

Welshpool Methodist Church, High Street

“Celebrating and Sharing God’s Love”

“IN TOUCH” issue 28, 7th April 2021

News and Updates

1. Birthdays – Gordon wishes to thank all who, on the occasion of his 80th Birthday, kindly extended their good wishes, and contributed to the planting of an eco-scheme tree – a brilliant idea, and very much appreciated.

2. Congratulations to Joan Corbett who will be celebrating her 96th Birthday on 22nd April. We send good wishes to her and to all with birthdays this month.

3. Thanks from the Langfords – Joan, Gwenda and family wish to pass on their grateful thanks for all the messages of sympathy they have received following the loss of Bryan. Your support and kind words have been much appreciated.

4. Easter Sunday – it was wonderful to be back in church to celebrate Easter, and to be able to receive Holy Communion. It was a “full house” – 45 adults and 2 children gathered for a very special service led by Revd Marian. We express our thanks to her, to Anne for the floral Easter Cross (and the Easter Eggs!), to Vio for organ music before and after worship, and, as always, to Derek, for projecting the service liturgy on the screen. We were pleased to welcome those worshipping with us for the first time, and others we had not seen for some weeks (except via zoom!). We plan to continue to offer worship ‘live’ each week. Our Worship Sheets will be prepared and sent out as usual (but please let us know if you no longer require them if you are back worshipping ‘live’), and, in addition, the circuit will be providing a recorded weekly service to join on line. (Those on email will be receiving the link).

5. Morning Worship, 11th and 18th April – next Sunday, 11th, we welcome Mrs Kat Bond, a local preacher in training, to lead our worship, and the following week, 18th, a Prayer and Praise service will be led by our own members. There is no need to book seats for either of these services.

6. Private Prayer – the church will be open for Private Prayer every Wednesday from 10am until 12, and 2 until 4. Thanks go to our stewarding teams.

7. Reading the Bible Together – Bible Reading will resume in church on Thursday 8th, and continue fortnightly. Why not join us? We meet at 12 midday for an hour. This is not a Bible Study group as such, although we do discuss points of interest which crop up in our reading. All are welcome – please bring a bible.

8. Other Church Activities – will be resumed as soon as we are allowed. It is hoped that the Saturday Walking Group may be able to meet in May.

9. Current Appeals – if you have been ‘Counting Your Blessings’ for Action for Children’s Lent Appeal, please let us have your resulting donation by the end of the month. Your **Easter Offering Envelopes** for World Mission should also be returned by the end of April. Alternatively send your donations by post to Methodist Church, High Street, Welshpool, SY21 7JP – cheques payable to Welshpool Methodist Church, or to the charity. Thank you.

From Revd Marian: 'High Days and Holy Days'

Although each day has its designated saints, there are so many that we, as Methodists, have never heard of. Remember that according to St Paul, we are all called to be saints – ordinary people who allow God's light to shine through them. Rightly, the Resurrection dominates our readings, thoughts and prayers during these weeks, although there are some saints of whom you will have heard.

On April 20th, **St Beuno** is commemorated. He was a 6th century abbot and patron saint of sick children and sick cattle. A local saint, he was born in 545AD at Berriew and was the grandson of a prince of the local dynasty, who descended from Vortigern, king of Britain. After education and ordination in the monastery in Bangor, he became an active missionary with the support of Cadfan, king of Gwynedd. Bueno's well at Clynnog Fawr, on the Llyn Peninsula, remains a destination for pilgrimage today, and there is another holy well dedicated to Beuno in Holywell, Flintshire, situated close to its far more famous neighbour – the well of Beuno's niece, St. Winifred. Beuno died on April 21st 640.

The church moved St Beuno's commemoration because the more famous **St Anselm** is remembered on April 21st. He was born in Italy in 1033 and his early education impressed on him the importance of being clear in the words we use. He joined a monastery at Bec, Normandy, and only a few years later was appointed Abbot there. He was a theologian and wrote a number of books but is most famous for his argument to 'prove' the existence of God. He made a number of visits to England and founded a priory in Chester before being appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 1093.

On April 23rd, **St George**, the patron saint of England, has his feast day! No-one knows very much about him although there are those who suggest that he died in 303AD. He definitely wasn't English; it seems he had Greek roots and became a Roman soldier. In the time of the Emperor Diocletian, Christians were persecuted and George refused to renounce his faith. On April 23rd 303, he was decapitated. He stands out because he is known and revered by both Muslims and Christians, especially in the Middle East. There are those who think that the legendary dragon was a crocodile!

Song of St Anselm

Jesus, like a mother you gather your people to you;
you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.

You comfort us in sorrow and bind up our wounds,
in sickness you nurse us, and with pure milk you feed us.

Jesus, by your dying we are born to new life,
by your anguish and labour we come forth in joy.

Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness;
through your gentleness we find comfort in fear.

Lord Jesus, in your mercy heal us;
in your love and tenderness remake us.

In your compassion bring grace and forgiveness;
and for the beauty of heaven may your love prepare us.

Sing Praises! Two hymns for the Easter Season chosen this week by Janice

One of the things I am missing most during these restricted times is being able to sing ‘live’ with others. On Good Friday evening, I listened to a recording of Stainer’s “Crucifixion”. It was a special experience which I found quite moving, as I joined in all the choruses, while reflecting on the many times I have sung the familiar words in the past, remembering pre-Welshpool days and my fellow choristers from the Ecumenical Choir in Lichfield, with whom I sang “Crucifixion”, alternating each year with “Olivet to Calvary”, every Good Friday evening.

One of my favourite hymns comes at the end of “Crucifixion”, just after the final unaccompanied tenor solo “And He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost”: in **StF 341 “All for Jesus, all for Jesus, this our song shall ever be”**. The words are by William John Sparrow Simpson (1859-1952), who was born in London, the son of a minor canon of St Paul’s, and was educated at St Paul’s School and then Trinity College, Cambridge. As an undergraduate he was awarded the Chancellor’s Gold Medal for English verse in a competition judged by Robert Browning. He graduated in 1882 with a first class degree in theology, and became deacon at Christ Church, Marylebone, being ordained priest in 1883. From 1888-1904 he was vicar of St Mark’s, Regent Park, before moving to Ilford, where he was Chaplain to St Mary’s Hospital until his death. He wrote more than fifty books, and also published several hymns, including those which were originally part of his libretto for “Crucifixion” – these will be familiar to some of you (“Jesus, the Crucified...”, “Cross of Jesus...”, “Holy Jesu, by Thy Passion” and “I adore Thee..”) but I particularly like the simplicity of “All for Jesus”, with the title phrase recurring in each verse, and the final verse’s climax emphasising “All for Jesus, all for Jesus, this the Church’s song must be; till, at last, we all are gathered one in love and one in thee”.

My second choice, by contrast, is a ‘new hymn’, not known before the publication of “Singing the Faith”, but for some of us it has already become a firm favourite:

StF 304 “Jesus is Risen, alleluia!” The words are by Bernard Kyamanya (born in Tanzania in 1938), an orphan who was taken in by the Bethel Mission and raised by a German deaconess. He first became a teacher, but in 1968 started working as a Lutheran pastor. The song’s lively melody is also from Tanzania. (John Bell translated the words and arranged the melody for StF). The original Swahili text was written while Bernard was in seminary in 1966. He wrote it in a very African style, envisioning a story-teller presenting the story of the Easter gospel: eg v1.“Jesus is risen, alleluia! Worship and praise him, alleluia! Now our redeemer bursts from the grave; lost from the tomb, Christ rises to save”, and the congregation responding with the refrain: “Come let us worship him, endlessly sing; Christ is alive and death loses its sting. Sins are forgiven, alleluia! Jesus is risen, alleluia!” The song should move along at a lively tempo - the instruction in StF at the start of the music is “Vigourously”! Asked about his popular hymn, Pastor Kyanamya said: “I had a need to proclaim God’s word, and I am delighted that the hymn has become so popular in other parts of the world”. Sadly we have not been able to sing it together this year or last, but hopefully by Easter 2022 restrictions will have been lifted, and we will be able to include it in one of our Easter services - singing it with gusto and raising the roof! It is so joyous!

I hope you will enjoy singing these two hymns at home during this Easter season.

APRIL – some facts about this beautiful spring month (*from www.thefactfilesite.com*)

1. We know it as the fourth month of the year, but that's by the Gregorian calendar that we follow now. It was previously the fifth month in the earlier Julian calendar, and originally had 29 days, but a 30th day was added later when Julius Caesar established the Julian calendar.
2. No one is sure how the month got its name, but we do know the Romans called it "Aprillis". The etymology behind the word "April" comes from the verb "aperire" which means "to open". It's commonly believed that the word refers to the season of trees and flowers beginning to open or bloom.
3. Those who are born in April have a diamond as their birthstone, which represents innocence. Their birth flower is either a daisy or sweet pea. Daisies also symbolise innocence and purity. According to legend, when an infant died, God sprinkled daisies over the earth to cheer the parents. In Norse mythology the daisy is the sacred flower of Freya, goddess of love, beauty and fertility. As such the daisy came to symbolise childbirth, motherhood and new beginnings. In the language of flowers, sweet pea blooms symbolise fond farewells, and have been used to say "thank you". They have also inspired poetry, for example, this verse by Alfred Noyes:

*Under the sweet-peas I stood and drew deep breaths, they smelt so good.
Then with strange enchanted eyes, I saw them change to butterflies.
Higher than the skylark sings I saw their fluttering crimson wings
Leave their garden-trellis bare and fly into the upper air.
Standing in an elfin trance through the clouds I saw them glance....
Then I stretched my hands up high and touched them on the distant sky.
At once the coloured wing came back from wandering in the zodiac.
Under the sweet-peas I stood and drew deep breaths. They smelt so good.*

4. April is a great month for meteor showers, one of which is the Lyrids meteor shower, which appears from 16th to 26th. There's another called the Eta Aquariids meteor shower that can be seen from 21st.
5. There are quite a few notable historical figures born in April, for example Leonardo da Vinci, Shakespeare, and Queen Elizabeth II.
6. George Washington was inaugurated as the First President of the United States on April 30, 1789.
7. After a break of 1,500 years, the first Olympics of the modern era took place on April 26, 1896, in Athens.
8. On April 15, 1912, the famous Titanic ship hit an iceberg and sank on her first voyage.
9. On April 11, 1970, Apollo 13 was launched and ran into difficulties. It was then that the famous line "Houston, we have a problem here" was said.
10. The explosion of the Chernobyl nuclear plant in Ukraine occurred on April 26, 1986, which forced everyone within a 300-mile radius to be evacuated.

As we all know "April showers bring May flowers", so if the rain of April ever gets you down, never forget the silver lining!

April is the time for Spring Cleaning....

“The Feather Duster” (*from “A Cuppa and a Prayer”, Reflections on Daily Life, by Nick Fawcett*)

I rarely used it,

but I should have done,
for when I stopped to look there were cobwebs everywhere,
trailing from the walls and ceiling in room after room,
each a sign of complacency, of a spring-clean long overdue.

My faith, Lord, is cloaked with cobwebs,
having been left untouched too often and for too long,
neglected to the point of being redundant.

I've been complacent,
assuming discipleship can look after itself,
instead of needing regular dusting down.

Forgive me,
and may your Spirit sweep through my life,
freshening up my faith
and breathing new life within. Amen.

“The Window Cleaner” (*another reflection from “A Cuppa and a Prayer”*)

I was ashamed when he'd finished,
appalled that so much dirt could have built up without me noticing,
clouding my vision and obscuring the view.

Suddenly the sun seemed brighter,
colours enriched,
little details previously hidden now noticed,
everything fresh, made new.

Wipe clear, Lord, the windows of my soul,
so that, seeing you better,
I may know you more fully.

Grant me a clearer picture of you
that sheds new light on every aspect of life,
every part transformed by your sanctifying touch. Amen.

“Laundry Prayer” (*from Magnet magazine, Spring 2011*)

God, you have washed me clean and dried me,
Now turn me upside down and shake me out.
Discharge the static when I cling to things,
Smooth out the creases, brush away the fluff.
Pull me, reshape me, turn me right side out,
Iron me and air me, ready to be used.
Let me not be afraid of dirt and sweat,
Repair me if I split, patch up my wear,
But please don't ever leave me on the shelf,
Out-dated, out of fashion, past repair. Amen.

How to Stay Young! (source unknown)

1. Throw out non-essential numbers. This includes age, weight and height. Let the doctors worry about them!
2. Keep cheerful friends. The gourches pull you down.
3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer, crafts, gardening, whatever... Never let the brain idle. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop."
4. Enjoy the simple things.
5. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath.
6. Tears do happen – let them. Endure, grieve, and move on.
7. Surround yourself with what you love, whether it's the family, pets, keepsakes, music, plants, whatever... Your home is your refuge.
8. Cherish your health – if it is good, preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.
9. Tell the people you love that you love them, at every opportunity, and always remember – life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away. We all need to live life to its fullest every day.
10. Worry about nothing, pray about everything. Have a Peaceful Day!

Anosognosia (temporary forgetfulness) – by French Professor Bruno Dubois, Paris Hospitals

Professor Dubois writes: It often happens in people of 60 years and older that they complain that they lack memory, but the information is always in the brain – it is the 'processor' that is lacking. This is anosognosia.

Half of people 60 and older have some symptoms that are due to age rather than disease. Most common cases are:

- forgetting the name of a person
- going to a room in the house and not remembering why we are going there
- a blank memory for a movie title or actor
- wondering where we left our keys or glasses

Professor Dubois reassures the majority of people concerned about their oversights that the more we complain about memory loss, the less likely we are to suffer from memory sickness. Now for a little neurological test: Only use your eyes!

1. Find the C in the table below

oo
oo
oo
oo
oo

2. Find the N in the table below

MM
MMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMNNMMMMMMMMMM
MM
MM
MM

3. Find the 6 in the table below

99
99
99
99999699
99

If you pass these three tests without problem, your brain is in perfect shape!

From Pat P: "Easter Bunny" (www.silversurfers.com) - an appropriate quote re: the above!)

'At our age, we can hide our Easter eggs, wait half an hour, and have no clue where we have put them!"

More Recipes from the Saturday Menus:

Chris's Boiled Fruit Cake

4oz marg	2 eggs, beaten	1 tsp bicarb of soda
6oz granulated sugar	4 oz plain flour	2 tsp mixed spice
8oz sultanas	4 oz SR flour	Pinch salt
6oz currants		
8 fl oz water		

1. Place marg, sugar, sultanas, currants, water, bicarb and spice in a saucepan. Bring to the boil and simmer for 1 minute.
2. Pour into mixing bowl and leave to cool.
3. Add eggs, flour and salt to the cooled mixture.
4. Mix well and turn into a prepared 2lb loaf tin.
5. Bake in the centre of a moderate oven, 180C, 350 F, gas mark 4, for 1½ hours.

Jackie's Blueberry and Lemon Cake Squares

250g SR flour	4 large eggs	For the icing
1 tsp baking powder	3 tbsp milk	6-8 tbsp lemon juice
225g golden caster sugar	Grated zest of 3 lemons	200g icing sugar
225g butter, softened	250g blueberries	Extra lemon zest

1. Preheat oven to 170C/fan150C/gas 3½. Line a straight-sided 30cm x 25cm traybake tin with baking paper.
2. Put the dry ingredients in a large bowl and make a well in the middle, then add the eggs, butter, milk and lemon zest. Beat with an electric hand mixer until smooth and combined, then stir in the berries.
3. Pour the batter into the prepared tin, then bake on the middle oven shelf for 35 minutes or until risen and golden. Turn out onto a wire rack to cool.
4. Mix the lemon juice into the icing sugar, a little at a time, until you have a smooth spreadable icing. Drizzle over the sponge, then scatter with extra lemon zest and leave to set for 1 hour. Cut into 24 squares.

If you have a favourite recipe, please send it in so that we can share it in "In Touch"

From Betty H: "Who?"

- WHO IS.....?
- Your first friend and last enemy?
Your staunchest ally and greatest deceiver?
Your highest hope and deepest despair?
Your bravest strength and saddest weakness?
Your wisest teacher and craftiest informer?
Your hardest master and wiliest tempter?
Your surest help and nearest stumbling block?
Your loudest advocate and sternest judge?
Your trustiest guide and slyest advisor?
Your greatest danger and safest haven?
Your least known and best understood?
- Answer: YOURSELF

Puzzle time: "Springtime" (Clues all relate to the season of Spring in some way or other)

1. Less heavy sirs? (7, 6)
2. Avian, album track (4, 4)
3. Dried plum – or cut back for better growth (5)
4. Sounds like Oriental mistake, recently hatched (6, 4)
5. Something borrowed (4)
6. Black bird curse provides small flower (6)
7. Needlework yields (6, 5)
8. 'Dials doff'? (9)
9. Early morning refrain (4, 6)
10. Mouser relatives for hazels (7)
11. Gulps from Africa (8)
12. 'Refine tales' provides cover for birds (5, 2, 4)
13. Financial institution for a vacation (4, 7)
14. Well behaved Daniel Defoe's man (4, 6)
15. Timepieces move from off (6, 2, 2)
16. Initially, branches use daylight source (4)
17. Oliver asked him for more, with honey producer (6-3)
18. Having height and in and out seas (4, 5)
19. Twenty third of April (2, 7, 3)
20. Foolish – bird or clock (6)

Answers to puzzles in issue 27: Units of Measurements

- | | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| 1. Knot | 6. Foot | 11. Barrel | 16. Gallon | 21. Noggin |
| 2. Week | 7. Acre | 12. Inch | 17. Fathom | 22. Hand |
| 3. Bushel | 8. Curie | 13. Denier | 18. Carat | 23. Chain |
| 4. Decibel | 9. Cup | 14. Pole | 19. Cubit | 24. Firkin |
| 5. Mile | 10. Second | 15. Peck | 20. Furlong | 25. Therm |

Thanks to those who have contributed to this issue. Please keep your items coming in – we need more! All contributions are welcome – news, comments, anything topical/seasonal, favourite hymns, prayers, poetry, prose, funny stories, quizzes etc. For Issue 29, out on 21st April, please send to rhodes4144@gmail.com, tel. 850514, or to 'Brynteg', Castle Caereinion, Welshpool, SY21 9AS, by 17th April.