

# CONNECT

The Magazine of the Swansea and Gower Methodist Circuit

Spring 2017

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### **Tell us all your news**

Keep us informed with news of people, activities and special events by sending your contribution to the Editor or sending her an email.

**Deadline for the next issue is  
Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2017**

# BIBLE MONTH

## 2017

### *30 days with James*

### — #BibleMonth —

The Methodist Church in Swansea and Gower will join with other circuits throughout the Methodist Connexion during the month of June to run a 'Bible Month', 30 days focused on the New Testament letter of James.

The Bible Month will involve our preachers preparing and preaching a series of sermons on James over four Sundays and small group leaders running a 'Bible Month' group that focuses on James, but which also helps those attending engage the Bible in fresh and innovative ways. Children and youth groups will also take part.

By focusing on a single biblical book, the aim of the Bible Month is to help all in church engage more deeply with Scripture. A pilot project showed that the Bible Month model could be effective in raising biblical literacy, and the majority of those who took part were keen to hold another Bible Month in the future!

The letter of James encourages Christians to live out their faith as well as to confess it. It reminds us that faith without works is dead, and so encourages us to love God and neighbour in deed as well as in word. While future Bible Months will focus on different biblical books, James seems a suitable work to begin with - and also features in the lectionary earlier in 2017.

'Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom.'

(James 3:13)

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**news in brief**

**Wesley**

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May 10-12 Coffee morning and stalls.  
Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June at 3.00 p.m. Strawberry Tea in aid of  
Breast Cancer Care.  
Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June at 3.00 p.m. Tea Dance.  
To confirm events or require more information please  
contact Pauline Evans( tel: 01792 415323  
e-mail [evansp70@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:evansp70@yahoo.co.uk))

**Clydach**

Bible Study led by Rev.Noon at Capel y Nant on  
Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March and May 15<sup>th</sup> at 11.00 a.m.

**Penlan**

Special Sunday evening services to take place on  
23<sup>rd</sup> April and 21<sup>st</sup> May. Both starting at 6.00 p.m.

**Murton**

Messy Church will take place on the following  
Saturdays from 3.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.  
8<sup>th</sup> April – Pennard Community Centre  
3<sup>rd</sup> May – Port Eynon Village Hall  
Coffee mornings will be held at the church every  
Tuesday from 10.00 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.

**Brunswick**

FAN "Friends and Neighbours" every Wednesday at  
10.30 a.m.  
Intercessory Prayer Meeting every Wednesday at  
4.00 p.m.  
Coffee mornings on the last Saturday of every month.

**Mumbles**

Theo's Coffee Shop open daily from 9.00 a.m. to  
5.00 p.m.  
Wednesday Lunchtime Worship at 12.15 p.m.  
Book Sale – Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April to Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April

**Wesley**

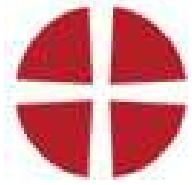
Bible Study every Tuesday at 10.00 a.m.  
Christianity Explored Course starts on Tuesday  
25<sup>th</sup> April at 10.00 a.m.  
Lite Bites – Every Thursday from 12 noon to 2.00 p.m.

**Uniting Church Sketty**

Curry and Quiz on Monday 27th March 7.00pm at  
Mumbai Restaurant, Blackpill £15.00  
Concert by the Gwalia Singers Friday 5th May 7.30pm  
for 'Hands Up For Downs' Charity  
Concert by Abbey Players 'Songs from the Shows'  
Friday 30th June 7.30 p.m. Tickets £5.00  
For tickets for any of the above email  
[unitingchurchsketty@gmail.com](mailto:unitingchurchsketty@gmail.com)



## Message from the Superintendent



There is a lovely story about the late Swiss theologian Karl Barth. Barth is regarded as the greatest Protestant theologian of the 20th century. Pope Pius XII called him the most important Christian theologian since St. Thomas Aquinas. He certainly was very well known, even making it onto the front cover of Time magazine in 1962.

There's a lovely story about Barth sitting on a bus in his home city of Basel, Switzerland. A tourist boarded the bus and sat down next to him. The two men began talking. Barth asked the tourist, "What do you hope to see in our lovely city?" The tourist said, "I hope to see the great theologian Karl Barth." And then he asked, "Do you know him?" With a gleam in his eye, Barth responded, "I give him a shave every morning." The tourist was excited, "Really?" They would have continued talking, but the bus stopped and the tourist got off. He went and told his friends with great joy, "I have just met Karl Barth's barber!" Barth was sitting right next to him and he didn't realise it.

Sadly, many people can go through their entire life without realising who Jesus is. For those who have made the discovery that Jesus is the Son of God describe their experience in a variety of ways. For some it came suddenly and dramatically like it did for St Paul on the Damascus Road and for others it came gently over time as it did for the two men on the Emmaus Road.

Nicky Gumbel who presents the Alpha Course said that coming to faith is like travelling on a train into another country. Those who travel by day know the exact point that they cross the border but those that travel by night cannot say when exactly they crossed, they just know that they have.

The two travellers on the Emmaus Road came to realise that their companion was the risen Jesus after travelling with him. It was a discovery that was made after studying the Scriptures and breaking bread with him.

Even though they were downcast and sceptical about the news of the resurrection Jesus lights a fire within them. They said after Jesus left them 'didn't our hearts burn within us when he opened the scriptures for us on the road'.

The Novelist Kathleen Norris wrote that "to believe" is a matter of the heart. The heart is connected to the eyes. When our heart is on fire, our eyes can see. When our heart is lukewarm, and we are not in touch with the centre of our being, the world looks bleak and we are blind.

Through his teaching of the Scriptures and in the intimacy of breaking bread and sharing a meal, their eyes were opened and they recognised him. They saw that it was the Lord. He was alive and was with them.

I am reading a book at the moment written by William Lane Craig titled 'On Guard'. Bill Craig is one of the world's leading Christian apologists – Christian apologetics being the defence of the faith.

In the early chapters of the book he talks about the utter futility of life without God. He gives his Christian testimony and the moment in his life that he came to know Jesus Christ.

'That moment changed my whole life. I knew that if Christianity was really the truth then I could do nothing but spend my entire life telling others about this wonderful message. For many Christians, the main difference they find in coming to know Christ is the love or the joy or the peace it brings. All of those things were thrilling to me, too. But if you were to ask me what is the main difference Christ has made in my life, without hesitation I would say – 'meaning'. I knew the blackness, the despair of a life lived apart from God. Knowing God suddenly brought eternal significance to my life. Now the things I did were charged with eternal meaning. Now life mattered, now every day I could wake up to another day of walking with him.

*(continued on page 4)*

**We would be well on our way to perfection if we could weed out one vice from ourselves each year.**

**T.á Kempis**

*(continued from page 3)*

We too can come to know Christ in a similar way. When we know in our hearts that his resurrection is true, as we study the Bible, break the bread and journey through life, we can be assured that he is always with us.

May God's richest blessing be upon you this Easter.

**Howard**

## Big Day Out

On Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> February over 50 young people and helpers from Methodist Churches across South Wales descended on Swansea. The morning was spent swimming at the LC2 where we stayed for lunch, then it was on to Mumbles Methodist Church for the afternoon.

We opened with worship which looked at the theme of the afternoon which was 'Agents of Change'. The young people then had the option of attending two of the following workshops:-

1. How many Methodists does it take to change a light bulb? – Looking at how the Methodist Church works and how the young people might affect change within it.
2. If I ruled the world – Looking at the journey from being led to being a leader.
3. Change in the world – Looking at how young people can be agents of change in the world
4. Refugee Crisis, 'Surely I can't help.....can I? – Thinking about refugees, who they are, where they come from, what the world's response should be, and what our response could be.

There was also space for the young people to have quiet time in amongst it all in the Creative Prayer space area. Here there was opportunity for them to reflect on themselves, their families/friends, their local church and circuit and the wider world through a variety of quiet activities.

We also had lots of ice breakers and fun games interspersed throughout which were thoroughly enjoyed by everybody.

We then had a sandwich tea together in the youth area followed by closing worship looking at how the cross can be an agent of change before everybody left to make their journeys home.

A lot of work went into the planning and preparation of the day but it was well worth it as it was a huge success. It was really encouraging to see the church full of young people enthusiastically taking an active part in and fully engaging with all that was on offer and we are hoping to run something similar next year.



**Cerys Davies**

**Timely good deeds are nicer than afterthoughts. The smallest good deed is better than the grandest intention.**



## Visit of Julia Edwards



It was a delight to welcome Mission Partner Julia Edwards to the Circuit recently. Julia has been a Mission Partner in Fiji for the past 6 years, with a particular interest in climate change and the way it is impacting on the people of those islands.

On Sunday morning Julia led worship with Alan Cram at our Brunswick Church, taking as a theme "creation care". As well as using resources from the Christian environmental charity A Rocha and Christian Aid, Julia brought her own experiences to the service. Using her own photos, Julia first of all encouraged us to celebrate the many different uses of the coconut: a rather important plant in Fiji! Later in the service, Alan asked the congregation to think about Jesus' words in Matthew 5 in which Jesus encouraged his followers to be like salt, permeating society with God's topsy-turvy kingdom values. This idea of SALT=GOOD was then followed by Julia illustrating how rising sea levels are inundating fertile farmland, poisoning the soil with salt: hence SALT=BAD! The challenge, Julia said, is not to ignore something that we think is happening thousands of miles away, and therefore of no concern of ours, but to see ourselves connected physically by the sea to the people of Fiji, and therefore our actions DO affect them.

On Monday evening, a large group met at Murton Church to hear Julia talk in more detail about Fiji; the geography, the people and their culture, their faith, and their politics. We were given a vivid account of a society and way of life that is largely alien to us. Julia emphasised how important community and hospitality are to the Fijians: something we in our so-called sophisticated Western world have largely forgotten. Julia concluded with slides showing the impact of climate change on the Fijians: some villages have already had to re-locate due to rising sea levels, forcing people to leave

behind their ancestral land.

Again, we were reminded that we live in a global community: our excessive burning of fossil fuels being directly responsible for global warming and hence rising sea levels. Shockingly, whilst people escaping war and poverty have a variety of rights as refugees under international law, those displaced by climate change are not recognised as refugees, and therefore have no rights. We were left in no doubt as to our responsibilities as Christians, and we were very grateful to Julia for both informing and challenging us.

**Alan Cram**

On Saturday 20th May at 1.30 p.m. Clydach Guild is holding their Spring Fair and Plant Stall with tea/coffee and refreshments. Why not come along and support us.

Contact Marilyn on 844256 for more details

## Pause to Ponder

It is not culture but conversion that we need first. Not education, but transformation. Not new knowledge, but a new nature. We must become new creations by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit before we are ready to live Christ's life and bear his image.

**Robert C. Cunningham**

Four things to learn in life:  
To think clearly without hurry or confusion;  
To love everybody sincerely;  
To act in everything with the highest motives;  
To trust God unhesitatingly.

**Helen Keller**

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.

**Matthew 6:33**

**Be gentle and ready to forgive; never hold grudges. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.**

**Col.3:13**

## Lindors Report



*(Rev. Dr. Neil Richardson)*

On 10<sup>th</sup> February four of us (Alice, Annie, Cynthia and myself) set off from the Swansea circuit to go to Lindors Country House in the Wye Valley for the Local Preacher's weekend.

The weekend was led by Rev Dr. Neil Richardson, former Principal of Wesley College, Bristol and President of the Methodist Conference in 2003.

We arrived in good time after an uneventful journey as I didn't manage to get lost for a change. We had a warm welcome and comfortable rooms.

We were also joined by Rev. Preben Andersen, the Superintendent Minister and his wife from Caldicot. I met him at Synod but that's another story! He recently played the Angel Gabriel at a play in Cardiff with 55 different nationalities. I think he was type cast!

After dinner at 6.30pm we had our first session on 'Reading the Bible well'.

We were then confronted by a 7.45am start on Saturday which we almost managed – but not quite.

Cynthia and I then led the devotions and I introduced us as 'Little and Large' from Swansea, one of the best Methodist Circuits in the world! I was able to qualify it by telling everyone that Neil Richardson was our Superintendent's Tutor at Wesley College!! After a lot of groans from the audience we shared our devotions. At least they all remembered us after that. This was followed by 'A journey with Jesus into God'.

In the afternoon we went for a shopping trip to Abbey Mill at Tintern, which is really very tired now and I do hope someone will bring it in to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, at some stage.

In the afternoon our session was 'God, according to St. Paul', and after dinner a session on ideas for Local Preachers Continuing Development, which is ongoing.

In between all this I had to somehow catch up with the Wales v. England game, which wasn't easy.

The following morning we didn't have to appear until 8am so that was fine – I think.

The Sunday morning session was entitled 'God in the Psalms'. As well as being enlightening from a very expert, enlightening teacher we were also supplied with plenty of notes.

We had a communion service during the morning and after lunch made our farewells after a very fulfilling weekend.

**Caroline Buckler  
Mumbles**

### **Swansea Little Theatre**

**presents**

**Son of Man**

**by Dennis Potter**

**directed by Brian Sullivan**

**from**

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

**at 7.30p.m**

**Tickets £10/£9**

**Card fee £1.00**

**Online fee £2.00**

**The Dylan Thomas Theatre**

**[www.dylanthomastheatre.org](http://www.dylanthomastheatre.org)**

**I used to ask God to help me. Then I asked if I might help him. I ended up by asking God to do his work through me.**

**Hudson Taylor**

## Christmas Charity fundraising at Murton Methodist Church



*Mum's the Word Choir performing at Murton Methodist Church*

On Tuesday 13th December the Ladies Tuesday Guild at Murton Methodist Church organised a Christmas Concert to raise funds for their nominated charity, Hands Up for Downs. Our very own Rev. Andy Walker, welcomed Mums the Word Choir, conducted by local Soprano Ros Evans, who entertained us with festive carols which included a memorable rendition of the Twelve Days of Christmas.

The community spirit was overwhelming with members of the Congregation raising in excess of £500 for this good cause.



*Mums from the charity Hands Up for Downs collecting their cheque for £500 from the Ladies Tuesday Guild*

The Circuit Budget Meeting will be held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April at Sketty at 7.30 p.m. The Treasurer and one church steward from each church are invited to attend.

## Birthday Celebrations

At Clydach Chapel during February we held a 90<sup>th</sup> birthday tea for one of our members, Mr. Austin Bradley.



It was made even more special as Austin's wife Jean was able to join with us. Due to ill health Jean hasn't been able to join our services for some time. Anyone who knows Jean and Austin would agree that they are a very special couple, always happy and willing to help anyone at any time. The ladies of the Guild put on a lovely afternoon tea with sandwiches, cakes, balloons and a birthday banner and of course a special 90<sup>th</sup> birthday cake. Austin was given many lovely gifts and cards. The afternoon was enjoyed by all.



**Speak kind words and you will hear kind echoes.**



## Nobel and Bob Dylan – Idols With Feet of Clay?

The awarding of the Alfred Noble Prize for Literature to Bob Dylan has brought these two individuals into focus.

**Alfred Bernhard Nobel** (Born 1833 - died in 1896) was a Swedish chemist, engineer, inventor, businessman, and later as a philanthropist. Known for inventing dynamite, Nobel also owned Bofors, which he had redirected from its previous role as primarily an iron and steel producer to a major manufacturer of cannon and other armaments. Nobel held 355 different patents, dynamite being the most famous. After reading a premature obituary which condemned him for profiting from the sales of arms, he bequeathed his fortune to institute the Nobel Prizes.

However subsequently he did not take the opportunity to 'beat their swords into plowshares, - *Isaiah 2:4; Joel 3:10; Micah 4:3* and did not direct Bofors to stop producing arms. Their anti aircraft guns and other artillery pieces were extensively used by British, French, and American forces in both the major conflicts of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.



*(Let Us Beat Swords into Plowshares, by Evgeniy Vuchetich in the United Nations Art Collection)*

As an aside, long after Nobel had died and met his maker, in World War 2, the Bavarian city of Schweinfurt became a target of the American Air Force, because 52 percent of German ball-bearings were manufactured there. The

Americans reckoned a decisive blow in Schweinfurt would cripple not only fighter production, but indeed the production of all vehicles in Nazi Germany. It was a particular nasty, futile & expensive exercise with a tremendous loss of life by American airmen. For their part, the Nazis were aware of the danger and had begun receiving supplies from all over Europe, particularly Sweden. This for me throws the idea of Swedish 'Neutrality' into question. Is selling to both sides in a conflict 'Neutral' or just profit making? Do two wrongs make a right?

**Bob Dylan** was born Robert Zimmerman to Jewish parents and in his early years his family lived in the towns of Hibing & Duluth in Minnesota (Highway 61 ran nearby). He moved to New York in 1961, partly to be near his hero Woody Guthrie, and partly to start a career in the music industry. Dylan's early style was Folk based, (using a guitar and a Harmonica mounted in a frame), as he thought that 'pop' music of the day 'didn't reflect life in a realistic way. ' Dylan started to win recognition as a song writer of songs of social comment, and through his early live performances and recordings was pigeon-holed as a 'Protest Singer' On his LP 'The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan' released in the spring of 1963, one of the tracks was '**Masters of War**' It runs for many verses and is an anti-war anthem, and a protest against the Cold War arms build-up of the early 1960s, but would be just as relevant as today.

I will just extract a few verses –

Come you masters of war, You that build the big guns  
You that build the death planes, You that build all the bombs  
You that hide behind walls, You that hide behind desks  
I just want you to know, I can see through your masks

You that never done nothin' But build to destroy  
Like Judas of old, You lie and deceive  
But there's one thing I know, Though I'm younger than you  
That even Jesus would never forgive what you do

*(continued on page 6)*



(continued from page 5)

Let me ask you one question, Is your money that good?  
Will it buy you forgiveness, Do you think that it could?  
I think you will find. When your death takes its toll  
All the money you made, will never buy back your soul

Dylan released a few more albums in the guitar and a Harmonica mode, before moving to an electric guitar with a backing band, maybe to shake off the 'Protest Singer' tag but more probably he worked out that 'Rock' music was more profitable and more likely to extend his career. He has probably forgotten his early work, although I haven't, as I am cursed with a good memory. At one stage he looked he might boycott the award, but he then said he would accept but could not attend. Bob at 75 years old, has probably forgotten his anti-war stance, or may not know about Nobels arms making past, but the eventual acceptance of Dylan of the 2016 Nobel Prize for Literature was disappointing but perhaps not suprising, (there has been no word on what Dylan will do with the cash award that comes with the award!) To sum up, I remember a cartoon from the 1960s whereby two people were walking past a theatre with a sign for a music concert with the banner 'Sold Out' stuck on it, and the joke was 'Yeah they all do in the end'.

Mark 8:36 (K.J.V.)

<sup>36</sup> For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

**Robert Allender**

### **"Are we slaves to our genes?"**

This was the theme of a stimulating, challenging talk by Dr Dennis Alexander at the Waterfront Church recently, organised by the Cymru Institute for Contemporary Christianity (CICC). Dr Alexander is the Emeritus Director of the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, St Edmund's College, Cambridge, where he is a Fellow, and he has a distinguished career in immunology. He now, as Director of the Faraday Institute, has a particular interest in communicating science to faith groups, emphasising that there is no conflict between scientific discoveries and Christian belief.

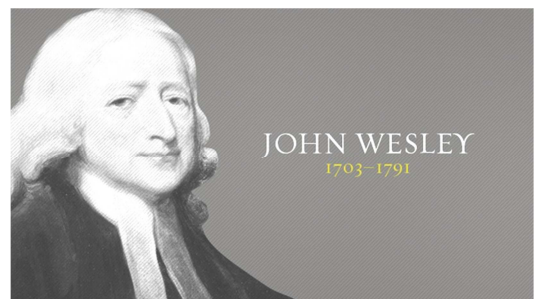


*Dr. Dennis Alexander*

In a 45 minute "tour de force", Dr Alexander argued how we are products of both "nature" and "nurture", emphasising how our environment influences our development and personality by 100%.... as do our genes! Therefore, to conclude that criminality, homosexuality, happiness, male baldness (!), to name but a few, are each the result of a **single** gene mutation, or simply the result of a person's "upbringing", is a gross simplification. Beware tabloid headlines! Indeed, beware any headline that provides simple answers to the complexity of being human!



**Alan Cram**



### **Wesley Day**

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May Holy Communion at Mumbles Methodist Church at 12.15 p.m.

....without faith it is impossible to please God...

**Heb.11:6**

<b>Gower Ministry Area/Churches Together Lent Services 2017</b> <b>Theme – Learning from the Parables</b>				
Day/Date/Time	Subject	Reading	Location	Officiants
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 7.00 p.m.	Sower	Matt 13: 3-9	St.George's Reynoldston	Carol Davies Penny Henderson Lay Worship Leaders
Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> March 7.00 p.m.	Talents	Matt 25: 14-30	St.Madoc's Llanmadoc	Glyn Austin Nigel Doyle Sue Waite
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> April 7.00 p.m.	Great Banquet	Luke 14: 15-24	Murton Methodist Church	AndyWalker Andrew Pearce Dave Ball Sue Raad



**Easter Offering 2017**  
**Shine Like Stars**  
**At Penlan Methodist Church on**  
**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May at 6.00 p.m.**  
**Preacher Rev.Linda Woolacott**

**Uniting Church Sketty**  
**presents**  
**A Concert by the Abbey Players**  
**'Songs from the Shows'**  
**on**  
**Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30 p.m.**  
**Tickets £5.00**  
**email: [unitingchurchsketty@gmail.com](mailto:unitingchurchsketty@gmail.com)**

## Did You "Follow The Coastal Path"?

Well for those of you who did, via UCS's pantomime, I hope you will agree that we all had a good time. With our minister Leslie as the "Spirit" steering our path we shared adventures and laughter. We were reminded that in panto, as in real life, we are given an end and a beginning and the middle is up to us, which our "Spirit" thought was a good message for life.

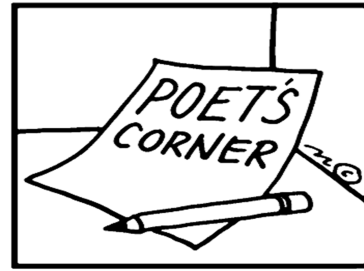


Merlin, the Magnificent Magician, taught us that if we believe in ourselves we can achieve our ambitions. And indeed, with the help of our lovely audiences, the panto crew achieved their ambition of financial success. Thus we have been able to pass £1500 to the Circuit Project and £300 to our lovely church family.

So, thank you to our church family and to those in the circuit who managed to join us on our journey.



Jan Chaplin



## Epiphany

Now that the shortest days are over  
and the Baby born,  
the waiting begins for spring –  
like a breath drawn in –  
and held in the silence of winter  
beneath its sad, umbrageous skies,  
after the mad, festive rush  
and the brush  
with Hope.

No breeze stirs up the dull,  
damp detritus from the old year  
that lurks in dark corners;  
not even the sparkling snow can lighten  
and brighten  
the spirits of a sombre,  
pondering world.

Just the gloomy, waiting days now  
until March blows in  
and wakes the daffodils,  
bidding them shake their bonneted heads  
like gentle Quakers,  
to nod friendship to Life,  
and the Dawn  
of New Beginnings.

Diane Norton ©

**Linda and Bernard** would like to thank everyone for their cards, kind thoughts and prayers. We appreciate the support from you all at this difficult time.

Our Love and Best Wishes.

The study of God's work, for the purpose of discovering God's will, is the secret discipline which has formed the greatest characters.

J.W.Alexander

## “An Afterthought”

Some of you may remember my article in the “Winter Edition” of “CONNECT”, relating to the wonderful experience Doug and I had of meeting Rev. Mother Mary Agnes on the “far-flung” rugged and grand Island of UNST, part of the Shetland Isles, in June of last year.

On reflection, I wondered if you may be interested in seeing a photograph of the writer and Rev. Mother Mary Agnes, taken by Doug on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June, outside Haroldswick Methodist Church, UNST, the most Northerly Church in Britain (as mentioned in “Miracle Encounter”).



We hope to visit UNST again in 2018, so perhaps the next photo will be of us “posing” outside the “Westing Complex”, which is in the process of being built.

In the meantime, I continue to be in touch with the dear lady in question by “Text Messages”, and who very graciously keeps me informed about the progress of the Complex, etc. Here’s hoping the stormy and ferocious weather experienced in that part of Great Britain doesn’t deter the building work required “on site”, which, believe me, is very much exposed to the elements, i.e. the magnificent but often wild Atlantic Ocean, only a “stone’s throw” away!

I really don’t fancy joining the “hardy souls” away up there in wintertime, when I expect the “hatches will have to be battened down” as it were, but oh what a beautiful location and outlook in the “good old summertime”!

Do “watch this space” for further developments and more news of this continuing fascinating saga!

**Mrs.Irene Dendle**  
**Morrison Methodist Church**



*Zac Dunstan at the Half Term Holiday Club at Mumbles*

**Be cheerful! Of all the things you wear, your expression is the most important.**



## News from CYTUN (Churches together) in Clydach

Here in Clydach, we pride ourselves on the various ways the different Christian denominations work together. The "Ty Croeso" project is truly ecumenical: a community centre in the heart of the village, offering a drop-in, a food bank, a credit union, a bereavement support group, a "Families Anonymous" group, as well as "Siop Siarad" for Welsh learners, a book club and, our latest venture, a seated exercise group!

In addition, members from different churches come together every year to support Lent Lunches, and other activities, in aid of Christian Aid. We also meet weekly during Lent to discuss how we relate our Christian Faith to daily living: this year we are following the CTBI (Churches together in Britain and Ireland) course. On Whitsunday, we hold an ecumenical service in the park, and another service in August on the weekend of the Village Fayre.

In February, Christians in the village came together to participate in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Again, using resources provided by CTBI, we met with one another on 6 consecutive days in different churches to consider the theme "Breaking Barriers" ("Croesi Muriau", yn y Gymraeg): a theme made even more topical by the policies of President Trump, who seems to want to build more walls, rather than break down existing ones.



Each session was led by members, and sometimes Ministers/Priests, from the different denominations. Inevitably, then, each session had a different "flavour", reflecting not only the topic, but also the creativity of the leaders, our different faith traditions, as well as different cultural backgrounds: we sang hymns in Welsh and English, had readings in both languages

(and one in German...thank you the Rev Leslie Noon!). On two occasions we celebrated Holy Communion together.



Perhaps Church unity is not so much about all worshipping together under one monochrome label, but more about breaking down barriers between the denominations through a willingness to meet together in a spirit of open-ness. In so doing, we are able to celebrate and show respect for our different traditions and theological perspectives, and thus learn from one another.

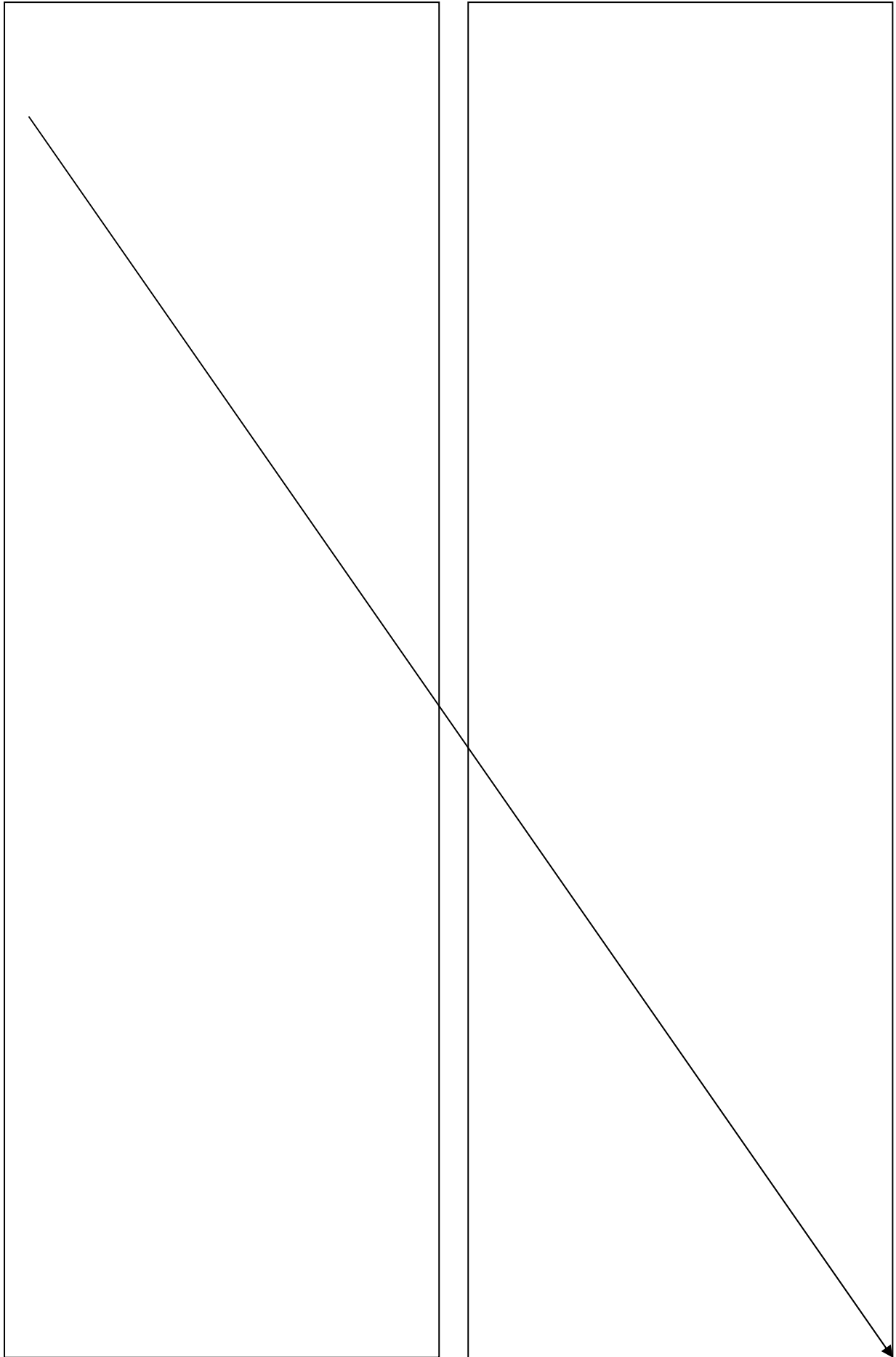
Alan Cram

**Mumbles Methodist Church  
presents a concert by  
Swansea Excelsior Ladies Choir  
*in aid of Christian Aid*  
on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2017  
at 7.00 p.m.  
to be attended by the  
Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress**

**Tickets £10.00 to include a buffet  
available from the Church Office  
(tel: 01792 362290)**

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.**

**Prov.3:5**



**Poverty is life without Jesus, but close friendship with Him is incalculable wealth.**  
**T. à Kempis**

## URC Swansea Region

### “Churches - in - Community” Project

Through a process of “re-imagining”, the URC Swansea Region (which now comprises Christwell, Manselton; Bethel/Sketty Methodist LEP; Gowerton; Carmarthen Road; Tabernacle, Mumbles; Hill Chapel, Mt. Pleasant; and Hall St./Methodist LEP, Llanelli) recognised the overall need to be ‘**making missionary churches**’ - equipping each local church to become a church-in-community and so bring about social change and justice within communities. It was decided that to develop such congregations, a Church Related Community Worker (CRCW) should be appointed. This eventually became achievable due to a very generous donation of £50,000 from Llandeilo URC.

Consequently, in S below) was inducted as the CRCW Minister for this “Churches-in-Community” Project. Incidentally, Rosie is now the only professional working exclusively on Community Development in the Swansea Bay area. The Project was recently reviewed by the URC Synod, London and it was agreed that it would be continued for a further 5 years period from September 2016, which is a great tribute to the efforts of Rosie and the Project Management Group.



This Project is based mainly on a wide range of Community Development Activities carried out in the URC churches at ChristWell, Carmarthen Road and Gowerton. These activities include:

- “The Memories Choir” - for Dementia and Alzheimer sufferers, their carers and members of the local community.

- Children’s Club – for Toddlers and Carers.
- Coffee Shop and Welsh Cafe.
- Day Services for older people;
- “Time-to-Meet” Group - for those with learning difficulties.
- Playgroups, including Brownies and Welsh Toddlers.
- Health Support Group.
- Weekly Community Meetings - for the elderly, the lonely and the vulnerable.
- Computer training - a facility has been established at ChristWell to train elderly people to use computers for a range of tasks (e.g. shopping on-line, emailing family and friends, switching insurances and gas/electric suppliers, etc.).
- “Unity in Diversity”(the re-formed group since the closure of the Cyrenians) - a network and support group for asylum seekers and refugees. Currently, more than 75 attend appropriate sessions twice a week.
- Through Rosie’s leadership ChristWell has become involved in the Swansea Night Shelter.
- Rosie also provides religious input to residents of St. Mark’s Care Home, Cwmbwrla and has led Worship and Study at local URC churches.

**Dr.Gwyn Brooks**

**A little faith will bring your soul to heaven, but great faith will bring heaven to your soul.**

**C.H.Spurgeon**

## Slow the Flow Calderdale – 2017

Many members of our churches supported the Methodist Church appeal to aid the Calderdale flood victims of Boxing Day 2015. Here is an update from Adrian Horton, Ann Beynon's son who lives in the area.

In the 14 months since the devastating floods in the North of England, and especially the Calder Valley, much work has been done by the various agencies and Government to try and stop it from happening again. In addition to this work, local community groups have also been set up and have been busy playing their own part in this important work.

Slow The Flow Calderdale was set up late last year to scientifically look at how the valley floods and what can be done to Slow The Flow into the main channel, The River Calder. They are working with the Environment Agency and the National Trust on a pilot project to Slow The Flow of rain water into the valley bottom.

This starts with simple river surveys of every river and tributary in the catchment to understand how the river reacts to rainfall.

This in itself will take around 2 years to complete because we rely entirely on volunteers to carry out these surveys. The rivers will ultimately be monitored by river level sensors on bridges around the catchment to measure the river volume at this point. This is one of the other projects of the work of the group and is still in its infancy.

To fund all this work, Slow The Flow are busy fundraising to raise around £20,000 which will buy equipment for this work to be carried out.

One of the events Slow The Flow are participating in is Tough Mudder is July which is a 12 mile extreme assault course with around 20 obstacles to overcome. This is not for the faint hearted and they have a dedicated team of 6 people to raise £3000 towards this target of £20,000.



If you can help Slow The Flow to raise this money to continue this important work, they would be very grateful. More information can be found here:

<https://www.gofundme.com/slow-the-flow-calderdale>

For more information on the work at Slow The Flow Calderdale, please visit:  
<http://slowtheflow.net>

Please get in touch via the website/Facebook if you need more information.

**Adrian Horton**  
(Tel: 07557 954113)

(Ann Beynon would be happy to accept donations on Adrian's behalf)



Swansea Sail is the new Action for Children Project that is following on from the work of the 'Little Steps Big Steps' project that has helped over 200 young families in Swansea.

Swansea Sail is supported by the National Lottery and the Treasury. SAIL stands for support, advocacy, information and life coaching for parents and parents to be in Swansea whether or not they live with their children.

**Alison Long**



(The following article was not included in the previous issue of the magazine)

## Swansea and Gower Circuit Mission Service October 2016



Our Circuit Mission Day 2016 was held at our Penlan church with the theme being the circuit's ongoing support of the work of the ZrJ Trust and its work with Zimbabwean orphans.

The afternoon began with a welcome from the Superintendent minister, Rev. Howard Long who then called upon me as the patron of the Zambuko Ra Jehovah Trust to say a few words and explain the current work of the project. I explained that I was looking forward to visiting Zimbabwe to explore the possibility of mounting a water tank at the school to enable a vegetable garden to grow. This has been made possible because the borehole which we installed is now working properly.



Win Hawkins, the Chair of the ZrJ Trust also updated the Circuit on the various fundraising activities that have been taking place. She reported that the Circuit had raised over £7000 and the trustees through their own initiatives had raised over £3000. I was very excited to hear how our miracle working God is continuing to lead and guide us in the important task of caring for these Orphans. Let us praise and thank Him for enabling us to do these things.

The afternoon was full of fun! We had different workshops. The first one was led by Sarah Lloyd and the children. The group sang lovely songs, danced and performed. A good number of people joined in the dances and in learning the songs. There was also a workshop on tying traditional African headdress.

The next session was Margo and her drums. This was a great experience! A good number of people had a drum each to play. Margo gave instructions which we all followed. We all thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it. The last workshop was hymn singing and it was led by The Methodist Church Zimbabwe Fellowship members who had come all

*(continued on page 15)*



**If I can put one touch of rosy sunset into the life of any man or woman, I shall feel that I have worked with God.**

**George Macdonald**

(continued from page 14)

the way from Bristol and Newport. After the workshops we all enjoyed some lovely African food which was so plentiful there was more than enough for everyone.

The last thing on the programme was the Circuit Mission service itself. This started at 6 pm and the preacher was the Chair of the Wales Synod, Rev Dr Stephen Wigley who took the them 'Holiness and Justice' It was indeed a touching service.

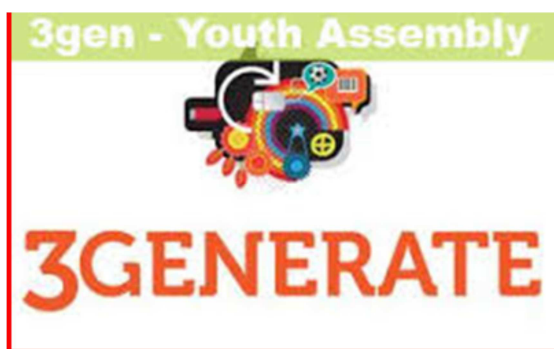
I want to thank all the members of our Circuit for their generosity in supporting the ZrJ Trust. In particular, I want to thank the Uniting Church Sketty for initiating the sponsored walk which raised over £3000. What a great job. Well done!

Finally, finally as I said in my short speech, what is going to happen when this road ends? What will happen to these orphans when I am away from here? It is only God who has all answers because I believe this is His project.

Let us all say thank you to Swansea and Gower Circuit! This was indeed a wonderful Mission Day! We Praise God.

**Yours in Christ Jesus  
Reverend Siperire**

### **Methodist young people call for support in a challenging world**



After gathering at the 3Generate event, attended by more than 500 young people aged 8-23 and their leaders, three manifestos have been produced that highlight the issues concerning young people in the Methodist Church today.

Other issues raised include poverty, the refugee crisis and the positive tackling of extremism.

The manifestos will be presented to the 2017 Methodist Conference, taking place in Birmingham in June.

Tim Annan, Youth President of the Methodist Church commented: "The Methodist Church has a wonderful tradition of actively listening to its members, including its young people. These statements should make important reading for all Methodists across the Connexion.

"Young people are an integral part of the Church today and these are the issues they are talking about which are affecting us as Methodist people now.

"The church has an important job in helping people grow in their faith and to provide the support that we all need to explore and discuss these issues from a Christian and a Methodist perspective."

Penny Fuller, Church and Community Development Co-ordinator, commented: "The world can be a very difficult place for people of all ages to navigate, especially at the moment. Young people don't just want to understand the world; they want to take an active role in seeking solutions to its problems.

"Children and young people are calling for the Church to support them and work with them to make change happen. They are speaking out about how, as individuals, they want to become 'Agents of Change' and work alongside the wider Church and their communities to create a better, fairer world based on Christian and Methodist values."

3Generate 2017 is going to be held at Pontins Camp in Southport, 24-26 November 2017. Youth Leaders and Children's workers will be accompanying and caring for their groups at the event. Individuals not part of a group will be encouraged to attend with others from their District.

***3Generate, the Methodist Children & Youth Assembly, is an action-packed weekend for hearing the voices of children and young people across the Methodist Church, focusing on fun, faith and friends***

**Temptation is sure to ring your doorbell, but do not ask it to stay for dinner.**