

Welshpool Methodist Church, High Street

“Celebrating and Sharing God’s Love”

“IN TOUCH” issue 16

News and Updates

1. **Happy Birthday** to all who will be celebrating birthdays this month – we know of some, but no “specials” until next month. Watch this space!

2. **Condolences** – we extend our sympathy to Gwen Lander and the church family at Newtown following the sudden death of Gwen’s husband Barry.

3. **Morning Worship** – sadly, following the Welsh Government’s announcement of a two week lockdown in Wales from 6pm on Friday 23rd until the morning of Monday 9th November, we will not be able to go ahead with the services we had planned on 25th October with Revd Jacquie, on 1st November (All Saints Day) with Graham, or our Remembrance Day service with Holy Communion on Sunday afternoon 8th with Revd Marian. Our church will have to remain closed for at least the next two weeks which means that we will be unable to offer a space for Private Prayer on Wednesdays 28th October or 4th November. However, Service Sheets for Home Worship will continue to be sent out, as will the next issue of “In Touch” on 4th.

4. **All We Can Harvest Appeal: “Change begins with a Bicycle”** – thanks to all who have responded to date. We would like to send our donation before mid November, so if you still have a Smartie tube or anything further to add to this appeal, please let us have your contribution the next time the church is open. Similarly, if you still have **Christian Aid Lent Appeal: “Count Your Blessings”** bags could you please hand them in to Chris R or Derek as soon as you can. Thank you.

5. **Book Swaps** – have you been doing lots of reading during lockdown? Do you have a book that you could recommend to another reader, or are you searching for a particular type of book for yourself? A few years ago the church had a library, which was well used by one or two folk who were sad to see its demise. One reader is looking, in particular, for non-fiction books with moral, religious, and/or philosophical content. If you can offer such a book, or if you are looking for a specific type of book yourself, or if you would like to offer to organise a book swap scheme as a form of church outreach, please get in touch – tel. 850514.

6. **Dates for the Diary** - Church Council has given permission for the following church groups to meet (one group per week) when Covid restrictions allow:

1st Mondays in the month at 10.15am: Jubilate – “Fun, Faith, Fellowship and Flasks!” but no singing (Contact: Janice 850514)

2nd and 4th Thursdays at midday: Bible Reading (Contact: Derek 561175)

3rd Fridays at 7pm: Gallery Group (Contact: Graham 553818)

4th Saturdays: Walking with Friends, weather permitting (Contact Derek)

Hopefully these activities will be able to resume from Thursday 12th November, the 2nd Thursday, with Bible Reading at 12 noon (bring your own Bible).

7. Church Council Meeting - held on 7th October

Usually the Minutes are posted on the Meeting Room Notice Board, but it is unlikely that many would get the opportunity to read them at the moment, hence some points of interest to note:

(i) Finance: Derek reported that income from church offerings and group lettings is understandably down, and it is estimated that, if the current situation continues, our annual income could be reduced by £10,000. Following a 5 month assessment holiday from April to August, circuit has now agreed to set assessments for the first 6 months of this year (September to February) at 50%, after which the situation will be reviewed. Derek advised that, with reserves, our church is financially sound at the moment and can “weather the storm”, but not forever.

(ii) Property: Council agreed to accept a quote of £6,508+VAT from Recclesia for polycarbonate secondary glazing for the church windows, the cost to be met from the portion of the Sylvia Evans legacy set aside for property maintenance.

(iii) Pastoral: Current membership is 63 with 37 adherents. Revd Jacquie asks adherents to consider becoming members. Leah Smith has retired as Pastoral Visitor after many years service. It was agreed that a letter of thanks should be sent to her. Both “In Touch” and Home Worship Sheets (each with a circulation of approx. 100) will continue to be produced as now – to be reviewed at the end of the year.

(iv) Appointments: Because of “lockdown”, no appointments had been made for 2020-21. With the exception of Leah Smith, it was agreed that the 2019-20 officers be elected en bloc for 2020-21. Graham Smith was elected to replace Leah.

(v) Church Caretaker/Bookings Secretary: Anne had given notice to the Property and Finance Committee of her intention to retire as caretaker from the end of the year, 31st August 2020. Property Committee recommended to Church Council that the position of Caretaker should then become a paid post from 1st September. (A volunteer would be sought to oversee bookings). This was agreed.

(vi) Other matters: following concerns for the congregations' comfort and health during the winter months with all doors open during worship, it was agreed to continue the practice of closing the inner double doors for the duration of the service only. (At the Worship Consultation meeting held on 15th October, it was further agreed that the front outer doors should also be closed during the service). Heating will be put on before the service, but the heater fans will have to be turned off before worship begins. You are advised to wrap up warm and bring a blanket in the coldest weather.

8. Circuit Officer Vacancies

At the Circuit Meeting held on 13th October, the circuit churches were asked to advertise two vacant Circuit Officer positions which it is vital to fill:-

- (i) Circuit Property Steward (Job Description from Stan Mountford, 01686 621354)
- (ii) Circuit Safeguarding Officer (Job Description from Revd Jacquie, 01686 625690)

A volunteer is also sought to take over as Circuit Missions Secretary from Andrew Mathieson (01938 555376)

Sing Praises! Julia's choice of hymns for Mondays 26th October and 2nd November

Julia writes: "On some recent Sundays, Peter and I have taken our turn to steward the small church of St Gwynog so that it can open for private prayer. The pews have tape similar to a crime scene and we do 'Track and Trace'. Afterwards we disinfect all around. It's very different from the vibrant, warm building we are used to entering. I miss the singing. We also link into the service Derek sends out, and there are half a dozen ways we can worship at home, but still....

I guess God does 'Track and Trace' on a global basis – sending someone out to follow up new contacts - actively encouraging the contagion of faith, peace and love by a friendly encounter. Our "In Touch" magazine (how grateful we are to Janice) has been one such bringer of light.

I was reading in another magazine of one place in St Asaph Diocese where they put appropriate little items in a basket on certain Sundays/Festival Days on a help-yourself basis e.g. Mini eggs, balloons, little cakes etc., next to which was an empty Food Bank box. The Food Bank box filled up as the basket emptied, so more lives were touched than just those passing by – a small investment multiplied. There was no proof that they were the same people giving and taking but the idea of sharing had caught on - new ways of being church.

The two hymns I am sharing this week are '**Brother, Sister, Let me Serve You**' (StF 611) written by Richard Gillard in 1977 and '**Colours of Day**; (StF 167) from a 1974 collaboration of three writers, Sue McClellan, John Paculabo and Keith Rycroft. As we watch the changing leaves on our trees, the colours of day really do impress, yet both these hymns track our minds across a world of humanity with its diversity and variety of needs.

Every Monday I continue to send these hymn choices to Jubilate members for our coffee hymn, which of course we can only sing individually in our kitchens. Do join in whatever your voice – the strain of praise will be joyful in the heavens.

My best wishes, Julia Francis".

From Pat P: 'A new take on the well-loved verses of the 23rd Psalm'

The Lord is my shepherd – That's relationship!

I shall not want – That's supply!

He makes me lie down in green pastures – That's rest!

He leads me beside still waters – That's refreshment!

He restores my soul – That's healing!

He leads me in the paths of righteousness – That's guidance!

For His name's sake – That's purpose!

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death – That's testing!

I will fear no evil – That's protection!

For you are with me – That's faithfulness!

Your rod and staff comfort me – That's discipline!

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies – That's hope!

You anoint my head with oil – That's consecration!

My cup runs over – That's abundance!

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life – That's blessing!

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord – That's security! Forever – That's eternity!

“Mental Health for All”

This was the theme of World Mental Health Day 2020 which was marked on 10th October. As we live through the Covid-19 pandemic and government-imposed restrictions, it's more important than ever to be proactive in looking after our mental health. According to recent research carried out by MIND, more than half of adults (60%) and over two thirds of young people (68%) said their mental health has deteriorated during lockdown. We've had to deal with changes to our established routines, feelings of uncertainty, loneliness, fear, and anxiety, amongst many others. Many people have received new mental health diagnoses as a result of the pandemic, and for others existing mental health problems have deteriorated.

What does Mental Health mean? The World Health Organisation defines it as *“a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community”*. Other terms used are 'mental well being' and 'emotional health'. Anxiety and depression are the most commonly recorded mental health disorders in the UK. Other fairly common mental health disorders include phobias, panic attacks, post-traumatic stress, post-natal depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). One in four of us will experience a mental health problem at some point in our lives. Our mental health isn't something constant, it fluctuates as we go through our lives and experience different circumstances. All of us will have experienced feelings like stress, anxiety, worry, or just being generally fed up, but for some, this can develop into more serious mental health problems. There are various factors that play a part in how good our mental health is – our circumstances, our biology, our brain chemistry, and any family history of mental health problems.

There are many misconceptions about mental health and many negative stereotypes about people who experience mental ill health including that they are crazy, dangerous or that they can't make any meaningful contribution to society. In recent times a number of public figures have spoken out about their struggles with mental health and this has helped to challenge these stereotypes. These include successful figures such as Stephen Fry, Alistair Campbell and David Beckham. We all have a responsibility to reduce stigma and discrimination, and help to create mentally healthy communities where we live.

Top tips for looking after our mental health:

1. Open up about your feelings – talking about how we feel always helps
2. Good diet – the brain needs the right nutrients and vitamins to keep healthy
3. Reduce/stop alcohol and smoking – drugs that have mind-altering effects
4. Do something for someone else – helping others makes us feel more positive
5. Sleep well – try to sleep for 6 to 9 hours per day
6. Become more active or do some exercise – giving us a sense of achievement
7. Connect with others – if not face to face, phone, text or write
8. Enjoy yourself – make some time for yourself! You could spend some time doing a hobby or learning a new skill, listening to some music or watching a favourite TV programme, and remember that laughter releases chemicals in our brain that helps to improve our mood.

From “As Time Goes By”, a weekly newsletter produced for the residents of Midland Heart complexes

From Megan: The Mountain

If the mountain seems too big today, then climb the hill instead.
If the morning brings you sadness, it's OK to stay in bed.
If the day ahead seems heavy, and your plans seem like a curse,
There's no shame in rearranging – don't make yourself seem worse.
If a shower feels like needles, and a bath feels like you'll drown,
If you haven't washed your hair for days – don't throw away your crown.
A day is not a lifetime. A rest is not defeat.
Don't think of it as failure, just a quiet, kind retreat.
It's OK to take a moment from an anxious, fractious mind,
The world will not stop turning while you get realigned.
The mountain will still be there when you want to try again.
You can climb it in your own time – just love yourself till then.

From Revd Marian: New Beatitudes *(With apologies to CartoonChurch.com)*

Blessed are those who stay indoors for they are protecting others.
Blessed are the checkout workers for they have patience and fortitude in the face of frustration and fear.
Blessed are those who are alone yet still know that God is with them.
Blessed are the refuse collectors for they are doing all they can to prevent disease.
Blessed are the teachers for they are providing stability for our children and grandchildren in disturbing times.
Blessed are those who, even now, are isolated with their abusers; we pray that they will find safety.
Blessed are the delivery drivers and postal workers for they are the bringers of essential things.
Blessed are the single parents for they are coping alone with their responsibilities and there is no respite.
Blessed are the hospital workers, the ambulance crews, the doctors, nurses, care assistants, cleaners, pharmacists, for the kingdom of heaven is surely theirs.
Blessed are you who, during this time, use your phone to keep up the spirits of those who feel isolated; may God's love shine through you.
Blessed are all who, through this time still hunger and thirst for justice, work for peace and model mercy, for they are reflecting the image of God.

From Graham: The Value of One *(author unknown)*

One song can spark a moment. One flower can wake a dream.
One tree can start a forest. One bird can herald spring.
One smile begins a friendship. One handclasp lifts a soul.
One star can guide a ship at sea. One word can frame the goal.
One vote can change a nation. One sunbeam lights a room.
One candle wipes out darkness. One laugh will conquer gloom.
One step must start each journey. One word must start a prayer.
One hope will raise our spirits. One touch can show you care.
One voice can speak with wisdom. One heart can know what's true.
One life can make a difference – you see, it's up to YOU!

From Terry P: What can civilised man not live without? *(Owen Meredith)*

We may live without poetry, music and art,
And may live without conscience and live without heart.
We may live without friends,
We may live without books,
But civilised man cannot live without cooks!

This was found printed on the title page of a wartime cookbook (published 1937) distributed by Revo Electric Co. Ltd., Tipton, Staffordshire, provided free with a new cooker purchased by Terry's mother!

Favourite Saturday Friendship Lunch Recipes

Sadly, it looks as if it will be sometime before we can resume Saturday Coffee and Lunches, so this verse from Terry is an ideal introduction to a new feature for "In Touch". For some time, Saturday customers have been asking us to produce a cookbook with recipes of some of their favourites from our menus, but, apart from scribbling the odd recipe on a scrap of paper, we haven't got round to it, so, from now on, one or two recipes will be featured in each issue of "In Touch" for you to try at home.

We will start with **IMPOSSIBLE PUDDING**, a really easy pudding to produce, and described as "Impossible" because you wouldn't believe it works out as it does – a very fine pastry base, with a vanilla egg custard above, topped with a thin layer of coconut sponge. Why not try it and see?!

Blend together in a liquidiser:

1 cup caster sugar	2 cups milk
1 cup desiccated coconut	1 tsp. vanilla essence
½ cup plain flour	½ tsp. baking powder
¼ cup soft margarine	¼ tsp. salt
4 eggs	

1. Pour into a lightly greased 9" circular glass pie dish (or equivalent)
2. Bake at 350F/180C/mk. 4 for 50mins to 1 hour, until brown and set.

Can be eaten hot, with custard if liked, or cold – good luck! Enjoy!

Secondly, the easiest of all fruit loaves, **ALL BRAN FRUIT LOAF:**

1. Mix together:
1 teacup All Bran + 1 teacup Sugar (I prefer brown) + 1 teacup mixed dried fruit
2. Stir in 1 teacup milk
3. Leave to stand (I usually leave it overnight)
4. Stir in 1 teacup SR flour and mix well.
5. Put mixture into lined 1lb loaf tin.
6. Bake at 350F/180C/mk. 4 for 1 ¼ to 1 ½ hours, until skewer comes out clean.

Serve sliced with butter/spread. This loaf stays moist for days.

Look out for more recipes in our next issue! If there is a recipe you would particularly like to be included, let me know (850514)

Laughter – the Best Medicine!

To make you smile - a series of imaginary letters written by church treasurer, Norbert Dranesqueezer, from "Writes of the Church - Gripes and Grumbles of People in the Pews" by Gary Alderson, published by the Bible Reading Fellowship (lent by Revd Jacquie).

(With apologies to Derek, our church treasurer, who fortunately bears no resemblance to Norbert - although, like him, may feel like resigning at times!)

Dear Sir,

Over the last year, the vicar has preached on Jesus throwing the money changers out of the temple; Jesus telling the rich young man to give all his money away; and the early church sharing their possessions and helping the poor. Not once has he mentioned Paul's exhortation that 'God looks after those who look after themselves'.

Faced with this socialism, I resign as church treasurer.

Norbert Dranesqueezer

Dear Sir,

I write to protest about the extravagance of the Church Council. The proposed new toys and carpet for the children's corner could cost as much as £74.22.

My great-uncle gave the church that carpet in 1921. It has years of wear left in it yet.

I therefore have no alternative. I resign as church treasurer.

Norbert Dranesqueezer

Dear Sir,

Once again, the PCC has – against my advice – voted to spend money on frivolities. Buying chocolate biscuits to eat after Sunday service is a massive luxury and may cost an extra £74.22 per year.

I therefore have no option but to resign as treasurer. Someone else will have to make the savage cuts required to pay for this.

Norbert Dranesqueezer

Dear Sir,

Candles are expensive. We use two candles on the altar, two around the altar and two for the acolytes. That's six candles lit every week. It soon adds up. Yet when I pointed out to the vicar that we are spending £74.22 on candles every year, he said it was money well spent.

I therefore have no alternative but to resign as treasurer.

Norbert Dranesqueezer

Dear Sir,

I know the vicar believes the Pet Service is part of the church's 'mission', but what pays for the cleaning afterwards? Church funds, that's what - £74.22 this year. I demanded that the vicar ceases this annual ruining of the 18th century wooden floor, but he refuses.

I therefore have no alternative but to resign as treasurer.

Norbert Dranesqueezer

(Look out for letters from the vicar, Revd Nathan, and others, in the next issue!)

Puzzle Time: Things associated with the Olympic Games (Thanks to Oswestry Methodists)

1. Mr Leap into a new arrangement (10)
2. Initially just undertaken down on mat (4)
3. Mother rodent with short address for the judge (8)
4. A Blue Peter and Red Duster are example (5)
5. Vile Jan has a point (7)
6. North and South, and the bank's secure storage place? (4, 5)
7. 'The Wonder Horse' (8)
8. Douglas and Dawson together produce obstacles (7)
9. Hand on, hand on to ethnic group (5, 4)
10. Third place for tin and copper (6)
11. 'Rent' and 'Rips'. Bolt for a short distance (8)
12. Old frock turned around so elegantly (8)
13. Second class road with short business management has weight (9)
14. An old one might ignite fond memories! (5)
15. Useful for DIY (and a yellow one sings) (6)
16. A CD for you and me? (6)
17. Look into being timed also presented with awards (6)
18. My cat sings, displaying physical ability (10)
19. They say hares are good at it in springtime (6)
20. Lode mover makes a place for two wheelers (9)
21. Sounds like a multitude of babies' beds (7)
22. A spire, run after together (12)
23. Be patient – raise it aloft? (13)
24. Jeffrey, old MP, needs targets? (7)
25. Putting in line on water? (A kind of trap follows a kind of quarrel?) (6)

Answers to "All Things Musical" Puzzle in issue 15

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|----------------|------------------|
| 1. Castanet | 13. Glockenspiel |
| 2. Zither | 14. Choir |
| 3. Conductor | 15. Orchestra |
| 4. Sitar | 16. Four Seasons |
| 5. Hymns | 17. Oboe |
| 6. The Proms | 18. Ocarina |
| 7. Harp | 19. Solo |
| 8. Duets | 20. Washboard |
| 9. Banjo | 21. Euphonium |
| 10. Fiddle | 22. Ragtime |
| 11. Tambourine | 23. Rattle |
| 12. Fanfare | 24. Carol |
| | 25. Tenor |

Thanks to all of you who have been 'in touch' with contributions for this issue. Please send your news, messages, thoughts, poems, prayers, quizzes, funny stories etc. for issue 17 which will be out on 4th November, to rhodes4144@gmail.com, by phone 01938 850514, or post to "Brynteg", Castle Caereinion, Welshpool, SY21 9AS, by Saturday 31st October. (Cake orders: Gwen 555988 or Janice 850514)