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MINISTRY AREA

District of Gelligaer Magazine:

Churches of
St. Catwg's, Gelligaer
St. Margaret's, Gilfach

*A welcoming Christian
community serving the people
of the District of Gelligaer.*

The Season of **LENT**

What's in this edition!

Greetings from the Rectory.

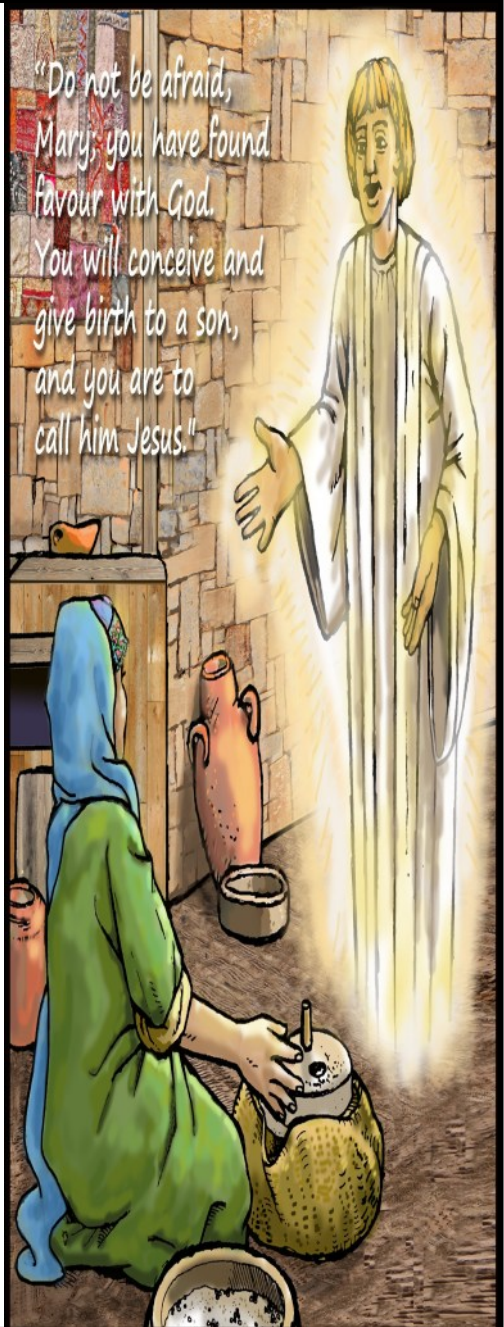
Reader Writes.

District News/Messages.

Mothers' Union.

For the Children!

and More.....



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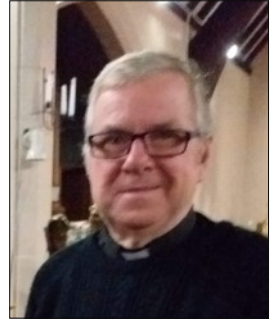
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Greetings from the Rectory

Dear friends,

As we enter the season of Lent our thoughts turn towards preparing to celebrate once again the events of Holy Week and the passion, death and resurrection. We are privileged that we can do so in peace. This year our celebration of the Passion of our Lord will be all the more poignant. Uncertainty is growing all around us, uncertainty as to the future as the world becomes less stable, alliances which have kept the peace for eighty years are becoming more unstable as the situation in Ukraine becomes increasingly difficult. As we will walk with Jesus through the events of his last week on earth, as we watch as Jesus is arrested, tried and put to an horrendous death we witness his suffering once again, we witness his death once again in the many conflicts around the world and in the lives of those suffering closer to home, through illness, bereavement, loneliness and economic hardship. Yet on the cross Jesus prays for his persecutors, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." This is Jesus' prayer for all who persecute others and so it is our prayer for aggressors around the world.



Yet Holy Week ends with a celebration of the resurrection of Christ. The resurrection stands at the centre of our faith, a sign of the sure and certain Christian hope that a new day will follow every dark night. As Europe and the world enters a new darkness it remains our certain hope the present troubles will see a new day dawn, a brighter day of renewed peace, for our continent and for the people of Ukraine.

***Every blessing from your friend and Priest,
Fr Gary.***

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Holy Week and the passion, death and resurrection.



“He came to Save others, and not to be made a king himself in the sense in which they understood him.” —**Charles Spurgeon**

Reader Writes.

For me, the last three months seem to have flown by. It doesn't seem too long ago that it was Advent where we were preparing for Christmas and now we are in the season Lent where we are preparing for Easter.



The first thing most people think of when they hear of Shrove Tuesday is pancakes. According to tradition, during Lent, foods such as butter, eggs and fats, which are some of the ingredients for pancakes, were used up. Following on, we have Ash Wednesday, where, during the service we have the sign of the cross put on our foreheads using the ash from the previous year's palms.

Lent, for some people, is a time when they give something up. On the flip side, Lent is also a time when some people take up something. Irrespective of whether an individual gives up something or takes up something, each requires self-discipline.

When Jesus was in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights, not only did he fast but he also avoided temptation as being on his own, with no distractions. This period in the wilderness was, for Jesus, an important time and place in his life, it was an important time as it was where he could prepare for his work of teaching and healing. It was also important for Jesus to be somewhere on his own so that he could concentrate on God and on the busy and important time that lay ahead.

As Christians, we should use this time, not only to give or take up things but also to concentrate on Jesus, as even when we may face a difficult situation, we are never on our own as Jesus never forgets us and walks with us, step by step each and every day.

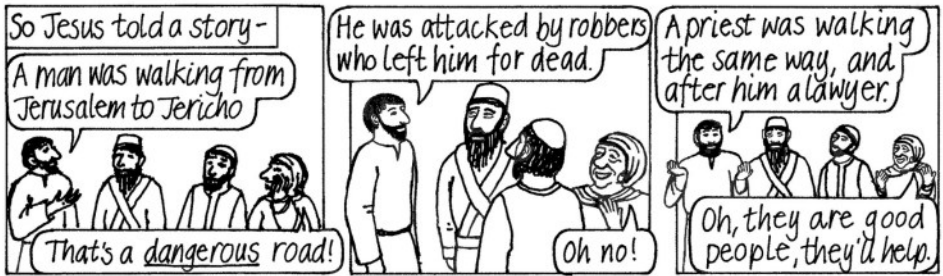
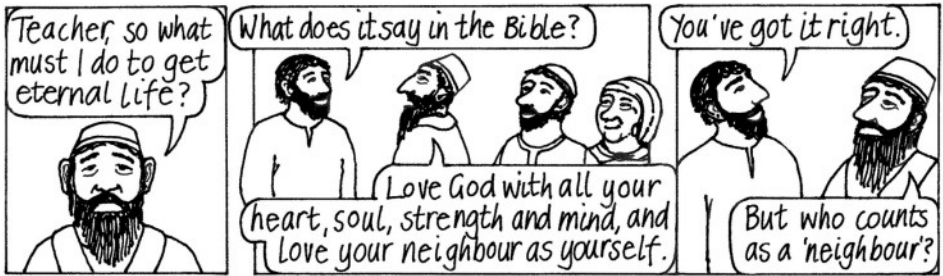
Carolyn

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke 10: 25-37

An expert in the Law of Moses wanted to test Jesus' knowledge of the laws in the Bible, so he asked Jesus a question.



A tribute to Alexander Fleming

Seventy years ago, on 11th March 1955, the Scottish bacteriologist Sir Alexander Fleming died. He was joint winner with Ernst Boris Chain and Sir Howard Walter Florey of the 1945 Nobel Prize in Physiology/Medicine for discovering penicillin.



Fleming was not the tidiest researcher, and his discovery of penicillin came about more or less by accident, as he said himself. He regarded his earlier discovery of lysozyme, a mildly antiseptic enzyme which is present in body fluids, as his best scientific work.

The discovery of penicillin was much more significant in practical terms, but for some years he was unable to persuade fellow-experts of its importance – another example of the scientific consensus being wrong. In the end Chain and Florey were vital to its success, having discovered a method of turning penicillin into a practical, useful treatment.

Fleming came from a Presbyterian background but was described as “not particularly religious”. He served through the First World War in the Royal Army Medical Corps, working in battlefield hospitals in France, where he observed that closed wound treatment often had adverse effects.

He was a member of the rifle club at his medical school, St Mary’s, which led to his joining the research department there.

The discovery of penicillin and its subsequent development as a prescription drug marked the start of modern antibiotics. Fleming was knighted in 1944. In 1999 he was named in Time magazine’s list of the 100 most important people in the 20th century, and three years later as one of the 100 Greatest Britons in a BBC poll. He was also voted third greatest Scot in 2009.

When he heard that penicillin production had been patented in the US in 1944, he was furious that his discovery, given free, should become a profit-making monopoly in another country.

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Mothering Sunday: 4th Sunday in Lent

There is an old Jewish saying: God could not be everywhere, and therefore He made mothers.

Mother Church, Mother Earth, Mother of the Gods - our human mothers - all of them have been part of the celebration of 'Mothering Sunday' - as the fourth Sunday in Lent is affectionately known. It has been celebrated in the UK since at least the 16th century.

In Roman times, great festivals were held every Spring to honour Cybele, Mother of all the Gods. Other pagan festivals in honour of Mother Earth were also celebrated. With the arrival of Christianity, the festival became one honouring Mother Church.

During the Middle Ages, young people apprenticed to craftsmen or working as 'live-in' servants were allowed only one holiday a year on which to visit their families - which is how 'Mothering Sunday' got its name. This special day became a day of family rejoicing, and the Lenten fast was broken. In some places the day was called Simnel Day, because of the sweet cakes called simnel cakes traditionally eaten on that day.

In recent years the holiday has changed and in many ways now resembles the American Mother's Day, with families going out to Sunday lunch and generally making a fuss of their mother on the day.

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Why you love your mother

Gratitude is a large part of Mothering Sunday. So, this month why not spend a few moments thinking back, and ask yourself this:

What quality or wisdom did your mother bestow on you in childhood, for which you are most grateful now?

Or you could go to the Sunday School, and ask the children for their response to this:

What does your mother do each day that makes you think that she loves you?

St Joseph, patron saint of fathers and holy death

Why should St Joseph's day be in March? Surely, he belongs to Advent and Christmas, at Mary's side in millions of nativity scenes around the world.

In any case, as the foster-father of Christ and husband of Mary, Joseph played a major part in the story of the coming of Jesus Christ. All that we know about him for sure is in the gospels. Read especially Matthew 1 – 2. He was of Davidic descent, but his trade as a carpenter shows that he was not at all wealthy.

Joseph's gentleness and decency towards Mary, and his willingness to do God's will when it was revealed to him, portray him as a kind and godly person. Joseph is the patron saint of fathers of families, and he makes an excellent example. He comes across as a protecting, loyal, thoughtful, self-controlled person, full of integrity, and willing to work hard. Who wouldn't want a father like that?

Joseph is also the patron saint of all who desire a holy death. Thus, countless churches, hospitals and religious congregations are dedicated to Joseph.

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Chad, the recycled bishop

Chad should be the patron saint of any modern bishop whose consecration is questioned by another bishop. Chad was consecrated a bishop, then deposed - and then re-consecrated!

It all began about the middle of the 7th century, when Oswiu, King of Northumbria, made Chad the bishop of the Northumbrian see. But due to a scarcity of appropriate bishops, two dubious bishops did the job of consecrating him. This led to Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, deciding to depose him about three years later.

Chad took his dismissal with good heart, and peacefully retired. But then Theodore had second thoughts: Chad was of excellent character: humble, devout, and zealous. So, Theodore re-consecrated him – to be the first bishop of the Mercians. Second time around, Chad was a great success - again.

When Chad died in about 672AD, he was quickly venerated as a saint. People took a great fancy to his bones, believing that they would bring healing. Even today, four large bones, dating from the 7th century, and believed to be Chad's, are in the R.C. cathedral in Birmingham.

Bishops today may still argue about consecration, but they are unlikely to have their bones disturbed.

Notices!

100 Club Winners!

January 2025

Date:	No:	Winner	Church
5th	38	Darren Niland	St. Catwg's
12th	13	John Dines	St. Catwg's
19th	59	David Britten	St. Catwg's
26th	93	Pat Cooper	St. Margaret's

The social club AGM took place on the 19th. February, thanks to all who attended.

The committee is as follows..

June Phillips chairperson

Jenn East. Treasurer

Linda Bartlett & Cheryl Pugh .Secretary

Hilda Shorey, Lynne Thomas, Linda Hall, Fr Gary.

Iiris joined as well.

Thanks to all of you for supporting and helping us over the last year , fellowship is important and we are thankful that we have it in abundance.

Dates for the diary..

2nd April

Quiz night

4th May.

Buffet lunch /VE Day.

14th June.

Strawberry tea

5th October.

Harvest lunch

25th October.

Autumn Fayre .

12th December.

Christmas Draw.

We will let you know times nearer the event.



District of Gelligaer Website

Scan the QR code on your smart phone, then open in browser to visit our website or visit us on

<https://www.parishofgelligaer.org.uk>

Come along to Neuadd St Catwg Community Hall Gelligaer on 22nd March at 3.00pm for a show that has something for everyone, from the youngest to the oldest. Tickets Adult £4, Children £3 and family £12. Would be wonderful to see you there.



Please see our Facebook page (<https://facebook.com/Neuadd St Catwg Community Hall>) to view our poster for details.

Carolyn

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Palm Sunday visit

It was Palm Sunday, but because of a sore throat, five-year-old Bobby was kept home from church with his grannie. When the family returned home, they were carrying several palm fronds and Bobby asked them what they were for. “People held them over Jesus’ head as He walked by,” his father explained. Bobby was aghast. “I don’t believe it! The one Sunday I don’t go, and He shows up!”

100 Club Winners!			
<i>February 2025</i>			
Date	No:	Winner	Church
2nd	92	Sharon Porter	St. Catwg’s
9th	76	John Dines	St. Catwg’s
16th	31	Christine Thorpe	St. Margaret’s
23rd	84	Kristel Richards	St. Margaret’s

God in the Arts

This year the Revd Michael Burgess surveys works of sacred art that can be found in various museums...you can see the image by googling the title of the painting and the artist. '

He gave us eyes to see them': 'Menorah' by Roger Wagner



In the midst of the dreaming spires and Gothic splendour of Oxford stands the Ashmolean Museum. Its classic proportions are a contrast to the buildings around. Within, the addition of thirty new galleries has doubled the exhibition space, and the visitor to the museum will discover a wealth of beautiful and impressive works – Renaissance drawings, Eastern art and British paintings. The last category includes this month's work: 'Menorah' by Roger Wagner. It was painted in 1993 and at that time it was the largest contemporary painting acquired by the Ashmolean. It is now on loan to St Giles' Church at the northern end of the city.

Roger Wagner was born in 1957. He graduated from Oxford and now worships at the Romanesque church of Iffley. He works on a small scale with book illustrations, but also creates large canvases that juxtapose traditional religious images with contemporary symbols in a startling and arresting way. The background of 'Menorah' is Didcot Power Station, which can be seen from the windows of the Oxford-London train. The central chimney and the cooling towers around form the shape of the seven-branched candlestick of Judaism. In front of them are the three crosses of Calvary. Around the scene of crucifixion we can see a couple consoling each other in the foreground and isolated individuals wandering in the mud in grief and perplexity. They are dressed in Hasidic robes.

An earlier work of Roger Wagner's is 'The Burning Furnace' where angels are painted in the setting of a Victorian iron works. It is the same contrast of ancient and modern in this painting: the Good Friday of 2000 years ago and an industrial, bleak landscape of today. The artist is also contrasting the menorah of Judaism and the cross of Christianity – the suffering of the Holocaust and the suffering of the Saviour.

The menorah would burn in front of the Holy of Holies as a sign of God's invisible presence. In the book of Revelation, St John describes his vision of Jesus the Lamb in the midst of the same seven flaming

torches, moving with grace and glory. Here in ‘Menorah’ the figure of Jesus is insignificant against the immense scale of industrial buildings spewing out pollution into the bright sky.

But it is that figure of Jesus on the Cross who draws us this month in Holy Week and draws us in this painting. The mourners around look like figures in a concentration camp: victims of man’s inhumanity to man. The cooling towers are a vivid reminder of our violation and destruction of mother earth. And in the centre we see our crucified Lord. We hear Isaiah’s song of the suffering servant that there is no sorrow like this sorrow. We also hear Jesus crying ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’ And we can ponder this painting as we ask, Is it a sign of the absence of God, or, like the Menorah lit in the temple, a sign of the presence of God? There is human chemistry creating the destruction of life and earth as depicted by Roger Wagner. Can we proclaim a divine chemistry at work which will transform suffering and death into the new life of Easter in the power of the Resurrection?

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God in the Sciences

This series is written by Dr Ruth M Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.

Science and a sense of the Transcendent

What is the difference between a cathedral and a physics lab? Are they not both saying: ‘Hello’? - Annie Dillard

Scientists often speak of a reality beyond the objects they are studying, and for some this is encountered in powerful – if rare – episodes of wonder and awe. The Christian writer J.W. Sire quotes this line from Annie Dillard in his book *Echoes of a Voice*, which explores spiritual or ‘transcendent’ experiences.

In his analysis of these experiences Sire describes moments that are “emotional, intellectual, highly charged, usually sudden, unannounced, often odd, some weird, others glorious”, and places them on three different levels:

A material object that points beyond the material reality. For example, someone might develop a sense of what is good and evil, based on the actions of others.

Experience of “something personal...just behind the surface of what we are directly experiencing, often something with which one feels at peace or even at one, or, perhaps, as dangerous or threatening.”

A felt presence that has a specific character or presence, e.g., holiness, or inspiring humility, fearful awe or wonder.

According to Sire, level 1-2 experiences are fairly common but level 3 is rare. He gives a wide range of examples, including scientists. Some of these people are religious or interested in spirituality, others are atheists. Some of their moments of transcendence carried a particular meaning, others simply sparked curiosity.

The famous geneticist Francis Collins described several significant moments when he was young: “being transported by the experience of looking through a telescope”, or “a Christmas Eve where the descant on a particularly beautiful Christmas carol...left me with a sense of unexpected awe and a longing for something I could not name”.

These experiences meant that when Collins was faced with the question of belief in God, “all [his] arguments seemed very thin”. Now, as a fully-fledged scientist and a believer in God, he is able to say that “for a scientist who occasionally is given the remarkable privilege of discovering something not previously known by man, there is a special kind of joy associated with such flashes of insight.”

Most of us are not scientists, but we may well have had experiences like this in different contexts. How can we, in our engagement with scientifically minded individuals, make connections through our shared experience of the transcendent? Can we listen as well as explain, finding some common points of connection?

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Snoring

A clergyman consulted his doctor about his wife’s snoring. “It has to STOP,” he insisted.

The doctor was intrigued: “Does it really bother you that much?”

“Well, it’s not just me,” confided the minister. “She is bothering the whole congregation.”



Mothers' Union



We are still reporting under the Mothers' Union banner as we haven't officially closed our branch. After Jean Stark's talk last month we haven't had a meeting to discuss what she said. She was in total agreement with all our thoughts and worries about the Mothers' Union fees and the path it seems to be taking. She had just been to a Diocesan meeting where she explained the same thoughts and worries were raised but with no definitive answers. She promised she would try to get answers to our questions and would report back as soon as possible but unfortunately she was going on holiday so this would take some time. The point she made about Africa needing the money more than we do did not equate with our thoughts and wishes. As previously stated we are continuing with our monthly meetings and coffee morning and quiz afternoon. When the retired Bishop Richard Fenwick was in church with us I spoke to his wife who I knew to be a very active member of Mothers' Union and she knew we were thinking of disbanding and asked if she could come to talk to us so she will attend our March meeting. She knows we are a good branch and sent me thoughts of how to continue but she said that she doesn't believe that Africa needs the money. Having lived and worked there she said that it doesn't always get to the right people. This is our collective thought so we are continuing to keep an open mind and I reassured her that we would still support the caravan in Porthcawl and the Mothers' Union in other ways.

We will discuss again but it seems our decision has been made and it's just working out details from now on.

This week Fr. Gary conducted Olive Chard's funeral which was well attended. It was a lovely appropriate service for Olive who had been a devout worshipper and member of Mothers' Union. She had written most of her eulogy herself which was a true reflection of her, with added thoughts from her family. Olive was a great character and story teller and it was a privilege to visit her with Fr. Gary the week before she died. We remember her with great affection as she was always pleased to see us and share any gossip she had heard. She will be missed by many friends in church and may she rest in peace after going through many years of illness.

We pray for Marion who is very happy in Ty Clyd and for Dorothea who is in White Rose home. May they spend their time there

happily. We also pray for Gareth, Jeanette's husband who has gone through such an horrendous few months and hope he will be home soon. Most of our members have their own problems and I hope that if anyone needs any help or just a friendly ear we will always be here for you. The spirit of Mothers' Union remains with us in that we are a family to help each other and anyone else who needs it, especially in our church and community.

God Bless
Kath

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St David's Day, time for daffodils



1st March is St David's Day, and it's time for the Welsh to wear daffodils or leeks. Shakespeare called this custom 'an honourable tradition begun upon an honourable request' - but nobody knows the reason. Why should anyone have ever 'requested' that the Welsh wear leeks or daffodils to honour their patron saint? It's a mystery!

We do know that David - or Dafydd - of Pembrokeshire was a monk and bishop of the 6th century. In the 12th century he was made patron of Wales, and he has the honour of being the only Welsh saint to be canonised and culted in the Western Church. Tradition has it that he was austere with himself, and generous with others - living on water and vegetables (leeks, perhaps?!) and devoting himself to works of mercy. He was much loved.

In art, St David is usually depicted in Episcopal vestments, standing on a mound with a dove at his shoulder, in memory of his share at an important Synod for the Welsh Church, the Synod of Brevi.

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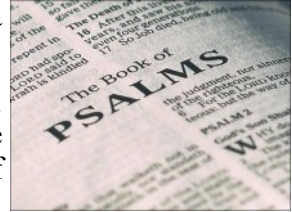
Between the humble and contrite heart and the majesty of heaven there are no barriers. The only password is prayer. – **H Ballou**

Editor: Canon Paul Hardingham continues his series on the books of the Bible, which will run until the end of 2025.

What’s the Big Idea? An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament: Psalms

This month we continue our examination of a selection of books from the Old Testament.

‘The Psalms have a unique place in the Bible, because most of the Scripture speaks to us, while the Psalms speak for us’ (Athanasius of Alexandria).



The Book of Psalms contains 150 prayers or songs of praise, the majority (73) attributed to David, although some were composed later. They were mostly composed for liturgical worship. There are songs of praise, in which people joyfully express praise for God’s work of creation and sustaining (eg 135 & 136). In others, the psalmist recounts a desperate situation and gives thanks for God’s answer to his prayers (eg 30 & 116).

There are a significant number of psalms of lament, both individual (eg 3-7; 22) and communal (eg 44), which begin with a cry for help. Some express deliverance from sin (51 & 130), or point to the certainty that the Lord has heard their prayer (7, but contrast 88). The theme of trust is central in many psalms (23, 62 & 91).

The ‘royal psalms’ (eg 20, 21 & 72) point to the promised Messiah, fulfilled in Jesus. There are also psalms teaching wisdom (eg 37, 49); ‘torah’ psalms, focussing on the law of the Lord (eg 1, 19 & 119), and psalms which celebrate the history of Israel and God’s faithfulness (eg 78, 105 & 106).

The psalms can help us in our own prayers, by providing us with models to follow, as they express our own deepest feelings as we approach God: ‘The Lord is my shepherd, I shall lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul’ (Psalm 23:1-3).

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Praying with the Prayers of the Bible.

We continue our series on prayer by the Revd Dr Herbert McGonigle, former Senior Lecturer in Historical Theology & Church History, Nazarene Theological College, Manchester. If you would like the earlier ones in the series, we would be happy to email them to you.

Praying the Prayer of Forgiveness:

Numbers 12:13, ‘O God, heal her, I pray.’

These six words are Moses’ prayer for his sister Miriam. They tell us a lot about Moses and a lot about prayer.

For some time Miriam and her brother Aaron had been simmering with anger against Moses. They protested that he had married a Cushite woman (v.1), but the real cause of their animosity was jealousy. ‘Has the Lord spoken only through Moses?’ (v.2). Don’t we have a ministry as well? Hasn’t God also spoken through us? Why does everyone look to Moses? Why are we overlooked?

Jealousy is a powerful and deadly emotion. God had given ministries and honour to Miriam (Exod. 15:20,21) and Aaron had become the chief priest (Num. 3:1-3), but neither of them were satisfied with that. It looks as if Miriam fomented and took the lead in criticising Moses. Suddenly the Lord intervened (v.4). He called Moses, Aaron and Miriam together and defended His servant Moses. Moses is faithful in all my house! (v.7)

Whereas the Lord had often spoken to other prophets in dreams and visions, He speaks to Moses ‘mouth to mouth’ (v.8). How dare Aaron and Miriam question Moses whom the Lord called ‘my servant’ (v.8). Having so strongly defended Moses and rebuked his critics, the Lord departed and then the divine judgement fell. Suddenly Miriam, the leader of the conspiracy, was struck down with the dreaded leprosy.

Aaron immediately cried out to Moses, confessing his own and his sister’s sin and foolishness (vv. 11,12). Then Moses demonstrated why the Lord honoured him so highly. He expressed no anger, no vindictiveness, no spirit of ‘settling scores’ against his brother and sister. In spite of their antagonism and jealousy, Moses loved them both and ‘cried to the Lord’ on behalf of Miriam.

He prayed one of the shortest prayers found in the Bible. ‘O God, heal her, I pray’ (v.13). He was grieved and full of compassion to see his sister so terribly afflicted. The prayer was prompted by the love that forgives, the love that overlooks what others have done to us, the love that wants God’s best for them. And only God’s grace can make us like that. The prayer is so short, so simple, so direct, so personal. ‘O God, heal her, I pray.’

And God heard and answered. As a warning to others who might challenge Moses' authority, Miriam was quarantined for seven days, then fully healed and restored (vv.14, 15). How does this incident help us in our prayer life?

First, true prayer is born in compassion. The lips express the deep feelings of the heart.

Second, God will not hear our prayers if our hearts are not right with him and with one another. While we cherish resentments and grudges, our praying is powerless.

Third, while there are many times when prayer needs to be persistent, there are also times when it is a simple, deep cry from the heart.

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Time for the Great Daffodil Appeal

Throughout the month of March, the end-of-life charity Marie Curie will once again be holding their annual flagship fundraiser, the Great Daffodil Appeal.

There's only one chance to give someone the best possible end of life.

And one chance for you to help fund care that makes that possible. Care that protects someone's dignity – instead of leaving them to die alone or in avoidable pain. This Great Daffodil Appeal is that chance.

Every five minutes, someone dies without the support they need. But by donating and wearing your daffodil this March, you can change that – and help Marie Curie Nurses bring expert end of life care when there's no cure, whatever the illness.

Money raised also funds the charity's free support line and webchat which is available to anyone with an illness they're likely to die from and those close to them. It offers practical and emotional support on everything from managing symptoms and navigating care to financial information, including how to get help with energy bills and bereavement support.

Whether it's taking part in a fundraising challenge, organising an event including bake sales, charity walks or concerts or volunteering your time to collect donations, every penny will help Marie Curie deliver quality care to those who need it most.

The Great Daffodil Appeal only happens once a year. This is your chance to make it count. For information and to donate

visit: Mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil



Services and Holy Days

Celebrations of the Holy Eucharist will be held twice weekly in both our Churches:

St. Margaret's each Sunday at 9.30am and each Wednesday at 10.00am.

St. Catwg's each Sunday at 11.00am and each Thursday at 10.00am.

<i>Date.</i>	<i>Services and Holy Days</i>
<i>2nd March</i>	THE SUNDAY before LENT: TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY
<i>5th March</i>	ASH WEDNESDAY
<i>9th March</i>	THE FIRST SUNDAY of LENT
<i>16th March</i>	THE SECOND SUNDAY of LENT
<i>19th March</i>	* Joseph of Nazareth
<i>23rd March</i>	THE THIRD SUNDAY of LENT
<i>25th March</i>	* The Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary
<i>30th March</i>	THE FOURTH SUNDAY of LENT / LENT 4 as MOTHERING SUNDAY

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, occurring six and a half weeks before Easter (between February 4 and March 11, depending on the date of Easter).

Ash Wednesday is a solemn reminder of human mortality and the need for reconciliation with God and marks the beginning of the penitential Lenten season. It is commonly observed with the distribution of ashes and with fasting. Ashes are placed on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday, as a personal act of remembrance and as a sign or a witness for others.

A prayer for Lent

We beseech you, O Lord, that as our bodies grow weaker for lack of food during the season of fasting, so our souls may grow stronger. May we learn to fight more valiantly against evil, and to strive more earnestly for righteousness. Thus, through abstaining from the fruits of the earth, may we bear more abundantly the fruits of Your spirit. From the Gelasian Sacramentary (c. 500), the oldest official prayer book of the Western Church.

Sudoku Challenge

	5				2	8		
			6	1	5	9		
	4		8					3
3								7
1					7		5	2
		9	3	7	1			
		6	5				4	

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Solution can be found on page 39

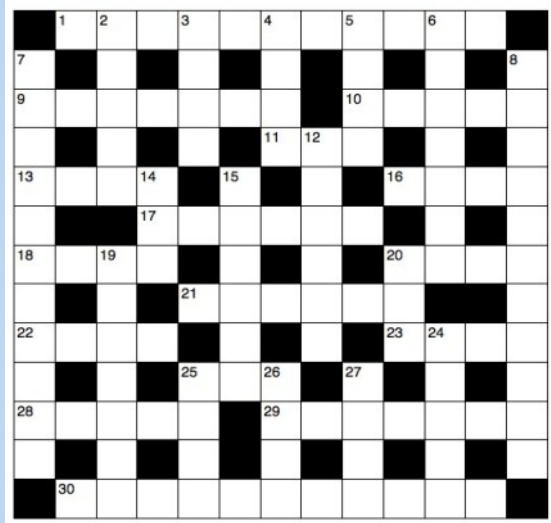
With Lent and spiritual self-examination in mind....

Some people think reconciliation is a soft option, that it means papering over the cracks. But the biblical meaning means looking facts in the face, and it can be very costly; it cost God the death of His own Son. – **Archbishop Desmond Tutu**

‘Abide in Me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in Me... If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. – **John 15:4,7**

Give me, good Lord, a humble, lowly, quiet, peaceable, patient, charitable, kind, tender and pitiful mind; with all my works and all my words and all my thoughts to have a taste of the holy blessed spirit. – **Sir Thomas More**

March's Crossword



Challenge

Across

- 1 These letters come between Romans and Galatians (11)
- 9 'You will not — me to the grave' (Psalm 16:10) (7)
- 10 King of Moab to whom the Israelites were subject for 18 years (Judges 3:14) (5)
- 11 Town possessing mineral spring (3)
- 13 Mede (anag.) (4)
- 16 High-fidelity (abbrev.) (4)
- 17 He succeeded his father Rehoboam as king of Judah (1 Kings 14:31) (6)
- 18 A son of Simeon (Genesis 46:10) (4)
- 20 Controversial religious book of the 1970s, The — of God Incarnate (4)
- 21 'He has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you — — and hear' (Acts 2:33) (3,3)
- 22 'You — me together in my mother's womb' (Psalm 139:13) (4)
- 23 Edit (anag.) (4)
- 25 'Who has believed our message and to whom has the — of the Lord been revealed?' (Isaiah 53:1) (3)
- 28 Abraham's brother (Genesis 22:23) (5)
- 29 'When Mordecai learned of — that had been — , he tore his clothes' (Esther 4:1) (3,4)
- 30 Sympathetic (Proverbs 11:16) (4-7)

Down

- 2 'That was why his parents said, "He is — —; ask him"' (John 9:23) (2,3)
- 3 Integrated Services Digital Network (1,1,1,1) 4
- 4 'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his — of thousands' (1 Samuel 18:7) (4)
- 5 Concept (John 8:14) (4)
- 6 'Do we, then, — the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law' (Romans 3:31) (7)
- 7 Industrious (2 Timothy 2:6) (11)
- 8 'I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be — in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you (Ephesians 1:18) (11)
- 12 'Out of the same mouth come — and cursing' (James 3:10) (6)
- 14 This was how many of the Jewish leaders described Jesus (John 10:20) (3)
- 15 Vitality (Job 20:11) (6)
- 19 He urged David to kill Saul at Hakilah (1 Samuel 26:8) (7)
- 20 'So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul — with the church and taught great numbers of people' (Acts 11:26) (3)
- 24 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord — — ' (Deuteronomy 6:4) (2,3)
- 25 Parched (Matthew 12:43) (4)
- 26 'In the image of God he created him; — and female he created them' (Genesis 1:27) (4)
- 27 Disparagement (Psalm 15:3) (4)

Crossword solution - Page 39

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April's Magazine 2025

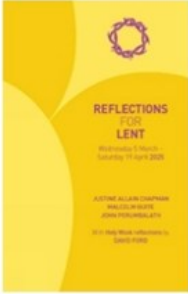
Please can you forward any news, articles etc, to me by Monday 24th March, for inclusion in the April's edition.

Many Thanks Chris (email: chriscorbin1961@gmail.com)

Book Reviews

Reflections for Lent 2025

By Justine Allain Chapman, Malcolm Guite and John Perumbalath, CHP, £5.39



Reflections for Lent is designed to enhance your spiritual journey through the forty days from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday. Covering Monday to Saturday each week, it offers reflections on readings from the Common Worship Lectionary, written by some of today's leading spiritual and theological writers.

Each day includes: full lectionary details for Morning Prayer, a reflection on one of the Bible readings, and a Collect for the day. This volume offers daily material for 5 March to 19 April 2025, and is ideal as a daily prayer companion throughout Lent.

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In Quietness & Trust -

Lent devotions from the beatitudes

By Matt Searles, 10Publishing, £6.99

Early in His ministry, Jesus gave His followers a description of how He wants His people to live. Rather than seeking to ascend to God, Christian discipleship is a downward flourishing; a counter-cultural way of blessing.

These 40 devotions, with a daily reading and short reflection, will guide you through the beatitudes Jesus gave in the Sermon on the Mount. This Easter, join Jesus on His path to the cross, and see that His way – though so different to the way of the world – leads to freedom, joy, and life.



Church Reading / Cleaning Rotas

If anyone wishes to be on either the readers rota for either church, please do not hesitate to contact the relevant church wardens.

St. Catwg's Readers Rota

March 2025		April 2025		May 2025	
2 nd	Pat Davies	6 th	Pat Davies	4 th	Christine Harvey
9 th	Paul Thomas	13 th	Paul Thomas	11 th	Pat Davies
16 th	Cheryl Pugh	20 th	Cheryl Pugh	18 th	Paul Thomas
23 rd	Janeve Manca	27 th	Janeve Manca	25 th	Cheryl Pugh
30 th	Christine Harvey				

St. Margaret's Readers Rota

March 2025		April 2025		May 2025	
2 nd	June Phillips	6 th	Kath Llewellyn	4 th	June Phillips
9 th	Jenn East	13 th	Neil Hazell	11 th	Chris Ball
16 th	Jennette Jones	20 th	Alex Ball	18 th	Christine Thorpe
23 rd	Linda Bartlett	27 th	Audrey Powell	25 th	Enid Mayne
30 th	Lynne Thomas				

Should you wish to be on the St. Margaret's cleaning rota please contact the relevant Church Wardens.

St. Margaret's Cleaning Rota

March 2025			April 2025			May 2025		
2	Lynda Bartlett	Sue	6	Lynda Trollope	Enid	4	Lynda Trollope	Enid
9	Lynda Trollope	Enid	13	Jennette	Audrey	11	Jennette	Audrey
16	Jennette	Audrey	20	Kath	June	18	Kath	June
13	Kath	June	27	Lynda Bartlett	Sue	25	Lynda Bartlett	Sue
30	Lynda Bartlett	Sue						

For the Younger Generation.

The Doctor and the Patient



JESUS HAD MANY FRIENDS



BUT SOME WERE EXTRA SPECIAL. THESE WERE HIS 'DISCIPLES'.

JESUS ONCE ASKED A TAX-COLLECTOR CALLED 'MATTHEW' TO BE ONE OF HIS TEAM



YES!

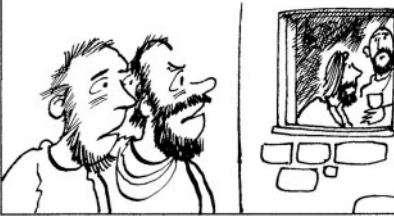


MATTHEW AGREED TO FOLLOW JESUS

JESUS WENT TO HAVE A MEAL AT MATTHEW'S HOUSE

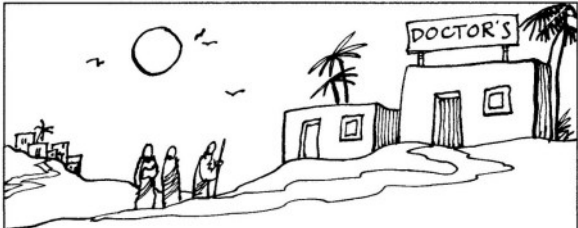


BUT MANY PEOPLE COMPLAINED ABOUT THIS. THEY THOUGHT MATTHEW WAS A BAD MAN - AND JESUS SHOULD IGNORE HIM.

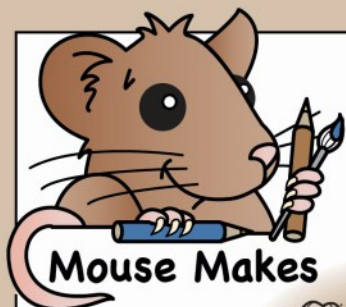


JESUS' REPLY WAS VERY STRAIGHT FORWARD.

HE EXPLAINED THAT MATTHEW NEEDED HELP, NOT CRITICISM.



"IT'S NOT THE WELL THAT NEED A DOCTOR - BUT THE SICK!"
see Luke 5:27-32



THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

After Jesus was baptised who led him into the wilderness?

 Luke 4:1



For how many days was Jesus tempted by the devil?

 Luke 4:2



Who did Jesus say you should ONLY worship and serve?

 Luke 4:8



READ
 the story in
Luke 4:1-13

Jesus said not to put the Lord your God to the...

 Luke 4:12



What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into?

 Luke 4:3

What happened after the temptation of Jesus?
 see Luke 4:14-15

JESUS • LED
 WILDERNESS
 DESERT
 TEMPTATIONS
 DAYS • DEVIL
 HUNGRY • SON
 STONE • ROCK
 KINGDOMS
 WORLD • GLORY
 WRITTEN
 SCRIPTURE
 WORSHIP • ONLY
 SERVE • LORD
 JERUSALEM
 HIGH • TEMPLE
 THROW • DOWN
 JUMP • ANGELS
 HANDS • HOLD
 LIFT • FOOT

R	W	O	R	S	H	I	P	H	A	N	D	S	D
L	I	F	T	W	P	A	H	D	J	U	M	P	A
E	L	O	R	D	K	I	O	E	D	O	S	E	Y
D	D	O	A	N	G	E	L	S	E	K	T	M	S
F	E	H	U	N	G	R	Y	E	B	R	O	C	K
O	R	E	J	E	S	U	S	R	Y	O	N	L	Y
R	N	S	S	C	R	I	P	T	U	R	E	U	H
T	E	M	P	T	A	T	I	O	N	S	G	T	S
Y	S	T	D	S	J	E	R	U	S	A	L	E	M
B	S	H	O	E	H	K	I	N	G	D	O	M	S
R	F	R	W	R	I	T	T	E	N	E	R	P	O
E	O	O	N	V	G	G	O	C	E	V	Y	L	N
A	O	W	V	E	H	O	L	D	K	I	W	E	
D	T	E	S	T	V	D	W	O	R	L	D		



Find the words from the questions too!

Complete the WORDsearch!

l	x	b	d	q	m	i	n	d	y	j	q
t	o	i	r	u	i	l	a	w	y	e	r
w	a	v	j	e	x	t	r	h	u	r	t
p	r	i	e	s	t	e	o	m	u	i	t
h	e	a	r	t	t	a	b	o	o	c	e
e	r	c	u	i	d	c	b	t	r	h	t
l	i	r	s	o	n	h	e	g	r	o	e
p	g	d	a	n	g	e	r	o	u	s	r
r	h	x	l	i	q	r	s	o	u	l	n
s	t	r	e	n	g	t	h	d	e	n	a
w	v	n	m	s	a	m	a	r	i	a	l
d	o	n	k	e	y	b	i	b	l	e	u

Teacher

Jericho

lawyer

good

eternal

inn

Jerusalem

priest

strength

heart

Samaria

donkey

love

Bible

dangerous

question

right

mind

robbers

hurt

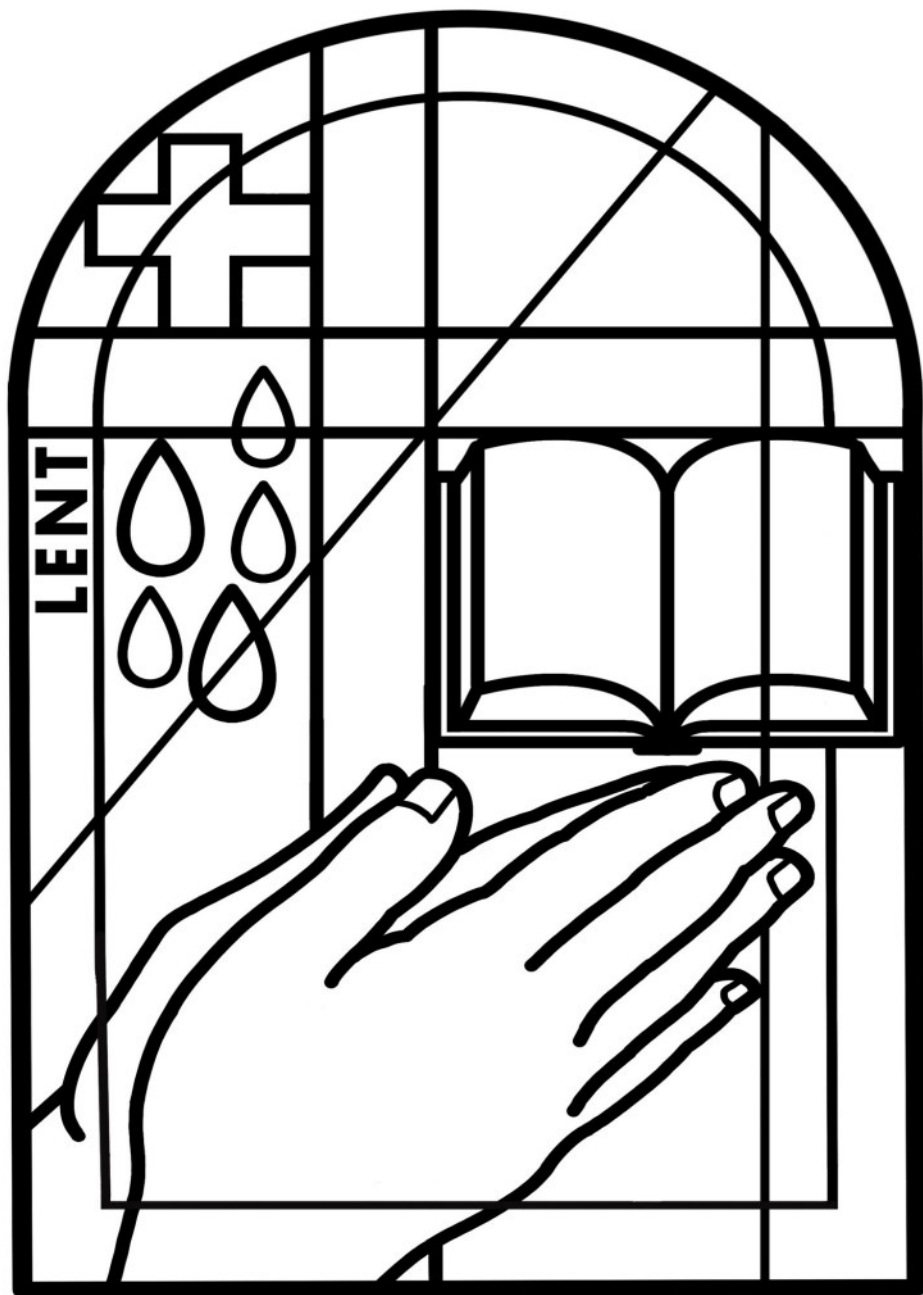
neighbour

paid

help

soul

Colour in!



From the Register

Christian Funerals

February 2025

4th	Mr Graham Price RIP
18th	Mrs Andrea Pondsford RIP <i>(Memorial Service)</i>
20th	Mr David Price RIP
25th	Mrs Olive Chard RIP

*May the souls of the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.*





Gone yet not forgotten,
Although we are apart,
Your spirit lives within me,
Forever in my heart.
Until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Author Unknown

-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-

Prayers for the Bereaved

*May the love of God and the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ
console you and gently wipe away every tear from your eyes.
May Almighty God bless you, and look after you at this
difficult time. Amen.*

-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-

*Lord, in our time of grief we turn to you. God of love
hear our cries. Listen to our prayers for whom
you have called out of this world. Lead them to
your kingdom of light and peace. Amen.*

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Christine Harvey: 01443 833123



Christine Harvey 01443 833123 / Booking Secretary.
Facebook Page: <https://facebook.com/Neuadd St Catwg Community Hall>

Service Times

Celebrations of the Holy Eucharist will be held twice weekly in both our Churches:

*St. Catwg's each Sunday at 11.00am and each Thursday at 10.00am and
St. Margaret's each Sunday at 9.30am and each Wednesday at 10.00am.*

Both of our Churches have a friendly and welcoming atmosphere where you can worship our Lord, Jesus Christ. Everybody is welcome to attend any of our services listed below. If it is your first visit to the Parish and you are new to our Church please do not hesitate to make yourself known to us.

SUNDAY

9.30 am. Sung Eucharist at St. Margaret's Church
1st Sunday of each Month - Family Services

11.00 am. Sung Eucharist at St. Catwg's Church

WEDNESDAY

10.00 am. Holy Eucharist at St. Margaret's Church,
followed by Tea and Coffee

THURSDAY

10.00 am. Holy Eucharist at St. Catwg's Church

General Disclaimer

The appearance of comments, articles, advertisements, hyperlinks, or statements made within our District magazine do not necessarily represent the views of the District of Gelligaer Wardens and Committee. While we aim to include accurate and up-to-date information at the time of publication, we make no warranties or representations as to the accuracy. We therefore assume no liability or responsibility for any error or omission in the content.

Directory of Contacts

*Should you wish to contact a specific group that meets in our churches,
please use the relevant telephone number from the list below.*

Thank You!

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Family History Research: Carolyn Corbin Tel: 07983677360
 Email. carolyncorbin63@aol.com

Mothers' Union:

Branch Leader Kath Llewellyn. Tel: 01443 829658
 Branch Secretary
 Branch Treasurer June Phillips. Tel: 01443 835977

Community Dance Group: June Phillips. Tel: 01443 835977

Flower Arranging Group: Nesta Williams. Tel: 01443 831009

Arts and Crafts Group: June Phillips. Tel: 01443 835977

Neuadd St. Catwg's Hall: Christine Harvey. Tel: 01443 833123
(Bookings and Enquiries)

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Solutions to this month's puzzles.

6	1	4	9	8	3	7	2	5
9	5	3	7	4	2	8	1	6
8	7	2	6	1	5	9	3	4
2	4	7	8	5	6	1	9	3
3	6	5	1	2	9	4	8	7
1	9	8	4	3	7	6	5	2
4	2	9	3	7	1	5	6	8
7	3	6	5	9	8	2	4	1
5	8	1	2	6	4	3	7	9

C	O	R	I	N	T	H	I	A	N	S
H	F	S	E	D	U	E				
A	B	A	N	D	O	N	E	G	L	O
R	G	N	S	P	A	L	L			
D	E	E	M	V	R	H	I	F	I	
W		A	B	I	J	A	H	F	G	
O	H	A	D	G	I	M	Y	T	H	
R	B	N	O	W	S	E	E	T		
K	N	I	T	U	E	T	I	D	E	
I	S	A	R	M	S	S	N			
N	A	H	O	R	A	L	L	D	O	N
G	A	I	L	L	O	N	E			
K	I	N	D	H	E	A	R	T	E	D

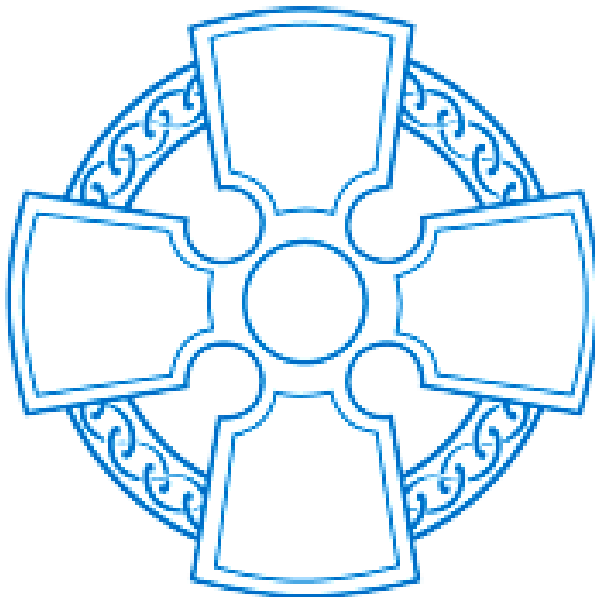
Answer to **Sudoku** on page 21

Answers to **Crossword** on page 22

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