



WELSHPOOL METHODIST CHURCH

Minister: Rev Marian Jones

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"Celebrating and Sharing God's Love"

DECEMBER 2017 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).

A CHRISTMAS WISH

The children wish and wait for clouds of snow,
Excited, they could sledge and slide and throw;
Jack Frost add sparkle underneath the moon,
But children hope the snow will fall quite soon.

They've seen the wonder on their festive cards,
Now want the snow transforming their back yards;

They're full of joyous hope, so who can say?
Perhaps the snow *will* come on Christmas Day.

If *we* could have that childlike hope for good,
Make Christmastime a time for seeking God,
His Word would leap from prophecy and praise,
And Christ would come again to light our days.

Andrea Davies

Sunday 26th November: Sunday before Advent

Lectionary

Ezek 34:11-16,20-24; Ps 95:1-7a or Ps 100; Eph 1:15-23; Matt 25:31-46

Morning Worship at 10.45am led by Gareth Evans

Afternoon Tea Service at 4pm (P&P) led by Andrea Davies

This week:

Monday 27th Coffee Morning 9.30am to 12; Jubilate at 10am; Playgroup at 1pm
Tuesday 28th Jubilate at 7.15pm
Friday 1st Dec 'Carols on the Steps' (Town's Winter Festival), 6.30pm
Saturday 2nd Christmas Fair, Coffee and Lunches, 9.30am to 2pm

Sunday 3rd December: Advent Sunday

Lectionary

Isaiah 64:1 -9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Cor. 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

Early Communion at 9am led by Rev Marian; breakfast in the Gallery

Morning Worship including Baptism at 10.45am led by Rev Marian
(No Bring and Share Lunch this month)

Evening Worship (Evening Prayer with HC) at 6pm led by Rev Bob

This week:

Monday 4th Coffee Morning 9.30am to 12; Jubilate at 10am; Playgroup at 1pm; Christmas Messy Play
Tuesday 5th Funeral of Bill Roe at 12; Jubilate at 7.15pm
Thursday 7th Reading the Bible Together at 12; picnic lunch
Saturday 9th Walking with Friends: The Beacon Ring. Depart 10am.

Sunday 10th December: 2nd Sunday of Advent

Lectionary

Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2,8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

Morning Worship at 10.45am led by John Harbron

Choral Society Christmas Concert at 7.30pm (No WCT service)

Join us for this varied programme of religious songs and carols, with harp and flute, to celebrate 40 years' service to the Society of Beryl Jones and Margaret Benbow (conductor and accompanist)

Tickets: £6, to include refreshments, from Janice, or at the door. Proceeds will be divided between Choral and Ponthafren, Welshpool.

(Jubilate members Bill, Derek, John, Roy, Janice, Linda, and Kath, & also Jenny Thomas, sing with Choral Society - please support them).

This week:

Monday 11 th	Coffee Morning 9.30am to 12; Jubilate at 10am; Playgroup at 1pm
Tuesday 12 th	Service of Light at 7.00pm - to remember, as we prepare for Christmas, those from whom we are separated by distance, death or any other reason.
Thursday 14 th	Prayer Meeting led by Rev Marian, 12 to 12.30pm. "Listening for God in the Silence" Jubilate's final rehearsal for 17 th at 7.15pm
Friday 15 th	Fellowship at 2.30pm: Christmas Celebration and Tea Gallery Group at 7pm
Saturday 16 th	Carol Singing, Pinewood, for Action for Children, 9.30am Coffee Morning and Friendship Lunch, 11am to 2pm

Sunday 17th December: 3rd Sunday of Advent

Lectionary

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; 1 Thess. 5:16-24; John 1: 6-8, 19-28

Morning Worship at 10.45am led by Graham Smith

Afternoon Tea Service, Cafe Style, in Church, at 4pm when Jubilate "Invite you to a Party to Celebrate the Birth of a Son" as they sing Graham Kendrick's "Make Way for Christmas - The Gift" which will include carols for all. **Come and Join us for this Carol Service with a difference, and bring your friends! Tea follows!**

This week:

- Monday 18th Coffee and Carols for Action for Children, led by Jubilate, 10.00am to 12
- Tuesday 19th Carols by Candlelight at Pentre Llifior, 6.30pm
- Thursday 21st Carols and Readings at The Hermitage, 10.30am.
Carols by Candlelight at Cefn, 7pm

Christmas Eve 24th December: 4th Sunday of Advent

Lectionary

2 Samuel 7:1-11,16; Psalm 89:1-4,19-26; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

Morning Worship at 10.45am A traditional Service of Nine Lessons and Carols led by Jubilate with readers from various church groups.

Crib Service at 4pm led by Rev Marian, when the children help to build the Nativity Scene, and we all sing some favourite carols.

Midnight Communion at 11.30pm led by Rev Marian.

(You are invited to bring a small gift to place under the tree).

This week

Although there is no Christmas Day service at our church you will be welcome at Newtown (10am), Pentre Llifior (10.30am) or Chelsea Lane Baptist (10am).

New Year's Eve 31st December: First Sunday of Christmas

Lectionary

Isaiah 61:10 - 62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

Morning Worship at 10.45am led by Rev Marian will be our annual **Covenant Service**, to which we welcome our friends from St Mary's.

(There is no evening service today)

This week

- Thursday 4th Reading the Bible Together at 12; picnic lunch
- Saturday 6th Coffee Morning and Friendship Lunch

From Rev Marian

Dear Friends

My first visit to Bethlehem stays in my mind, coming up the steps from the cave beneath the Church of the Nativity, with tears running down my cheeks.

Why? Who knows?

Many other places in the Holy Land have had the same impact over the years but Bethlehem was the first. Years later, reflecting on that place and the events commemorated there, these words whirled round my head, and I offer them to you -

In the hay, a baby lies,
Star-lit stable, manger bed:
Lord of heaven and earth and skies
Lying where the beasts are fed.

What significance has this?
Who are they who gather there?
Child of Mary, Son of God,
Born on earth in stable bare.

Shepherds visit, wise men, too -
As the good news spreads afar -
Woken by an angel host;
Beckoned by a bright new star.

They bring gifts to offer him:
Incense, gold, for God and king -
Give themselves to serve the Christ -
Myrrh, foretelling dark death's sting.

God has come to earth to dwell,
Born in poor obscurity;
Offering abundant life,
Suff'ring, dying on a tree.

'Twas for us he came to earth
Sharing our humanity,
That the least and last and lost
Share in his divinity.

Star-lit stable, manger bed;
Mary, resting after pain:
Pain prophetic, for her son
On the tree of life will reign.

Marian Jones 2009

Metre: 7.7.7.7 Suggested tune: Harts (H&P 289(i))

As we go through the waiting time of Advent with the preparations for the Christmas celebration, recognising the mixed emotions that the season brings, my prayer is that you will know God's blessing.

Peace.

Marian

Reminder: PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND 2018

A visit to The Cave and Church of the Nativity is included in the itinerary of this Pilgrimage, led by Rev Marian, flying from Heathrow on 29th October, with 6 nights in Jerusalem and 5 nights in Tiberias, at a cost of £2,345.50 per person (£782.00 single supplement). For more details, Brochure with Itinerary, and Booking Form, speak to Rev Marian, or phone her on 01978 810292.

Updates

An Open Meeting to discuss ideas concerning the use of the generous legacy left by Sylvia Evans was held on 1st November and attended by 18 members. All the ideas which had been fed back from the questionnaire were discussed, and a short-list drawn up of ideas to take further:-

1. Replacement of church kneelers
2. TV Flat screen for Meeting Room (and camera, and monitor for lectern in church)
3. Digital Hymnbook
4. Construction of Canopy Porch for rear entrance from ramp
5. Professional survey of condition of stained glass (as preliminary to any other work that may be required, which would come under Maintenance)
6. Outreach Worker

A lengthy discussion ensued on the suggestion of an Outreach Scheme, and it was agreed that, before moving forward with this idea, we need (a) to be clear about aims and objectives, (b) we need to identify the needs in the community that we would be trying to address, and (c) we must consider whether any proposed scheme could be self-supporting once resources from the legacy had been used up.

It was known that Rev Bob had been involved in setting up an Outreach Scheme in his previous circuit, where a redundant chapel had been converted into "THE SHED", a woodworking venture run by Rev Bob and two retired members from the circuit, to enable people with a range of "issues" to meet weekly in a friendly and safe environment, with the opportunity to be creative and to develop social skills. It was agreed that a small group would meet with Rev Bob to seek his advice about setting up such a venture, and also to discuss with him any other ideas related to Mission and Outreach.

Ideas discussed at a meeting with Rev Bob on 21st November

1. The Shed Scheme - the need for appropriate supervision and compliance to safety regulations were particularly stressed
2. 'Holiday at Home' Scheme - an annual few days' holiday based at church, with activities, outings and meals for those who would otherwise never have a holiday - elderly, those on their own etc.
3. Holiday Clubs -for children during school holidays
4. Community 'Out and About' Group - organising monthly outings, shared transport or hired minibus and driver
5. Information/Advice Bureau - drop-in centre with tea and coffee
6. Door-to-Door Outreach - small teams knocking on doors around the town, distributing cards with all details of what goes on at our church, including meetings of all groups that use our premises.
7. Explore what "hidden" talents there may be among our church family. There may be people who would like to use their talents/skills in some form of outreach - a challenge to "take risks" with whatever talent we may have (ref. Rev Marian's sermon on 19th November!)

These suggestions will be considered further and it is hoped that a proposal will be brought to the February Church Council.

CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY CAP

Three members of the church attended a Money Coach Training Day at St Barnabas Church, Erdington, Birmingham, in October. This was a very informative day with some interesting speakers.

We have held a course for 5 young people over 3 Friday nights, when they have been shown how to make and manage their Budgets. Tea, coffee and cakes were available and all enjoyed the experience. We are planning a get together in the New Year to see how they are managing their budgets, and we are hoping to run another course in early 2018.

For more information speak to Fiona Jones, Eric Pacey or Karen Kerr

BETTY BROWN

(An amusing tale submitted by Margaret Owen)

There lived quite near a County Town
A dear old dame, named Betty Brown,
Her cottage was not very big, but there she kept her cow and pig.
On Sunday she would haste away to hear her Pastor preach and pray.
In him her faith was firm and strong;
Her Pastor could do nothing wrong.
Then, she was taken ill one day; the Pastor called to read and pray.
Next morn, a neighbour called and said:
I've just popped in to make your bed.
But O you seem quite well again! What did you take to ease the pain?
Nothing, said Betty,
I do declare it must have been the Pastor's prayer.
Then sickness fell on Betty's cow.
It's queer, she said, but anyhow,
I'll fetch the Pastor, that I will, and tell him my poor cow is ill.
The Pastor knew not what to do,
Praying for cows was something new.
However as she put him to the test he promised he would do his best
So leaning over her, he said, you poor old beast, you look so bad,
Your poor old mistress is so sad. If you live, you live;
If you die, you do, and that will be the end of you.
The cow got well;
The good dame went off to church when Sunday came, to tell her Pastor
how his prayer had cured her cow and eased her care.
That day the Pastor took a chill, it made him feel extremely ill,
A violent cough then shook his frame,
And in his throat an abscess came.
Two doctors said, unless it broke, he most decidedly would choke.
His loving wife was in despair,
and nursed him with the greatest care.

When Betty heard this awful news she quickly donned her Sunday shoes,
her bonnet & her Sunday shawl, & at his house she made a call.
The servants all began to grin, of course they would not let her in.

When Pastor heard the noise below,
They told him that she would not go.
Oh let her come, was his reply; I'll see poor Betty ere I die.
When Betty reached the Pastor's bed, she gently coughed,
And then she said,
I can't pray much, I dun' know how, but you prayed for my poor cow,
I learned your prayer, and now I'll pray
And this is what I means to say:
You poor old beast, you look so bad, your poor old missus looks so sad
If you lives, you live; if you die, you do,
And that will be the end of you.
The Pastor laughed enough to choke, and all at once,
The abscess broke! He felt no pain, his throat was clear,
And he had nothing more to fear.
His loving wife was filled with glee,
And praised the Lord wholeheartedly.
Good Luck to Betty and her cow. She beat two doctors anyhow!!

And finally, a Seasonal Verse: "Christmas Dinner"

(submitted by Gwen Jones)

We love the family gathered round on this so special day,
The firelight bright, the candles lit, dispelling winter's grey.
Best glasses sparkling, special plates with Christmas bands of gold,
And crackers that bring festive cheer although the jokes are old!
We drink a toast to family and friends no longer here,
And for a moment we reflect on loved ones held so dear.
But laughter very soon returns, young children see to that,
And everyone enjoys the fun and wears a paper hat!
The turkey might be over-done, the sprouts may not be eaten,
The joy is being with family, and that just can't be beaten!