

# **NOVEMBER 2016**

**The Magazine  
of  
UNITING CHURCH SKETTY**

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**Dillwyn Road, Sketty, Swansea SA2 9AE  
[www.unitingchurchsketty.org.uk](http://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 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.

Also, we are able to record some of our services for anyone unable to attend, whether regularly or on a particular Sunday.

Please contact **Jean K** for further details.

**Please submit all items** for the **December/January** magazine to Jan T by  
**Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> November 2016.**

**The Magazine for December/January** will be issued on **Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> December 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.



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

 **The Methodist Church**

## From the Manse

Dear Friends,

I have no idea what's in store for us! In a week's time we will be picking up a new puppy to bring home, so by the time you read this, he will be a new edition to the Noon household. Of course we are looking forward to cuteness, love and fun. But we are also aware that there might be sleepless nights, chewed furniture and messes to clean up. But at the time of writing this, we really have no proper idea! No doubt I shall be keeping you up to date as time goes on!

You could say the same thing about other forthcoming events in our church. We have some brand new events never before undertaken coming up, as well as events that we are a bit more familiar with. Look out later in our magazine for information on:

- An old-fashioned church social and games evening for all the family on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November. Come and join the fun!
- Faith and Fellowship Advent studies as we immerse ourselves in the story by watching the BBC film The Nativity.
- The Mosque Return Visit on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November. Following our visit to them in March, we are looking forward to hosting a return visit.
- Outdoor Nativity with other churches in Sketty on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December. An exciting opportunity to present the Christmas story to the shoppers in Sketty and Killay.
- The Swansea Night Shelter, once again being hosted in our church on Saturdays in January.

**I hope you will make a note of all these things in your diary and support** and join in with some of them! If you think about it, between them they cover the full range of Christian activity: discipleship, service and evangelism.

With best wishes, *Leslie*

## **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD COFFEE MORNING**

A very big thank you to everyone who braved the weather to come to the coffee morning on Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> October. Special thanks to those who made the coffees or helped man the tables and sales items. We were thrilled with a total of over £400 which will provide the Swansea warehouse with money to purchase fillers to top up any boxes which require items. We always feel in the first few days of opening the warehouse that we cannot possibly need all the extra items we have obtained and yet, by the time the last few boxes are being cartoned, we will be out of all the extra hats, soap and toothpastes we have gathered. We like to believe that every child who receives a box, sent from the Swansea warehouse, will be thrilled with the contents, but this often means adding items where some boxes do not meet our high standards.

The warehouse this year is in a similar area to last year. It is **Unit 7, Tower Court, St David's Industrial Estate, SA6**. We plan to open on 7<sup>th</sup> November, but it will probably be the 14<sup>th</sup> November before many of the boxes start arriving. Everyone is welcome to visit to see the work in progress or possibly to volunteer for a few hours; all help will be greatly appreciated. This year, we understand that the first collection of boxes will go to Liberia on 25<sup>th</sup> November, with a further two collections going to Ukraine and Romania. If you need further details of help required, warehouse opening hours or details of how to get there, please contact Alan or Linda J or Jan C. A huge big thank you to everyone for all your support.

**Linda J**

## **MEETING OF THE URC NATIONAL SYNOD OF WALES 15<sup>th</sup>OCTOBER**

Five members of Bethel made the journey to Carno in mid Wales for the Autumn Synod, where worship was led by the Moderator, Rev Simon Walkling. All were concerned that Rev Kevin Watson, newly appointed as one of the Moderators of General Assembly, was unable to attend due to a newly diagnosed illness. Prayers were said for him, for Simon and his family, as Simon's mother is very ill and for Chris Coe, who has had to resign, for reasons of ill health, from his post as Rural Officer.

As Bethel's representative on Synod, I voted on a number of procedural issues, none of which were controversial, but if anyone is interested I can give you the details!

The Learning Leadership and Mission Board (LLMB) reported that there had been no response to a second advertisement for a Training Officer in South Wales which is very disappointing.

However, on a brighter note, the Rev. Sally Thomas, Ecumenical Officer has been re-appointed until November 2019 when she will retire. This was agreed following a review of the post and of her work. As Chair of LLMB, I am now on a small group charged with implementing the recommendations of the review.

The last Synod focused on education, this Synod discussed mental health issues. There was a very moving session in which the new Church Related Community Worker in Bettws, shared what it means to live with mental health problems. One of the staff of Synod office spoke about what it means to have a son with a mental health condition and subsequently others present shared their own experiences. There has been a focus in the press recently about the needs of mental health sufferers and their families and the fact that there is under resourcing to support these needs. It is something of which we should be sensitively mindful, accepting and prayerful. I

was probably not the only one to be surprised at how many of those present, some of whom I thought I knew fairly well, live on a daily basis with sadness and stress.

Aberfan was remembered in the closing worship. Many of us know people who were involved in this horrendous tragedy and who can never talk about it. For Mrs Jeanne Jones an Elder in Merthyr, there were particularly harrowing memories. Her husband was one of the local GPs in Aberfan and he was one of the first on the scene. He identified the body of the Headteacher of the school, to save her family from doing so. He discovered that his partner's son had been killed and that all those who died had been his patients. Mrs Jones paid tribute to the churches and their ministers and in particular Rev Erastus Jones who returned to Aberfan and continued to work there for many years; known to us, he did wonderful and sustained work in terrible circumstances. Mrs Jones also said that although the scars will always be there, there is still a thriving Community Centre on the site of the school and new life does go on.

**Pat D**

### **ACTION FOR CHILDREN**

Once again the Action for Children organisation will benefit from the generous donation we are able to give them as a result of our Communion collections last month and several additional donations. When the Gift Aid facility is used it can boost funds considerably and so our grand total this year, which includes the addition of Gift Aid that Action for Children can claim, is £704. 77p. On behalf of the needy children who will benefit, I would like to say a very big THANK YOU to everyone.

**Maggie C.**

## **ABERFAN – A MEMORY**

The Aberfan disaster happened on **Friday, 21 October, 1966** and its memory is being observed across Wales and in radio and television programmes. On that morning Delyth and I were in my birthplace in the Rhondda Valley. Rain clouds came low down the hillsides. A neighbour said, “Something terrible has happened over the mountain.” The television was switched on and we saw! I felt as though the ground was cut from under my feet. Ours was the last house in our street – next to it was a disused coal tip. Almost all the men in my family for at least two generations worked in the mines. One branch goes back at least four generations to a great-great-grandfather at Beaufort, Ebbw Vale. My great-grandfather received the Albert Medal (2<sup>nd</sup> Class) for his part in the rescue at the Tynewydd Colliery, Porth, in 1877. My mother’s brother was killed in a mine accident when I was twelve; a cousin had 90% pneumoconiosis before his thirtieth birthday and never worked again. My father was brought home on several occasions with “minor injuries” which kept him idle for weeks. I have been reminded of my own moments of insecurity when awaiting my father’s hoped-for safe return at the end of a shift. Added to that was the fact that my father and his father were born in the next village to Aberfan. I was overwhelmed by the need to do something.

On returning home that day I phoned my friend, Derwyn Morris Jones, who was chaplain to the mayor of Merthyr Tydfil that year. He asked me to be at Aberfan by 8.00 am on the following Monday. Fifty years later, a series of “snap shots” remain in my memory. I drove up on what is now the Heads of the Valleys Road and turned right for Merthyr Tydfil. Immediately there was a road block. When I told the police that I came at the request of the mayor’s chaplain, I

was allowed through. What struck all visitors at that time was the utter silence in the industrial village; the streets were virtually deserted. Huge machines stood in the street near the school and children came to look at them. The pain hanging over the village was to be felt as clearly as Friday's clouds were to be seen. Derwyn and I represented the local churches, whose clergy were as shocked as their flocks, most had lost many or all of their children at a time of large Sunday Schools. We were based in the bar of a local pub, which was temporarily closed. Against one wall, behind tables, sat half a dozen funeral directors from across South East Wales, whilst Derwyn and I sat at the other end. Our work was to arrange the community funeral, planned for the following Thursday. Parents came to say whether their child(ren) were to share in the communal grave or have a private funeral. Our forms listed name and age, address and church, communal or private arrangements; if communal, did they wish their child(ren) to lie next to friends. Tribute should be paid to the funeral directors, who volunteered their services, performing their duties with great sympathy, dignity and kindness. This whole task was completed by Wednesday. The narrow roads to Aberfan cemetery are very difficult for hearses at the best of times. There were over a hundred to be buried. The work of collecting those for communal burial began at 8.00 am on Thursday and everything was in place before the families arrived for the 3.00 pm service. Early that morning, Derwyn and I needed to visit a local minister. On our return, we crossed another old tip; at its end we looked down on a little one sided street; there were five hearses close together. Derwyn went to one house and I went to another. I received a warm welcome, sat in a wooden armchair by the fire and was given a cup of tea. I asked if they had lost anyone.

The wife replied, “Two of our three children, brother and sister and my mother who was the first to be killed in a farm house.”

I tried to express sympathy, but could say nothing else. I just sat with them in silence for a while and then left.

My silence has bothered me for fifty years until, last week, when I recalled the words of Ezekiel 3.15, when he visited the sorrowing exiles in Babylon: “And I sat where they sat.” Maybe it did help a little.

The funeral took place on Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> October. By 3.00 pm two thousand people had come together. Families stood before the coffins of their children. A short and simple but warm service took place. Two hymns were sung: “Loving Shepherd of thy sheep” and “Jesu, Lover of my soul” in its Welsh and English versions at the same time. The Anglican Bishop of Llandaff read from the Scriptures and the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cardiff led the prayers which contained Psalms 148 and 12, read by all. Aberfan’s senior pastor, Welsh Independent Rev. Stanley Lloyd was responsible for the simple and moving Committal in which he commended “our children” to the loving care of God. His chapel, Bethania, used as the main mortuary, was closed, pulled down and replaced by a new building, as was the Presbyterian chapel.

I returned home after the service. Only once have I returned since, but those four days remain in my heart.

Human greed caused Aberfan’s suffering. Human greed still causes children to suffer as we see daily from Aleppo and other places.

**Ivor**

**God grant to the living, grace;  
to the departed, rest;  
to the world, peace;  
and to us, and all his children, life everlasting.**

### **COMMUNION COLLECTIONS IN NOVEMBER**

During November we will be collecting for Ty Hafan, the children's hospice. Every year the service has to raise £3.7 million to be able to offer a free service to Welsh children and their families. The number they support increases every year. Ty Hafan aim to give life-limited children a full family life, so the service involves supporting parents and brothers and sisters as well as the child and they try to create opportunities for fun and happy memories.

**Susan G**

### **COFFEE MORNING AND CRAFT FAIR**

It is impossible for you not to have noticed the retail hype that has started as we build up to Christmas. We can help you by giving you an opportunity to buy your Christmas presents at the **Craft Fair** to be held on **Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> November**. Also, donations of cakes for a cake stall would be much appreciated. Hope to see you all there.

**Kath D.**

### **LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERTS IN THE BRANGWYN HALL**

Autumnal organ concerts in the hall with Dr William Reynolds on **Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> November** and Huw Tregelles Williams on Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> November. Come and listen to Swansea's magnificent Willis Organ and be entertained! **All concerts from 12.45 – 1.30pm.**

**Alan S**

### **GARETH HEWITT CONCERT AT UNITING CHURCH SKETTY**

On **Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> November, at 7.30pm** at Uniting Church Sketty, we will have a Gareth Hewitt Concert. This will include stories of justice and hope from Nicaragua, Palestine and Dalits, in words picture and song. Tickets £10, with Concessions at £8.

### **FOLK DANCING ON MONDAY AFTERNOONS**

Please come and join us on **Mondays at 2pm in Bethel Hall**. We extend a warm welcome to any new members who would like to join us. No experience is necessary and you don't need to bring a partner. Dancing is good for you, so why not come and join us – we'd love to see you!!

**Rosemary B**

### **LADIES' KEEP FIT**

Come and join us on **Tuesdays at 10 to 11am in Bethel Church Hall**. We do gentle standing and floor exercises, so please bring a mat and a sense of humour. The exercises are suitable for all ages and it just costs £2 per session. New members always welcome.

**Maisie H**

### **CRAFT GROUP**

We will meet in the Wesley Room every **Tuesday, from 2pm to 4pm** during term time. We look forward to seeing everyone and extend a warm welcome to any newcomers.

**Kath D**

### **COVER TO COVER**

The Garden of Evening Mists by Tan Twan Eng, inspired a wide cross section of topics in our lively discussion, from war crimes; surviving the cruelties of prisoner of war camps; coping with dreadful memories, to the beautiful elements required to create a Japanese garden and the merits of tattooing. Our next meeting will be on **Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November at 10.30am in the Bethel Room**, when we will discuss The Trouble With Goats and Sheep by Joanna Cannon.

**Mike W**

### **THURSDAY CIRCLE**

Our next Thursday Circle will take place on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November at **2.00pm at Bethel Hall. Please note new time for Winter sessions.** We are pleased to welcome our friend Janet Neilson, who will give a talk and digital presentation on 'Blue Swansea', which I'm sure will reveal some interesting facts previously unknown to us. A warm welcome awaits all who wish to join us.

**Pat 'B' D**

### **REEL TO REAL**

Our October film, Unbroken, was a difficult, heart wrenching film to watch. It was based upon a true biographical war story of survival, resilience and redemption and it raised some really good discussion points.

The film for November will shortly be distributed and discussion dates will be arranged as soon as possible. If anyone is not on my lists and would like to join us, you will be very welcome.

**Sandra C**

### **TRAI DCRAFT**

Traidcraft dates between now and Christmas are: **13<sup>th</sup> November and 11<sup>th</sup> December.** You can also browse the Traidcraft website to see what items they have in stock. Please let us have Christmas orders. Order items earlier rather than later, as some items can be out of stock by early December. There are some new items in the food section, so if there is anything you would like us to order that we don't usually stock, please let us know.

**Jackie & Gary C**

## **SATURDAY, 26<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER, A GAMES EVENING!**

A Games Evening from 4pm-6pm on Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> November will be held at our church! Remember the games from the church socials in the past? Come and share them with others.

There will be games for all age groups.

Games for the more energetic and quiet games for others.

Come and share the fun and enjoyment.

**Half way through we will have a bring and share tea.**

**So come and have fun!**

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## **AN ALTERNATIVE GIFT FOR CHRISTMAS**

Have you thought about giving 'alternative' gifts to your family and friends at Christmas? This year we will be promoting 'Alternative' gifts from [www.presentaid.org](http://www.presentaid.org) (Christian Aid Gifts) where you can choose gifts from as little as £6. If you prefer not to use the internet to choose and order your gifts, we hope to have catalogues available to enable you to order by post. You are encouraged to consider making this a part of your giving every year, something your family and friends come to expect in their Christmas stockings. Gifts are available from as little as £6 making them ideal 'stocking fillers'; you can buy Sunflower Seeds for £6, Love a Lav for £8 or buy a Kid Goat for £9, just a few examples of a wide range of gifts up to £250 for a Home Safety Package. As a way of encouraging everyone who uses our church to share in giving alternative gifts, there will be a display available at the Prayer station in the vestibule, where we hope we can demonstrate how many gifts our church has given in 2016 – please watch the weekly notices for more information as to how this will work.

**Leadership Team**



For Advent

## **The Nativity**

**Tuesdays from 10am-11.30am:**

**29 November, 6 December, 13 December, 20 December**

**Thursdays from 7.30pm to 9pm:**

**1<sup>st</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> (note this is a WEDNESDAY), 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> December**

How better to prepare ourselves for Christmas, than to immerse ourselves once again into that familiar story, with all of its humanity, the love, the sadness and the miracle of birth.

Each week we will watch one episode (30 minutes) of the BBC's retelling of Jesus' birth (2010), called The Nativity. We will then have an opportunity to look at the parallel accounts in the Bible as well as reflecting on the human side of the story.

The Nativity is a fascinating and moving account aimed at a mainstream audience. The writer, who also writes for Eastenders, brings his trademark humour and humanity to a faithful telling of the biblical narrative.

## **RETURN VISIT FROM SWANSEA MOSQUE**

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November at either 7 or 7.30pm (to be confirmed)

About 40 of us visited Swansea Mosque earlier this year. We received tremendous hospitality, learnt a lot about Islam, observed them during prayers and began to form relationships.

We are delighted that the Mosque are now paying a return visit to us. We will offer a similar programme, which will include:

- Arriving and gathering together
- A short presentation on the basics of Christianity
- Time for questions
- A short act of Christian worship
- Sharing together in refreshments

We hope that you will want to come and share with our Muslim neighbours. In a fractured world, we want to be at the forefront of good community relationships.

Nearer the time we will be looking for people who will be willing to make a cake or similar to serve as part of the refreshments.

## **SWANSEA NIGHT SHELTER**

Once again, the Swansea Night Shelter will be operating around Swansea during the cold winter months. Here at UCS we will be hosting guests on Saturdays during January. We have already received a good response, but are looking for volunteers for each of the three shifts. Please note that new volunteers must attend the compulsory two hour training and returning volunteers the refresher training. **Refresher training** will be held at various times and locations, but will include **Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December between 5-6pm at UCS.**

Please contact Leslie or Gwen if you would like to volunteer.

**Churches Together in Sketty and Killay present**

## **An Outdoor Nativity**

# **Christmas Flashmob – Follow the Star**

Over 8 churches in Sketty and Killay are working together to present an outdoor nativity to the people of Sketty and Killay.

**On Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December**

**11am at Sketty Cross**

**2pm in Killay**

**(lunch at the 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventist Church)**

### **We need:**

People willing to dress as characters from the nativity, who will go round the shops interacting with shoppers (eg 'have you seen my sheep?')

People willing to be part of the crowd, who follow the characters, discover the stable and sing carols.

People willing to act as stewards (with high vis jackets) ensuring what could be a large crowd are kept safely off busy roads.

### **We need:**

Children, young adults, middle-aged and older people. AND A DONKEY!

Watch out for more information – but put the date in the diary. This is a first, so we want to make a really good splash.

And resolve to come and join us! (whatever the weather)

## CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE HIGGS SISTERS

**Miriam** won the Gower Society Youth Action prize for a piece of original research. She wrote an essay entitled "Gower food throughout the seasons".

**Rachel** graduated in the summer with a first class honours degree in music from York University.

**Sarah** is now teaching in Brynhyfryd Primary School, Swansea.

### WE SEND BIRTHDAY GREETINGS IN NOVEMBER TO:

Elsa on the 3<sup>rd</sup>

Ronia on the 19<sup>th</sup>

James on the 21<sup>st</sup>

Ryan on the 23<sup>rd</sup>

### THE FLOWER ROTA FOR 2017

The rota for 2017 is now on the notice board in the vestibule. If you would like to give flowers one Sunday please put your name by your preferred date under the 'givers' heading. If you would like to arrange your flowers or be willing to arrange for someone else, please add your name to the 'arrangers' column. Any queries please contact Rosemary.

Many thanks.

**Rosemary B**

## 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 the Wesley Room.

There is an induction loop for those with hearing aids.

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

For evening services the offerings plate is placed at the entrance.

### Weekly in term-time:

Monday 2pm Folk-dancing

7pm Wesley Club

Tuesday 2-4pm Craft Group

4.30-5.30pm Beavers

5.45-7pm Cubs

6.15-7.30pm Brownies

Wednesday 10-11.30am Sunbeams Play Group

7.30pm Sketty Madcaps

Uniting Church Sketty weekly notices:

Lynne W - UCSweekly@aol.com

(Please send to Lynne by Friday morning)

Property Stewards:

Alan J

Keith M

Gwyn B (Bethel property)

Booking enquiries and heating requirements:

Kath & Bill D

Bethel booking and heating requirements:

Sonia B

## NOVEMBER DIARY

1<sup>st</sup> Tues 7.30pm Tuesday Evening House Group 7.30pm

5<sup>th</sup> Sat 10am-12noon Craft Fayre and Coffee Morning

6<sup>th</sup> Sun 10.30am Rev Leslie Noon: **Communion**

6.30pm Rev John Atkinson

7<sup>th</sup> Mon 7pm Wesley Club: A Musical Evening with John, Lynda &  
Sarah Atkinson

12<sup>th</sup> Sat 7.30pm Gareth Hewitt Concert

13<sup>th</sup> Sun 10.30am Rev Howard Long: **Remembrance Service**

6.30pm Rev Leslie Noon: **Communion**

14<sup>th</sup> Mon 7pm Wesley Club: Beyond the Walls with Maureen Clayton

19<sup>th</sup> Sat Theatre Visit, Oliver at the Grand Theatre

20<sup>th</sup> Sun 10.30am Rev Leslie Noon: **Breakout Church**

6.30pm Rev John Jones

21<sup>st</sup> Mon 7pm Wesley Club: Esme Wood presents....

24<sup>th</sup> Thurs 7.30pm Church Meeting

26<sup>th</sup> Sat 4pm-6pm Our Saturday Social Evening

27<sup>th</sup> Sun 10.30am Rev Ivor Rees

6.30pm Rev Leslie Noon

28<sup>th</sup> Mon 7pm Wesley Club: Advent with Rev Leslie Noon

30<sup>th</sup> Wednes 7pm Return Visit from Swansea Mosque

(Time to be confirmed)

## NOVEMBER ROTAS:

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

### **Welcome Teams: Myrddin**

#### **6 NOVEMBER    13 NOVEMBER    20 NOVEMBER    27 NOVEMBER**

Ian & Judith	Harry	Allan & Joe	Ian & Susan
Sonia	Graham	Caroline C	Shirley J
	David P		

### **Sound**

Bill	Elizabeth	Myrddin	Gary
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### **Evening**

Keith	Anne	Jeff	Pat
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### **Flowers: Rosemary**

#### **Giver:**

Chris H	Jean & Paul	Chris L	Janet N
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#### **Arranger:**

Chris	Rosemary	Pam T	Rosemary
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### **Distribution of the Flowers: Anne W**

Shirley	Jan	Mary	Margaret
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### **Sunday Morning Coffee: Paul H E**

Jackie & Gary	Julie	Judith & Ian	Ruth
	Myrna	Elizabeth	Sandra
	Liz		Clare K