

DECEMBER 2015/JANUARY 2016
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

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

Refreshments in Bethel Hall 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. Please contact Jean K

Please submit all items for the February magazine to Jan T by Friday, 22nd January 2016.

The Magazine for February will be issued on Sunday, 1st February, 2016.

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.




The Methodist Church

Letter from the Manse

Dear Friends,

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6)

Prince of Peace, what a wonderful, hopeful title. Except, when we consider our world today, there seems to be little peace. As I write this, we are in the aftermath of terrorist attacks in Mali, Paris, Beirut and Lebanon. As I write this, innocent civilians are fleeing war-devastated countries as they seek to live their lives in peace. As I write this, the number of attacks on UK Muslims has increased by 300%.

And we are left with not knowing what our response should be – and this is deeply troubling. We recognise that we cannot change the world. But at our Church Meeting held in November we did decide to make a stand for peace and to write letters of support to our Muslim friends living in Swansea. As we prepare to receive once again the Prince of Peace, I leave you with the text of the letter, kindly drafted by Kim F, and which I sent to the three main Mosques in Swansea on your behalf. I copy it below so that you may know what was sent on your behalf.

In the meantime, may you, this Advent and Christmas, know a sense of God's peace in your hearts and lives, breaking into the midst of your own lives.

With love, *Leslie*

LETTER SENT TO LOCAL MOSQUES

“In the name of the One God, the Compassionate, the Merciful, we greet you on behalf of Uniting Church Sketty. In the wake of the horrific events in Paris, we write to express our concern about their impact in the UK, particularly on the Muslim community.

The BBC has recently reported that hate crimes against Muslims in London have risen by 70% in the past year. Since the terrorist attacks, there have been disturbing reports of verbal and physical abuse against Muslims around Britain, and such incidents will no doubt increase in the weeks ahead. The toxic combination of panic and fear, religious ignorance, and xenophobic scapegoating suggests that we should not be complacent about Islamophobic violence occurring in Swansea.

In this ominous context we, as a church, reaffirm our solidarity with Islam in the fundamental principles of love of God and neighbour, and in our common search for peace and justice. We also express an especial concern for the safety and wellbeing of Muslims in Swansea during these troubled times. We will, of course, remember you in our prayers, but if there is any practical support that we can give you, please let us know. Both the Qur’an and the Bible say that God is able, and we are ready to work with you opposing what is evil and defending what is good.

May God unite us in purpose and peace.

In friendship,

Rev Leslie Noon

On behalf of all the members of Uniting Church Sketty”

New Year Open House at the Manse

Please do drop in to the Open House at the Manse any time between:

10.30am to 3.30pm on Saturday 9th January 2016

Pop in any time – have a chat and a drink and catch up with friends.
We'd love to see you!

P. S. If anyone can offer a couple of hours to help Leslie and Geoff serve teas and coffees, that would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Leslie!



Advent 2015

We all know how the commercial and materialistic side of Christmas can take over. It is vital therefore that we take time to prepare ourselves to engage with all that the birth of Christ means for us and for our world. All are welcome at our Faith and Fellowship sessions – no expertise is needed, come as you are!

Tuesdays 10 – 11.30am

1 December, 8 December, 15 December

Thursdays at 7.30 - 9pm

10 December, 17 December

CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT UNITING CHURCH SKETTY

Come and join us for our Christmas Services. Why not bring a family member, a neighbour or a friend with you. Don't keep the good stuff to yourself!!

SUNDAY 20th DECEMBER

10.30am Nativity Service

Our children and young people will once again present the ancient story of the birth of Jesus – but as ever with a modern twist.

6.30pm Carols by Candlelight

The Church will be decorated, the candles will be lit, and once again we start our preparation for Christmas by singing carols, by hearing the story in new and old ways and by sharing together in hot drinks and refreshments.

THURSDAY 24th DECEMBER, CHRISTMAS EVE

3pm Ready, Steady Christmas Service

If you aren't able to come to the later Christmas Communion, then come along to this alternative Christmas Eve Service.

11.30pm Christmas Communion

“When the world was dark, and the city was quiet, God crept in beside us”. This quiet, communion service is in many ways the meeting place of heaven and earth as we greet the Christ-Child.

FRIDAY 25th DECEMBER, CHRISTMAS DAY

10am Family Service

Bring a present with you to our family service when we celebrate together the birth of Christ. How else would you want to start your Christmas Day? Please note the time of 10am!!

THE STABLE TRAIL

Following the incredible response in 2013 when around 600 people, 400 children and 200 adults, came to encounter the Gospel message of Christ's coming at Christmas.

THE STABLE TRAIL IS BACK!

WHEN? Saturday 12th December 2015.

WHERE? Come to Reynoldston Village Hall. SA3 1AA

TIME? Trails set off about every 10 minutes
from 10.30 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 pm to 4 pm.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

Follow South Gower Messy Church on Facebook

AN AMAZING, UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE FOR EVERYONE!

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS ON SATURDAY, 19th DECEMBER

It is now our custom at Christmas to decorate the church with poinsettias in memory of loved ones. We invite you this year to bring a poinsettia to Bethel, in memory of loved ones, on Saturday, December 19th between 1.30pm and 3pm. Thank you.

Rosemary B

CAROL SERVICE ON SUNDAY 20th DECEMBER

Mince pies, mulled wine (non-alcoholic), tea and coffee will be served in the hall following the Carol Service. If you would be willing to either make or buy a few mince pies, could you please sign the list in the porch. If you have any queries about this event please, speak to either Gaynor B or Gwen D.

SAMARITAN CHRISTMAS BOXES - A MAGNIFICENT RESPONSE

Yet again our church family has come up trumps and we have been able to send a shoe box to 152 children. These are real tangible messages to remind them that they are loved and remembered by people who they will never see.

For one reason or another, our Wesley packing boxes open evening, had as many Wesley apologies as members present. However, our church family rallied around and we had a very full hall beavering away with excellent results. Extra boxes have been brought in by individuals, hence the magnificent total this year. Additionally, so many people have brought gifts for boxes and, or given financial contributions to buy items. Therefore, we will now be able to ensure that as many boxes as possible leave our warehouse looking worthy of those children who will receive them.

Our communion collection for October, totalled £245. This, together with a contribution of £55 from Wesley Club funds, means that we have ensured transport costs for all our boxes. The conclusion of our church efforts this year, was our very moving and thoughtful service of blessing from Leslie.

Please forgive me for writing the above in detail, but I have been so touched by the way people have given of their time, their money and themselves. The result is that this year, EVERY member of our WHOLE CHURCH FAMILY has contributed; truly the “faith, hope and love” which Leslie spoke of, in action. Therefore, on behalf of the children we will never meet, but to whom we send our love and prayers, a very sincere THANK YOU to EVERYONE.

Jan C

CHRISTMAS AND CAROL SERVICE COLLECTIONS

Zambuko ra Jehovah (Zimbabwe AIDS orphans) is the circuit and Uniting Church Sketty project for the next two years. The project launched in October and we are now responsible for the education and care of 30 boys and girls who have lost either one or both of their parents from AIDS. The project pays for school fees and uniforms, which every child in school has to wear. We also provide some basic food rations. I am a member of the Zambuko committee and we are anxious to make best use of our funds. At present, there is a problem with the flow of water from the well, which was provided by the church in Coventry that we have taken over from. When the well is fixed, we would like to look into starting a vegetable garden beside the school. Revd Siperire is helping us to find out more about each child that we are looking after, which we hope will encourage us in our fund raising. Our Christmas and carol service collections will be for our "Zimbabwe Orphans", which I hope you agree will be a very appropriate focus for our giving this Christmas.

With thanks for all the support and help that has got our project up and running!

Mary J

COMMUNION COLLECTIONS IN DECEMBER – STEPPING STONES

The December collection will be for Stepping Stones, an Action for Children project based in Killay which works with pre-school children with an emerging or diagnosed disability. It is the only facility of the kind in the area and some of our congregation have been involved with it for a long time.

We will also have a Christmas collection for Zimbabwe AIDS Orphans, which is both our church and the circuit project for the year.

Susan G

COMMUNION COLLECTIONS IN JANUARY - SHELTERBOX

This month, our committee have decided to support Shelterbox, which is based in Cornwall. It was set up in 2000 to provide immediate emergency aid to countries affected by disasters such as hurricanes, typhoons, and earthquakes. Its aim is to send essential aid to people who have lost their homes and all their possessions. As the name suggests, Shelterbox provides emergency accommodation. Each emergency box contains:-
relief tents; ground sheets; water carriers, thirstaid stations; thermal blankets; tool kits; Luminaid, kitchen sets and soft toys. When the charity began, they only had one depot base and that was in Cornwall. Now they have a number of centres in different parts of the world, enabling them to respond faster when a disaster occurs. Their aim is to reach and offer assistance within forty eight hours as this is the vital period of time when help is most needed. Since Shelterbox was established, they have given emergency aid to over 250 different disasters in over 90 different countries.

Paul E

Quotes' Corner: Just a little something to make us think.

“All people smile in the same language.”

“A smile is the lighting system of the face and the heating system of the heart.”

Anon

TALKING OF MARRIAGE AND RELATIONSHIPS

Both the Methodist and the United Reformed Churches have been exploring the issue of marriage and relationship's in today's world. Within the Church many people have views about human relationships and the nature and purpose of marriage. In 2014 a change in the law enabled the introduction of same-sex civil marriage. As Christians we should engage with this issue honestly, prayerfully and graciously in a process of deep reflection and discernment about matters relating to marriage and human relationship.

All URC and Methodist Churches have been asked to undertake such a conversation. Therefore Uniting Church Sketty will be holding a one-off meeting in which we too can engage with these conversations.

This conversation will be held in the Bethel Hall on

Friday 15th January at 8pm.

All are invited to come and participate in this conversation. No vote will be taken, it is not that sort of meeting. It is instead an opportunity to explore our views and listen to others. That's why we're calling it a 'conversation'!

WESLEY SITE UPDATE AND THE PLIGHT OF THE PEWS

In our last church meeting, Alan J reported that all appeared to be on track. Apart from one small delay, due to building control requirements, now resolved, completion is in line with the original schedule at the end of February 2016.

It was also announced that Keith M was currently talking to potential buyers for the pews. However, it was agreed that members of our congregation should have the opportunity to obtain one of them, if they wanted to. Therefore, if anyone is interested, please contact Keith

Jan T

BETHEL PLACE OF REFUGE

On Friday November 6th our Bethel hall was fortunately occupied by our young Tiny Toes ballet class. Whilst the youngsters were dancing in the hall and the mothers were waiting in the Elders' Room a badly injured dog limped in and lay down battered and bleeding on the floor. With good sense and compassion they called for help and comforted the dog. The dog warden attended and took the injured one to the St James vet hospital close by in Gower Road. The dog was chipped and we later learned that he was panicked by fireworks whilst in Singleton Park, fled away from the owner and was knocked over. Meanwhile the mothers very thoughtfully cleaned up the blood in the kitchen and the Elders' Room. I learned from the vet next day that despite the cuts and some broken bones there was a good chance he would survive. He was subsequently taken to the owners' own vet in Gower and I was pleased to hear he is on the road to recovery. He was not the only dog to be brought to St James after injuries resulting from loud firework bangs.

Good dog for finding help at Bethel, get well soon and thanks to the ballet mothers – chocolates all round!

Sonia B

METHODIST WOMEN IN BRITAIN

MWiB in the South Wales area is planning to produce a recipe book to sell to raise funds for MWiB projects overseas and at home. If you have any tried and tested recipes you would like to share, please give them to Janet N by the end of January. Recipes can include starters, main courses, desserts, cakes, vegetarian, gluten free etc.. Recipes are welcome from women, men and young people; anyone who wants to share good food.

Janet N

THURSDAY CIRCLE

The Christmas meeting of the Thursday Circle will take place in Bethel Hall on 3rd December 2015 at 2-00pm. Rev. Leslie, will lead our Devotions and Rev. Kim will also attend. We are looking forward to welcoming our sisters of the Wesley Club to join us for Carols and a Festive tea. A warm welcome to all, ladies and gentlemen. Christmas Blessings to all at Uniting Church Sketty from Thursday Circle.

Advance Notice -

The Thursday Circle will re-convene on February 4th 2016.

Pat B D

REEL TO REAL

Copies of our film for November and December are now being circulated. Unstoppable, tells the story of a runaway freight train and the two men who attempt to stop it. A massive unmanned locomotive roars out of control but the threat is more ominous than just a derailment. The train is laden with toxic chemicals and an accident would decimate human life and cause an environmental disaster. The only hope of bringing the train to a safe stop is in the hands of a veteran engineer and a young conductor. These unlikely heroes risk everything as they realise what really matters in life. This film is inspired by true events in 2001 in Ohio USA.

Our discussion dates for the film will be in early January - please keep an eye out for the sign-up sheets which will be in the porch later this month. All are welcome, and if you would like to see a copy of the film please contact me.

Sandra C

CRAFT GROUP

The craft group have finished for this term. We will meet again on the 12th January 2016. We will not be meeting on the 22nd Feb as this is half term.

Kath D

TRAIDCRAFT

The next Traidcraft stall will be on 13th December after the morning service. Perhaps you will find some last minute Christmas gifts!

Jackie & Gary C

THEOLOGY PUBLIC LECTURE PROGRAMME AT SWANSEA UNIVERSITY

On Monday, 18th January 2016, a Montgomery Trust Lecture, by Dr Rebecca Nye, researcher, consultant and trainer in the field of Children's Spirituality, and entitled, "Teaching Christ to Children?" will take place in the James Callaghan Lecture Theatre. All are welcome, free of charge.

PANTO ANTIPASTO

Latest news from the rehearsal room; according to **Zoe Ontheball**. Just a quick taste of what's to come in February when our Church Panto hits the stage with a colourful, wonderful show, that promises to be an absolute hoot, packed, as always, with humour and fun. If like me, you love all Flower Fairies, look forward to a bouquet of delights; apart from one fallen fairy, Fairy Black, who has a resentful and withered heart. The Regal Family are full of farce, but have been blessed with a beautiful daughter, so cute. There are outrageous, Downtonesque dames, full of force and fun, played skillfully with naughtiness, wit and wigs. The hero and heroine are love's delight, fated to be together, as no web of deceit will stand as a barrier to the power of love. Amor vincit Omnia! All are dusted down with the special magic of our delectable and gorgeous Fairy Godmother, who soothes all worries and emotions and calms all perils and commotions. We meet many incredible characters, including Saucy Susie, as we travel in search of a solution to the panto's conundrum. Heralds abound, announcing tidings of great joy, whether girl or boy. All are equals in this panto!

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

We offer our thoughts and prayers for Jean E who is unwell at the moment an undergoing treatment.

We offer our thoughts and prayers for Andy and Bob who have had a recent bereavement in the family.

WE SEND BELATED BIRTHDAY GREETINGS FOR NOVEMBER TO:

Ryan on the 23rd

WE SEND BIRTHDAY GREETINGS IN DECEMBER TO:

James on the 1st

Eliot on the 6th

Gleb on the 10th

Chloe on the 15th

Felix on the 19th

Phoebe on the 26th

WE SEND BIRTHDAY GREETINGS IN JANUARY TO:

Aimee on the 9th

Tabitha on the 13th

Ellie Mai on the 14th

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 in Bethel Hall.

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	2-4pm Craft Group
	4.30-5.30 Beavers
	5.45-7 Cubs
	7.15-8.30 Scouts
Wednesday	10-11.30 Sunbeams Play Group
	6.15-7.30 Brownies
	7.30 Sketty Madcaps
Thursday	7.30-9.30 Explorers

Uniting Church Sketty weekly notices:

Lynne W (Please send to Lynne by Friday morning)

Property Stewards:

Alan J and Keith M

Gwyn B (Bethel property)

Booking enquiries and heating requirements: Kath & Bill D

Bethel booking and heating requirements: Sonia B

DECEMBER DIARY

- 1 Tues 7.30pm Killay/Dunvant House group
3 Thurs 2pm Thursday Circle, Bethel Hall
3 Thurs 7.30pm Circuit Meeting Mumbles Methodist Church
6 Sun 10.30 Rev Leslie Noon: Communion
6.30 Rev John Jones
7 Mon 7pm Wesley Club: Rev. John & Linda A,
Music and poetry of Sidney Carter.
12 Sat 10.30am-12.30pm & 2pm-4pm Stable Trail at Reynoldston
13 Sun 10.30 Rev Simon Walkling
6.30 Rev Leslie Noon: Communion
14 Mon 7pm Wesley Club: Rev Kim F, Christmas devotions.
20 Sun 10.30 Rev Leslie Noon
6.30 Rev Leslie Noon : Carol Service
27 Sun 10.30 Heather
6.30 No Service this evening
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JANUARY DIARY

- 3 Sun 10.30 Rev Leslie Noon: Communion
6.30 Rev Noel Davies
5 Tues 7.30pm Killay/Dunvant Housegroup
10 Sun 10.30 Rev John Dews
6.30 Rev Leslie Noon: Communion
11 Mon Wesley Club, New Year lunch at Sketty Hall
17 Sun 10.30 Rev Leslie Noon
6.30 Rev Siperire Mugadzaweta
18 Mon 7pm Wesley Club: Entertainers. Chris Pike and friends.
24 Sun 10.30 Rev John Jones
6.30 Rev Leslie Noon
25 Mon 7pm Wesley Club: Rev Pam Cram. Traidcraft Trip to Cuba.
31 Sun 10.30 Rev Noel Davies
6.30 Rev Betty McNiven

DECEMBER ROTAS:

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

Welcome Teams: Myrddin

6 Dec	13 Dec	20 Dec	27 Dec
Allan & Joe	Ian & Susan	Jan T	Ian & Judith

Caroline	Shirley	David Myrddin	Sonia
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Evening

Keith	Anne	Jeff	Pat D
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Flowers: Rosemary

Giver:

Chris L	Harold	Gaynor	Christmas poinsettias
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Arranger:

Rosemary	Enid	Rosemary
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Distribution of the Flowers: Anne W

Shirley	Mary	Christmas poinsettias
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Sunday Morning Coffee: Paul H Evans 426045

Kath & Bill	Jane & Laurie	Judith & Ian	Julie
Mary J	Paul E	Pat B D	

JANUARY ROTAS:

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

Welcome Teams: Myrddin

3 Jan	10 Jan	17 Jan	24 Jan	31 Jan
Harry	Allan & Joe	Ian & Susan	Enid	Ian & Judith
Graham	Tina		David	Alan & Liz
David	Caroline	Shirley	Jan T	Sonia
	Paul		Jacqueline	

Evening

Myrddin	Paul	Keith	Ann	Jeff
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Flowers: Rosemary

Giver:

Jennifer	Pam E	Pam T	Lynne	Jean K
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Arranger:

Jennifer	Pam E	Pam T	Lynne	Una
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Distribution of the Flowers: Anne

Sonia	Margaret	Maggie	Jan T	Pat B D
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Sunday Morning Coffee: Paul

Gary & Jackie	Jon & Sandra	Julie	Ian & Susan	Una
Elizabeth	Clare	Liz	Margaret	Pat D
		Myrna		Sandra

CHRISTMAS CAROLS QUIZ

Can you decipher the real titles of these exaggerated titles of very familiar Christmas songs? Answers to Janet N please. There are two prizes, one for adults and one for children.

Closing date for entries 10th January 2016.

1. From dark 'til dawn, soundless and sanctimonious.
2. Celestial messengers from splendid empires.
3. In a distant bovine diner.
4. Universal elation.
5. Ornament the enclosure with large sprigs of berry bearing evergreen.
6. O miniature Nazarene village.
7. May Jehovah grant unto you.
8. Those of you who are true, come here!
9. Primary Yuletide.
10. Heavenly cherubs announcing in song, listen

