



Beulah CROSSROADS

The
Monthly
Newsletter
of Beulah
United
Reformed
Church

February
2021



The
United
Reformed
Church

Letter from the Manse

Dear Friends,

One of the things we enjoy about living in Cardiff is the scenery. We, before lockdown, loved going to Penarth Pier and walking along the Coastal Path. We enjoyed driving further along the coast to the beaches. We enjoyed driving into the Brecon Beacons, and beyond. We explored the Gower in the summer. Unfortunately, the restrictions of the pandemic have limited our opportunities to explore.

However, when we drive north from our house or walk north around Roath Park, we sometimes pause and look beyond us. There before us are the hills that ring Cardiff. In that moment of pause the words of Psalm 121 ring through our heads:

*I will lift up my eyes to the hills,
from where does my help come?
My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.*

As we approach a year of pandemic restrictions, these words hold the promise of support. Many of us are weary. We have found ways to respond to the changes. We have done our best to live by the restrictions. We long for the pandemic to end and our restricted patterns of living to be eased or better yet finish, but God walks this lonesome valley with us. When we look to the hills, we are reminded of God with us.

It feels like we are running a marathon. We think we are close to the end of the race, but we don't know the course so we are not exactly sure how close the finish line actually is.

This running imagery reminds us of another Bible passage—Hebrews 12: *(We) run with endurance the race set out for us, keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.*

(Continued on page 3)

Part of the United Reformed Church Cardiff and Penarth Pastorate

CHURCH NEWS

February brings some lighter days and the start of Lent on the 17th. I have to admit my plan last year to reduce the Wilkes household use of electricity including 1 hour a day electric free did not go down well or for very long! It was much harder than I first thought.

This year the Cardiff & Penarth Pastorate of churches will be focusing on the 5 senses in Lent reflections and studies. I was able to spend a few mindful minutes alone in church this week - I couldn't taste anything but my other senses could see, hear, touch and smell familiarity. (All touch points were wiped down afterwards of course).

Thank you to everyone involved in the church service for George Dickman's funeral, the first we have been able to hold since the first lockdown. It was a privilege to be there. Although the Welsh Assembly allows Church to be open for worship the URC guidance strongly recommends to close, we have therefore suspended further Sunday services for the time being and will review this at the next Elders Meeting.

We will be holding a regular question and answer session after zoom worship the Sunday after Elders meeting to keep you up to date with church

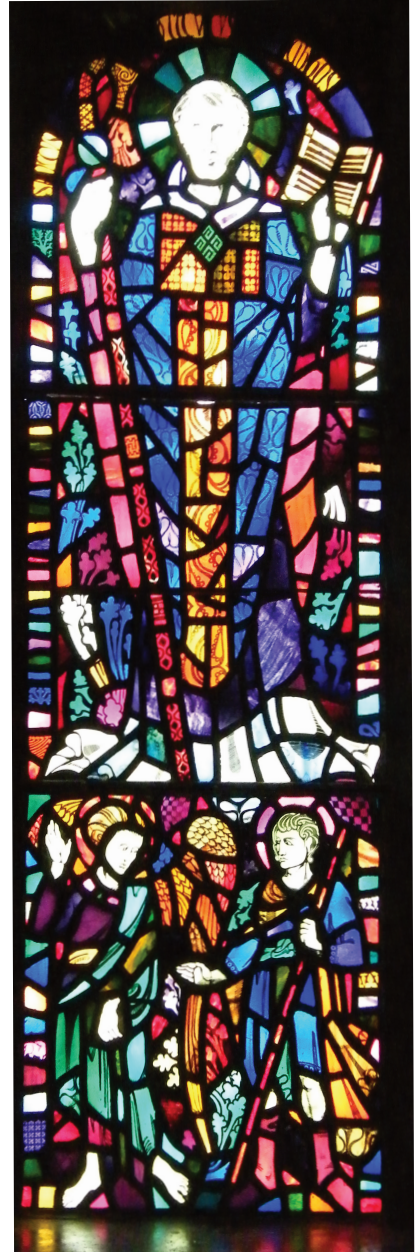
business and any changes. If you do not have access to zoom and would like to ask a question please let either myself or your pastoral elder know in advance.

*Take Care,
Anne*

Synod Meeting

The next Synod Meeting is on 6th March and will be held on Zoom. If you would like to attend please let me know. There will be discussion about the Synod Environmental Policy again let me know if you would like further information on this.
Anne W

Anne W



Church Secretary:
Mrs Anne Wilkes

Church Treasurer:
Mrs Barbara Rhys,

Ministers in the Pastorate:
Revd. Martha McInnes
Revd. David Dean

Letter from the Manse

(Continued from front page)

We lift our eyes to the hills. We keep our eyes on Jesus. When a particular day seems overwhelming, we give ourselves a moment of pause; we take a deep breath; we say a short prayer; we take stock; we take the next step and keep going. We keep running the 'race.'

The verse before the race imagery is the reminder that we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. Even in our isolation those who have taught us about faith remain beside us. That cloud of witnesses offers words of encouragement—sometimes over Zoom or WhatsApp, sometimes in a phone call or text message. Sometimes the message comes through a Bible reading or encouragement we find in a book we are reading or a comedy we are watching on television. Though we are isolated in some ways, the cloud of witnesses is always with us. They are instruments of the One who made heaven and earth.

All of us long for the end of the pandemic. We are moving toward the end and we can face the challenges before us, as we did those behind us. We do this remembering God comes close to help us through these times. Though we remain under the restrictions of the pandemic, we are still connected to our

communities—where we find the encouragement we need to keep us on track, always moving toward the end of the pandemic race.

Look to the hills and remember God's presence. Surround yourself with your cloud of witnesses, and let's reach the end of the race together.

Yours in Christ,

Martha and David



Christmas Stars

A very big thank you to Junior Church and all the helpers who knitted the beautiful stars for the children to decorate with shining stars, beads, and ribbons – to bring joy and light to the older members of our community – what a lovely idea!

The stars I was given are hanging in my kitchen to remind me every day of the pleasure they bring, especially to people who live alone!

Many thanks,

Mair (Haywood)

Thank you

We would like to thank the Beulah family for the plant we had last year, and the flowers and stars. Thanks also to our Elder, Louise, for keeping in regular touch.

With best wishes,

Sheila & David Phillips

Visit us at..... <http://www.beulahurc.org.uk/>

**NOTES FROM
Question & Answer
SESSION
HELD AFTER MORNING
WORSHIP ON
24 JANUARY 2021**

Members of the Pastorate were invited to remain in the meeting if they so wished.

Andrew welcomed everyone and said that these meetings would take place each month on the Sunday following our Elders' meeting.

He explained that, whilst Welsh Government guidelines allow for public worship to take place, the URC had decided that our churches should remain closed for the time being. Although we had hoped to hold 2 services in January, we had had to cancel these and had taken the decision in Elders' meeting that we would not be meeting in February either. The situation would be reviewed each month at Elders' meeting.

We had also written to all our Canolfan users this week to say that, regretably, we would not be opening the building until after Easter this year, at the earliest.

The question of outside worship was raised and it was pointed out that Welsh Government guidelines do not allow us to meet outside at present, and so there were no plans to do so for the moment. Andrew reminded everyone that the Canolfan garden was open daily for those who wished to use it.

Another matter raised was the potential opening and refurbishment of the Whitaker Lounge. It was pointed out that the numbers that could be accommodated with social distancing were such that it was not possible to open to the public while that was still in place. In the meantime, the small group working on the refurbishment of the lounge had met and their recommendations would be going to Finance and Elders next month. Serving teas and coffees in the Canolfan had been suggested but we were not able to do this at present.

James Hall thanked David and Martha for the quality of services that we continued to enjoy via, telephone, Mixed Cloud and Zoom and felt it was important that they be made more widely available via YouTube for example. It was agreed that this would be a good thing to do and, whilst Martha and David were willing to do this, there was the question of the increased technology that would be involved in doing so. Agreed that we would look into how this might be done without increasing David and Martha's workload.

Andrew reminded everyone of the new system of Eldership (CLEs and PEs) which had been introduced last March and which should have gone to Church meeting in March. As we went into lockdown this had not been possible, but we had been very well served throughout recent months by both. All our Elders and their pastoral helpers were thanked in particular for their pastoral care and help during that time. Also, the

Junior Church leaders who had kept in contact with the children and young people.

We were behind time with our normal process for the election of new Elders, and it was being proposed that the whole process should be moved to the Summer and there was general agreement for this. It was confirmed that the process would be started soon after Easter to allow time for everything to be in place before the Summer holiday period. More discussion was needed on how this would be achieved. Serving Elders would all be approached to ask if they were willing to remain in post until that time, but would also be given the opportunity to finish as planned if they so wished.

There was to be a family social evening on Saturday 6 February starting at 6.30 p.m. which it was hoped the whole Pastorate would participate in. Games etc provided, pens and paper, nibbles and wine to be provided by participants!

Andrew thanked everyone for attending the session.



WHITCHURCH, RHIWBINA & BIRCHGROVE WORSHIP

2021

DURING THIS TIME OF COVID

*Everyone IS INVITED to join Friends from thirteen local
Churches in **'VIRTUAL' WORSHIP***

30th JANUARY

BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

led by **Rev'd Phil Dunning**

27th FEBRUARY

St Thomas', Birchgrove

27th MARCH

Bethel, Whitchurch

All at 10:15 a.m.

CHURCH CONTACT :

Anne Wilkes



The Climate Coalition's SHOW THE LOVE campaign is about using our voices to protect what we love from the impacts of climate change. The time is now to use the power of green hearts to drive action on the climate crisis. By getting creative, we can ask our politicians to put aside their differences and work for a healthier, cleaner, fairer world.

Later this year, the UK is hosting the UN Climate Conference COP 26. This is the most important international summit we have ever hosted. What gets decided in Glasgow will define the world that our children inherit. COP 26 is an opportunity for the UK to lead the world into a greener future, but first we must ensure that our own recovery gets us on track to net-zero emissions and to limiting global warming to below 1.5 degrees C.

By making, wearing and displaying green hearts and by sharing a green heart with our MP, we can raise awareness and call on our politicians and the government to take urgent and ambitious action.

Following on from the stars at Christmas, Show the Love is an opportunity for us to come together again across the Pastorate. We can use our creativity to demonstrate that as individuals and churches we celebrate God's gift of creation, care deeply about the climate and biodiversity crises and call for climate justice.

Making your green heart:

There are lots of ways to get involved with this action and Martha has already sent out an email to everyone with suggestions and ideas for creating your green hearts. You can use paper, wool, felt, ribbon, material ... the possibilities are endless. The main thing is to use recycled materials where possible, and keep it green!!

Displays around our churches:

Some of the hearts can be used to create displays outside our churches. We can put them in the windows, on our notice boards and hang them on railings. As individuals, we can also put green hearts in our own windows to show our concerns and to inspire conversation around climate change and biodiversity loss.

Show the Love at Beulah:

Jo Jones has designed a beautiful heart to go on the Canolfan wall for Sunday 14th February. Over the following days, everyone is invited to bring their own green hearts to hang on this big heart. Hearts can also be hung on the Canolfan railings. Even in this time of separation, we can create a striking and powerful message from across the congregation and community.

Junior Church will also be getting busy and will be helping with a display in the Canolfan foyer. Many thanks to Marianne for her suggestions and guidance.

Contacting your MP and MS:

Each year constituents across the UK send hundreds of green hearts to their MPs. Your green heart is your personal message to your MP or MS asking them to commit to a green recovery that tackles the climate crisis. Please see the attached notes that Revd. Gethin Rhys has kindly provided offering ideas and guidance on writing to your MP. A list of constituency office addresses can be found on church websites.

The Time Is Now Declaration:

As part of Show the Love and ahead of COP 26, the Climate Coalition is encouraging people in every corner of the UK to sign The Time Is Now Declaration. The Declaration calls on the Prime Minister to lead the UK and the world towards a healthier, greener, fairer future.

Please sign the Declaration and ask your MP and MS to sign as well.

<https://thetimeisnow.uk/declaration>

Please do get in touch with any questions, or for further details.
Thank you for taking part, Eileen.

A few tips on writing to your MP/MS

1. You must include your name and address, so that the MP/MS can see that you live in their constituency or region. (But you do not have to be registered to vote at this address– so children, overseas citizens, students registered at their termtime address and those who have recently moved can all write).
2. With this campaign, it is better to write a letter rather than send an email – although a few people may like to design emails involving green hearts. MPs/MSs are inundated with emails, so most are read only by junior staff. A letter with a green heart enclosed will have much more impact on the constituency staff and therefore on the elected member.
3. A brief personal message – written on the heart or enclosed with it – is better than a long essay. For example,
 - if you are a birdwatcher you may have noticed changes to which birds you see due to migration changes caused by climate change. Refer to this and say how much you love birds.
 - if you are a gardener, you will be aware of the changes in flowering times and planting times for plants and vegetables. Refer to this and say how much you love gardening or growing your own food.
 - if you are a walker, you will have seen storm damage in local woodlands, or local buildings. Climate change means more damaging storms. Referr to this and say how much you love your local area.
 - and so on – there are as many messages as there are people who can write. If the MP/MS wants to know more about the topics you raise, they have researchers who can look this up on the internet.
4. As several other charities use hearts to campaign in February, the heart must be green, and make clear reference to **The time is now to protect what we love from the climate crisis.**
5. Please ask your MP/MS to sign the Climate Coalition The Time Is Now Declaration - [Declaration | The Time Is Now](#). And make sure you sign it yourself (and note when asked that you are signing as part of a faith group so we can measure the response by people of faith).
6. If you know that your MP/MS is already active on environmental issues, please thank them – everyone likes to be appreciated! Likewise if you wish to thank them for other work they are doing – but try not to distract from the message of this campaign. If you want to know more about a particular MP/MS's views on climate change or the environment, by all means contact me and I can tell you more. But the campaign is primarily about what we love and are concerned about.
7. You don't have to refer to your church membership, but if you are willing to do so it will show the depth of commitment from the Christian community.
8. If you get a substantive reply (rather than a standardised acknowledgement), please do share it with us.

Gethin Rhys 17.01.21

EDITORS

Colin Grimes,

Huw Morgan,

Contributions for the next edition of Crossroads should be submitted by Sunday, 21st February , and Huw will be editing.

**Please note,
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