



WELSHPOOL METHODIST CHURCH

Minister: Rev Sue Lawler

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"Celebrating and Sharing God's Love"

JULY 2018 CHURCH BULLETIN

We extend warm welcome to any visitors, or to anyone worshipping with us for the first time. Please make yourselves known to us and stay after the service for a cup of tea. (We have a loop system. Please turn off mobile phones).

Summer Rain (*Andrea Davies 2018*)

The softest drops of misty rain,
That drift and fall like cooling tears,
Will wash away the dust from petalled heads
And spike again the grassy spears.

Once morning sunshine clears the cloud
From misted leaves to shed its light;
More vibrant colours gild the verge,
The hawthorn's shawl glints bridal white.

Refreshed, those daisy faces smile,
Their petals pretty, white, tipped pink.
How can such transformation be?
It gives us cause to stop and think;

We all need change, to be renewed,
To seek the rain, rinse off the grime;
Restored, we look to face the sun
Then seize again our precious time.

Sunday 1st July

Lectionary

Lamentations 3:23-33; Psalm 30; 2 Corinthians 8:7-15; Mark 5:21-43

Early Communion at 9am with Rev Marian

Morning Worship at 10.45am led by Rev Marian. (No Lunch today)

Evening Worship with Communion at 6pm led by Rev Bob Thomas

Group from Jubilate to Willersley Castle, Cromford, Derbyshire for the "Singing for Pleasure" week - no Jubilate practices this week.

This week:

Monday 2nd Coffee Morning 9.30am to 12; Playgroup at 1pm

Thursday 5th Prayer Meeting, 12-12.30pm, led by Rev Marian

Saturday 6th Coffee Morning and Friendship Lunch, 11am to 2pm

Sunday 8th July

Lectionary

Ezekiel 2:1-5; Psalm 123; 2 Corinthians 12:2-10; Mark 6:1-13

Morning Worship at 10.45am led by Graham Smith

Evening Worship at 6pm at New Street, Churches Together

This week:

Monday 9th Coffee Morning and Stalls, for Cefn, 9.30am to 12;

Jubilate at 10am; Playgroup at 1pm; WCT at 7.30pm

Tuesday 10th Jubilate at 7.15pm

Thursday 12th 'Reading the Bible Together' at 12noon; picnic lunch

Saturday 14th June from 9.30am

COFFEE MORNING AND '100 CAKES' STALL

Raising funds for transporting this year's Samaritan's Purse Christmas Shoeboxes - donations of cakes, please, and your support on the day would be appreciated.

Sunday 15th July

Lectionary

Amos 7:7-15; Psalm 85:8-13; Ephesians 1:3-14; Mark 6:14-29

Morning Worship at 10.45am led by Rev Marian
(Morning Worship at 10am at Trefeglwys led by Jubilate)

Evening Worship at 6pm led by Terry Jobling

This week:

Please note: Rev Marian is on holiday from 16th to 28th.

Monday 16th Coffee Morning 9.30am to 12; Jubilate at 10am; Playgroup at 1pm

Wednesday 18th at 7.15pm

An Evening with Rev Simon Sutcliffe

Please come along and discuss with Rev Simon possible ways forward for a Mission Initiative in our community, using funds from the Sylvia Evans Legacy

Thursday 19th Friday Fellowship "Away Day" to Borth

Saturday 21st Coffee Morning and Friendship Lunch, 11am to 2pm

Sunday 22nd July

Lectionary

Jeremiah 23:1-6; Psalm 23; Ephesians 2:11-22; Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

Morning Worship at 10.45am led by Canon Julia Francis

Evening Worship at 6pm led by Eileen Jobling

This week:

Monday 23rd Coffee Morning 9.30am to 12; Jubilate at 10am

Thursday 26th 'Reading the Bible Together' at 12noon; picnic lunch

Friday 27th Gallery Group at 7pm

Saturday 28th Walking with Friends, 9.30am - Dolgellau Precipice Walk

Sunday 29th July

Lectionary

2 Kings 4:42-44; Psalm 145:10-18; Ephesians 3:14-21; John 6:1-21

Morning Worship with Holy Communion at 10.45am led by Rev Marian to which we welcome friends from St Mary's on this 5th Sunday.

Evening Worship at 6pm led by Nigel Evans

This week:

Monday 30th Coffee Morning 9.30am to 12

Thursday 2nd Prayer Meeting, 12-12.30pm, led by Rev Marian

Saturday 4th Coffee Morning and Friendship Lunch.

Sunday 5th August

Lectionary

Exodus 16:2-4,9-15; Psalm 78:23-29; Ephesians 4:1-16; John 6:24-35

Early Communion at 9am with Rev Marian

Morning Worship at 10.45am led by Rev Marian

Evening Worship with Communion at 6pm led by Rev Michael Taylor

This week:

Monday 6th Coffee Morning 9.30am to 12

Thursday 9th 'Reading the Bible Together' at 12noon; picnic lunch

Saturday 11th Church Outing to the Black Country Museum

Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th August **PENTRE LLIFIOR FLOWER FESTIVAL**

Please note:

Sunday 19th August at 10.45am

This will be Rev Marian's last service of her year with us at Welshpool, and will include the Confirmation and Reception into Membership of Selina Owen and Prue Bowen.

From Rev Marian

July 2018

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this, people will be going on their summer holidays and, because of the way the church works, we've been looking towards autumn, harvest and even Christmas! Where does the time go?

Not everyone is able (or wants!) to go away during what has become holiday time. Holy days, which became holidays, were an extension of the day of rest in the story of creation and they weren't for going away but for giving ourselves space for rest and relaxation and, even, time for the God who is so often crowded out of our busy lives.

Are you going away? Have you been away? Will you make space at home or take a chair into the garden, close your eyes and listen to the bees with the sun warming your face? Is there a place that you go to or a space that you create where you feel that God is not far away?

There are places I return to on a fairly regular basis, a couple of places where I can be fairly sure that I won't meet another human yet I know I'm not alone there. You've heard me mention one of these – a place high in the hills; getting there involves a very steep climb – in the car of course! - often, there are people camping in the valley by the lake, then, travelling onwards and upwards through the wooded hills there's an open space near the hill top and with an ancient church and graveyard. From that high spot it's possible, on a clear day, to look down on castle ruins perched on a cliff, to see the coastline for miles and scan a large village much visited by holidaymakers. When I'm there it is my Bethel, the House of God.

That's what Jacob called a place where he encountered God, where he saw something, experienced something that changed his life forever. There he was, still a young man, running away from home because his family had finally imploded – we'd call it a dysfunctional family. His father was dying. He and his older twin brother, Esau, had both wanted their father's blessing. Jacob's mother had colluded with Jacob to get it – the birthright of the elder son – and, though the scheme had worked, it enraged his brother to the point where Jacob fled for his life. The twin fled for his life. The twins weren't identical, it sounds as though Esau was larger and stronger and would have made mincemeat of his younger brother, so Jacob left with little more than the clothes he was wearing.

When he had gone as far as he could, he looked for a place to rest and something to rest his head on. He found a stone the right size to use as a pillow and fell asleep ... you know the story! In case you've forgotten, I'll remind you –

Jacob fell asleep and, in his sleep, he had a dream. In this vivid dream there was a ladder set up on earth with the top of it reaching into heaven and the angels of God descending and ascending it like bright-winged ants. Then suddenly, God was with Jacob promising him safety, land and children. 'Remember, I am with you,' God said to him. 'I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.' In spite of what had gone before, the deception and the 'stolen' blessing, Jacob's life was changed for good when he woke up to God and Jacob knew he had to mark the spot.

What marks those places where you have encountered God, woken up to God? Where are those places where we were able to say, 'Surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it!' If you can't return there physically, can you return there in your mind and recall the feeling?

The dream showed Jacob things that he hadn't realised – that God would reveal himself to the most unlikely person in the most controversial circumstance (a cheat who was running away); that the whole earth belonged to God and where Jacob slept was the house of God (as any place can be). He turned his stone pillow into an altar before he set off praising the God who had come to him where he was.

Where will you spend your holy days this summer? Have there been places where God seemed very close and, as you relax in your favourite chair, can you take yourself there in your imagination? I'm sorry I can't disclose my 'special' place. I enjoy the isolation and don't want to share it!

Peace! *Marian*

"Cum Cantibus in Choro" (Singing Together)

(from a John Bell "Thought for the Day")

It may not be long before the tabloids sport headlines such as *Mendelssohn on the Mersey* or *Rachmaninov in Raploch* ... and all because there are *More than Maracas in Caracas*.

Last week, the Simon Bolivar Orchestra from Venezuela performed in Britain. Its first concert earned a rare five-star rating in *The Guardian*. All the instrumentalists in the ensemble are under 24. And many come from backgrounds where classical music would not have been a life choice were it not for a project called El Sistema which, in 30 years, has tutored 400,000 children and set up 150 orchestras in what is still regarded as a 'developing nation'.

The scheme is now being introduced in Britain. It has already started in Scotland, in Raploch, a deprived neighbourhood on the outskirts of Stirling. The project there is called 'Big Noise'. The chairman of the project commented, 'It costs about £2,000 per year for a child to be taught in the Big Noise; but if the child ends up in the criminal justice system, it costs £18,500 per year.'

Does this mean that classical music is the antidote to criminality? No, that would be a naive assertion. But I'm reminded of a comment made by the head teacher of a primary school I once visited in Yorkshire. Its 190-strong choir included every child who did not go home for lunch. The head had made class singing a priority, an essential feature of the curriculum, and commented that one result was a noticeable decrease in behavioural problems.

'Why so?' I asked her and she said, 'You can pay a fortune for sports equipment and instructors and one of the by-products is to make children competitive. You hire a part-time singing teacher and you make children cooperative'.

Maybe this is why in Christian churches music has such a high priority ... not just the practised music of performers, but the sound of untutored voices doing something magnificent together.

For, of all the arts, music is the most participative. We cannot all paint or perform a play together, but we can all sing. And the Bible sees this cooperative activity not as an option, but as a response to a divine command, 'Sing me a new song...,' says God.

In a highly competitive society, there's something to be treasured in a pursuit which costs little apart from time. Maybe this is what differentiates us from the beasts - that we make music not to attract suitors or display skills, but because cooperation is what we need to learn in order to prevent our race from dying.

Fine Tune Me Lord

Fine tune me Lord, to hear the faintest tune you play
And fit my life around your melodies
And help me finally to recognise
The tune I play is yours
There all the time, if only I had listened.

Unknown

Pause to Ponder

I am not what I might be,
I am not what I ought to be,
I am not what I wish to be,
I am not what I hope to be;
But, thank God, I am not what I once was
and can say with the great apostle,
'By the grace of God, I am what I am'

John Newton

'WELCOME'

(seen recently on a Notice board outside a Sidmouth church)

A nun, a rabbi and an atheist walk into church ...

We welcome tourists, seekers, doubters, pilgrims ... and YOU

We offer a special welcome to those who are single, widowed, divorced, married, co-habiting, in a civil partnership or "complicated" relationship

If you are rich, poor, noisy, or shy you are particularly welcome

Uniquely welcome are toddlers, babies, dogs on strings, teenagers, the elderly, the old, the very old, the very VERY old, the middle-aged and children, the childless, parents, grandparents and great grandparents, the unemployed, overworked or lazy

You will feel at home here if you are in recovery, addicted, or trying to give up, angry, disaffected or apathetic

We offer a specific welcome to the homeless, refugees, immigrants, second home owners, the precariously housed or those from gated communities

If your religious beliefs are Hindu, Sunni, Shia or Ahmaddiya Muslim, Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, Buddhist, Jain, Jew, not sure, don't care or born again ...

YOU ARE ALL ACCEPTED

Atheists and agnostics are especially welcome

Food for thought?

WELSHPOOL TRANSPORT FESTIVAL

Thanks are extended to all who helped in any way to ensure the success of our participation in the Transport Festival. **Hopefully we proved that we, too, are a welcoming church for all comers!**

On Saturday 23rd, the foyer and church were filled with a variety of exhibits, and it is estimated that around 400 people visited our venue. From the Market Research interviews carried out, we received some very favourable general comments and observations:

- "The variety of exhibits catered for all age groups"
- "The quality of the food and its very reasonable cost"
- "The atmosphere"
- "Glad to see the Church working so closely with the community on this type of event"
- "Good to see the Church being used on days other than Sunday"

The Catering Team were exceptionally busy, selling over 100 cakes, as well as ploughman's, sandwiches and salads, and, despite repeated trips to Sainsbury's, eventually ran out of food!

On Sunday morning 24th, Rev Marian conducted the Festival Service, on the appropriate theme of Journeys, and Andrew Hall, from the Wales Air Ambulance, spoke about the charity's work with four helicopters operating from bases around the country.

During the weekend, there was opportunity for visitors and congregation to donate to the work of the Air Ambulance, and a total of £400 was raised.

If you were not able to visit on Saturday to see the exhibits, look out for photographs which will be displayed in the Meeting Room.