

A member of a Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT) in Hebron describes life for Palestinians in what is now the 48th year of the occupation of Palestine by Israel.

“Our preferred way to several of the places where we monitor the progress of children on their way to and from school, and to one kindergarten where we actually walk with the children, is via two checkpoints near the Ibrahimi Mosque. They are about 200 yards apart, at either end of a straight road. Using this road and the checkpoints at each end, it takes about ten minutes to be in place. For the last month we have not been allowed to use these checkpoints, and no-one knows why. After twenty years in Hebron, we have been denied access to a public road, with the result that it now takes nearly half an hour to reach the places where we need to be, either via a road closed to Palestinians, or via some very steep hills. Responding to emergencies, such as the detention of Palestinian children, or house invasions by the Israeli military, is very difficult indeed.”

The closure of that short stretch of road has changed our work immeasurably, though I can imagine some Palestinians saying, 'Now you know how we feel when we are not allowed to use Shuhada Street, or access our homes by the front door, and have to resort to circuitous routes, including ladders, to enter our houses (all true of several of our neighbours). But we would still like to know why. When challenged, soldiers always say, 'We have our orders. CPT cannot use this road.' They are supposed to produce a written order to that effect, but never can. We had arranged a meeting with a senior Israeli commander to discuss the situation, but he didn't turn up."

Our Communion collection in June will go to Christian Aid partners in the occupied territories, as this is now our Uniting Church Sketty charity for the year.

Commitment for Life is our way of supporting the Christian Aid partners in this area. For the past 20 years Commitment for Life, has been our church charity at Bethel, alternating with the three other countries in this scheme. We are looking forward to sharing this in our new Uniting Church!

Mary J

AMELIA TRUST FUND

To date the monthly quizzes have raised £35 towards our circuit project. The winners for May are Keith C and Isabel. Please claim your prizes when you see me. The quizzes for June are now available at 50p per sheet.

Janet N

TRAI DCRAFT

There will not be a Traidcraft Stall in June, normal service will be resumed on 19th July.

Pat T

METHODIST WOMEN IN BRITAIN

On May 9th, we welcomed Linda Crossley, Connexional President of MWiB, to Hall Street Church, Llanelli. Linda spoke about her visits to India to visit Dalit people (formerly known as untouchables).

India's population is 1.2 billion, which includes 200 million Dalits.

Every week 13 Dalits are murdered, 21 Dalit women are raped, 5 Dalit homes are burned and 6 Dalits are kidnapped or abducted. In villages where there are water pumps there are two – one for Dalits and one for those of higher castes.

Caste discrimination is illegal, by law, in India, but the law is not enforced. Caste discrimination is also an issue in Christian churches. Caste discrimination also still occurs in large Indian communities in the UK.

MWiB, in partnership with the Church in North India, has opened two hostels for girls, where they receive an education, advice and help to build their self-confidence. The girls enjoy staying in the hostels, even though their homes may be within walking distance, because they have a bed roll to sleep on, instead of the floor, they have nourishing food to eat and they clean their teeth with toothbrushes and not twigs. MWiB has produced a resources pack - "Dalit Solidarity" – if you would like to read it please see Janet N.

Booking Forms are now available for the MWiB Quiet Day at Nicholaston House on Tuesday 6th October. The theme for the day is "Welcome to the Feast". More details are available from Janet N

Janet N

UNIVERSITY THEOLOGY FREE PUBLIC LECTURES

On Tuesday, 2nd June at 7pm in the James Callaghan Lecture Theatre, there will be a Theology Public Lecture entitled, The History of The Church, by The Reverend Dr Miranda Threlfall-Holmes (Vicar of Belmont and Pittington in the Diocese of Durham; Former Chaplain and Research Fellow at University College, Durham University).

SKETTY MADCAPS - CHEQUE PRESENTATION

On Wednesday 22nd April, at our regular Madcaps evening, I am delighted to report that Rebecca Chick, who is the official Ty Hafan co-ordinator for the Swansea area, came along to accept our cheque of £1,500 for Ty Hafan. As well as informing us of the work carried out by the charity, Rebecca wanted to come and say thank you in person to Sketty Madcaps, for putting on the panto and allowing Ty Hafan to be the chosen charity on this occasion. Also, Rebecca wanted to thank the audience for supporting the event; for without your support, this wonderful amount of profit would not have been possible. So on Rebecca's behalf, and on behalf of everyone associated with Ty Hafan, thank you one and all for your support and for making such a large gift possible.

Just a reminder, Ty Hafan are holding a family fun day/open day at the Hospice on Saturday, 4th July. If anyone would like to attend, please see me a.s.a.p. so that we can make arrangements. This would allow people who are interested to see where the money has gone. With grateful thanks.

Paul H E

FRIDAY NIGHT @ THE MOVIES

Friday Night @ the Movies has been able to give £50 to the Amelia Trust Farm (Circuit Project); £50 to Ty Olwen and £50 to Christian Aid since October. FN@M is now taking a summer break and will probably restart in October.

Janet N

COVER TO COVER

On Thursday, 11th June at 10.30 we will be meeting at Mike and Ann W's home, Judith M will lead the discussion on The Thoughts and Happenings of Wilfred Price, Purveyor of Funerals, by Wendy Jones. All are welcome to join us in our discussions.

On 14th May, we discussed The Children Act, the recent novel by Ian McEwan. With mixed press reviews, we agreed that it was a well written and carefully researched book, detailing the intricacies of law involved in High Court Family Division cases.

It recounts a succession of cases, highlighting the legal precedents and the issues raised. These often cause the main character, High Court Judge, Fiona Maye, sleepless nights and stressful days. The separation of Siamese twins; the education of two Chareidim, Jewish Orthodox sisters whose parents prepare to separate and the application by a Health Authority for a High Court judgement in the case of a blood transfusion for an adolescent boy.

Although the plots are intricate, there's nothing in the writing of Fiona's private life that is as interesting as the legal arguments. Until, Fiona faces a decision of life and death. Legal decisions have consequences and these throw her into confusion and self-doubt. Separation between home and work had always seemed straightforward, but her private self and public function as an instrument of impartial law, begins to break down.

Adam Henry at 17 is legally a minor, he is intelligent, charming, musical and brought up by parents who are Jehovah's Witnesses. He has leukaemia, a blood transfusion could save him, but they refuse to consent to it. Fiona listens to all, then takes a decision with far-reaching effects on all their lives.

The book engaged us in discussions about other faiths and the Church's opinions on various cases, also the impact of professional work on private lives and the sacrifices made.

Sandra C

THURSDAY CIRCLE

The next meeting of the Thursday Circle will be held on 4th June 2015 at Bethel Hall @ 2.30pm. We look forward to welcoming back Rev. Kim Fabricius as our guest speaker. This will be our last meeting for the summer. All are welcome to join us.

We will reconvene on 3rd September 2015.

Pat 'B' D

REEL TO REAL

Sometimes in life, bad things happen to us to wake us up, make us change, refresh our lives and perhaps even alter our direction. "Brakes, break for a reason", says Mr. Kadam. This is the main message in our film for June, The Hundred-Foot Journey. This is without doubt a film full of food for thought, where people from different cultures come together and instead of making recipes of disaster, they concoct wonderful delights! It shows how a simple act of kindness and hospitality can lead to some treasured, life changing events. Does this sound a little familiar? Let's all be ready to embrace change and smell the roses or spices....! Due to the current building challenges that we now face, dates for viewing and discussion are yet to be arranged. These will be given in the weekly notices and sent out by email.

In our discussion for the film in April, The Reader, we soon realised that it raised worrying questions about human behaviour and how sometimes the most innocent of actions can have serious consequences. Also that it is all too easy to search out a scapegoat who will carry the blame for others. We looked carefully at the biblical definition of a scapegoat. After the discussion, Les wrote down his response to the film and then, with a little persuasion, agreed to share his written thoughts and ideas. These have been sensitively expressed and help us put the whole situation into perspective. Many thanks to Les.

Jan T & Judith M

FURTHER THOUGHTS ON THE READER

As children, we are read to about rabbits and bears that live in houses, are a bit like us, but also rather different. That is something that helps us to empathise and relate to other people, who are also a bit like us but can be rather different. Different colour of skin, different clothes, different culture etc.

The reader is emotionally damaged and “stuck” in a childhood condition where, although she can relate and empathise with people in the stories that are read to her, she has not developed the ability to do this in real life. To her real life is something that happens to her, over which she feels no control and real people are not easy to relate to.

The relationship with the young boy becomes something special simply because it is like something out of a story rather than something out of real life.

The reader lives in a world where it is only when she is being read to that she can really feel the warmth of real relationships. Thus, it was only when she *read* the memoir about the camps that the people became real to her and the impact of what she had done to other human beings became *real* to her.

Her learning to read had also had a profound impact on her sense of “self”. She started to understand that events don’t always just happen to you, you can do things that allow you to “take control” of your life.

These two facts together made the situation unbearable, the self knowledge that she could have done things differently together with the realisation of the characters she played a part in destroying. She needed to use her newly gained self-confidence to take control of this situation and she did it by taking the action that she did.

Les Want

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

BETHEL ELDERS

At the end of May, Sonia B and Denis E stood down as Serving Elders. Grateful thanks to Denis who served Bethel as Church Treasurer for over twenty years. He not only used his considerable gifts to ensure that we were always within budget and able to meet payments to the URC, but he has always had a Christian understanding of church finances. He believed in giving away what we could, while maintaining proper responsibility for our assets of the church buildings and manse. Denis continues to serve the church as a member of the Finance and Property Committee and has offered to keep his pastoral duties.

Sonia has carried out her many duties relating to the church lettings most efficiently, diplomatically pointing out any problems and difficulties; not to be underestimated! Sonia has offered to continue with these responsibilities, for which we are most grateful. Sonia's pastoral list has been distributed amongst the Serving Elders.

Pat D

ROBIN H CALLS IT A DAY

It is never easy to say an adequate "thank you" to someone such as Robin H. For so many years, he has been our "lighting and sound man" both in church and all our associated activities. Certainly in the early years MADCAPs would never have managed without his expertise. The problem with the tasks that he often took on was no one noticed he was there or what he was doing. However, had he been absent or had something gone wrong, then we would all have noticed, and what would we have done - called for Robin of course! So a sincere thank you Robin for all you have done for our church family and the wider community and I am sure you will continue to support us should the need arise.

Myrddin

WELSH LIBRARIAN OF THE YEAR SHORTLIST

Congratulations to Ian G who was short-listed for the Welsh Librarian of the Year Award. Although Ian didn't win, he and Susan enjoyed a lovely meal at the awards ceremony. Well done Ian.

Leslie Noon

MARY H OUR HIGHLY ACCLAIMED LOCAL ARTIST

Mary's new exhibition is now on display at Oriel Bach, Dunns Lane, Mumbles. It opened on 25th May and will continue up to and including 6th June. Opening times 11am-4pm Mon-Sat. There are two collections, one entitled Storm, the other After The Wild Winter.

WE SEND BELATED BIRTHDAY GREETINGS IN MAY TO:

Rio on the 8th May
Oscar on the 12th May
Heidi J on the 15th May
Megan on the 18th May
Skye on the 25th May
Jacob E on the 26th May

WE SEND BIRTHDAY GREETINGS IN JUNE TO:

Abby L on the 3rd
Louis J on the 6th
Ayla O on the 9th
Alana T on the 14th
Isabel B on the 20th
Anaya P on the 21st
William T on the 26th

COMING EVENTS

Services: 10.30am & 6.30pm

Adventurers: 10.30am

On Sundays a Steward will introduce the preacher and ask the congregation to stand as the Bible is brought in.

Please stay and have refreshments with us after the morning service,

There is an induction loop for those with hearing aids.

There are large print versions of hymns and notices at the door.

At evening services the plate is placed for your offerings as you enter.

Weekly in term-time:

Monday 2pm Folk-dancing

7pm Wesley Club

Tuesday 2-4 Craft Group

4.30-5.30 Beavers

5.45-7 Cubs

7.15-8.30 Scouts

Wednesday 10-11.30 Sunbeams Play Group

2-4 Computer Club

6.15-7.30 Brownies

7.30 Sketty Madcaps

Thursday 7.30-9.30 Explorers

Uniting Church Sketty weekly newsheet. Please send by Friday morning to Lynne W

Property Stewards:

Alan J

Keith M

Booking enquiries and heating requirements to Kath & Bill D

JUNE DIARY

- 1 Mon 7pm Wesley Club: Tony Fitzgerald, My Life in Films.
2 Tues 7.30 Killay/Dunvant House Group
4 Thurs 2.30 Thursday Circle Bethel Hall
6 Sat 10-12 Coffee Morning in aid of Commitment for Life
7 Sun 10.30 Rev Leslie Noon
6.30 Heather
8 Mon 7pm Wesley Club: Ann Marie Thomas, Alina -
White Lady of Oystermouth
11 Thurs 10.30 Cover to Cover at Ann & Mike W's home
14 Sun 10.30 Rev John J
6.30 Rev Leslie Noon: Communion
15 Mon 7pm Wesley Club: Chris L, Save the Children
21 Sun 10.30 Selina
6.30 Ann G
22 Mon 7pm Wesley Club: Chris Pike & Friends, Entertainers
25 Thurs 7.30 Reel to Real discussion venue to be arranged
28 Sun 10.30 Rev Kim F
4.30 Rev Leslie Noon
6.30 Rev Leslie Noon
29 Mon 7pm Wesley Club: A.G.M.

Quotes' Corner: Just a little something to make us think.
(Found in a 1973 Clapham URC Magazine)

"A pessimist is a person who blows out the light to see how dark it is."

"Courage is fear that has said its prayers."

Rotas: If you are unable to fulfil your place on a rota, please make other arrangements or contact the organiser.

Welcome Teams: Myrddin

JUNE 7

Harry
Graham
David P

JUNE 14

Joyce
Allan & Jo
Caroline
Tina

JUNE 21

Ian & Susan

Gwyn
Shirley

JUNE 28

Enid
David K
Jacqueline
Jan T

Evening

Jeff

Paul

Keith

Ann

Sound Recording

Robin H

Harry

Myrddin

Bill

Flowers: Rosemary

Giver:

Sonia B

Pam T

Lynne

Eileen

Arranger:

Enid

Pam

Lynne

Rosemary

Sunday Morning Coffee: Anja

Pauline

Jane

Linda

Susan

Pam

Laurie

Alan

Ian

Pat B.

Elizabeth

Ann W

Margaret

Distribution of the Flowers: Anne W

Janet N

Mary J

Jan T

Gwen D