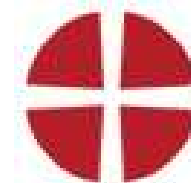


CONNECT

The Magazine of the Swansea and Gower Methodist
Circuit



winter 2018

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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 4th March 2019***

Editor

Mrs. Myra Maddock
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New Circuit Project 2019



The new circuit project for 2019 is 'Tools for Self-Reliance', a UK based charity that aims to improve the lives of African artisans and families by providing them with quality refurbished recycled hand tools and training.

Old unwanted hand tools and sewing machines are collected from all over the UK and brought to the workshop where they are cleaned, repaired and sharpened. They are then sent by container to grass roots community groups in several African countries.

The project was launched on October 14th at Penlan where a full church welcomed the speaker Rev John Hanson and members of the TfSR team from Porthcawl. Last year's circuit project was the Ogof Adullam homeless centre in central Swansea and £5,500 was raised through various fundraising events. We look forward to supporting Tools for Self-Reliance in similar way.

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Methodist Circuit**



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The Swansea and Gower Methodist Circuit is a
Registered Charity
No 1134882

news in brief

Uniting Church Sketty

Sunday 23rd Dec– Following Carol Service
'Just Desserts' proceeds for Ogof Adullam
Saturday 3rd February – Coffee Morning
10.00 am - 12 noon
Wednesday 6th February – Organ Recital
7.30 pm Alan Sykes
Annual Family Pantomime –
21st to 23rd February 2019

Brunswick

Coffee mornings on the last Saturday of every
month.
Bible Study every 1st and 3rd Thursday of the
month at 11.00 am in the Welcome Room
Prison Fellowship every 2nd Thursday of the
month in the Wesley Room.

Mumbles

Theo's Coffee Shop - open daily 9.30 am –
4.30 pm
Wednesday Lunchtime Worship 12.15 pm
The Alpha Course – from Wednesday
23rd January 2019 at 6.00 pm

Wesley

Bible Study every Tuesday 9.30 am
Lite Bites – every Thursday 12 noon – 2.00 pm
Asian Fellowship – 3.30 pm 1st and 3rd Sundays
of every month

Penlan

After School Meal and Play, every Monday in
term time 3.30 pm (Booking Required)

Clydach

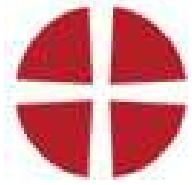
CYTUN Carol Service led by the Salvation
Army 13th Dec. at St Mary's Church 7.30 pm
Christian Aid Quiz Night 15th February at
6.00 pm Capel y Nant, Clydach.

Murton

Coffee Morning 10.00 am every Tuesday
morning in the Wesley Room.
Luncheon Club 12.30 pm every other Thursday
(beginning 6th Sept) in Murton Church Hall.
Booking essential Tel 234045.
Carol Service Saturday 22nd December at
5.00 pm



Message from the Superintendent



This year has marked the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. On the 11th November 1918 the guns finally fell silent on the Western Front.

There was another occasion in that conflict when the fighting stopped albeit very briefly. It was Christmas 1914 and there was a series of unofficial ceasefires along the Front which stretched for 440 miles.

The weather in Northern France at the time was below freezing, and in some places, it had begun to snow. According to Private Albert Moren, of the 2nd Queens Regiment, who was in a trench near the French village of La Chapelle-d'Armentières, German soldiers could be heard singing Silent Night.

Rifleman Graham Williams, of the 5th London Rifle Brigade, wrote:

'Suddenly lights began to appear along the German parapet, which were evidently makeshift Christmas trees, adorned with lighted candles, which burnt steadily in the still, frosty air. First the Germans would sing one of their carols, and then we would sing one of ours. The Germans immediately joined in, and I thought, well, this is really a most extraordinary thing – Two nations both singing the same carol in the middle of a war.'



In some places, food was thrown into each other's trenches. In others, soldiers cautiously advanced out of their trenches to shake hands, drink schnapps, swap buttons, tobacco and chocolate, and show each other photographs.

On Christmas Day itself, there were numerous reports of the Germans and British holding joint services to bury their dead. There were also reports of several football matches being played between opposing armies. The 133rd Royal Saxon Regiment played a game against Scottish troops.

It was the first and the last time this was to happen for once High Command heard about it, orders were given stating that fraternization with the enemy was strictly forbidden and anyone caught doing so would be shot.

The unofficial Christmas Truce of 1914 lasted only briefly, and it wasn't long before the fighting resumed, banishing the spirit of Christmas that had flirted in a strange way across No-Man's Land and for a few hours had triumphed.

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. Through Jesus' life, death and resurrection we see God's goodness triumph over evil and in him we have hope for a new and better life. In him we find forgiveness, reconciliation and enemies can become friends.

If we allow it, the spirit of Christmas can conquer and overcome all things and bring us closer together.

Howard

Lindors – September 2018

This year was the last time we will meet together in Lindors, a week hosted by Jean Long. The Christian Guild have now sold the building, more about that later.

Our Speaker this time, as on the last few occasions, was Rev. David King.

Every year we have talks on a different bible topic and this year it was the 'Extraordinary God. An insight into The Acts of the Apostles'. David has a wonderful way of bringing the subject to life with examples that are very understandable and meaningful. He only occasionally refers to his notes and will often preach for an hour, with his audience hanging on every word.

Every morning and evening we have 15 minute devotions. On Wednesday evening we were fortunate enough to have a visit from Rev Steve Wild, Chairman of the District in Cornwall and President of Conference in 2015. He is always very entertaining and a true evangelist.

On Thursday we went to Bristol on the coach to see the SS Great Britain where there is a cafe, a shop and the ship itself with a great deal to see. In the evening we were entertained by the Chepstow male voice choir which was an excellent evening.

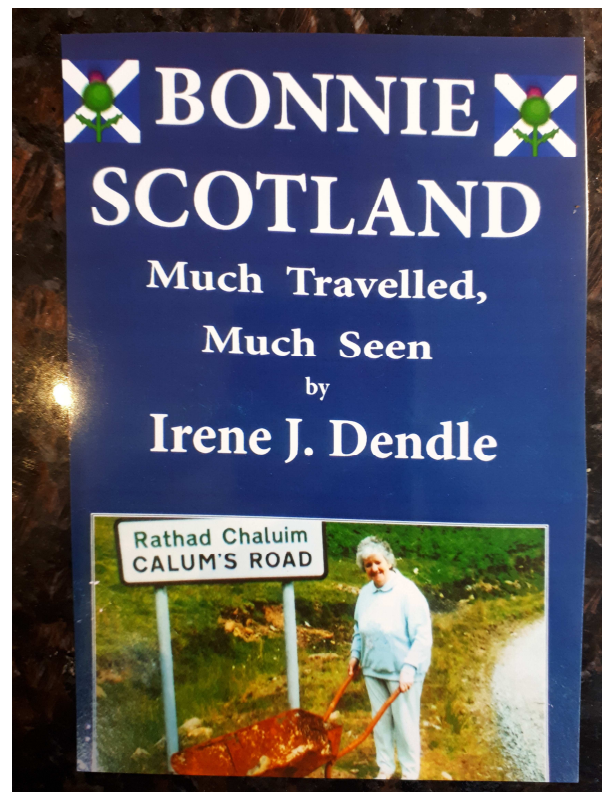
So then our goodbyes until we meet next year. However, no more Lindors. So we are sad about that – but hope to meet again next year on **Sunday 22nd** September until Friday 27th September at Sidholme in Sidmouth.



Lindors Team: Rev. David King, Jean Long and Rev. Steve Wild

If you are interested in coming along, please contact me on 361190 and I will try and give you up to date information. You can find details on the internet on www.christianguild.co.uk, or I can arrange for you to have a brochure.

**Caroline Buckler
Mumbles**



Why not take a literary glimpse into my beautiful country, through the medium of "Bonny Scotland" Much Travelled, Much Seen". This paperback is priced at £6.50. Do please get in touch if you'd like to have a copy – tel: 01792 781137. The content of the book is about holidays through the years, from childhood up to the year 2016. I sincerely trust that this venture into writing proves ultimately to be a "hit" and not a "miss"! Happy reading!

**Irene Dendle
Morrison Methodist Church**

Wesley Club Is 65



Earlier this year we realised that Wesley Club, at Uniting Church Sketty, was started 65 years ago, by Rev Harold Chapman.

It was started for married couples and single adults. It was a non-denominational Sketty "village" club. It even included a Roman catholic, until her priest found out!

The club had a drama group, as well as facilities for table tennis, billiards, darts, lawn tennis and craft. The ladies were active at the annual summer fete at Killay House for many years.

Eventually the club "dwindled" to a small number of women, but they hung in and numbers grew again. Today the club operates as a women's only club, but men are invited when the speaker's topic seems appropriate.

On September 24th we celebrated by having afternoon tea. We were invited to dress as ladies did 65 years ago, with hat, handbag and gloves etc. Everyone entered into the spirit of the occasion, and we "awarded" prizes for the "best" hat and the "best" overall outfit.



Our tea consisted of dainty sandwiches, scones and cakes, together with a quiz through the decades and some singing.



We also reminisced using a power point show of photographs. We remembered women who had played a part in our lives over the years, who are now no longer with us.

We were delighted to welcome Avril Evans, now living in Cardiff. Avril was our chairman for over 20 years and is still held in great affection.

Wesley Club meets every Monday at 7pm from September until June. New members are always welcome. We enjoy a great variety of speakers, but also involve ourselves in church life in many ways – and long may that continue.

Janet M Neilson



Murton 'Faith at Five' Music Group

The Alpha Course

How and what and why and when? What's the difference between now and then?

Where are we going, what should we do? Is this religion good for me and you?

Are you bothered, bewildered or totally lost?
Feeling you're puzzled, perplexed or storm tossed?

Hungry for knowledge of that wonderful love that comes from our Father in heaven above?

Who is this Jesus and why did He die? Was it all fallacy? Was it a lie?

Did He arise on that first Easter Day? Are you baffled, confused or just lost your way?

Well pop into Alpha, it's totally free. The answers are there and quite plain to see.

You may have known God since you were quite small,
perhaps you have never known Him at all.

I'm certain you'll find great peace in your heart.
Not naff and not spooky, great fun from the start.

There's a whole new life just waiting for you.
Come in and see. Believe me! It's true.

If you battery's flat, just plug in with friends and you'll notice the difference when the Alpha course ends.

The recharge is great, it sparks from the start and you'll come home from Alpha, new life in your heart.

**Taken from the Almanac of an Old Trout
by the late Mary Greaves**

We believe that everyone should have the chance to explore the Christian faith, ask questions and share their point of view - wherever they are in the world.



Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith. Each talk looks at a different question around faith and is designed to create conversation. Alpha is run all around the globe, and everyone's welcome. It runs in cafés, churches, universities, homes—you name it. No two Alphas look the same, but generally they have three key things in common: food, a talk and good conversation.

We have been running Alpha Courses here in Mumbles for 18 years. Many lives have been changed as a result. Why not come along and give it a try? Or if you have a friend, a relative or a work colleague who wants to know more or has unanswered questions, why not invite them and bring them along.

The Course tackles the basics of the Christian faith and all are welcome: Alpha is suitable for people of all faiths or none.

The next Alpha Course will run every week at 6:00 pm on Wednesdays starting 23 January 2019.

We meet in Theo's Coffee Shop which is inside the Mumbles Methodist Church building.

It's FREE and we begin each evening with a simple meal.

**Ken Alison (01792 401620)
Geoff Maddock (07769225900)**

Murton Methodist Ladies Tuesday Guild

Back in June 2018, members of the Murton Methodist Ladies Tuesday Guild held their Annual General Meeting, at which time they decided to fundraise for a new charity, Blood Bikes Wales.

At their first meeting back after the summer break, the Committee arranged for representatives of the charity to come and talk to the ladies but, unbeknown to its members, they had arranged to bring one of their very large motorbikes with them. Unfortunately, the bike was so big it couldn't go through the doors of the Wesley Room, so it had to be driven into the church! Needless to say, there was a lot of excitement and opportunities for photographs.



Peter Moule from Blood Bikes Wales informed the group that the charity provided free, out of hours transportation to move blood supplies, plasma, documents and other items between hospitals from 7pm on a Friday evening until midnight on Monday morning, including bank holidays and even Christmas day! Without this service, the NHS would have to use the police, ambulance service, taxis and couriers to carry vital supplies. Blood Bikes Wales saves the NHS substantial sums and it is estimated that for each £1 received in donations, the NHS saves at least £5!

We are pleased to report our fundraising that night was a huge success with members raising £100 for this worthy cause.

Gower Voluntary Transport

NEEDS MORE DRIVERS



Especially in the Reynoldston, Mumbles, Murton, Bishopston and Pennard areas!! (In fact, all over Gower!)

We provide lifts for the elderly who have no form of transport and cannot get to doctors, hospitals, dentist, shopping etc. by any other means.

If you have some spare time, your own car and would like to help please contact G.V.T. on 01792 851942 for information. (Travel expenses paid).

We operate from our office in Penclawdd Community Centre and we now share the room with the recently relocated Gower Society Bookstore.

New Circuit Treasurer

At the September circuit meeting Martin Gregson stepped down as the circuit treasurer and handed over to Mrs Grace Coleman. The circuit thanked Martin for his hard work and dedication over the years and welcomed Grace into her new role. Grace is a member of our Morriston church.



Becoming a member aged 100!

On Sunday 7th October, four new members were welcomed by transfer into membership of Uniting Church Sketty.

During the service they shared something of their Christian journey with us. One of them was Bunny Adams. Two days earlier Bunny had celebrated her 100th birthday in the residential home where she now lives. Church members bring Bunny to church each week in her wheelchair. Bunny told the congregation how her Christian journey began 100 years earlier when she was baptised in the local Anglican church, St Paul's. It was here that she was also confirmed and married, taught in the Sunday school, and sung in the choir. It was here that her husband was buried.

Bunny's links with Sketty Methodist Church began 20 years ago when she started attending various mid-week activities. The church quickly became her home and she felt part of the church family. Bunny is the oldest person in our church family, but our newest church member! There were great celebrations that Sunday, including a party after church, complete with cake.



Bunny and her birthday cake



Alice and Bunny

In addition we welcomed Alice Rutter who recalled her service as a Mission Partner in Zimbabwe, David Llewellyn-Jones who had grown up in Sketty Methodist Church, but work had taken him to different places, and his wife Peggy Llewellyn-Jones, who had grown up in New Hampshire, USA where many of her family had been Congregational Ministers.



David and Peggy Llewellyn-Jones

Rev. Leslie Noon



THE FILLING STATION

A place to make friends,
build faith and meet God

gower@thefillingstation.org.uk

The next

Gower Filling Station

will be held at the
Guide Centre,
Parkmill
(near Gower Inn)
on
Thurs 17th January 2019
at 7.30 pm

Visit of Revina and Nyangi from Tanzania



If you weren't able to come to Clydach back in October to listen to Revina and Nyangi, then you missed a treat! These 2 Tanzanian ladies work for Cheka Sana ("lots of laughter") in the town of Mwanza, on the shores of Lake Victoria. Cheka Sana, supported by UK-based the Amos Trust (which was founded by a regular visitor to Swansea, Garth Hewitt), actively engage with street children and vulnerable young women in Mwanza. 12 months ago, I was privileged to "shadow" the team which works with street children, and also Revina and Nyangi who work with young women, many of whom are sex workers. The team which works with street children befriends and offers support and education to children aged 7-14 who are, for various reasons living on the streets. The aim is to eventually reunite them with their families, but this can take up to 2 years in the more complex cases. In a similar way, Revina and Nyangi first befriend and gain the trust of the young women, and then seek to empower them through providing training and capital, enabling small groups to set up their own businesses, and thus release them from prostitution. The success rate is an astonishing 95%!

Revina and Nyangi were brought to the UK, together with women doing similar work in 6 other countries, by the Amos Trust for a week-long sharing of experiences and ideas. Revina and Nyangi then spent a weekend in Swansea, before returning home. In addition to speaking (and singing!) in an open meeting at Capel y Nant, they also participated in the Sunday morning Welsh service at Capel y Nant, and then in our own "Wesley" service in Clydach in the afternoon, led by Rev. Leslie. On the Saturday afternoon, they were able to enjoy a couple of hours in glorious sunshine at Rotherslade, followed by a visit to Ogof Adullam.

They returned home to Tanzania refreshed (exhausted?!), buoyed up by the support and welcome they received; and we are left with memories of 2 wonderful ladies doing remarkable work.

For more information about the Amos Trust and its "On Her Terms" project, and Cheka Sana, please visit the Amos Trust website, <https://www.amostrust.org/amos-street-child/> or speak to me! Two videos of the work of Cheka Sana can also be found on <https://player.vimeo.com/video/266831690> and <https://vimeo.com/148640084>



amos  trust

Alan Cram

160 Children say "THANK YOU"



Recently Rev Leslie blessed Christmas boxes being sent as gifts of love from UCS to 160 children in Liberia. None of these children will ever have had a Christmas box before. Indeed, many of them will never have had a present of any kind before. Can any one of us even begin to imagine what that must be like? As we follow Christ's instructions to love and care for one another, we hope that each child who receives a box from us, will know that they are loved and remembered.

Linda Jones and Jan Chaplin
Uniting Church Sketty

Swansea Inter-Faith Week

Around the country churches, mosques, schools, universities etc mark inter-faith week every November. Swansea is sadly very much behind the times when it comes to this, and very little goes on. However, starting with the university (and only starting, there is a hope that it will expand), inter-faith week is marked every year.

This year there were activities for students on both Campuses, where there were opportunities to make 'inter-faith' music together, with Father Tim on his didgeridoo and drums and other instruments available so people could join in. We were able to witness the call to Islamic prayer and hear a 'chant' from one of the 'earth' faiths.

The evening event was an inter-faith Question Time at the university, which was open to the public (and well attended by folk from Sketty and the wider circuit). Chaired by the Archbishop of Wales, there were six members on the panel, each from a different faith: Hindu, Buddhist, Islam, Jewish, Christian and Earth faiths (see photo).

As the representative from the Christian Faith, I thought I would be nervous, but in fact I enjoyed it! We had been given three questions in advance

- Who or what is God;
- Who are we and why are we here;
- What is the role of inter-faith dialogue
- None of these questions can be answered easily – and indeed it must be said that some panellists went on (and on). However the audience and the other panel members discovered a lot in the course of the evening.

There are things to be learned for next year, but there will be a next year. So look out for information next November, and think about attending one of the events on offer. For the sake of harmony in the world, it is imperative that we understand one another better!



Rev.Leslie Noon

90 Years Young



Congratulations to Joan and Eric Beynon, who both celebrated their 90th birthdays this year. They met at a Village Hall dance in Llanrhidian, were married in Horton Chapel April 15th 1951, and have lived and worked at Eastern Slade Farm all their married life (67 years). They continue to be regular worshippers at Horton and Pitton Chapels.

Submitted by Horton Chapel

Changes at Traidcraft



Some of you may have heard that Traidcraft, the Fairtrade company that has been running for nearly forty years, is to close in its present form from the end of 2018. As in retail generally, life has been difficult for the company since the 2008 financial crash, and although great effort had recently been put in to revive Traidcraft's fortunes, a decision had to be made.

Traidcraft has been overwhelmed by the messages of regret and support that have been received, and have been consulting with everyone involved with Traidcraft. The outcome is that Traidcraft will continue but in different form structurally and very much slimmed down in terms of the products available. Directors have agreed the principles and are continuing the consultation on the details.

Meanwhile Traidcraft Exchange, the charity linked to the company, aims to continue as before but is aware that their income could decrease significantly if Fairtraders like myself have much less 'profit' to feed back into the charity. Alongside that the need for their work has increased, because they need to support those producers who will no longer be selling to Traidcraft, helping them find and/or adapt for new markets. Traidcraft has a Christmas Appeal in which they're highlighting the needs of artisans in Bangladesh and the Philippines. Should you want to support this appeal donations can be sent directly (6 Kingsway N, Gateshead NE11 0NE) or via myself.

Rev.Pam Cram

Service of Thanksgiving for our Pets

Uniting Church Sketty
(corner of Dillwyn Road and Llewelyn Street, Sketty)

All Welcome

10.30am
Sunday 20th January 2019

Pets and their well-behaved owners welcome!

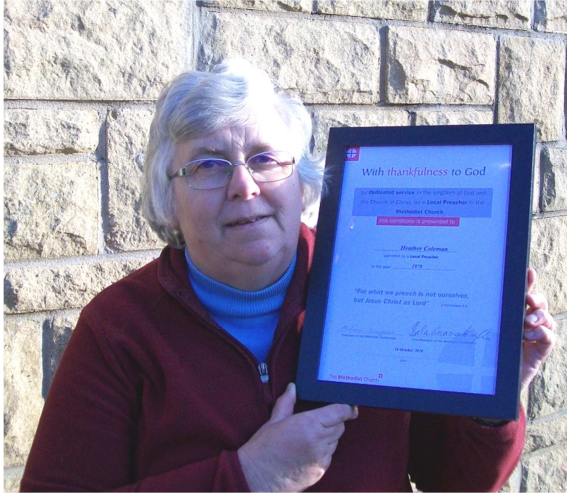
(Dogs on leads and other animals in carriers!)

Or bring a photo of a current pet or a much loved pet no longer with us

For more information contact Rev Leslie on
01792 203938 or unitingchurchsketty@gmail.com

In conjunction with

40 Years Preaching – Heather Coleman



At the circuit service in October, Heather Coleman was presented with a certificate signed by the President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference marking her 40 years of local preaching in the Methodist Church. As well as being a Local Preacher, Heather is actively involved in Uniting Church Sketty and one of our circuit stewards. We have asked Heather to write a few words for Connect about her call to preach.

'I had little opportunity to explore Christianity further until I went to University. A little chapel near our Hall of Residence, became my regular place of worship, and where I found fellowship. I also attended Methosoc.

People expected me to be a teacher, which I knew was not right for me. At University I explored being a Missionary with the Methodist Church. They talked of teaching and training as a Local Preacher. I realised I was being called to Home Mission and trained as a Court Missionary (Probation Officer). Studying Botany at University is not the normal route into a Social Work Course. Cardiff University had just started a new two-year post-graduate Social Work Course, which the Home Office sponsored me to do.

While training I continued to feel the call to preach and I had no more excuses of not exploring this call. I expected to be rejected and felt I could then forget about it. I started the training before Jeff and I married and left Cardiff for the Bridgend Circuit, where I finished my Local Preachers training. My recognition

service was a few days before our eldest son was born.

Studying and preparing for services has increased my knowledge of God and made me realise the more I learn the less I know. At my final interview during training I said I wanted to help people have a clearer and more focused understanding of God. I pray I have been able to do this. Studying, preparing of services and other opportunities outside the church which have presented themselves to me, have equipped me with gifts which I believe God has been able to use in preaching and in other jobs I have felt called to do in His service.

It is a privilege to preach in our churches, and a tremendous responsibility. I know I could not do it if I did not feel God working through me, and I thank him for being with me and helping me'

Heather Coleman

Pause to Ponder

Who can add to Christmas? The perfect motive is that God so loved the world. The perfect gift is that He gave His only Son. The only requirement is to believe in Him. The reward of faith is that you shall have everlasting life.

Corrie ten Boom

Our God is the God of the unexpected. A few things could be more unexpected than the King of heaven being born in a stable.

Bil Crowder

I truly believe that if we keep telling the Christmas story, singing the Christmas songs, and living the Christmas spirit, we can bring joy and happiness and peace to this world.

Norman Vincent Peale



At Murton



At Mumbles



At Penlan

Thank you John and Malcolm



Rev Malcolm Guest and Rev John Jones

After a lifetime of preaching the Gospel, Rev John Jones and Rev Malcolm Guest, both Supernumerary ministers in the circuit, have decided to cease taking services on the plan. The Methodist Church owes both ministers a debt of gratitude for their preaching ministry over the years and not only to them but to their wives Gwyn and Jean and families.

Both are former Superintendent Ministers with John being a former Superintendent here in Swansea and Gower. The circuit thanked them both by presenting them with a gift of a statue of John Wesley from the New Room in Bristol, the first Methodist preaching house in the world.



