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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 Feast of the
Ascension of our
Lord

What's in this edition!

Greetings from the Rectory.

Reader Writes.

District News/Messages.

Mothers' Union.

***Short Quiz on the
Book of Judges.***

***For the Children!
and More.....***



***Exalted to the
right hand of
God, he has
received from
the Father the
promised Holy
Spirit and has
poured out what
you now see and
hear.***

Acts 2: 33

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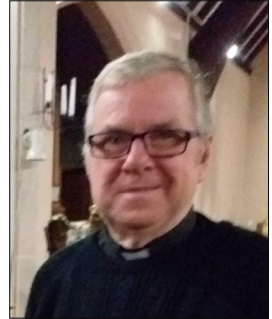
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Greetings from the Rectory

Dear friends,

Since Easter we have been in a period of great excitement. The risen Lord has appeared to his disciples and they wait to see what will happen next. As I write to you I too am in a period of waiting. After enjoying a lovely week in the sun in Paphos, Cyprus, where I spent time at S. Paul's pillar among the ruins of an old Basilica where he was chained and whipped I am now waiting to be picked up and whisked off to this year's Clergy School in York.



It was very moving to think of all that Paul endured in order to spread the Good News of the Resurrection of Christ set against the poverty of my own efforts. This month the waiting comes to an end as we celebrate the Feast of the Ascension of our Lord. It is the occasion when Jesus was raised from the earth before his Disciples eyes to take his place at the right hand of the Father in heaven where he continues to intercede for us. From his throne he rules over all creation, the Lord of our lives. We thank God that we live our lives under his care and protection and in the light of his love.

Whatever we face in our daily lives, whatever we see happening in the world we can be sure that Jesus is at our side, praying for us and supporting us. Sometimes it may be difficult to sense his

presence, sometimes our faith will be challenged but the promise of the resurrection is that Jesus will never abandon us and his love will never be withdrawn from us.

As Jesus intercedes for us and for all his people from his throne in Heaven we continue to remember in our prayers the people of the world, for all who live in fear or war, violence, poverty of disease. We remember especially the people of Israel and Gaza and the people of the Ukraine. We hold in our hearts before God those known to us who are in need at this time.

Every blessing from your friend and Priest,

Fr Gary.

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**While he was
blessing them,
he withdrew from them
and was carried up
into heaven.**

Luke 24.51

Reader Writes.

When I was at the Polytechnic studying Public Administration, one of the subjects studied, People and Organisations, spoke of the 3 Es – Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness. Whether in school or the swimming pool the three Es come to mind when I notice how children have their own version – Enjoyment, Excitement and Enthusiasm. It does not seem to matter which subject the children are studying or which stroke they are learning, they seem to have these 3Es at the core of the school day and lesson time. Sometimes we need 3Es when we think of our faith and worship.



We are fortunate enough to live in a country where we can speak of and live out our faith. Sadly, people in other countries are persecuted for their belief in Jesus. Thinking of how lucky we are compared with the people suffering persecution should allow us use of the 3Es in our spiritual life. Many people today may not have been brought up attending Sunday School or Church so these people need Encouragement and we need to be Encouraging and Encouraged ourselves. Having faith Enhances our lives – it gives each and every day that something special.

Also, we should not forget that for us to grow in faith we need to be Enabled by the Holy Spirit. We need to listen and be guided in all we do - the Holy Spirit will Enable and through him we all can Encourage and be Encouraged and through listening and believing our lives will be Enhanced.

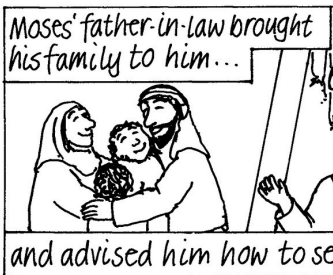
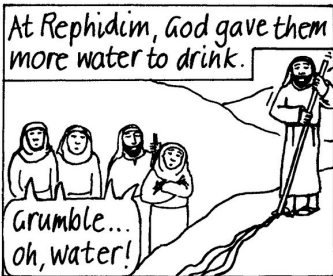
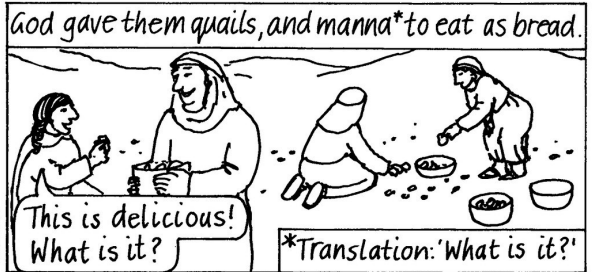
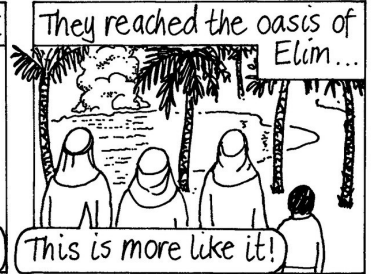
Carolyn

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Exodus chapters 15:22 to 19:2

God had rescued the Hebrews from Egypt, and was leading them to their new land. But after 3 days....



Rogation Sunday (Sunday before Ascension)

In the Anglican Church, Rogation is celebrated on the fifth Sunday after Easter. Rogation means an asking of God - for blessing on the seed and land for the year ahead. It is appropriate in any emergency, war, plague, drought or foul weather.

The practice began with the Romans, who invoked the help of the gods Terminus and Ambarvalia. In those days a crowd moved in procession around the cornfields, singing and dancing, sacrificing animals, and driving away Winter with sticks. They wanted to rid the cornfields of evil.



In about 465 the Western world was suffering from earthquake, storm and epidemic. So Mamertius, Bishop of Vienne, aware of the popular pagan custom, ordered that prayers should be said in the ruined or neglected fields on the days leading up to Ascension. With his decision, 'beating the bounds' became a Christian ceremonial.

Rogation-tide arrived in England early in the eighth century and became a fixed and perennial asking for help of the Christian God. On Rogation-tide, a little party would set out to trace the boundaries of the parish. At the head marched the bishop or the priest, with a minor official bearing a Cross, and after them the people of the parish, with schoolboys and their master trailing along. Most of them held slender wands of willow.

At certain points along the route - at well-known landmarks like a bridge or stile or ancient tree, the Cross halted, the party gathered about the priest, and a litany or rogation is said, imploring God to send seasonable wealth, keep the corn and roots and boughs in good health, and bring them to an ample harvest. At some point beer and cheese would be waiting.

In the days when maps were neither common nor accurate, there was much to be said for 'beating the bounds.' It was still very common as late as the reign of Queen Victoria. Certainly, parish boundaries rarely came into dispute, for everyone knew them. (Do you know yours today?)

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Fire of Pentecost



"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth" Acts 1:8

We all get tired and battle weary sometimes. The disciples of Jesus had just been through a three-year long roller coaster adventure with Jesus that had culminated in His death, resurrection and ascension into heaven.

The range of emotions would have been hugely taxing in the days leading up to Pentecost, as they remembered Jesus weeping in the garden of Gethsemane, betrayed by Judas, brutally beaten and crucified, and then dead and buried. Then there had been the shock and awe of finding out that He was alive again! But then He had left them again, to return to His Father. By the time the day of Pentecost arrived, the disciples would indeed have welcomed some fresh spiritual fire!

For us today, many of us have felt emotionally drained with the uncertainties caused by Covid 19, the worry of prices rising at an alarming rate, and now the pain and uncertainty of what will happen in the war in Ukraine.

So, what better day to pray for fresh spiritual fire for each of us? As we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and birth of the Church, let us thank God that He will never leave us or forsake us.

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Pentecost - not a Ghost but a Gift

We used to call it Whitsun – ‘White Sunday’ because long ago children marched to church in white on that day. There are no processions nowadays, and we’ve even changed its name. It’s now ‘Pentecost’, which is more accurate but needs explaining.

Pentecost marks a vital event in Christian history. It is celebrated 50 days after Easter. The year Jesus was crucified (which took place at the Passover), the remnant of His followers, just 120 of them, were

together in an upper room in Jerusalem. They were afraid to show their faces in case the authorities arrested them. But on the day of Passover, they had an amazing collective experience.

They described it in terms of wind and fire, a great surge of spiritual energy and confidence. Afraid no longer, they burst out on to the streets where crowds were gathering for the festival, led by Peter they began to tell them about Jesus and His resurrection. As they did so, although many of the people in the crowd were foreigners who spoke other languages, everyone heard them in their own tongue. Peter told them that what they were seeing was the fulfilment of an old prophecy when God would pour out His Spirit on the human race, men and women, young and old.

As a result of His words and the extraordinary spectacle, 3,000 people believed and were baptised in the name of Jesus. They were the nucleus of what in 100 years would be a Church that would turn history upside down. For Christians Pentecost is in effect the birthday of the Church.

Many people find the whole idea of the Holy Spirit mysterious and elusive. It wasn't helped by the earlier title 'Holy Ghost'. The spirit is not spiritually a 'ghost' but a precious gift.

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Matthias the Apostle, called by lots

Have you ever happened to be in the right place at the right time, with certain qualifications, and suddenly realise that God is singling you out for a special task? If so, Matthias is a good patron saint for you!

In Acts 1 (15 – 26) the apostles had a task to do: Judas had betrayed Jesus and died, and so a new apostle needed to be chosen. He had to have been a follower of Christ from the Baptism to the Ascension, and also a witness of the Resurrection in order to qualify. In the event, the choice fell to one of two: Joseph Barsabas and Matthias.

Lots were drawn, and Matthias was chosen. How confident he must have felt in his calling: what encouragement that would be when the going got rough in later years! Matthias is thought to have ministered in Cappadocia and even Ethiopia. His emblem is usually an axe or halberd, regarded as the instrument of his martyrdom. His supposed relics were translated from Jerusalem to Rome by the empress Helena.

Notices from our Churches and Community

100 Club Winners!

March 2024

3rd	73	June Phillips	St. Margaret's
10th	48	Gareth Jones	St. Margaret's
17th	79	Nesta Williams	St. Margaret's
24th	10	Ros Britton	St. Catwg's
31st	1	Fr Gary Powell	

Children's exam papers

The following real-life answers to various exam papers explain why teachers need long holidays...

What is a nitrate? – Cheaper than a day rate.

What was Sir Walter Raleigh famous for? – He is a noted figure in history because he invented cigarettes and started a craze for bicycles.

What did Mahatma Gandhi and Genghis Khan have in common? – Unusual names.

Name one of the early Romans' greatest achievements. – Learning to speak Latin.

Name six animals which live specifically in the Arctic. – Two polar bears. Four seals.

Name the wife of Orpheus, whom he attempted to save from the underworld. – Mrs Orpheus.

Where was the American Declaration of Independence signed? – At the bottom.

State three drawbacks of hedgerow removal. – All the cows will escape. The cars drive into the fields. There is nowhere to hide.

What is a fibula? – A little lie.

Why would living close to a mobile phone mast cause ill health? – You might walk into it.

What is a vibration? – There are good vibrations and bad vibrations. Good vibrations were discovered in the 1960s.



Deepest sympathy to Pauline Viles and family on the passing of her brother Ray.

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Prayer for May 2024

Dear Lord,

May, the loveliest of months – and this year, as we welcome the blossom and the beauty of late Spring, we also welcome Your Holy Spirit afresh, as we celebrate Pentecost.

May we open our hearts to receive Your Spirit, as Your people did on that first Day of Pentecost. May we be filled and empowered and emboldened to witness to Your goodness and love.

May we be transformed by Him and reflect Your transforming grace to the broken world in which we live. May people who meet us ask, “What does this mean?” May they turn to You and hear You speaking in ways they can understand.

Without Your Holy Spirit we can do nothing. With Him living in us, we can do all things.

Come Holy Spirit, come to us, we pray,

In Jesus’ name.

Amen.

By Daphne Kitching



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>

June’s Magazine 2024

Please can you forward any news, articles etc, to me by Monday 27th May, for inclusion in the June’s edition.

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

God in the Arts

Editor: The Rev Michael Burgess begins a year-long series looking at great works of Christian music.

‘Glorious the song when God’s the theme’: the Stabat Mater



May is traditionally the month of Mary, the mother of Jesus. When we read of Mary in the Gospels, we sense the heartache and trial of much of her life: a teenage mother giving birth in a stable, fleeing with her new-born baby and Joseph to Egypt, losing the child Jesus while on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, following her son on His ministry but always in the background, and there at the foot of the cross as her son is crucified. It is then Mary must have thought back to that occasion in the temple when Simeon

took her child and told her that a sword would pierce her own soul.

That sense of heartache and the sorrow it brings is poignantly expressed in a beautiful poem of the Middle Ages called *Stabat Mater*, which pictures Mary at Calvary and that sword of desolation and sadness that pierces her soul. We are not sure who wrote this poem. It is ascribed to Jacopone da Todi, who became a Franciscan friar on the death of his wife in the 13th century. The contemplation of Mary’s sorrows in the *Stabat Mater* has inspired many composers, and there are wonderful settings by Palestrina, Rossini, Dvorak, Verdi and Poulenc.

This month let’s focus on a very simple setting, but one that captures those searing pangs of sorrow at the heart of the poem. It is by Antonio Vivaldi, who was born in Venice in 1678. In 1703 he was ordained a priest, but by then he had made his name as a skilled violinist and composer. He continued to compose throughout his life: a vast amount that includes some 40 operas (though only 18 survive), 400 concertos, and over 100 choral works. In 1730 Charles de Brosse described him as ‘an old man with a prodigious fury for composition.’ For much of his life Vivaldi was music director of the Ospedale della Pieta, a music school for girls. Then in 1740 he left Venice hoping for preferment in Vienna. That was not to be, and his final days were marked by poverty and neglect, and in 1741 burial in a pauper’s grave.

Most of us know Vivaldi through the brilliance and colour of ‘The Four Seasons’ and his setting of the Gloria. The tone is more restrained in his setting of the *Stabat Mater*. There is a very fine CD recording entitled ‘Vespers of Sorrow’ where the work is linked to a sonata, a psalm setting and the Magnificat for an imagined celebration of our Lady’s feast.

The *Stabat Mater* is a long poem and Vivaldi restricted himself to setting eight verses for contralto and strings: the solo voice standing for Mary as she sings of the despair and agony as the mother of Jesus. The

opening verse, ‘At the cross her station keeping’ captures the intensity of emotion with the throbbing rhythms of the accompaniment – that mood recurs throughout the work. And then with the verse, ‘Eja Mater, fons amoris’ (O thou Mother! Fount of love!) the violins and viola accompany without any bass instruments. It is a pivotal point in the work as the solo voice cries out ‘Mater’ across the heights and depths of the music, leading into the prayer that the love of Mary will touch all human hearts. The final verse set by Vivaldi begins ‘Make me feel as thou hast felt,’ and so Mary stands for all mothers who have lost loved ones: perhaps sons killed in Afghanistan, perhaps daughters dying through disease.

Mary’s love for Jesus, her son, touches the hearts of them and of all parents. Hers was a protective, sacrificial love that led her to the foot of the cross, where Jesus gave His mother and John, the beloved disciple, into the care of each other. The sacrificial love of a mother mirrored in the sacrificial offering of her son in death.

Julian of Norwich meditated on this motherly love in her Revelations. In chapter 60 she wrote, ‘A mother’s caring is the closest, nearest and surest for it is the truest...As we know, our own mother bore us only into pain and dying. But our true mother Jesus, who is all love, bears us into joy and endless living. Blessed may he be!’ So the protective care of mother Mary cries out to us in Vivaldi’s setting of the Stabat Mater. The closing lines of that poem look to Christ’s maternal love like Mother Julian:

*‘Christ when Thee shall call me hence,
Be my mother, my defence,
Be thy Cross of victory.’*

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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.

Finding Expression – and God’s Response – in Lament

The question of suffering comes up regularly in discussions about science and faith. I once visited a school to speak to some of the older teenagers. One of the pupils had sadly passed away from cancer a few weeks before and his classmates asked, “How could God let this happen?” Of course, these young people’s questions about where God was in this situation were important. But the chaplain also gently reminded the class that their friend’s family were Christians, and that they were finding that their experience of loss had brought them even closer to God than before.

One way that grief can bring us near to God is when we share it with Him, telling Him exactly how we feel. The biblical writers had no scruples about expressing themselves to God, giving vent to emotions we often hold back in a church context. As my colleague Roger Abbott has written in his book on ‘Unanswered’ Prayer, “Let us not confuse reverence with spiritual prudishness. Perhaps honesty, the way it feels, is precisely what God is waiting to hear from us.”

About one third of the Psalms express some form of grief. The book of Job is a series of responses to one man’s suffering as he loses his children, property and health in quick succession. Lamentations is also one long outpouring of sadness at what happened to Israel under the Babylonians. Some of the prophets, especially Jeremiah, also express their pain at these sort of events – which reflect something of God’s own feelings at the suffering of His people.

Most of these biblical authors would have had access to Scriptures that encouraged them to turn to God whatever the circumstances. Emboldened by their knowledge of His character and promises, these divinely inspired writers even express their anger to God about the things He lets happen, or complain that He seems to act unfairly or ignore them in their plight. Not only do these people let out all their feelings without fear of reprisal, but they also clearly expect a helpful answer. Some record a resolution to their troubles – often simply because God speaks to and comforts them, enabling them to keep going.

The biblical writers demonstrated that God can handle pretty much anything – anger, blame, bitterness – if we are actively looking to Him for help. As Pete Greig of the 24-7 prayer movement has written, “pain that is not expressed can never be transformed”.

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Roger Bannister and the Four Minute Mile

It was 70 years ago, on 6th May 1954, that Roger Bannister became the first person to run a mile in under four minutes (3 minutes, 59.4 seconds), in Oxford. Just 23 days later, on 29th May, Diane Leather became the first woman to run a mile in under five minutes (4 minutes, 59.6 seconds), in Birmingham.

These were both momentous achievements, though Diane Leather, born in Staffordshire, received far less recognition than Oxford-born Bannister. At the time women did not compete in major events over more than 200 metres; so she was not allowed to compete at the Olympics or internationally over her best distance.

Women's athletics was not widely covered in the media at the time, or someone might have pointed out that on the same day that Leather beat five minutes for the mile, she had already broken an 800 metres record. The following year she ran 4:50.8 for the mile and then 4:45.0, which remained a world record until 1962.

Leather – who became Diane Charles on marriage – had also set an 800m world record of 2:09 in 1954. She retired at the age of 27. Bannister's world record is one of the most widely known in athletics, and he continued to produce top performances, beating his Australian rival John Landy in Vancouver and taking the European title before retiring to concentrate on medical research. A lifelong Christian, he died in 2018, as did Diane Leather – coincidentally the daughter of a surgeon.



Mothers' Union



I start this with the sad news of the death of Gaynor. She was such a big part of our branch of Mothers' Union since the first meeting. When she was secretary she did all the quizzes, she organised the speakers, she organised the luncheon club and transported friends back and fro to meetings and lunches. I saw her on her birthday in January and she was struggling and then I had an e-mail from her daughter Jayne to say that although she had always enjoyed our visits she wanted everyone to remember her as she had been when she had been an active member, not as she was in the home. Her last few months were very difficult for her and we are glad that she is no longer in pain and can rest in peace. She was a good friend and loyal member to everyone in Mothers' Union and in church. We will miss her, as we have done so far.

I hear that Marion will be in Ty Clyd for a short while on Tuesday 7th May and so I hope I will be able to visit her there in that week. If anyone else would like to go she will be very pleased to see them. We pray for Olive who is still suffering and also to Glynis who at the time of typing this is in hospital after a nasty fall at home. We wish her a speedy recovery.

The Deanery Festival is in Caerphilly St. Martins on May 16th at 7.00 p.m. They need to know numbers before we go so I will be taking those at our next meeting on the 7th May. As already reported the Colour Fayre will take place in Caerphilly Twyn Community Centre on 29th June . Our colours are black and white and we will discuss

this at our meeting in May and finalise them at our meeting in June. I have invited Dave Kitchen to our meeting on 4th June. He did a talk in Bargoed and was described by those who attended a very interesting speaker. His talk is on the Bible in Ten which is an accessible introduction to every book in the Bible in ten minutes or less. We look forward to hearing him.

The open week for the caravan is 9th to 12th July. If anyone is interested in going please let me know so I can arrange a day and time for the visit. We are continuing with our coffee mornings and quiz afternoons. I was unable to go to our last quiz afternoon and it seems I may not be there for the next one. Hospital appointments don't always allow for leisure time. I am grateful to all those who ran the last one and hopefully will help at the next one. It is good to see the regulars at these events. Thank you all for your support at these events. I wish you all a peaceful month and look forward to the sun coming out so we can possibly arrange an outdoor event! I live in hope!!

God Bless **Kath**

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The Truth of the Ascension

‘While He was blessing them, Jesus left them and was taken up into heaven.’ (Luke 24:51).

The Ascension is a hugely neglected festival, which deserves to have a bigger place in our church life. How do we understand it?

The Ascension tells us that Jesus is in control: ‘Jesus has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand’ (1 Peter 3:22). Jesus occupies the top spot in the universe; the control of our world is in the safe, scarred hands of Jesus. We can offer Him our worship and allegiance, knowing that His plans are better than those of any Prime Minister or President.

The Ascension tells us that God is committed to His world: ‘And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus’ (Ephesians 2:6). Jesus did not leave His humanity behind when He ascended, for we are raised with Christ to heaven. Therefore, God is bound to His world and we can trust Him to fulfil His purposes for our lives and world.

The Ascension gives us a job to do: ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations’ (Matthew 28:18,19). God’s way of working in the world is through us. He commissions us for this task at the Ascension and

equips us at Pentecost. We are called to make disciples, starting in our workplace, family and community.

‘Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which He looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which He blesses all the world.’ (Teresa of Avila).

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The Story behind the Hymn – ‘Praise my Soul the King of Heaven’

Praise my soul the King of heaven,
To His feet thy tribute bring;
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
Evermore his praises sing.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise the everlasting King.

Praise Him for His grace and favour
To our fathers in distress;
Praise Him, still the same as ever,
Slow to chide and swift to bless.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Glorious in His faithfulness.

Fatherlike, He tends and spares us;
Well our feeble frame He knows;
In His hands He gently bears us,
Rescues us from all our foes.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Widely yet His mercy flows.

Angels in the height, adore Him,
Ye behold Him face to face;
Sun and moon bow down before Him,
Dwellers all in time and space;
Praise Him! Praise him!
Praise with us the God of grace!

By Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)

This stately poetic paraphrase of Psalm 103 has been included in probably more solemn ceremonies than any other hymn in the English language. It was even chosen by Queen Elizabeth for her wedding to the Duke of Edinburgh in 1947.

Henry Lyte had been a brilliant theological student at university in Dublin, with a gift for versifying. After graduation he moved to a tiny and remote parish in County Wexford to serve his curacy. It was here, when he was about 25, that Henry had a religious experience which would transform his life.

A close friend of his, another clergyman, had fallen ill, and was clearly dying. Henry went to visit him. The friend was not as distressed as Henry had imagined he would be. Instead, the friend confessed that he had been re-reading the New Testament, with an eye on eternity, and had made a great discovery. There was no need to rely on religious duties and formalities and good deeds to gain peace with God. Instead, we can trust completely in the mercy of Christ and His saving power.

Henry was sophisticated and had been very formal in his ministry. But this encounter with his friend's faith at death's very door, made him reconsider his faith. He wrote later that his dear friend 'who died happy in the thought that there was One who would atone for his delinquencies' made him 'study my Bible and preach in another manner than I had previously done'. And soon after this hymn appeared, in 1834. Lyte rejoices in the majesty and wonder of the living God, who in turn loves us. He captures the measure of the Psalm in enduring lyrics, which combine time, eternity, God and man all swept up into one embrace. Its last verse summons all the created order to join in a great act of joyous praise – surely a preview of eternity!

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Remembering Beethoven's greatest symphony

Two hundred years ago, on 7th May 1824, the first performance of Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No 9 took place in Vienna. It is regarded as Beethoven's greatest work and is one of the most-performed symphonies in the world. This last of his symphonies is known for its revolutionary structure and majestic emotion, and it is all the more remarkable because it was completed when the composer had gone profoundly deaf. Indeed, although Beethoven stood as conductor for the first performance, the musicians and singers were in fact guided by a separate musical director.

At the close Beethoven did not even hear the hugely enthusiastic response of the audience and had to be turned round by the young contralto so that he could witness it. The complex ninth symphony, completed over many years with multiple changes, is in fact part symphony and part oratorio – a device that mystified some of the less adventurous critics of the time, who regarded his iconoclastic style as a little too rock-and-roll.

The key final movement is a magnificent setting of Friedrich Schiller's famous poem, *An die Freude* (Ode to Joy), which celebrates brotherhood and freedom and has been used to mark many notable occasions. The most striking of these was perhaps the concert on Christmas Day 1989 in Berlin, shortly after the Berlin Wall came down. It was led by American conductor Leonard Bernstein, using musicians from East and West Berlin. For this one occasion the word *Freude* (joy) was replaced by *Freiheit* (freedom).

Beethoven's music to *An die Freude* is used as the European Union Anthem – but without the words.

Short quiz on the Book Judges

(answers on page 23)

1. Which tribe was the first to fight the Canaanites?
 - a. Judah
 - b. Zebulun
 - c. Dan
2. How old was Joshua when he died?
 - a. 80
 - b. 100
 - c. 110
3. Who sang a song celebrating the downfall of Sisera?
 - a. Hannah
 - b. Deborah & Barak
 - c. Shamgar & Ehud
4. What offering did Gideon present to the angel of the Lord?
 - a. Two turtle doves
 - b. A bullock and a grain offering
 - c. A kid and some unleavened cakes
5. How many volunteer soldiers did Gideon have initially?
 - a. 5000
 - b. 10000
 - c. 32000
6. What equipment did Gideon issue to his soldiers?
 - a. A sword, a shield and a helmet
 - b. A trumpet, a pitcher and a torch
 - c. Slings and stones
7. How many sons did Gideon have?
 - a. 10
 - b. 24
 - c. 70
8. What was the name of Samson's father?
 - a. Manoah
 - b. Phileas
 - c. Amon
9. What surprised Samson on his way to Timnah with his parents?
 - a. A thunderstorm
 - b. A young lion
 - c. An attack by his enemies
10. What animal did Samson send through the Philistine fields?
 - a. Cattle
 - b. Foxes
 - c. Sheep
11. Which of these was the source of Samson's strength?
 - a. New ropes
 - b. Uncut hair
 - c. Woven hair
12. Where was Samson when he died?
 - a. Philistine temple
 - b. Delilah's house
 - c. Jerusalem

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

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 - May 2024</i>
<i>5th</i>		THE SIXTH SUNDAY of EASTER: ROGATION SUNDAY
<i>9th</i>		ASCENSION DAY
<i>12th</i>		THE SEVENTH SUNDAY of EASTER - Sunday after Ascension Day
<i>14th</i>		Matthias, Apostle
<i>19th</i>		THE DAY of PENTECOST - Whitsunday
<i>26th</i>		TRINITY SUNDAY
<i>30th</i>		Thanksgiving for Holy Communion (Corpus Christi)
<i>31st</i>		The Visit of the Virgin Mary to Elizabeth

Bargoed Community Choir.

The choir will meet each Thursday, during term time, at St. Margaret's Church, Gilfach – 10.00 to 11.30 am. *All are welcome!!*

Community Dance Group

The dance group will meet each Monday at 10.30am at St. Margaret's Church. *All are welcome!!*



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Sign up to Llandaff Matters and receive inspirational stories of faith in action from across the diocese. Use the following link:

<https://llandaff.churchinwales.org.uk/>

then sign up to the mailing list, found half way down the page.

Quotes for May 2024.

Rogation Sunday (5th May) is about asking for God’s protection and blessing

Pure prayers have pure blessings. – **Thomas Goodwin**

Pentecost (19th May) – that day in Jerusalem when God poured out the Holy Spirit

The Spirit is not given to make Bible study needless, but to make it effective. – **J I Packer**

Miscellaneous musings on life.

Only one petition in the Lord’s Prayer has any condition attached to it; it is the petition for forgiveness. – **Archbishop William Temple**

Inanimate objects are classified scientifically into three major categories: those that don’t work, those that break down and those that get lost. – **Russell Baker**

Stars may be seen from the bottom of a deep well, when they cannot be discerned from the top of a mountain. So are many things learned in adversity which the prosperous man dreams not of. – **CH Spurgeon**

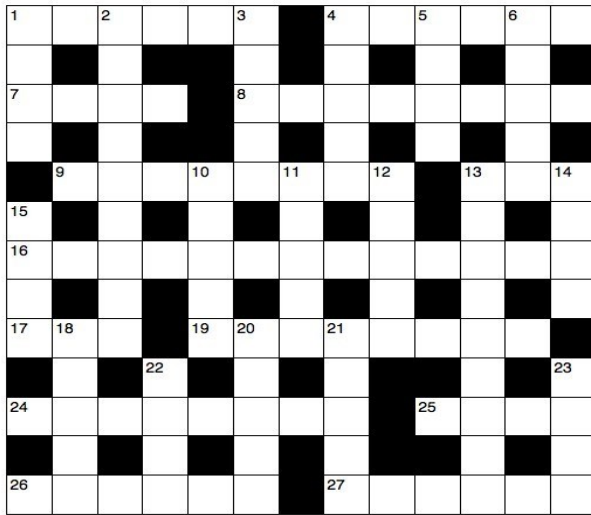
Sudoku Challenge

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

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Solution can be found on page 39

May's Crossword



Challenge

Across

- 1 One who owes money, goods or services (Isaiah 24:2) (6)
- 4 'A good measure, pressed down, — together and running over' (Luke 6:38) (6)
- 7 Continuous dull pain (Proverbs 14:13) (4)
- 8 This bread contains yeast (Amos 4:5) (8)
- 9 'But take heart! I have — the world' (John 16:33) (8)
- 13 And the rest (abbrev.) (3)
- 16 What Paul was accused of by Tertullus, the high priest's lawyer, in his trial before Felix (Acts 24:5) (13)
- 17 Rap (anag.) (3)
- 19 Founder of the Jesuits in 1534 (8)
- 24 'For where your — is, there your heart will be also' (Luke 12:34) (8)
- 25 The first word written on the wall during King Belshazzar's great banquet (Daniel 5:25) (4)
- 26 'We all, like sheep, have gone — ' (Isaiah 53:6) (6)
- 27 One was given in honour of Jesus in Bethany (John 12:2) (6)

Down

- 1 'The blind receive sight, the lame walk, the — hear, the dead are raised' (Luke 7:22) (4)

- 2 Conduct (Colossians 1:21) (9)
- 3 In the Catholic and Orthodox traditions, the body of a saint or his belongings, venerated as holy (5)
- 4 ‘Like a — of locusts men pounce on it’ (Isaiah 33:4) (5)
- 5 Very old (Genesis 44:20) (4)
- 6 In Calvinist theology, one who is predestined by God to receive salvation (5)
- 10 How Nicodemus addressed Jesus when he visited him one night (John 3:2) (5)
- 11 Sea (Psalm 148:7) (5)
- 12 ‘I will — you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever’ (Psalm 145:1) (5)
- 13 One of the groups of philosophers that Paul met in Athens, who disagreed with his teaching about the resurrection (Acts 17:18) (9)
- 14 Barred enclosure (Ezekiel 19:9) (4)
- 15 ‘Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in — with the Spirit’ (Galatians 5:25) (4)
- 18 Cares (anag.) (5)
- 20 Garish (Ezekiel 16:16) (5)
- 21 ‘So God said to Noah, “I am going to put — — to all people”’ (Genesis 6:13) (2,3)
- 22 Just (2 Corinthians 6:13) (4)
- 23 ‘The — of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge’ (Proverbs 1:7) (4)

Crossword solution - Page 39

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Quiz on the Book of Judges.

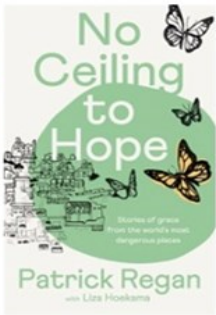
Answers:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <i>Q 1</i> a. Judah (Judges 1:2) | <i>Q 7</i> c. 70 (Judges 8:30) |
| <i>Q 2</i> b. 100 (Judges 2:8) | <i>Q 8</i> a. Manoah (Judges 13:2) |
| <i>Q 3</i> b. Deborah & Barak (Judges 5) | <i>Q 9</i> b. A young lion (Judges 14:5) |
| <i>Q 4</i> c. A kid and some unleavened cakes (Judges 6:19) | <i>Q 10</i> b. Foxes (Judges 15:4) |
| <i>Q 5</i> c. 32000 (Judges 7:3) | <i>Q 11</i> b. Uncut hair (Judges 16:19) |
| <i>Q 6</i> b. A trumpet, a pitcher and a torch (Judges 7:16) | <i>Q 12</i> a. Philistine temple (Judges 16:23-27) |

Book Reviews

No Ceiling to Hope: Stories of grace from the world's most dangerous places

By Patrick Regan and Liza Hoeksma, SPCK, £10.99



Here are some real-life stories from across the world to show how Christians are helping the most vulnerable in society with God's love.

In Bolivia, Christians are backing education projects to help families to find a way out of poverty. In London, XLP is mentoring young people to turn aside from violence. In Los Angeles, a new future is being offered to gang girls. In high security prisons in the UK and US, the Spirit is turning lives around. In Belfast's Shankill Road area, a group of elderly ladies is cooking meals for men who sit all day in local pubs . . . The list is extensive, and inspiring. The common element is that, in all circumstances, Christ is offering hope.

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

Grandparenting for Faith: Sharing God with the children you love the most

By Becky Sedgwick, BRF, £9.99

Part of the joy of being a grandparent is to help your grandchildren learn to have confidence in God's love for them.

This book will encourage grandparents to be a unique voice, speaking into their grandchildren's lives, and helping to nurture them into the reality of a relationship with the God who loves them.



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

St. Catwg's Readers Rota					
May 2024		June 2024		July 2024	
5 th	Cheryl Pugh	2 nd	Pat Davies	7 th	Joan Jenkins
12 th	Janeve Manca	9 th	Paul Thomas	14 th	Pat Davies
19 th	Christine Harvey	16 th	Cheryl Pugh	21 st	Paul Thomas
26 th	Joan Jenkins	23 rd	Janeve Manca	28 th	Cheryl Pugh
		30 th	Christine Harvey		

St. Margaret's Readers Rota

St. Margaret's Readers Rota					
May 2024		June 2024		July 2024	
5 th	June Phillips	2 nd	Kath Llewellyn	7 th	June Phillips
12 th	Christine Thorpe	9 th	Jenn East	14 th	Neil Hazell
19 th	Enid Mayne	16 th	Jennette Jones	21 st	Alex Ball
26 th	Huw Thomas	23 rd	Linda Bartlett	28 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

St. Margaret's Cleaning Rota								
May 2024			June 2024			July 2024		
5	Jennette	Audrey	2	Kath	June	7	Lynda Bartlett	Sue
12	Kath	June	9	Lynda Bartlett	Sue	14	Lynda Trollope	Enid
19	Lynda Bartlett	Sue	16	Lynda Trollope	Enid	21	Jennette	Audrey
26	Lynda Trollope	Enid	23	Jennette	Audrey	28	Kath	June
			30	Kath	June			

From the Register

Christian Funerals

April 2024

3rd	Mr George Grist RIP
9th	Mrs Sheila Withey 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.*

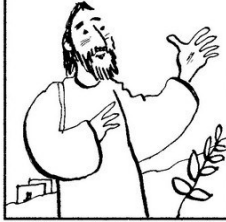
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*Lord, in our time of grief we turn to you. God of love
hear our cries. Listen to our prayers for whom
you have called out of this world. Lead them to
your kingdom of light and peace. Amen.*

For the Younger Generation.

The tale of the Mustard Seed & the tale of the Yeast

JESUS OFTEN TOLD
STORIES WITH
HIDDEN MEANINGS

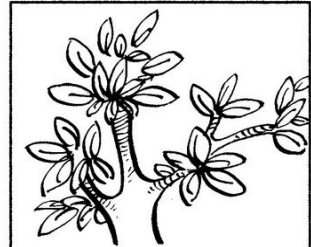


SOME OF HIS STORIES WERE
VERY SHORT, BUT THEY MEANT
A GREAT DEAL

ONCE JESUS EXPLAINED HOW
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
WAS LIKE A MUSTARD SEED

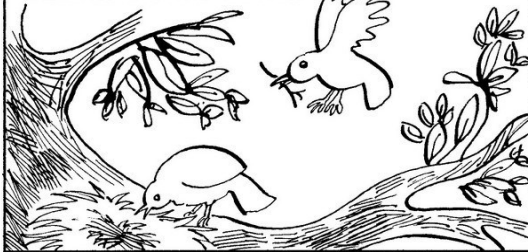


IT IS ONE OF THE SMALLEST
OF SEEDS....



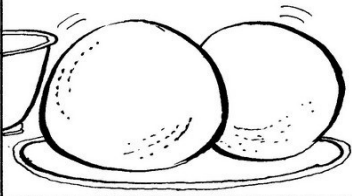
BUT WHEN IT GROWS UP IT IS
THE BIGGEST OF ALL PLANTS

IT BECOMES A TREE, SO THAT BIRDS COME AND MAKE
THEIR NESTS IN THE BRANCHES

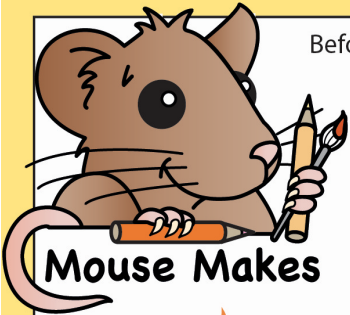


JESUS ALSO EXPLAINED THAT THE
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE YEAST.

EVEN THOUGH IT'S A TINY INGREDIENT,
WHEN IT'S MIXED WITH THE FLOUR,
THE WHOLE BATCH OF DOUGH RISES



THIS WAS JESUS' WAY OF SAYING THAT EVEN IF WE
HAVE A SMALL AMOUNT OF FAITH... IT CAN MAKE A
HUGE DIFFERENCE TO OUR LIVES, AND TO THE LIVES
OF OTHERS.

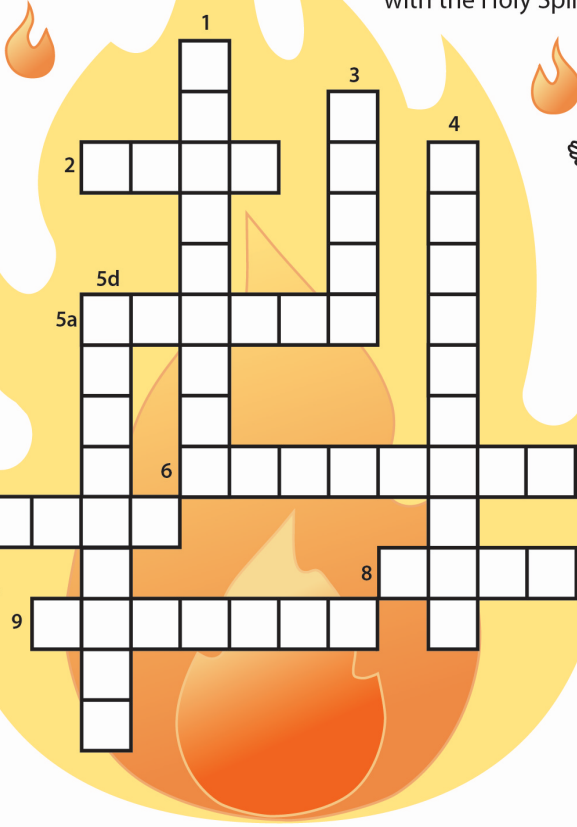


Before Jesus ascended to heaven he told his disciples
*"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit
 has come upon you, and you will be my
 witness in Jerusalem and in all Judea
 and Samaria, and to the end of the earth"...*
 ...When the day of Pentecost arrived,
 they were all together in one place,
 and they were all filled
 with the Holy Spirit."



READ the story
 of Pentecost
 in Acts 1-2
 Look up the Bible
 verses to find
 the answers to the
 crossword clues.

How many
 words can you
 make from
 the letters of:
 DAY OF
 PENTECOST



- 1 After Jesus ascended into heaven, which city did the Apostles return to? *Acts 1:12*
- 2 What appeared? Tongues of ...? *Acts 2:3*
- 3 Who spoke to the crowd? *Acts 2:14*
- 4 What were the disciples filled with? *Acts 2:4*
- 5a What did the Apostles devote themselves to? *Acts 1:14*
- 5d Which special day was it? *Acts 2:1*
- 6 Who was chosen to replace Judas? *Acts 1:26*
- 7 Who had prophesied this? *Acts 2:16*
- 8 What rushing sound came from heaven? *Acts 2:2*
- 9 What did they start speaking in? *Acts 2:4*

Complete the Wordsearch!

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

bread

manna

water

delicious

Moses

Sinai

God

disputes

whinge

staff

Egypt

mountain

food

Aaron

moan

Rephidim

land

oasis

grumble

quails

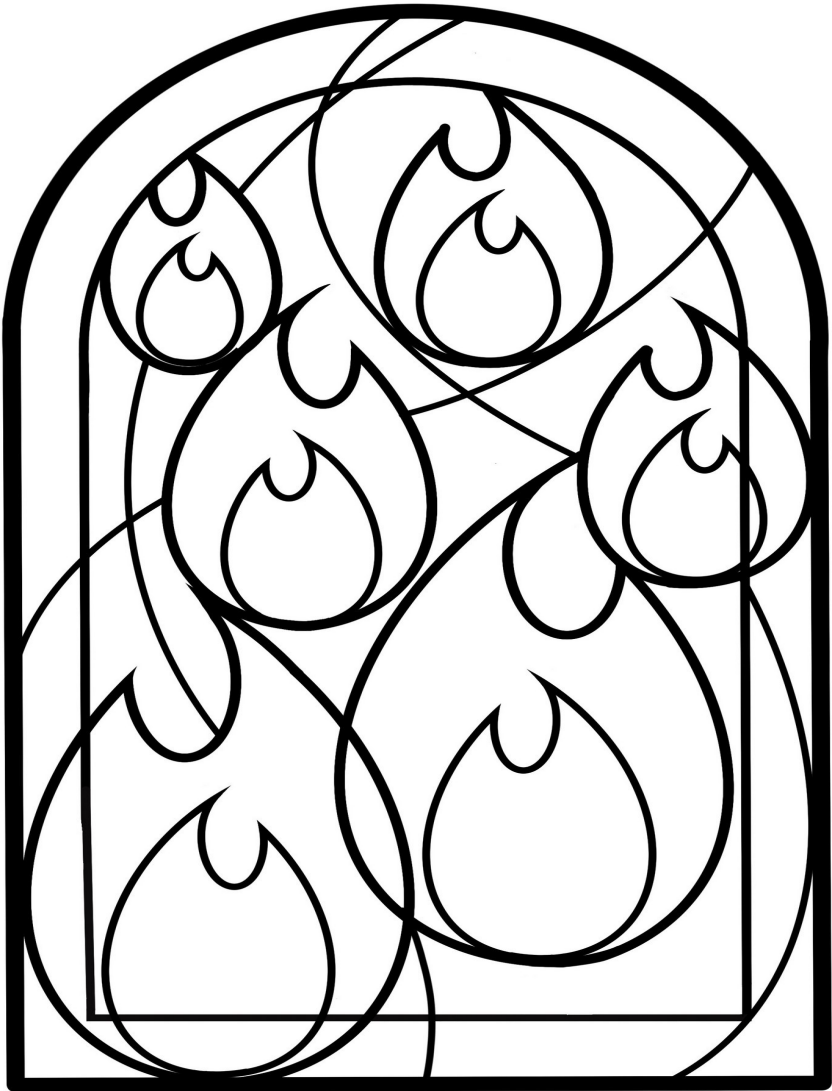
Elim

months

Amalekites

helped

Colour in!



The Feast of Pentecost

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Please Contact:

Christine Harvey: 01443 833123



Christine Harvey 01443 833123 /

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 District of Gelligaer 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 Council. 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!

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

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

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

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

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

Solutions to this month's puzzles.

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

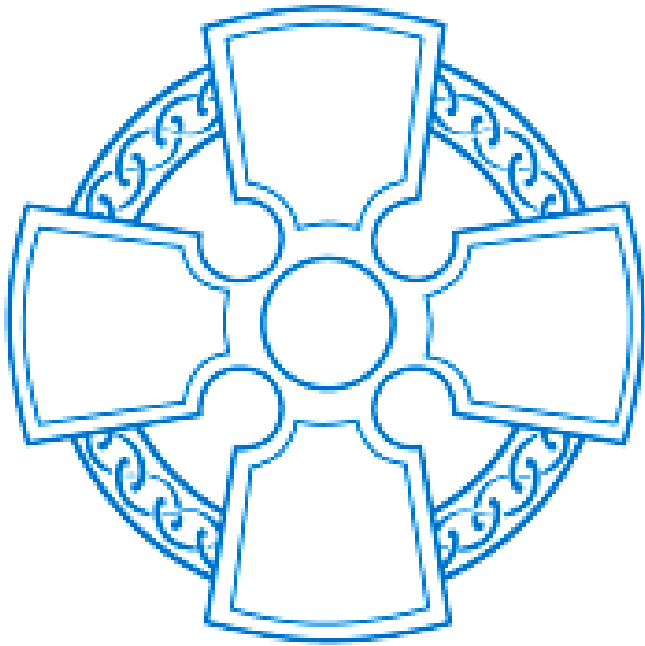
D	E	B	T	O	R	S	H	A	K	E	N		
E	E			E		W	G	L					
A	C	H	E	L	E	A	V	E	N	E	D		
F	A			I	R	D	C						
O	V	E	R	C	O	M	E	E	T	C			
S	I			A	C	X	P				A		
T	R	O	U	B	L	E	M	A	K	I	N	G	
E	U			B	A	L	C				E		
P	A	R		I	G	N	A	T	I	U	S		
C	F			A	N		R				F		
T	R	E	A	S	U	R	E			M	E	N	E
E	I			D	N							A	
A	S	T	R	A	Y		D	I	N	N	E	R	

Answer to *Sudoku* on page 18

Answers to *Crossword* on page 22



ARDAL WEINIDOGAETH
TÂF RHYMNI
TAFF RHYMNEY
MINISTRY AREA



*This Publication was produced and printed by the Taff Rhymney Ministry Area,
District of Gelligaer. 2024*