“Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.”

“God...through Christ changed us from enemies into his friends and gave us the task of making others his friends also.”
**Minister:** The Reverend Leslie Jane Noon

**Senior Elder:** Pat D  
**Senior Steward:** Jan C

**Sunday Services:**
**10.30** Morning Service including Adventurers for children, occasional informal worship and break-out church  
Refreshments in the Wesley Room following morning worship  
**6.30** Evening Service
- **Communion** is normally celebrated in one morning service and one evening service each month
- **An induction loop and large print hymnbooks are available**
- **Creche** available on request – please speak to a steward or elder

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This magazine is available on memory stick as an audio file for the visually impaired. We are also able to record some of our services on memory stick for anyone unable to attend, whether regularly or on a particular Sunday.

**Please contact Les W for more information.**
If you would like to receive the weekly notices and/or monthly magazine via email (.pdf file) **please contact Lynne W**

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**DECEMBER/JANUARY MAGAZINE**

All items for inclusion in the December/January (NB) Magazine to be sent to Noel D by 15th November 2019 **at the latest.**

**Issue date:** Sunday, 24th November.

**WEEKLY NOTICES**

**Material for Weekly Notices to Lynne W,**
by Friday noon each week

[Cover: Images of the Cross of Nails Copyright © 2019 Coventry Cathedral]
FROM THE MANSE

Dear Friends
At our recent church meeting, as part of our opening prayers, we had this image before us. It’s called Tree of Life and this is a photo of the icon painted by Betsy Porter. In her explanation of it, she talks about how it depicts “the numerous and inter-related life forms of planet Earth, coming into being in response to the presence of the Holy Spirit.”

What struck me was her emphasis and portrayal of the inter-relatedness of the world in which we live – both in terms of our relationship with our created world, which we thought about in our harvest service, ‘There is no Planet B’, and in many of the activities with which we are engaged. You can read elsewhere in this magazine about how we are seeking to relate to:

- the earth – with our expanded recycling station and as we seek to become an eco church;
- our sister churches in Swansea as we try to kindle new relationships between us;
- our friends from other faiths and especially the local Mosque as we mark Interfaith Week in November with an event in our church;
- our guests in the Night Shelter, which we will once again be hosting in January and February;
- and, of course, to God, celebrating especially Harrison’s baptism on 6 October and Ronia’s confirmation on 20 October.

As Christians our calling is to connect and relate to God, as shown to us in Jesus, and because of that relationship, to connect and relate to all our neighbours and our world.

May we, in Uniting Church Sketty, ever seek to do this!

With love,
Leslie
Communion collections in November will be for Messy Church in Penlan: The Penlan building is used to support various community initiatives. Messy church reaches lots of young people who come along for fun and some food as well as coming into contact with the Christian message. Your support for this work would be appreciated.

Susan G

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING, PRAY

prepared by Janet N

NOVEMBER

WEEK ONE – We pray for everyone living in the streets near our church – Sketty Park Road, Pine Tree Court, Greenwood Close, Dysgwylfa, Sketty Park Drive, Sketty Park Close, Oak Tree Avenue and Birch Tree Close.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

WEEK TWO – We pray for other Christian communities, whose members live in our vicinity – St Benedict’s Roman Catholic Church, the Quaker Meeting, and Christian students at our universities.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

WEEK THREE – We pray for districts of Swansea where there are family homes for youngsters and adults with learning and physical difficulties. Give the staff the strength they need to care for them.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

WEEK FOUR – We pray for all churches who are ECO CHURCHES and for those who are taking steps to discover what becoming an ECO CHURCH entails.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.
A PERSONAL PROFILE

Following the article about the roles of elders and stewards in the September Magazine, the Leadership Team agreed to launch a series of personal profiles to help us get to know one another better. This month Gaynor B shares something of her life story...

I have been asked to tell you a bit about myself as part of the Church Leadership team’s initiative to help us get to know each other better...
As an only child of elderly parents, I had a very happy childhood in which our Baptist Chapel played a huge part. All my social life revolved around the Chapel, and my friends all attended Sunday School, Band of Hope, and Christian Endeavour. In those days the congregation was large and music played an important part in the Church. We had a choir. We were always rehearsing something or other (perhaps that was where my taste for Madcaps comes from). I left school after ‘O’ levels and trained to be a Comptometer Operator (you may need to look it up on Google!) I worked at Richard Thomas and Baldwin’s, Landore, in the Accounts Department, until I left to have our daughter.
I met Ian when I was seventeen and we married at our Chapel in 1964. We’ve been so lucky. We’ve been very happy, had a lovely daughter and two gorgeous grandchildren. Ian started his Engineering Company in the ‘70’s and I worked with him, running the financial side of our business. Now that we’ve retired, Alison runs the business and Ian and I travel and enjoy a busy life with the organizations and charities we are interested in.
My parents moved down to Sketty to live with us, in very poor health, got well, and enjoyed twelve years! Our old minister came every month to give my mum communion and I kept my membership until after they passed away.
I joined Bethel, as I wanted to be part of a local church. Some years later, to my surprise, I was invited to become an elder, and when we became UCS, became part of the Leadership Team. At UCS, I found the church family that I grew up with and hope that, through our various shared activities and duties, I can give back a little of what you give me.

**RELATING TO OUR NEIGHBOURS OF DIFFERENT FAITHS**

Swansea is once again marking Interfaith week. There are events going on in the Taliesin Theatre from 11am to 3pm on Tuesday 12 November and also, if you happen to be in the centre of Swansea on Wednesday 13 November, a group of us from different faiths will be in the Quadrant, demonstrating community cohesion and respect for one another. But the main event to mark in your diaries is the showing of the Due to copyright issues we are unable to display any information regarding film chosen in this online version of the church magazine. For details please see posters in the church or the paper copy of the church magazine

Leslie

**RELATING TO OUR FELLOW CHRISTIANS**

Following a remark in a Church Meeting earlier in the year, concerning the lack of ecumenical work in Sketty (with the exception of the Swansea Night Shelter in which a number of Sketty churches take part), a few interested UCS folk got together to think about a way forward. This led to an invitation to other church leaders to come together for a meeting in our church to discuss the way forward. I was delighted that the leaders of St Paul’s and Holy Trinity (Robert), All Soul’s (Phil), Bethel Welsh and Trinity (Jill-Hailey) and Sketty Community Church (Monty) joined me and one or two others. It was a positive meeting, with a number of events planned including a Christmas get-together, a service to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Lent lunches and possibly some sort of joint church
presence at one of the major festivals in Singleton Park. More details about all these things will follow at appropriate times – but your help is sought in terms of both supporting the events and encouraging friends and neighbours who go to other churches to attend also. At the end of the day, if there is no interest, it will fizzle out again. So for your diaries, the next event is:

**Thursday, 12 December at 7.30pm at St Paul’s Parish Centre:**
A Christmas gathering to get to know one another over mince pies, hot drinks and maybe some carols!

Leslie

**RELATING TO GOD: BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION**

We were delighted to welcome Emily and Nathan and their family and friends, along with baby Harrison. on 6th October for his baptism. He was the 4th generation to wear his baptism gown, which is 101 years old. His older sisters and brother took part in the baptism – and everyone shared jelly babies to remind us that although all different, all have a role in the nurture of Harrison.

And then on 20th October we celebrated, in English and in German, Ronia’s confirmation. She spoke articulately of what her faith and her relationship with God means to her – and various members of her family took part in the service, reading, teaching songs, playing the trumpet and leading the prayers. It was a special occasion and we pray that Ronia will continue to grow in the love and knowledge of God.

Leslie
RELATING TO THE EARTH

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed towards our harvest service on the theme ‘There is no Planet B’. This year all the windows were decorated by people who had never done one before – and they were so creative. And then the moving display at the front, done by our flower team, illustrated more powerfully than words, both the beauty and the destruction of our planet. During the service we all made an environmental pledge and a promise to God to try to do one thing to care better for the environment. May we all stick to our pledges and more!

Leslie

THANK YOU!

Our church always looks beautiful for harvest festival, but this year how impressive and beautiful our church looked for the harvest festival morning congregation, and for visitors to the evening special service. The imaginative display in the front brought into sharp focus the harsh reality of the damage being done to our planet. A visual message to us all to up our efforts. Many thanks to all involved, and to Leslie and all those taking part in the services.

Caroline C

RELATING TO THE HOMELESS AND MOST VULNERABLE

I am delighted that most of our night shelter volunteers have offered again this year. A huge thank you to them and in due course I will be contacting you about specific shifts etc. However, this is an appeal to those who could help the night shelter in other ways:

- We need someone who will come to the church every Saturday morning (around 9am) to open the church so that the bedding and guests’ belongings can be brought in.
- We need people who can offer to make desserts.
- We need people who can do the weekly shop.

Can you help in this way? Please see Leslie or Gwen if you can.
ADVENT: HOSPITALITY AND SANCTUARY FOR ALL

Jesus was born in temporary accommodation and soon had to flee across borders to escape violence and persecution. Of course, this is also a contemporary issue, as each year up to 1 billion people cross a border. This will be the theme for our Advent Faith and Fellowship sessions. All are welcome to join us – why not try to make a special effort this Advent as we seek to learn more about the contemporary situation and the biblical response to it?

Tuesday 26 November at 10am and Thursday 28 November at 7.30pm
Tuesday 3 December at 10am and Thursday 5 December at 7.30pm
Tuesday 10 December at 10am and WEDNESDAY 11 December at 7.30pm
Tuesday 19 December at 10 am and Thursday 19 December at 7.30pm

Leslie

In January this year, Jane Hutt, the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip, launched a Welsh Government refugees and asylum seekers plan for Wales “…they often arrive in Wales following traumatic experiences in their home countries and on their journeys to the UK… We want to support refugees and asylum seekers to rebuild their lives and make a full contribution to Welsh society – to support the taking-up of opportunities and adding to the diversity of our communities.” ‘Amen’ to that! (ed.)
LITANY OF RECONCILIATION

Following the bombing of the mediaeval Cathedral in 1940, Provost Howard had the words ‘Father Forgive’ inscribed on the wall behind the Altar of the ruined building. These words are used as the response in the Coventry Litany of Reconciliation, which is prayed in the new Cathedral every weekday at noon (in the Ruins on Fridays), and is used throughout the world by the Community of the Cross of Nails. As we approach Remembrance Sunday, we may wish to pray this prayer too...

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.
The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,
**Father, forgive.**
The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own,
**Father, forgive.**
The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth,
**Father, forgive.**

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,
**Father, forgive.**
Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee,
**Father, forgive.**
The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,
**Father, forgive.**
The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God,
**Father, forgive.**

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

[Images of the Cross of Nails, © 2019 Coventry Cathedral]

THE JOURNEY OF AN INTERN INTO RECONCILIATION

“I’m coming to the end of two years as a reconciliation intern at Coventry Cathedral. It has been a journey so different from my expectations — fun, challenging, joyful, tearful, full of love, changing, bumpy — beautiful.
This is a challenging place. One where the floor says, ‘to the glory of God, this cathedral burned.’ One that recognises our part in the destructive tendencies of mankind ... ‘Father, Forgive.’ And one that reminds us of the reconciling and restoring love of God, not just for the individual but for relationships, communities, and the world. It is a place that asks us to think beyond ourselves but not neglect how our actions and understanding of the world come from our journey and story, reminding us of the need to see, listen, and be open to the other.

This is a place of healing where we can sit at the top of the Queen’s steps (in the Cathedral) and see our reflection with the ruins behind, the scars of our lives, but surrounded by a host of saints and angels as we look forward towards the tapestry with the face of Jesus (behind the altar). This is a place of hope.”

Stacy Taylor, outgoing Coventry intern who came to Coventry from the USA [from the Coventry Cathedral website]

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

Let us remember before God the men and women of all nations who have died as a result of war – those whom we have known and whose memory we treasure; those we never knew, and those who died unknown. We will remember all who have lived in hope, but died in vain – the tortured, the innocent, the starving and the exiled, the imprisoned, the oppressed and the disappeared.

“Living God, by whose love we are united with one another across the boundaries of time and space, bring us to a new remembrance of your love and life, reflected in earth and sky, and every person who ever lived. Teach us to be reconciled to one another and to you. Amen.”

Adapted from a prayer by John Ansell [taken from https://www.quaker.org.uk/blog/remembrance-and-peace]
TWO REFLECTIONS ON WAR AND CONFLICT

In November, we remember soldiers and war. This month we have two moving reflections that come out of the experience of war. The first was passed on to the Magazine by Jean E. It was written by an anonymous Confederate soldier in the American Civil War (1861-1865). What he says applies to all of us fighting our own private battles in life.

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve,
I was made weak, that I might humbly learn to obey.
I asked for health, that I might do greater things,
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.
I asked for riches that I might be happy,
I was given poverty that I might be wise.
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men,
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life,
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.
I got nothing that I asked for – but everything that I had hoped for.
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.
I am among all people most richly answered.

The second is a poem written by Jeanette’s uncle, David B, and published in a small book of poems called ‘Echoes from the Battlefields’, dedicated to Jeanette’s father, Graham M, who was killed in action in 1943.

When to this war-wracked, weary world, the peace returns to reign,
Shall we forget those heroes, who will ne’er come home again?
Who gave their lives for you and me, and counted not the cost
Of bringing hope and help to whom all hope was lost –
Who fought, oft-times against such odds as men ne’er fought before,
On land and sea and in the air – our freedom to restore.
A greater love no man can have, than his own life to give,
That we and all humanity, in peace may ever live.
Then let us all remember them with everlasting pride –
The men who counted not the cost, but gave their all – and died.
Their memory must be kept alive for ever and for aye –
Not only for two minutes on a new Remembrance Day.

COUNTY LINES

Several weeks ago, I went (with Jan C) to an awareness raising session organised by the police about what the police call County Lines. Basically, this involves drug dealers in large cities currently London, Birmingham and Liverpool recruiting young vulnerable people (some as young as 14) and coercing them by threats, violence and sexual exploitation to bring drugs to sell in places like Swansea. Vulnerable youngsters are first befriended and groomed, being offered gifts, gifts which incur debts that can only be paid by becoming drug runners under the control of the drug dealers in the big cities.

Typically, these young people come here by train with the drugs and a mobile by which the drug dealer keeps in touch and ensures that they sell the drugs to the list of drug users which they have been given. Should a young person be arrested and unable to sell the drugs the debt is passed to family members who are coerced into making the deals. The threats made to the young people make them too frightened to tell police what is happening to them. Signs that young people are being involved can include visible decline in appearance, multiple mobile phones, going missing, unexplained gifts, excessive text messages or phone calls and typically they are vulnerable, from unstable home backgrounds or Looked After Children. They may have a learning disability and may themselves be substance misusers.

There is a huge demand in Swansea for Class A drugs and, shockingly, Swansea has the most drug related deaths in Britain. However, as
yet Swansea does not have a strong gang culture which makes it easier for the drugs to be sold without competition from gangs. You may also have heard of cuckooing, when drug dealers take over the accommodation of vulnerable people and use the accommodation for drug dealing. It would be very helpful if we all kept our eyes open for signs of drug dealing in our area: these could include different cars outside a property, curtains closed or windows covered, lots of fast food containers outside, tenants not coming to the door or unable to get in, multiple males in the house.

We were told that this can happen in OUR community. Let’s keep a watchful eye! If you have concerns ring the police on 101 or Crime Stoppers 0800 555111

Pat D

ECO CHURCH

I wanted to let you know about a new shop that has opened in Eversley Road in Sketty. It is called Balance and is plastic free. You bring along containers, weigh them and fill them yourself, thus avoiding any packaging. The shop sells grains like rice, pulses like lentils, dried fruit, nuts, and herbs and spices. It also sells environmentally friendly cleaning products like washing up liquid, laundry soap, shampoo etc. for you to fill your own containers with. 50 per cent of the price of toilet rolls goes towards building toilets in other parts of the world. At the moment the shop opening hours change weekly and can be found on the Facebook page, https://en-gb.facebook.com/pg/balancetheworld.co.uk/posts/. Website: balancetheworld.co.uk. The address is 63 Eversley Road, Sketty. The shop is well stocked, clean and friendly and I enjoy shopping there.

Ann A
REFUSE – REDUCE – REUSE – REPAIR – RECYCLE

‘I want to be a part of the solution not the pollution and help set the foundations on which the next generation can create a sustainable and eco-friendly environment, looking after both their planet and themselves.’

WHY?
The world is out of balance and if we don’t make the necessary changes not only will our planet suffer but we will too. Simple changes can make a huge difference if we all work together.

Text and images from the balancetheworld.co.uk website

OUR NEW RECYCLING STATION

As part of our harvest service, “There is no Planet B”, we launched our new recycling station. We have expanded to include more items that cannot be recycled at the kerbside. Thank you to everyone who offered support! The response was overwhelmingly positive.

We are so grateful to Janet N for setting up the recycling station and managing it for so many years – thank you, Janet!

We now need a small team of people who can regularly check the recycling station and take away items when the bins are full.
**An appeal:** Some of the items will need to be posted to Terracycle® to be recycled. To do this, we will need large cardboard boxes (but no bigger than 60x60x70cm). If you have any appropriate boxes, please save them for us! We would also love to share your tips for recycling / eco-living – send them to Amy W

**WHAT DO WE RECYCLE AND WHERE DOES IT GO?**

- Batteries
- Light Bulbs
- Tetrapaks/Cartons /Coffee Cups ➔ Swansea Recycling Centre
- Postage Stamps ➔ St. Paul's Church Scouts
- Ink Cartridges ➔ Currys-PC World Recycling Scheme
- Spectacles (no cases) ➔ Vision Aid Overseas
- Crisp Packets
- Pringles Tubes
- Baby Food Pouches
- Toothbrushes & Toothpaste Tubes ➔ Terracycle® Recycling Programmes

Please see the board above the recycling station and labels on bins for advice about what can and cannot be included, or contact Amy.
HARVEST FOOD BANK DONATIONS

THANK YOU for your generous Harvest donations to the Food Bank. All donations to the Food Bank are weighed on receipt; based on the formula the Food Bank applies to calculate the number of meals the donation will provide, our Harvest donations would provide 354 meals. Please remember the need is ongoing and we need to keep making donations throughout the year.

We are grateful to Leighton who has been delivering to the Mumbles Food Bank on a weekly basis. Leighton is not currently able to help in this way and we need volunteers who can deliver to one of the Swansea Food Banks. There are a number of Food Banks around the Swansea area, each operating on a different day of the week. If you think you could help, please speak to Gwen

Gwen D

CHRISTMAS CARDS

A box will again be provided near the Wesley Room where you can put your Christmas cards for church friends. If you do this, remember to put the name and surname on the envelope to ensure that your card is correctly delivered. Cards will be distributed on Sundays during December. There will also be an opportunity for you to place a message on a large card and make a donation to a charity. You may wish to use one or both of these ways to send your Christmas messages.

DANCING IS GOOD FOR YOU!

We all know that exercise is good for us but did you know that dancing is especially good? A study in 2017 showed that exercise can reverse the signs of ageing in the brain and dancing had the most profound effect! This is because you are learning new dances, new moves, steps and formations as well as meeting new friends.
So, why not come and join our friendly folk dance group on a Monday afternoon from 2pm till 4pm (with time for a cuppa!!) where we learn a variety of dances to suit all ages and abilities. We look forward to welcoming to our friendly group.

Rosemary B

MESSAGE FROM JESSICA

Last July I was selected to go to an international Guide camp in Iceland and wish to thank all of you who helped me go there. I had a wonderful time and really appreciate your generous gifts. I spent a wonderful seven days in Iceland and learned so many things, along with the amazing experiences it gave me. I enjoyed learning about the environment and culture and met some wonderful friends who I am keeping in touch with. I am currently in Rangers and hope to continue my guiding career and hopefully attend another international when I am 18.

Once again thank you

Jessica
(Pauline’s Granddaughter)

PS Jessica will be giving an illustrated talk all about her Iceland trip at Wesley Club on 11th November.

PRAYERS AND SUNSHINE

We recently enjoyed a wonderful adventure in Spain with sunshine, sun hats and sonrisas. We stayed in a beautiful village called Margarida, way up in the hills surrounded by Olive trees and Cherry trees and walked along quiet cobbled streets, enjoying the sound of the local church clock striking on the hour and warm greetings of ‘Buenos dias’ and ‘Hola’ from friendly local folk.

We visited several interesting towns and villages, including the picturesque town of Alcoy, proud of its many outstanding Art Nouveau buildings. As we walked along a pavement there, close to a green verge, I suddenly spotted a rather large green insect, motionless and apparently in deep thought. On closer inspection, we
realized that we were looking down upon a Praying Mantis, known in Spain as a Mantis Religiosa. I quickly took a photograph and was then delighted to see that the shadow that it cast, clearly showed it to be in a posture of prayer. What an example to us all. Whether large or small, short or tall, we all need to pray!! We felt blessed to have seen such a beautiful creature. Hope you like the photograph of Manti attached. Adios.  

Jan T

GETTING TO KNOW PEOPLE...

This time we’re getting to know something more about a long-standing member in Bethel and now in UCS. The Revd. Ivor Rees has spent a life-time in ministry. His ministry has been enriching and inspiring, with the ecumenical vision at the heart of all he’s done...

I was born in Treherbert, in the Rhondda and, apart from two uncles, all the men in the family were miners. My maternal grandfather was a well-known South Wales Boxer. I was taken to Sunday School at the age of three and became a church member when fifteen at Carmel Welsh Congregational Church, Treherbert, Rhondda. This became my spiritual home. From Rhondda schools I came to Swansea University, destined by the family to be a teacher but there I felt the call to ministry, inspired by the ecumenical vision that “Only the whole Church can preach the whole Gospel to the whole world.” I ended up reading History, English and Economics for three years; Greek and Philosophy for one and attending parts of the Welsh course, as I was learning the language at the time. Then I spent the next three years at the Congregational Memorial Theological College at Brecon. I received great kindness from the church members at Carmel and I am particularly indebted to its minister, the Revd. Emrys Jones, who enabled me to have practical experiences of ministry to fill the gaps left by my college course. My first church was at Wern, Aberavon. This was an exciting
time in a boom town where ecumenical wonders were performed. Delyth and I married at Wern, her home church. From Wern we went to Clapham (London), Ewell (Epsom), Manselton (Swansea) and Bamford near Rochdale, from where we retired to Sketty in 1996. These five pastorates were very different from one another, which added to both their interest and their challenge but all enriched our lives in one way or another. Visiting the Holy Land seven times between 1984 and 1996 was a life-changing experience, especially a two-month sabbatical at Tantur, half way between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. I grieve for the worsening sufferings of the Palestinian people, Christian and Muslim, and I fear for the future of these two Semitic peoples in the Holy Land, Jews and Palestinians. We have two children: Lythan is also a URC minister, currently working as “Minister for Cranbrook” (URC, Methodist and Anglican). Cranbrook is a new town being built close to Exeter Airport. Husband Phil is also a URC minister. They have three children. Our son, Dafydd, at Blackpool, has been unable to work for some seven years because of spinal problems but has been refused benefits. Mandy, a nurse, is a wonderful partner. When we retired, I wondered what I would do, when, somehow, a door opened into research and writing. This has given me immense pleasure and has produced a score of articles for various journals and six books in English and two in Welsh. Until recently I led worship each Sunday morning but suddenly that has cut back by two thirds. It is a joy now to sit in our church alongside Delyth and be blessed by its worship and its wonderful fellowship. What next? Who knows?

Ivor
THANK-YOU MESSAGES

Towards the end of the financial year, which ended on 31\textsuperscript{st} August, we make a range of donations to various organisations for whom we have not had a specific fund-raising opportunity during the year. Most of these are related to either the Methodist Church or URC organisations, but not exclusively. Here are two more thank-you letters we’ve received (you can find others on the noticeboard):

**Geoff N(Treasurer)**

**All We Can**

All We Can used to be known as the Methodist Relief & Development Fund whose purpose is to help find solutions to poverty by engaging with local people and organisations in some of the world’s poorest communities to end the suffering caused by inequality and injustice.

Thank you so much for your kind gift, which you recently sent on behalf of Uniting Church Sketty LEP. We are so grateful to have received your donation, which will transform the lives of people living in some of the world’s poorest communities.

Your generosity is making a significant difference for people like Ireen, Nora and Patience, who are all members of a gardening group in rural Zimbabwe. Ireen, Nora and Patience are among a group of women in their village identified as being particularly vulnerable and in need of support. By working as a group, they have been able to build supportive friendships and to use their new skills to develop a community garden. Now, they are growing a range of vegetables including tomatoes, carrots, onions, cabbage and beans, which will not only provide nutritious food for their families, but also a small profit when sold at their local market. The money earned will help provide school fees for the children in their care – ensuring that the next generation have the opportunity to fulfil their God-given potential. ‘Being in a group helps you share both ideas and share problems too’ says Ireen. ‘If the group
does well, I would like to be able to build a better home for myself and buy cattle for the family.’
We cannot thank you enough for making change possible for women like Ireen, Nora, Patience and their families.

Global Justice Now

The future feels precarious. From Brexit uncertainty and the growth of the far right, to troubling trade deals, the world seems an uneasy place. But through all the confusion, I am inspired by the amount of optimism and commitment shown by groups like yours, determined to rise to the occasion and help make the world a fairer place.

Thank you for your donation of £200 from Uniting Church Sketty. With your generous gift you are helping to provide us with the vital resources we need to help make a better world. You’re enabling us to take action against the worst excesses of corporate power, and campaign for positive alternatives to the current economic system.

To protect our independence, we don’t accept funding from government or institutions that could water down our aims. This makes your donation so important to us. It gives us the freedom to campaign on complex and important issues that others won’t touch.

Positive change is not a quick process, but we have learnt what we can do when we work together and we stay committed.

This year we will continue to see political uncertainties. But we seek opportunities to campaign for an alternative and to change the script. We are so grateful that you do too. Together, we are fighting for a better world. Thank you once again.

FROM THE EDITOR’S KEYBOARD

This month our reflections from the wider church come from the Moderators of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, the Revd Nigel Uden and Derek Estill. They reflect on Praying for our Politics – a very pertinent theme, given that you will be reading
this magazine on or around October 31, the day we are meant to leave the EU.

My fellow Moderator, Derek Estill (right in the photograph), and I have shared the responsibility of visiting the Conservative and Labour Party conferences over recent weeks – boxing and coxing to represent the United Reformed Church as part of the delegation organised by the Joint Public Issues team...

Our group of Church representatives had gone... prepared with questions about poverty, hunger and universal credit, about refugees, immigration and asylum, about the climate crisis, about nuclear weapons, the arms trade and peace-making. What I realised most of all, though, was that the value of Church representatives going to a 24-hour segment of Party-political conferences was at least partially pastoral. We learned how deeply difficult it is to be in parliamentary politics at the moment. One MP told us it was ‘terrible; truly terrible’. This description seemed to arise from several causes: the attitudes of some in the House of Commons, the vilification of the MPs via social media, the readiness of the press to write as if forgetting MPs are human beings, and the unrelenting sense of uncertainty about where, how and when the Brexit issue will end. Even as one echoes the many calls for parliamentary discourse to be more refined than of late, I am renewed in my sense that praying for politicians – national and local – is an essential part of the Church’s vocation. And, if words fail us, maybe we could borrow one of the prayers familiar to the House of Commons in its regular prayers:

Lord, the God of righteousness and truth,
grant to our Queen and her government, to Members of Parliament and all in positions of responsibility,
the guidance of your Spirit.
May they never lead the nation wrongly
through love of power, desire to please or unworthy ideals,
but laying aside all private interests and prejudices,
keep in mind their responsibility to seek to improve the
condition of all humankind; so may your kingdom come and
your name be hallowed, Amen.

Nigel Uden
from https://assemblymoderators.urc.org.uk/pray-for-our-
politics/#more-4294

NEWS FROM URC SYNOD OF WALES
On Saturday, October 19th, Pat and I went to Llandrindod Wells for the
meeting of the URC Synod of Wales. Pat was there as a representative
of UCS and I was there as an ecumenical guest (a voting guest!) on behalf
of the Union of Welsh Independents, a fellow member of the worldwide
Council for World Mission. What struck me particularly was the high
number of representatives, given that it’s the smallest Synod within the
URC. The synod moderator, Simon Walkling, is excellent at enabling a
sense of family and belonging. So welcoming, wishing well,
remembering and giving thanks were important aspects of the opening
period of the meeting. During this time, we remembered ministers and
elders who have served the URC and had died since the last meeting. It
was moving to hear Denis E and Alan R named as elders for whom we
give thanks to God.
A number of stories and developments are worth noting. There were
stories of local churches:

- In Tongwynlais outside Cardiff, where a small elderly congregation
  of 8 to 10 people (in a church that’s known locally as ‘The church
  behind the tree’) were prepared to risk regular Cuppa and
  Conversation occasions to which the local community was invited.
  That opened the door to communion in the round, where there was
  a deep sense of belonging, sharing and caring.

- Danygraig LEP in Risca brings together URC, Methodist and
  Presbyterian Church of Wales (PCW). It started by shared worship,
  grew in mutual trust and friendship. URC and PCW formed one
congregation; Methodists joining later. Eventually they decided to sell all the old chapels and building a new, contemporary, purpose-built church, that serves church and community in challenging ways. More risk-taking.

- **St John’s URC, in Buckley, North East Wales** is known as ‘the church on the common’. It decided this year to take up the national Weekend of Invitation initiative in its community. It involved lots of planning and publicity but drew a number of people together in worship, in shared meals, in afternoon tea with worship, in children’s events and a number of other activities. It helped people to discover that the church was for the community and was a warm and welcoming place. Yet more risk!

- There were also reports of URC-wide initiatives, including
  - a campaign to disinvest from companies that make their profits from fossil fuels and encourage local churches to think about switching to eco-friendly energy suppliers and investment policies. A challenge for us?
  - a report from a URC visit to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories in September which highlighted the frightening, oppressive and unjust conditions in which so many Palestinians live, especially when they live, work or farm on land that’s adjacent to the 26ft high dividing wall between Israelis and Palestinians. We were called to adopt a policy of Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions. Would you like to hear more?
  - encouragement to churches to move towards being a More Able Church where we try to develop more inclusive attitudes and assumptions and thus build churches of true belonging. (There will be a training and learning day on More Able Church in Llandrindod on 13 June next year).

An encouraging and informative day, then, that reminded us that, in the life of the church, we don’t have to be large and wealthy to respond to what God is calling us to be. It’s about faith and risk-taking!

Noel
NEWS OF OUR CHURCH FAMILY

A message from Chris H: ‘Ian and I would like to thank everyone for all the love and care displayed in so many different ways leading up to and since my surgery. I am sure my recovery has been helped a great deal by all the love, prayers and support I have received. We are extremely lucky we belong to such a loving and caring church family.’

Bunny wishes to thank everyone for the cards, gifts and good wishes that made her 101st birthday a time to remember.

Pastoral Update: We are thinking of several members of our church family who have been unwell or have changed circumstances and continue to remember them in our prayers.

- Narendra A, who has had a short stay in hospital following a heart attack. Narendra is now home under orders to rest.
- Eric P who has been in hospital for a few days, but is pleased to be home.
- Jean E who has had a second Cataract procedure and is doing well.
- Maisie who has now moved to Brynhyfryd House Nursing Home in West Cross.
- Minna B who we believe is still at Gorseinon Hospital
- Chris H who is recovering at home after recent surgery.
- Barbara G who is now home.

DATA PRIVACY is the latest hot potato! And rightly so. It’s important that we know who holds information about us and why. The church is no different in this regard. For members and friends, we hold the following information: your name, address, telephone number and email address (where applicable). Some groups might also hold birthdays for their members. We use this information for the following reasons:

- to administer membership records;
- to maintain our financial accounts and records (including the processing of gift aid);
- to provide news and information about events, activities and services at the church;
- to be able to offer pastor care and visit when appropriate.
Your personal data will be treated as strictly confidential and will only be shared with other members of the church in order to carry out a specific service connected with the church (e.g. to deliver flowers). If you have any questions or concerns about this, please speak to either Rev Leslie (as minister), Gwen D (as pastoral co-ordinator) or Les W (as data protection co-ordinator).

Leslie

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD (OCC) NEWS

“When we met with Faith again months after she received her shoe box, we noticed that she had kept it in perfect condition under her bed. Asking her why, she explained with a timid smile, that this was the first thing she had truly owned for herself. To her, it was such a precious gift that the actual shoe box meant as much to her as its contents!”

National Leadership Team Member - Liberia

“When we met with Faith again months after she received her shoe box, we noticed that she had kept it in perfect condition under her bed. Asking her why, she explained with a timid smile, that this was the first thing she had truly owned for herself. To her, it was such a precious gift that the actual shoe box meant as much to her as its contents!”

National Leadership Team Member - Liberia

"Amazingly our research shows each shoebox on average impacts the lives of six children. As they share their gifts and share their smiles their happiness radiates to those around them. Whole communities can be blessed that someone they have never met cares enough to do this for them and so the impact grows."

When reading quotes like those above how can we not fail to be moved to action? The warehouse in Swansea may have been considered surplus to requirements but the shoeboxes themselves are still desperately needed. Our Packing Parties will be held on 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th, 11th and 12th November between 10am and 4pm here at our church. Teas and coffees will be freely available as well as boxes to fill with fillers we have purchased or to take away to fill with items you have enjoyed shopping for. We will also be very grateful for any fillers you have made or bought.

Please make an effort to come for just an hour or longer if you are able. Every box we pack means another child will have the opportunity of receiving our love.

Linda J
Details of productions in Little theatre can be found at www.dylanthomastheatre.org.uk and details of Swansea Philharmonic Choirs Anniversary Concert from Grand Theatre Box Office are not shown in the line version of Magazine Details can be found in paper copy of magazine.
FOR YOUR DIARY

COFFEE MORNINGS:
Saturday 2nd November 10am-12noon Coffee Morning for Shuktara.
Saturday, 7th December 10am-12noon Coffee Morning for Refugee Funds

WESLEY CLUB PROGRAMME
Monday 4th Nov          Peter Rees          The Role of Women in 19th Century Rural Wales
“  11th                  Jessica Tomkins     Icelandic Adventures
“  18th                  Jeff Coleman       Swansea Asylum Seekers Support
“  25th                  John Atkinson      Surprise Package

SUNDAY LUNCH: The next lunch is on 17th November in Yr Hen Dderwen, 12 for 12.30 pm. Please sign the list in the front porch – all welcome. Contact Pauline for information

GO ORANGE QUIZ – Final Reminder!
On Friday 8th November at 6.30 for 7pm, we have a quiz in aid of Muscular Dystrophy UK. Tickets are available at £5 each. Come as a team or as an individual and join a team on the night. There will be a raffle and a cake stall as well as some intriguing and some fun questions, but I hope it will also cheer us up on a dull November evening. Contact Janet N for more information or to reserve tickets.

PLEASE NOTE: Concessionary Bus Pass Renewal: All Concessionary Bus Passes for the over 60s have to be renewed by the 31 December 2019. The easiest way to do this is via the online application. For those who need to renew their Pass, but don’t have access to a computer, or need help with the process, Les W and Gwen D will have their laptops at the Coffee Mornings in October, November and December and will be happy to help.
WEEKLY PROGRAMME

Sunday services: 10.30am (including Adventurers for children)  
6.30pm

Sunday lunch is arranged once a month in Yr Hen Dderwen. You are most welcome to join us. Please contact one of the leadership team.

The following are held during term-time:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>2.00pm</td>
<td>Folk dancing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.00pm</td>
<td>Wesley Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>2.00-4.00pm</td>
<td>Craft Group</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.00-6.00pm</td>
<td>Rainbows</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.15-7.30pm</td>
<td>Cubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.15-7.30pm</td>
<td>Brownies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>10.00-11.30am</td>
<td>Sunbeams: Play Group</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.30pm</td>
<td>Sketty Madcaps</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

House Groups, Faith and Fellowship, Cover to Cover and Reel to Real Groups are held from time to time throughout the year. Everyone welcome. Please contact one of the leadership team for details.

ROOM HIRE

A range of larger and smaller rooms is available for hire. Folding chairs and folding tables are available. All bookings are subject to Methodist terms and conditions. Further information available on request.

For booking enquiries and heating requirements please contact: Kath and Bill D
# NOVEMBER 2019 DIARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Sat</td>
<td>10.00am</td>
<td>Coffee morning: Proceeds for Shuktara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Sun</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
<td>Rev Leslie Noon: Communion Service</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.30pm</td>
<td>Rev Pamela Cram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Mon</td>
<td>7.00pm</td>
<td>Wesley Club: Peter Rees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Tues</td>
<td>7.30pm</td>
<td>House Group The Book of Esther</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Thurs</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>Circuit Property Stewards Meeting (at UCS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Fri</td>
<td>6.30pm</td>
<td>Go Orange Quiz Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Sun</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
<td>Rev Dr Noel Davies (Remembrance Sunday)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.30pm</td>
<td>YPF Exploring Faith Group</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.30pm</td>
<td>Rev Leslie Noon: Meditative Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Mon</td>
<td>7.00pm</td>
<td>Wesley Club: Jessica Tomkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Sun</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
<td>Rev Andrew Pearce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.30pm</td>
<td>Rev. Leslie Noon: Communion Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Mon</td>
<td>7.00pm</td>
<td>Wesley Club: Jeff Coleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Sun</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
<td>Rev Leslie Noon: Breakout Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.30pm</td>
<td>Rev Siperire Mugadzaweta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Mon</td>
<td>7pm</td>
<td>Wesley Club: John Atkinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Tues</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
<td>Faith and Fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Thurs</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
<td>Faith and Fellowship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ROTAS FOR NOVEMBER 2019

If you are unable to fulfil your place on a rota, please re-arrange with someone else or contact the organizer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>November 3rd</th>
<th>November 10th</th>
<th>November 17th</th>
<th>November 24th</th>
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</table>

Welcome Teams and Sound: Myrddin P

**Morning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonia B</th>
<th>Harry O</th>
<th>Alan &amp; Joe A</th>
<th>David K</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John N</td>
<td>David P</td>
<td>Jan T</td>
<td>Jan T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grosvenor H</td>
<td>Graham B</td>
<td>Tina L</td>
<td>Leighton J</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Hilary E</td>
<td>Paul E</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Sound**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Harry O</th>
<th>Bill D</th>
<th>Elizabeth E</th>
<th>Garry C</th>
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</table>

**Evening**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Myrddin P</th>
<th>Keith M</th>
<th>Anne V</th>
<th>Jeff C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Flowers: Rosemary B**

**Giver:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chris H</th>
<th>Alice R</th>
<th>Chris L</th>
<th>Anne L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Arranger:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rosemary B</th>
<th>Rosemary B</th>
<th>Lynne W</th>
<th>Pam T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Distribution of Flowers: Anne W**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maggie C</th>
<th>Gaynor B</th>
<th>Anne W</th>
<th>Pat B. D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Sunday Morning Coffee: Paul H E**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clare K</th>
<th>Jane &amp; Laurie H</th>
<th>John and Sandra H</th>
<th>Linda W</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ruth A</td>
<td>Paul E</td>
<td></td>
<td>Una G</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wednesday, 2 October 2019 marked the 150th anniversary of Gandhi’s birth. He was born of a Hindu family in Gujerat, western India. After training as a lawyer in London, he was called to the bar in 1891. In 1893, he went to South Africa and spent the next 21 years there. This was where he first used non-violent resistance.

When he returned to India in 1915, he set about organizing peasants, farmers, and urban labourers to protest against excessive land-tax and discrimination. Assuming leadership of the Indian National Congress in 1921, Gandhi led nationwide campaigns for easing poverty, expanding women's rights, building religious and ethnic friendship, ending untouchability, and above all for achieving Swaraj or self-rule.

He became an increasingly controversial figure, playing a key role in the movement towards India’s independence from Britain which led to establishing a Hindu-majority independent India in 1947 but also establishing a new Muslim-majority country, Pakistan. The partitioning of India still leaves its painful mark on relationships in the region.

Gandhi was assassinated by a Hindu nationalist on 30 January 1948. This year on the 150th anniversary of his birth, an urn containing Gandhi’s ashes was stolen from the Bapu Memorial in Madhya Pradesh in central India. This complex and controversial person clearly still has his enemies!

However, a recent article about Gandhi in the science journal *Nature* offers the following assessment: ‘As the world continues to grapple with how to respond to climate change, biodiversity loss, persistent poverty, and poor health and nutrition, Gandhi’s commitment to what we now call sustainability is perhaps more relevant today than in his own time.’

Among the many influences on his thought and actions was Jesus of Nazareth and his teaching: ‘I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven’ (Matthew 5.44 NIV).

Noel
During coming months, we are going to explore some of the key aspects of our own mission statement that you can find on the UCS website (or in the October magazine) so that we can learn more about who we are and who we are called to be as God’s people. It begins:

“Uniting Church Sketty is an open and welcoming church for people from all walks of life who seek to learn more about Jesus Christ...”

This short opening statement sets out some of the key features of a Christian church:

• A church is to be ‘open’: sometimes this may mean being literally open so that people can enter and leave unhindered; always it means that there are no boundaries around the church, we do not say ‘You can come but you cannot come’; we are inclusive; it also means that the church is open to the community around us, for the church is not for us but for ‘people from all walks of life’. We are an open church because Jesus is open to all and welcomes all.

• A church is to be a ‘welcoming’ place: whoever comes is to be welcomed and made to feel at home among us; there has to be a warmth of friendship towards all within our church community.

• What are the signs of openness and welcome among us? Do you feel that we live up to our own description of who we are?

• We are disciples: at the heart of a church is ‘learning more about Jesus’. How do we continue to ‘learn more about Jesus’ in our Christian life?

Contacting Us: Uniting Church Sketty, Dillwyn Road, Sketty, Swansea, SA2 9AH  Website: www.unitingchurchsketty.org.uk

Our building development programme was funded by the following: