RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY

“...the universe is on the side of justice. It is this deep faith in the future that causes the non-violent resisters to accept suffering without retaliation. They know that in their struggle for justice they have cosmic companionship.”

Martin Luther King jnr. (altd.)

from http://yarf.blogspot.com/
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
6.00 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

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.

MARCH MAGAZINE
All items for inclusion in the March Magazine to be sent to Noel D at by 14th February 2020 at the latest. Issue date: Sunday, 23rd February.

WEEKLY NOTICES
Material for Weekly Notices to Lynne W,

by Friday noon each week

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

Dear Friends,

How to disagree well, it could be said, is the challenge of our time. History students in the future may well look back on this era and see it as an age of entrenchment, when on a range of issues, people became more divided from one another than ever.

Certainly, our country has a long way to go and a lot of hard work to do before we can recover from the Brexit effect. And I’m not sure that talk of ‘bonging Big Ben for Brexit’ will do this – or indeed whether it’s worth half a million pounds!

But the reality is that, on the whole, we live and associate with people who are like us and who think like us. It’s what is called an ‘echo chamber’ where what we think and believe is echoed in those we associate with – both in the real world and the virtual world.

Two evenings are advertised in our magazine that might take us out of our own echo chamber. Look out for them and come along! The first is the Faith and Ethics seminar at the university when Sahar Al-Faifi will speak on what it means to be a Muslim woman in today’s Britain.

The second is our discussion on the Methodist report *God in love unites us* which looks at different kinds of relationships, including cohabitation, divorce and same-sex marriage. All churches are being asked to have this discussion, and these conversations will inform those who gather at Synods and then Conference, before resolutions are taken. If you would like more information on this, see Leslie or google ‘God in love unites us’ to see the range of information and material available online. And I would like to encourage you all to come along to our discussion and be part of the conversation.

With love,

Leslie
COMMUNION COLLECTIONS IN FEBRUARY will be for Share Tawe. This local charity helps destitute asylum seekers by arranging local hosts, funding bus tickets to go to appointments, English classes etc. and making a small contribution to bills and food. When people first apply for asylum, they are given accommodation and an allowance of just over £5 per day. However, many asylum seekers are refused after a Home Office interview and are then left with nowhere to stay, no money and are not allowed to work. With proper legal help these people often go on to prove their case and gain permission to stay so support from Share Tawe can be vital.

Susan G

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING – FEBRUARY 2020

WEEK ONE  We pray for everyone living in Derwen Fawr Road, Bryn Newydd Gardens, Beech Tree Lane, Rhyd y Defaid Drive, Channel View, Parklands View and Gabalfa Road.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

WEEK TWO  We pray that the start of churches in the Sketty area joining together at Christmas and for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity may continue and grow, strengthening the ties which bind us.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

WEEK THREE  We give thanks for the work that continues at Ogof Adullam, and pray for the new recovery housing project, Ty Ogof, that a suitable property may be found.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

WEEK FOUR  At this time of year, even though the weather can be depressing, we rejoice at the signs of new life in gardens and parks.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Janet N

A SPECIAL THANK-YOU

I am sending a big "thank you" on behalf of what are probably a very limited number of people. You see, my sight prevents me reading the monthly church magazine but Les and his team make sure I have an audio version. I love hearing all your news, plans and activities but even more importantly I like hearing about the charities you are supporting. I try to make sure that I
make a contribution to all these charities. So, the charities benefit as a result of the efforts of Les and his team. Thank you, Les. You bring pleasure to people like me and the charities benefit. Long may we continue to support one another.

Helen A

COLLECTIONS
There have been a number of collections and some donations over the past couple of months. In some cases, we have received thank you letters and these have been placed on the notice-board in the vestibule (top right as you look at it), but there have been a couple that have come in by e-mail which are reproduced below. The amounts raised, including Gift Aid where appropriate, were:

- Shuktara Trust (coffee morning) - £681.20
- Messy Church at Penlan (November Communion) - £361.41
- Stepping Stones (December Communion) - £421.49
- Swansea Asylum Seekers Group (coffee morning) - £655.25
- Leprosy Mission (donation) - £100.00
- All We Can (donation) - £200.00
- Ty Ogof, Circuit Recovery Housing project, Carol Service and Church card distribution - £1001.

As always, I would like to send my thanks to everyone who has made donations to these causes – thank you for your continued generosity.

Geoff N

TAKING OUT OR PUTTING IN?
Sincere thanks to those of you who used the 24 days of Advent to put a little something into an Advent gift box. These were passed to Sandra C for some of our asylum seekers. Sandra was delighted to be able to give a few of these people, some of whom have only been in Swansea a matter of weeks, a little unasked-for something extra to start 2020. Thank you so much.

Jan C

THANK YOU
Anne and Mike W would like to thank everyone for their concern, good wishes and much valued prayerful support during Mike’s recent hospital admissions. Mike is now making steady progress, has a long recovery period
ahead and looks forward to being Barista in charge of Saturday Coffee mornings!

**MESSAGE FROM PAULINE**
A big thank you for all the good wishes, lovely cards and numerous presents I received for my ‘special’ birthday! I was delighted to have so many and well done to all those who kept my surprise party such a secret! I had a really wonderful time. Thanks and love.

Pauline

**A WORD OF APPRECIATION**
I thought church members would like to hear of some comments that have been passed on to me by the ladies of Save the Children. They are so impressed by the help that is given at events such as coffee mornings. People make cakes and offer help at all times and are so supportive. One of the ladies told me that what goes on in our church is what she considers true Christianity to be. She knows of our involvement with Night Shelter and other outreach work. She said it is also obvious that we care for each other and welcome newcomers. I wanted to share this with you.

Christine L

**ANOTHER MESSAGE OF THANKS**
I am writing to thank the members of Uniting Church Sketty for their very generous support for Shuktara and to acknowledge receipt of a total of £681.20 that was raised at the November coffee morning. We are so grateful for your continued support for the Shuktara family in Kolkata.

Sue Tungay (Trust Secretary)

Many congratulations to David Earp (Denis Earp’s son) on being awarded the BEM in the New Year’s honours list for his work with Shuktara.
A BIG THANK YOU

We would like to thank everyone in the church for their support over the last year for Swansea Asylum Seekers Support Group. There have been numerous donations of kitchen and household equipment, blankets, bedding and towels. The coffee morning in December, with related donations, raised £655.25, which was a magnificent amount. In addition, after the Wesley Club talk by Carlos, Alun and Aboud we had offers of furniture, beds etc. and several Advent Baskets to give out at St James' Drop-In. Since then we have received a letter from the City of Sanctuary Committee saying "That is absolutely fantastic! Many many thanks to you for arranging and everyone who contributed so generously!" signed by Professor Tom Cheeseman. Once again thank you all so much for the difference you have made to such vulnerable people.

Sandra C and Jeff C.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Sometimes Christmas cards contain simple Christmas greetings, but sometimes they contain something unexpected! Here’s one message in a card that David and Barbara P received:

He was born in a barn, his father a carpenter and his mother a decent woman, but they were of no significance, and certainly couldn’t have afforded to give the boy a private education. And yet, as a teenager, he was arguing the toss with his elders and betters in the council chambers.

He never got a proper job, just roamed around the countryside, shaven, and living off bread and water, and an occasional fish, while offering his opinions to those who cared to listen. He became the manager of an eleven-man team known as The Disciples, not one of them a star. In fact, the twelfth man rather let the side down by accepting a transfer fee of thirty pieces of silver to play for the opposition.

The authorities eventually arrested him as a rabble-rouser, but couldn’t decide what to charge him with, other than the fact that he claimed he was the Son of God. They strung him up with a couple of criminals, and when he finally gave up the ghost, they rather assumed that would be the last they’d hear of him.
...When he died at the age of 33, there were no obituaries in the local press reporting his achievements, no glossy supplements highlighting his colourful career, no radio programmes to discuss his legacy, and no box sets recording any of his miracles.

But then, he’d never relied on focus groups to advise him on current trends or advertising gurus to spend millions promoting his brand or spin doctors to sharpen hi image. And he didn’t require social media to keep his followers up-to-date. So you’d be forgiven for assuming that he’d be forgotten in a few days.

So how can one explain that over two thousand years later, Jesus Christ is still the best-known celebrity on earth? Could it be that he was the Son of God?

Written by Jeffrey Archer

PASTORAL CARE AND HOW IT WORKS

“A healthy Christian community is one in which people know that they are loved, visitors are welcome and young and old alike are valued and feel safe. The care that we offer; both at times of crisis and in everyday life is an active proclamation of God's love in Christ and for all the world”.

(www.methodist.org.uk)

At the recent Pastoral Meeting we felt it might be helpful to publish an explanation of our structure of Pastoral Care since we became Uniting Church Sketty.

Pastoral Care is a very important aspect of our faith at UCS and we do our best to meet the needs of each and every member of our church family. Pastoral Visitors/Elders keep in touch with the people in their Pastoral Group, where appropriate, by phone or visits, sharing Church Magazines, recorded services (where applicable) and other church communications; also advising the Minister or the Pastoral Secretary when additional support may be needed. This contact is especially important for those who are unable to come to church regularly due to illness or infirmity.

The Minister has overall Pastoral Responsibility assisted by the Pastoral Visitors/Elders and the Pastoral Secretary. The Pastoral Group meets twice a year to discuss updates to the Pastoral List and Pastoral Groups and to
pray for and support each other and those in our Pastoral care, always being mindful of the need for confidentiality.

At Uniting Church Sketty we have a total of 20 Pastoral Visitors and Serving Elders with pastoral responsibility, managing the Pastoral Care of 185 members and adherents. We are blessed to have such a large family of faith at UCS, but it is a challenge to meet the Pastoral needs of so many people. We are aware that there is a significant amount of informal pastoral care and a strong commitment to looking after each other, for which we are thankful. We rely very heavily on that informal support, and without it, we would struggle to meet the Pastoral needs of our church family.

If you are ever concerned about a church friend or acquaintance, please feel you can share your concern in confidence with either the Minister, Rev’d Leslie Noon or the Pastoral Secretary, Gwen D.

WE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS...
We are very sad to share the news that Eric P died on Thursday 16th January in Morriston Hospital. He had lived a very full and active life and we will miss his presence in our church family. Our love and prayers go to Joan, Philip, Judith, Anna and all the family.

We also remember a number of our church friends who are currently unwell, particularly Una G and Mike W who is recovering at home following surgery, one or two people who are awaiting surgery and a number of people who are unwell with flu, coughs and colds. We remember them all in our prayers and hope they will soon be feeling better.

Gwen D

RAINBOWS ROCK AND BROWNIES BUZZ
At present we have ten Rainbows and eight Brownies meeting on our premises. Before Christmas they all went on a sponsored Moonwalk, in the dark and completed their physicist and leadership badges. Just before Christmas they attended a Harry Potter themed Christmas camp at Broneirion (the Guide/Brownie HQ in Wales). They also made angels. Their meetings include playing games – one of the favourites being, “Can we cross the golden river” and singing songs. This term they will be having a science day – Going to Mars – when they will be making rockets and a Mars rover.
They look forward to working with UCS on environmental issues (e.g. making bird feeders) as we think about working towards our silver Eco award.
We no longer have a Cub pack at UCS, which is very disappointing.

Janet N

WE DON’T WANT THEM HERE!

They have no need for our help
So do not tell me
These haggard faces could belong to you or me
Should life have dealt a different hand
We need to see them for who they really are
Chancers and scroungers
Lay-abouts and loungers
With bombs up their sleeves
Cut-throats and thieves
They are not
Welcome here
We should make them
Go back to where they came from
They cannot
Share our food
Share our homes
Share our countries
Instead let us
Build a wall to keep them out
It is not okay to say
These are people just like us
A place should only belong to those who are born there
Do not be stupid to think that
The world can be looked at another way. (© Brian Bilston)

You don’t like the sound of that? Now try reading it backwards from the bottom! Then use one of the prayers below... Thanks to Jan for sending this piece that was discussed in an Advent Faith and Fellowship session.
TWO PRAYERS FOR RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY

God-of-righteous-dreaming, give us an enlarged imagination to dream new possibilities, to imagine a world where transformation will happen, where creation is mended and restored, and where exiles and strangers can find a home and live in peace. Give us overflowing and extravagant hearts so that our whole lives may ...mirror your dream and promise of goodness and abundance. Amen.

God-who-walks-with-us, ahead, beside, behind, above, below and around us, you who journey with wandering and displaced people: clear our eyes to see you in the many displaced sisters and brothers at our borders, gates and doors; give us just minds and confident hearts to protest, challenge, and partner with others to turn hard, callous and inhumane policies into habits of generosity, compassion and welcome at our gates; and through your Spirit strengthen our resolve to work towards a new world where all can share in full and flourishing life. Amen.

Michael Jagessar

TWO APPEALS

FLOWER ARRANGING: The flower girls would really appreciate some help. Due to illness and holidays there may well be some weeks when no-one is available to arrange the flowers for church. If you feel you are able to help either on a regular or ad hoc basis we would greatly appreciate your help. Alternatively, those giving the flowers may be asked to arrange their own flowers. If you are able to help please contact Rosemary or one of the flower girls and we would be happy to have you join us. Many thanks.

Rosemary B

FLOWER DELIVERIES: This ministry is much-valued by our friends who are unable to attend church services either through illness, being house-bound or because they’re experiencing difficulties in their own lives or
those of their family. For various reasons, we are short of volunteers to collect the flowers from church either after Sunday evening service or Monday morning to be taken to friends ‘in need’. Having more volunteers on our rota helps to spread the duties. It really is not an arduous activity and the reward is seeing the pleasure of our friends’ knowing their church family is thinking of them.

There are currently 6 volunteers, which means a delivery by each person every 6 weeks. If you would like to join us in this ministry, please contact Anne Whitehead or Gwen Dumelow for further information.

Anne W

CONCESSIONARY BUS PASSES

The old-style pass must now be renewed by the end of February 2020; Transport for Wales has extended the period for renewal because not all the applications have been processed.

If you have applied for your new bus pass, but it hasn’t arrived, you will be able to use your old Pass until the end of February but you should call Transport for Wales to make enquiries about your new Pass.

The number to call is: 0300 303 4240
You will need to have available your existing card number, DOB, NI Number, Address and Post Code.

Gwen D

MESSAGE FROM MITRE!

When I was one
I had just begun.
But now I am two
My life begins anew!
Yes folks! I am now a fully qualified, working Guide Dog for The Blind and have taken up my responsible role with a gentleman in Salisbury.
Best wishes to you all, with love from Mitre
WOMEN’S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The World Day of Prayer service will be held this year in St Benedict’s Roman Catholic Church on Friday, 6th March at 11.00am. The material has been prepared by the women of Zimbabwe on the theme, ‘Rise, take up your mat and walk’.

THE LIFE OF A SENIOR STEWARD – DOWN UNDER

It is January 1st. The sun is streaming in through the bedroom window. The only sounds are those of cows gently mooing, a noisy kookaburra shouting its morning greeting. The outside temperature is already 20 degrees.

As you have already guessed, I am not waking up in Swansea but in Foster, Victoria, Australia. Firstly, let me assure you that we are over 100 miles from the devastating fires in part of the state. Here in Foster we have a higher humidity and hence more rainfall on its rolling hills. Other parts further north provide alpine sports during the winter months. We are, however, suffering with smoke haze as a result of fires in Tasmania and the house water tastes smoky, so it has to be boiled.

Our daughter and son-in-law’s small holding here - of about 70 acres - about five flat paddocks put to hay at this time of year. The rest of the terrain is so hilly that it’s only really suited as grazing for cattle (black, short legged Lowline Australian cattle) and sheep. We are reasonably self-sufficient with the meat provided when necessary, growing all our own vegetables, and electricity provided by solar panels on the roof.

We have kangaroos that visit regularly and wallabies that dare to try to eat our crops despite the precautions that are meant to deter them. We also have a koala who comes to visit in one of the trees from time to time. We’re made aware of his presence by the loud snoring noise he makes during the night. One of the delights of an evening is to step out on to the patio and wonder at the stars in the perfectly clear dark sky, the Southern Cross formation being easy to pick out.
Despite this rural setting, we are actually only about two kilometres from the small town of Foster. This town provides everything necessary for its 1500 population as well as the large outlying area. At this time of year, the population swells considerably, serving the nearby camping area, a National Park called Wilson's Promontory. Foster has a community hospital, health centre, schools for each age group, three churches, two hotels, two supermarkets as well as two butchers, fishmonger, post office, two banks and numerous small independent shops. We admit to enjoying a latte and chocolate brownie at Skye's, one of three cafes down the street - we are on our so-called holiday after all!!! Foster also has the important recreational reserve in which each small town shows such immense pride. This is the heart of the community with so many teams of each age group connected to it through football, netball, cricket, basketball, bowls and athletics. Like all small farmers in this area we cannot afford the equipment necessary for haymaking. Simon is one on a list of people who are all dependent upon the services of the one local farmer with the large-scale mower, the tedder which fluffs the cut grass up and then lastly the baler. We have been awaiting the arrival of Bill with his equipment for several days now.

**Saturday 4th January:** Bill has arrived now at 7pm and the five fields cut by 9 pm after which Bill says he has two more customers to serve that evening. The fields will now stay as they are for several days before the next operation.

**Tuesday 7th January:** We have had steady rain for several days. These conditions are just what the eastern side of the state requires to help dampen the fires but selfishly we can't help worrying that at this rate the hay crop will be a total failure as it lies sodden on the fields. The weather forecast for the next few days seems to be constantly changing from promising another heatwave to continuous rain.

This week our grandparent duties have begun in earnest with both Lucy and Simon back to work. We already know most of the places to go for the best playgrounds and favourite beaches, as well as trying out various swimming pools. Entertaining a nearly seven year old and a four year old can be quite
exhausting and we admit to looking forward to the scheduled hour the children are allowed on their ipads after lunch! Grandson James also claims to be a champion boules and Uno card game player but he keeps finding it necessary to practise against anyone he can persuade to play. Isabel also plays Uno but her technique requires moving positions to try to see everyone else's hands!!!

**Sunday 12th January:** The tractor has returned to re ted the hay- that is to fluff it up to try to dry it off!! Kelvin, Bill’s brother had already teddered it on Thursday but we had very heavy rain again that evening making the exercise useless. With a forecast of better weather for the next three days let's hope we can successfully get it baled and the crop will not be a total loss.

**Monday 13th January:** With a forecast of a beautiful day we set off with the children for the most southerly point of Australia - the Wilson's Promontory. Unfortunately, the weather forecast did not inform us that for the whole day we would suffer with very smoky atmosphere. The wonderful views usually seen down ‘the prom’ were non-existent today, and the wildlife that abounds there was notable by its absence. The only plentiful wildlife was the unwelcome variety - flies!!! Those I cannot get used to.

Alan J

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**ASH WEDNESDAY – 26TH FEBRUARY 2020**

Mark the start of Lent!

**6.30pm:** Relish the tradition of homemade pancakes! Have fun, laugh and enjoy the company of our church family.

**7.30pm:** Come before God, aware of all that separates us from God and from others. A quiet, informal service in which we can spend time reflecting on our lives.

All are very welcome!
EXPLORING CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS IN SKETTY
Following on from the Advent get-together and the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service on January 19th, two other initiatives are being planned:

**March** – **Lent Lunches** with possible short act of worship beforehand. Five churches will host and lead a short act of worship (20-30 mins) and provide a simple soup lunch. The purpose of this is to continue to establish relationships through socializing and worship.

**August** – Some sort of Sketty churches presence at one of the concerts in Singleton Park, along the lines of Street Pastors. The purpose would be to show concern, build community and work together as Christians.

GOD IN LOVE UNITES US

**Discussion Evening Wednesday 1st April 7.30pm**

How can we best live in relationships today? We all live within a huge variety of relationships in our world. Within our circles of friends, family and acquaintances, most of us will have at least some experience of conventional two-parent families, single parent families, cohabiting couples, single people, people who have divorced and re-married, same-sex partners and many more.

How can we best live faithfully as Christians in these relationships today? As Christians, we differ in how we answer this question. Yet we are called to be in loving communion with one another. What we share, in loving God and in knowing we are loved by God, is much greater than anything that divides us.

In July 2019, the report, ‘God in love unites us’, was presented to the Methodist Conference, which commended it to the wider church for study and prayerful discussion, before decisions are made at Conference.

Our opportunity to have this discussion in Sketty will be on Wednesday 1st April, and I invite you to come along and join us for this.

Leslie
GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

This month we’re getting to know Adella P who has recently joined our church and who serves the wider URC in the Swansea region as a Church Related Community worker. We welcome Adella among us and look forward to working with her over the coming years.

Alan and I moved into Gabalfa Road, Sketty at the end of August so that I could take up a post with the URC as the Church Related Community Worker (CRCW) for the Swansea Region of URC Churches. We slightly knew Swansea as our daughter was at Swansea University some 13 years ago and then moved to Cardiff. Our son lives in Stourbridge, West Midlands.

This is my third post. I worked in Wolverhampton for 10 years and have recently concluded just under 10 years in Winson Green, Birmingham. Both posts were a mix of working and worshiping with the church family; liaising with the members of groups that used the church centre; supporting different church and community projects and working with community organisations across the local political wards. Pieces of work that I have done in the past that very much link with my role now are asylum seeker & refugee work, community garden development and building community links. This time I am working with more than one church: Christ Well URC, Uniting Church Sketty, Tabernacle URC Mumbles, Hall St Llanelli plus Unity In Diversity (Asylum Seeker & Refugee Charity) and only have 5 years in post, as I am fulfilling the second term. Rosie B was the first term post holder. Before I trained to be a CRCW I was in retail management so I was very pleased to learn that Tabernacle want me to look at some kind of model of retail chaplaincy for the local retailing community in Mumbles. UCS is also my worshiping church so I hope to get involved more in the life of your church than just my work priorities.

Briefly, the task of a CRCW is to enable the local church to get further involved in community work in the neighbourhood of the local church, to develop aims and plans for carrying out this community work and to reflect on and develop this work. Thereby all the areas of the life of the church can be affected i.e its life, order, outreach, worship, theology and mission so exciting times ahead!
FOR YOUR DIARY

GO ORANGE COFFEE MORNING: The February Coffee morning will be held on Saturday, 1st February, 10am – noon in aid of MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY UK raising money for research and equipment for sufferers. Stalls will include books & music; bric-a-brac; cakes; craft; pebble painting; bagatelle and raffle. Tea/coffee and biscuits will be served.

WESLEY CLUB PROGRAMME

Monday 3rd Feb  Ukulele Band  (OPEN EVENING)
   “  10th Feb  Bill Davies  A Shocking Experience
   “  17th Feb  Tony Fitzgerald ‘India’
   “  24th Feb  Colin James  Joseph Parry – A Welshman of Note?

SUNDAY LUNCH: The February lunch will be held on Sunday 16th February at Yr Hen Dderwen. Please sign the list in the porch if you are interested and note time now: 12.30 pm for 1 pm. Any queries, please contact Pauline

COVER TO COVER: The February Cover to Cover will be on February 6th at 10.00am when we will discuss ‘The girl made of dust’ by Nathalie Abi-Ezzi.

REEL TO REAL: February:
   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.
FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP: Singing our Faith

Every week in church we sing our faith. Indeed, for many the hymns chosen (and their tunes) will impact on how they feel they have worshipped or come close to God during that time together. But we rarely, if ever, have time to properly explore the words that we sing. What bible references do they reflect? What theology do they offer? What do the words actually mean? In our Lent Faith and Fellowship series we will look more closely at four different hymns stretching from the baptism of Jesus, to his time in the wilderness, to his passion and cross, as we explore how the words and images speak into our lives and our faith today.

**Session 1:** Tuesday 3 March at 10am and Thursday 5 March at 7.30pm

**Session 2:** Tuesday 10 March at 10am and Thursday 7 March at 7.30pm

**One week’s break**

**Session 3:** Tuesday 24 March at 10am and Thursday 26 March at 7.30pm

**Session 4:** Tuesday 26 March at 10am and Thursday 2 April at 7.30pm

All are VERY welcome to come – the sessions are informal and lead us onto talking about our own life and faith experiences.

SMALL BOATS AND TREACHEROUS SEAS

*The following is a extract from Noel’s reflection at the joint service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on January 19th, based on the account of the shipwreck in the sea around Malta in Acts 27 and 28 where Paul and his companions were shown ‘unusual kindness’.*

“Our future as fellow human beings in Europe and worldwide calls us to work together to create a world of hospitality and hope, of welcome and well-being, of possibility and true prosperity. In that world, life-threatening journeys across treacherous seas to inhospitable and unwelcoming places would not be necessary. Our ecumenical fellowship, as sisters and brothers in Christ, here in Sketty and around the world, at least commits us to this endeavour: to create safe, welcoming and secure havens for those who seek to travel with their vulnerable and desperate families to
a new future of hope, and show, as the people of Malta did for Paul and his fellow-travellers, ‘unusual kindness’.

“This story of the shipwreck in the sea around Malta becomes a portrait of our contemporary church. We are called together as brothers and sisters in Christ to bear witness to the good news of God that in Christ we are all made one and belong together as one human family. We have to embrace this challenging vision for ourselves and allow our work and worship, witness and service as Christians of all traditions to be shaped and inspired by this cosmic vision. We are called to a ministry of healing, hospitality and hope for churches and for communities, here and around the world.”

WEEKLY PROGRAMME

- **Sunday services:**  
  10.30am (including Adventurers for children)  
  6.00 pm

- **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:**

  **Monday**  
  2.00pm  Folk dancing  
  7.00pm  Wesley Club

  **Tuesday**  
  2.00-4.00pm  Craft Group  
  5.00-6.00pm  Rainbows  
  6.15-7.30pm  Brownies

  **Wednesday**  
  10.00-11.30am  Sunbeams: Play Group  
  7.30pm  Sketty Madcaps

- **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
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<td>Sat</td>
<td>10.00-12.00</td>
<td>Coffee morning: Go Orange for Muscular Dystrophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
<td>The Revd Leslie Noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>The Revd Howard Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>7.30</td>
<td>Wesley Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>7.30pm</td>
<td>House group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>10.00am</td>
<td>Cover to Cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
<td>Revd Dr Noel A Davies (Racial Justice Sunday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.00pm</td>
<td>Rev Siperire Mugadzaweta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>7.00pm</td>
<td>Wesley Club:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>7.00pm</td>
<td>Church Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
<td>The Revd Leslie Noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.00pm</td>
<td>Caroline Buckler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>7.00pm</td>
<td>Wesley Club:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>10.00-12.00</td>
<td>Fairtrade Coffee morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
<td>The Revd Andrew Pearce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.00pm</td>
<td>The Revd Leslie Noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>7.00pm</td>
<td>Wesley Club:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>6.30pm</td>
<td>Start of Lent: Celebrating with pancakes followed, at 7.30, by a service of reflection for Ash Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>10.00-12.00</td>
<td>Coffee Morning for URC Commitment for Life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you are unable to fulfil your place on a rota, please re-arrange with someone else or contact the organizer:

February 2\(^{nd}\)  February 9\(^{th}\)  February 16\(^{th}\)  February 23\(^{rd}\)

Welcome Teams and Sound: Myrddin P

**Morning**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sonia B</td>
<td>Harry O</td>
<td>Allan &amp; Joe A</td>
<td>David K</td>
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<tr>
<td>John N</td>
<td>David P</td>
<td>Caroline C</td>
<td>Leighton J</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grosvenor H</td>
<td>Hilary E</td>
<td>Tina L</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graham B</td>
<td>Paul E</td>
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**Sound**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill D</td>
<td>Elizabeth E</td>
<td>Elisha G</td>
<td>Myrddin P</td>
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**Evening**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pat D</td>
<td>Myrddin P</td>
<td>Keith M</td>
<td>Anne V</td>
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**Flowers: Rosemary B**

**Giver:**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pat D</td>
<td>Pauline L</td>
<td>Pat B D</td>
<td>Barbara N</td>
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**Arranger:**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rosemary B</td>
<td>Pam E</td>
<td>Pat B D</td>
<td>Rosemary B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Distribution: Anne W**

[Please note Anne’s appeal on page 9 above for additional help]

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gwen D</td>
<td>Maggie C.</td>
<td>Pat B. D</td>
<td>Sonia B</td>
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**Sunday Morning Coffee: Paul H E**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claire K</td>
<td>Pauline L</td>
<td>John &amp; Sandra H</td>
<td>Jane &amp; Laurie H Paul E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth A</td>
<td>Pam E</td>
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RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY

The churches of Britain and Ireland are invited to mark February 9th 2020 as Racial Justice Sunday. The following is an extract from the introduction to this Sunday on Churches Together for Britain and Ireland’s website:

The Revd Dr Martin Luther King Jr famously said that, ‘injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere’! Dr King, like many before him, and others after, was inspired by the Hebrew and Christian scriptures which demonstrated that God was a ‘God of justice’ - “For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing…” [Isaiah 61:8].

...We live in a society that is badly in need of justice, and desperate for the hope, peace and mercy for which Christ died. For instance, irrespective of how people chose to vote on Brexit, one of the unintended consequences of that conclusion, is the rise in race and religious hate crime, and a general decline in civility and compassion in our discourse on ‘race’, immigration, asylum and refugee matters.

Moreover, ...the “Windrush Scandal” saw those of African Caribbean heritage, who had been living legally in this country for decades, threatened with deportation, and in some instances, actually deported. Finally, the so called ‘Migrant Crisis’, which came to the fore several years ago with those fleeing persecution and poverty (from the Middle East, Asia and Africa), making perilous sea crossings to reach Europe, has over recent years witnessed an increase in dangerous Calais journeys to these shores. When one looks behind these issues and stories, what we find are people – often the most vulnerable – in search of hope and a new life. And while it is easy to see them as statistics or figures who are connected to laws and regulations, it is important to remember that these same men, women and children are made in the image of God and loved by God. The church has a vital role to play in this conversation. As society’s moral compass, it can provide a prophetic voice which calls upon government...to act with compassion and integrity.
Welcome to Uniting Church Sketty

We’re currently exploring some of the key aspects of our own mission statement that you can find on the UCS website (or in the October 2019 magazine) so that we can learn more about who we are and who we are called to be as God’s people. It continues: “If you are new to church or if you are looking for a church or if you simply have questions about life, then we think you might find a home with us. Why? Because we too are people who have questions, but we have found it better to seek God together than alone…”

Like most churches, Uniting Church Sketty includes a range of people. Some of us have deep roots in this church or in other churches in these nations or around the world. Others have not been much involved in the life of the church until recently. Still others may well be searching for a spiritual home. But we believe that we all share one thing in common: ‘...we are people with questions.’ Not that all we have is questions, of course! At the heart of being a Christian is a shared faith, across the globe and throughout the centuries. We share faith in God as the source and energy of the cosmos. We share faith in Jesus, born among us, who lived love and compassion, was crucified for us and for all, and rose on resurrection morning. We share faith in the Spirit of God at work in the world and among God’s people through the centuries and today. But, like the father in Luke’s story, we too can say: ‘We believe; help us where faith falls short’. However secure our faith, we will have questions: about our understanding of the nature and character of God in a world where scientific perspectives can be confusing and perplexing; about the person and life, ministry and work, death and resurrection of Jesus in a world of many different faiths; about the work of the Spirit today when so much in our society seems to contradict the possibility of God working still among us. And about the meaning of life itself. Together we can ask and explore these questions, seek answers together and so help one another grow in faith, belonging and discipleship.

Our building development programme was funded by the following: