



The Methodist Church **Swansea & Gower Circuit Magazine**

CONNECT

Edition 1 - December 2022



**The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel
of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in
worship and mission**

Welcome to Connect Magazine in this issue

Page

3	Letter from The Superintendent
4	Circuit Minister, Church Steward Information and Zoom Service Details
5	Circuit Churches
6	Christmas Services
7	Rev Dr Inderjit Bhogal's visit - by Janet Neilson
8	That starlit world beneath the sea - A bench honouring Mike Roberts
9	Tradecraft - by Pam Cram
10	Brunswick - Kath Jones
11 - 12	Ty Croeso - Pam Cram
13 - 16	Conference Business Digest 2022
17	Zoom services
18	Where next for Murton?
19	Nicholston House
20	Coronavirus Memorial/ Ogof Adullam and Penlan Men's shed
21	Reynoldston Stable Trail
22	Mumbles Foodbank Collections / Methodist Ukraine Host Appeal
23	Morrison Coffee Morning and UCS Christmas Collection

**Having an event or have a great news story
that you want to share with the Circuit?**



Send your articles for our next issue to
swanseagowercircuitoffice@gmail.com

Message from the Superintendent

It's been quite some time since we produced the circuit magazine, due mainly to the pandemic and all things associated with it. I'm pleased to say that we are now back not only with a new magazine format but also with a new editor. Louise Davies is the new Circuit Administrator and will be responsible for the magazine going forward so please send articles and photographs to Louise so she can include them in future editions. I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to Myra Maddock who has edited and printed our circuit magazine for many years but has now decided to step down. One highlight of Myra's time as editor was the award she received in London in 2015 by the National Association of Church Magazine Editors for 'The Clarity of the Christian Message' in Connect. This is something we will strive to continue under Louise's editorship.

We have seen quite a few changes in the circuit and Synod over the last couple of years, most notably the closure of two of our much loved chapels, Brunswick and Morriston. We give thanks for the work and witness of these churches over the years by so many faithful and dedicated people and we are heartened to see that despite the closure of these buildings both fellowships are continuing to meet. The Brunswick fellowship are meeting both online and at St James parish church in the Uplands and Morriston are meeting in the nearby community centre. We pray that both fellowships will grow and develop as they move forward in this new way.

Another big change we have seen within Methodism in Wales is the formation of the new Wales Synod Cymru that now consists of 216 churches and chapels worshipping and witnessing in both languages in 16 Circuits across Wales. We now have two chairs Rev Dr Stephen Wigley and Rev Dr Jennifer Hurd although next year will see Stephen step down from his role as chair after 16 years and will be replaced by Rev Andrew Charlesworth who is currently the Assistant Chair of the Nottingham and Derby District.

We have seen staff changes in our circuit with Rev Leslie Noon leaving us to take up a new appointment in the South Bedfordshire circuit. We give thanks for Leslie's ministry in our circuit especially for her pastoral care of Uniting Church Sketty, Clydach and the University Chaplaincy. We look forward to welcoming Rev Louise Gough who has been stationed to serve in Swansea from September 2023. Louise currently ministers in the Manchester and Stockport District. I am very grateful to Rev Linda Woollacott, Rev Noel Davies and Rev John Atkinson for all their support in the circuit especially at UCS during this interregnum period. We also extend a big thank you to Ken Allison who has stepped down from his role as a Circuit Steward after many years service and welcome Colin Everett as he takes up this important office within our church.

As we approach Christmas this year we are aware of the enormous changes and challenges facing our world at the moment what with climate change, migration, the conflict in Ukraine and the cost of living crisis to name just a few. There a great deal of darkness in our world at the moment but as Martin Luther King once said 'Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.'

The message of Jesus Christ, the light of the world has never been more needed than it is today. The Christmas message is one of tremendous hope and reassurance that God is with us but it is also a challenge for us as members of His church to shine the light of God within our families and amongst our loved ones, in our places of work, wherever we find ourselves. It's also a challenge for us to stand up for Christian values in an ever increasing secular society and to stand for justice and actively fight against the forces that blight people's lives on a daily basis.

Let's do our best to shine a light for Jesus this Christmas.

Reverend Howard Long
November 2022



Swansea & Gower Circuit

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Log in details for Zoom and Live Streamed Services

Uniting Church Sketty – Live Streamed

Time: Every Sunday 10.30am

Meeting ID 897 0380 5889 Passcode: 334226

Telephone 0203 481 5240

Mumbles – Live Streamed

Time: Every Sunday 10.30am

Meeting ID 865 5689 9224 Passcode 430913

Telephone 0131 460 1196

Brunswick & Circuit– Online Only

Time: Alternate Sundays 10.00a.m

Meeting ID 834 1537 4083 Passcode 355450

Telephone 0203 481 5237

Mumbles Wednesday – Online Only

Time: Every Wednesday 12.00pm

Log in Details are the same as Mumbles Sunday Worship

Gower Online

Time: Alternate Sundays 18.00pm

Meeting ID 846 691 2796 Passcode: 181272

For Telephone – Please contact Rev. Andrew Walker

Swansea & Gower Circuit

Churches & Service Times



Brunswick

Meet at St James' Church
Walter Road, Swansea, SA1 4QA
1st & 3rd Sunday (Zoom) 10am
2nd & 4th Sunday (St. James) 3pm
5th Sunday (St. James) 10.30am



Clydach

Heol-Y-Nant, Clydach, Swansea,
SA6 5HB
Sundays 3pm
In the Church Hall



Horton

Horton Methodist Chapel, Horton,
Swansea, SA3 1LB
Alternate Sundays at
10:30am



Morriston

Meet in Community Centre
Pentrepoeth School Road,
Morriston, Swansea, SA6 6HZ
Every Sunday 11am



Mumbles

Mumbles Road, Mumbles SA3 4EA
Sunday 10.30am
Wednesday (Zoom) 12.00pm



Murton

Manselfield Road,
Murton, Swansea, SA3 3AR
Sundays 10.30am & 5.30pm



Penlan

(Home of The Ogof Adullum Project)
Heol Gwrosydd, Penlan
Swansea, SA5 7BT
Services as announced



Pitton

Pitton, Rhossili, Swansea,
SA3 1PH
Alternate Sundays at
10:00am



Reynoldston

Reynoldston, Swansea,
SA3 1BR
Sunday 10.30am



Uniting Church Sketty

Dillwyn Road, Sketty, Swansea, SA2 9AH
Every Sunday 10.30am

Wesley

Eaton Road, Brynhyfyd,
Swansea, SA5 9JL
Every Sunday 10.30am

Asian Christian Fellowship

Every 1st & 3rd Sunday 3pm



Swansea & Gower Methodist Churches

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Christmas Eve

Murton and Live Streamed on Gower Online

(all lead by Rev. A Walker)

3.30 pm - The Nativity

4.30 pm - Murton Farm Carols

(All weather Service)

11.30 pm - Holy Communion

Wesley

4.00 pm

Holy Communion
with Rev. H Long

Brunswick

7.00 pm

(Holy Communion online)
with Rev. A Pearce

Christmas Morning

Mumbles

Christmas Morning - 10.00 am

Family Holy Communion
with Rev. H Long

Wesley

10.00 am

At Christwell

UC Sketty

Christmas Morning - 10.00 am

with Rev. J Atkinson

Reynoldston

10.30am

with Quentin Hawkins

Murton

9.30am

with Rev. A Walker

Pitton/ Horton

11.00 am

Brunswick

10.30 am (at St. James)

with Revd A Pearce &
Revd I Folks

Morryston/ Clydach

To join with other churches

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him
in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger,
because there was no place for them in the inn. Luke2:7

Celebrating Swansea as a City of Sanctuary

Rev Dr Inderjit Bhogal's visit - 8th & 9th October 2022

by Janet Neilson

On October 8th and 9th, we welcomed Rev Dr Inderjit Bhogal and his wife Kathy to Sketty.

Rev Inderjit is a Methodist minister who was one of the co-founders of the City of Sanctuary movement and is now its President. He is also a former president of the Methodist Conference and former leader of the Corymeela Community. He was born into a Sikh family in Nairobi. His family fled Kenya in 1964 as refugees, settling in Dudley. As there was no Sikh temple nearby, Inderjit began to attend a local Methodist Church and eventually trained for the Methodist ministry.

The weekend was to be a celebration of Swansea's 10th anniversary as a City of Sanctuary which had to be delayed due to the restrictions that came with the Covid-19 outbreak. It began with an afternoon arranged by Swansea City of Sanctuary with the backdrop of the banners that were created by Mary Hayman. The banners are made up of panels contributed by people who have settled in Swansea including several contributions of members of UCS.

On Saturday our entertainment included singing, dancing, a quiz and lots of chatter and laughter as we got to know each other, one of our dancers even discovered to her delight that both Inderjit and herself were born in Nairobi. On Sunday evening we had a service by Pam Cram at which we welcomed the Lord Mayor of Swansea, Councillor Mike Day, Rocio Cifuentes (the Children's Commissioner for Wales), and Cllr James McGettrick, one of the Councillors for Sketty, as well as supporters of Swansea City of Sanctuary and members of other churches.

Around his neck, Inderjit wore, as a stole, cords of rope, which he salvaged from the original ship carrying refugees, which brought them to Lampedusa, an island in the Mediterranean Sea. His theme for his sermon was GRANT ME JUSTICE in which he spoke passionately about the conflicts in the world today, as well as the dangers refugees and asylum seekers face setting sail in unsafe craft, travelling hundreds of miles to seek asylum. Inderjit urged UCS to become a CHURCH OF SANCTUARY as well as for Wales to become a NATION OF SANCTUARY. He spoke about the concerns the world is facing around climate change, as this is another reason for people fleeing their homelands. During his sermon murmurs of approval were heard from the refugees and asylum seekers in the congregation who now call Swansea their home. At the end the congregation applauded, which I don't think that has happened at UCS before!



The City of Sanctuary Banners - by Mary Harman (assisted by Hanam Beko)
more information at www.swansea.cityofsanctuary.org/2021/03/08/banners-celebrate-city-of-welcome



L-r Rocio Cifuentes, Lord Mayor of Swansea Cllr Mike Day, Rev Dr. Inderjit Bhogal and Cllr James McGettrick

“In that starlit world beneath the sea”

Major Mike Roberts 1939 - 2021



The bench at Horton and its inscription



Former Horton Steward
Major Mike Roberts

The children of Major Mike Roberts, who was a long serving Steward at Horton church have donated and installed a bench at the Chapel in Horton in loving memory of their late father who passed away on 3rd January 2021.

The bench was installed by Gavin on 2nd April 2022 and serves as a sunny place to sit and enjoy the beautiful Gower sunshine for a while.

The inscription that accompanies Mikes name on the bench is from one of his poems.



Mike's Daughter Helena and Granddaughter Bramble with his bench

An Excerpt from
The Milky Way beneath my sea
by Mike Roberts

Youth's magic memories so profound
With Horton Beach my playing ground
And here my great discovery
a million stars beneath the sea

When My life's journey here is done
Some battles lost some trophies won
Then I'll ask my God to bury me
In that starlit world beneath the sea.



The Roberts family Mike & Hildegard with their children including Ieuan who passed in 2018

Transform Trade

by Pam Cram

I've been selling Traidcraft (Fairtrade & recycled products) for 18 years now. The pandemic presented challenges, but sales actually held up very well. A major shift at the beginning of the pandemic was that I brought my stock home as we weren't supposed to go into church - our dining room once again turned into a mini warehouse). When Traidcraft responded to the pandemic by selling Bio D anti-bacterial and other cleaning products we bought 5 litre bottles of some products to share between ourselves and Ty Croeso - an unexpected boost to sales. Then several of my loyal customers started to make orders by email which I either delivered to their door or they picked up, with payments made in various Covid safe ways. Gradually some new opportunities emerged to replace the now closed regular venues. I held a 'car-boot' fairtrade sale on our drive, and attended open-air markets arranged by the Community Council. One of my previous regular markets hasn't re-opened but I am back in the Parish Church once a month, and Capel y Nant now have their monthly stall too, both helping with cash-flow and keeping ahead of those dreaded 'Best Before' dates!

Just before the pandemic struck, we'd launched a campaign to make Clydach a Fairtrade community. That went completely on hold, but in September 2022 was re-launched during the Great Big Green Week. Phil Broadhurst of Fairtrade Ammanford (a FT community since 2012) did a walk from Clydach to Swansea starting with a tour of various eco projects and shops that sell FT products in Clydach (see image of Phil - 4 th from right - with the locals who gave him the tour).

During the pandemic many organisations have used the time to assess and re-imagine their work. Traidcraft Exchange, the charity 'arm' of Traidcraft, decided on some re-branding. Earlier this year they became 'Transform Trade', and recently launched a report on 'people-centred trade' - see graphic for a summary of its principles. I think this summary shows us that trading fairly is about much more than a fair wage, though that's still central. My profits are donated to Transform Trade, and I can accept donations on their behalf as well. Thanks to all those who have bought from me during the pandemic, and to those who so often say 'keep the change' - amazing how that mounts up, and it all supports Transform Trade.



“A Positive Outcome”

Kath Jones (Brunswick Methodist Fellowship)

The Covid 19 pandemic wasn't the only problem that we, as a church were faced with, during the past two years. The prospect of giving up meeting in our own building, was upsetting and a cause for much thought and discussion.

The only certainty was that we, as a congregation wanted to continue worshipping together.

We started meeting on-line with Rev. Siperire but missed the close fellowship and friendship.

When Rev. Andrew Pearce was appointed, he approached Rev. Ian Folks from St. James Church, with a view to using their church for our services and other activities. The PPC at St. James was agreeable and we now have a regular pattern of services, twice a month, joining members of St. James in their service, when there is an extra Sunday in the month. We continue to meet on-line on alternate Sundays and have weekly Bible Study and Prayer meetings. A successful Coffee Morning was held earlier in the year, with another planned for 3rd December.

We joined St. James' congregation for a delicious Harvest lunch and look forward to other joint activities in the coming year. Our Women's Fellowship Christmas lunch is in the process of being arranged for 13th December, at Clyne Golf club.

Due to the current situation, where the cost of keeping homes warm is a problem for many, it was decided at a recent joint meeting, where we were joined by the Local Area Co-ordinator, to have a 'Warm Hub' at the Parish Hall, every Wednesday, starting 16th November. This will provide a chance for people to meet in a warm place, have a light lunch, followed by board games and other activities. This will be a community venture and anyone and everyone is welcome.

Out of what seemed to be a hopeless situation, something positive has happened and we thank God for His guidance.

The last Harvest at Brunswick



Our first shared Harvest lunch with St James' Church



Happy Birthday



by Pam Cram

Yes, it's ten years since we took on a shop on Clydach High Street, not knowing what would develop but certain that we should be out there as Christians, showing that the church isn't just a building with high windows and closed doors! There was a time when we weren't sure whether we would have the finance to continue, but we've gradually changed and developed, trying new things – some of which failed, others which thrived.

The pandemic was another challenge. At first everything had to stop, except for the weekly Foodbank session as one of the Trussell Trust Swansea Foodbank centres. Linking with the various agencies that cropped up as the pandemic set in, we continued to offer food parcels, and gradually added more in the way of free toiletries and period products. Part way through the two pandemic years we were asked to take responsibility for a major grant from the international community fund of the local Nickel works (known locally as 'Mond' but now run by Vale). Entrusted with £26K we set about distributing it to various schools, charities, and groups to help in response to the pandemic, either for immediate needs or for developing community and service for the future. We have now distributed over £19K, the remainder being saved to support our own work. At our AGM in November, we were delighted to welcome three Young Carers and their project manager to tell us how they had used the money received from the Vale fund. One had bought an exercise bike and lost 2 stone; another had taken riding lessons; and a group of them had gone to the first Wales gathering of Young Carers in August. We also watched an excellent film about The Sharing Table, a project which runs cookery classes at the local Craigfelen School, teaching how to make a meal from a few simple ingredients enhanced by herbs grown in the school garden. As well as giving them a significant grant we helped initially by supplying some of the ingredients from foodbank stock so that families could try the recipe at home as well. (The video can be found on YouTube under Swansea Sharing Table) Finally, we heard from one of our volunteers (now also a Trustee), Fiona Gannon, who offered a year ago to start a small charity shop on our behalf. Opened in October 2021 it has been a huge success, raising funds to secure Tŷ Croeso's future; to support other charities; and help struggling individuals and families by offering clothes, toys etc at very reasonable prices.

While some of our past activities have not returned, others continue in different ways, and our links into the community are stronger than ever.



Some of those who attended the Ty Croeso 10th Anniversary AGM.



Wales Young Carers Gathering
August 2022

We've had lots of interest in Ty Croeso in recent weeks - last Tuesday ITV came to film a documentary (in Welsh for S4C, I think) on the cost of living crisis. Then today we had the Mayor and Mayoress visiting - and even helping out because some volunteers hadn't turned up! And this afternoon we welcomed a large group of representatives from the Free Churches Council, including the Moderator of the England and Wales Free Churches Group, Revd Helen Cameron (who is also currently Chair of the Northampton and Nottingham and Derby Districts of the Methodist Church!) Helen was keen to learn about the origins of the project, its links to local churches, and its activities.

We have even made a connection with a local Scout group (Fforestfach Scouts) who after a visit from Alan came to help with the food bank drive we had at Tesco Fforestfach earlier this month. They are very enthusiastic and as a group are taking part in a 'Reverse Advent Food Calendar' the proceeds of which will be donated to us.



Fforestfach Scouts help with our Food Appeal



Revd. Helen Cameron visits Ty Croeso



The Lord Mayors Visit to Ty Croeso



Please share this with the office holders and members of your Church and Circuit. This can be read online and downloaded from www.methodist.org.uk/conference

Conference Business Digest

A report for local churches about the business of the 2022 Methodist Conference

The 2022 Methodist Conference, held in Telford: Presbyteral Session 23-24 June; Representative Session 25-30 June.
www.methodist.org.uk/conference

Election and Induction of the President and Vice-President

On Saturday 25 June, the Revd Graham Thompson was elected and inducted as President of the Conference, and Anthony Boateng as Vice-President. In his Conference address, Mr Thompson focused on the theme for the year of The Greatest Commandment. Mr Boateng's address was entitled 'Revival: The Methodist Dream' and emphasised the need to revive the Wesleyan fire.

You can read both addresses in full here:

www.methodist.org.uk/presidential-addresses-2022

Reception into Full Connexion

During Conference worship, 20 presbyters and three deacons were received into Full Connexion on Sunday 26 June, along with four presbyters by transfer and two presbyters by reinstatement and transfer. Later that day, ordination services took place in four churches in the vicinity of Telford.

Candidating Process

The Revd Dr Roger Walton, who had chaired the review group, presented the proposed new three-phase process to the Conference. The Conference adopted the new process, noting that it aims to be simpler and shorter, while allowing space for exploration and discernment. The necessary revisions to Standing Orders will be

brought to the 2023 Conference and the new process will begin in September 2023.

Pension Schemes

The Conference received an update on the pension schemes, and, in particular thanked those Methodist bodies which had contributed so generously to the Pension Reserve Fund following the appeal made at the 2021 Conference. It agreed to increase the circuit contribution rate for the Methodist Ministers' Pension Scheme to 29.5% from 1 September 2023, with the shortfall during 2022/2023 being paid from the Pension Reserve Fund.

Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment (JACEI)

The Revd Dr Stephen Wigley, Chair of JACEI, presented the Committee's report to the Conference saying that due to world events, challenges remain acute and as pressing as ever for the investment community. This year's developments for the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church include a revised policy on Israel and Palestine, mining and other extraction industries, and increased engagement with banks including HSBC. A memorial urging further engagement with HSBC bank was accepted.

Methodist Homes (MHA)

The acting Chief Executive of MHA, Mr Dan Ryan, presented its report to the Conference, drawing attention to the considerable impact that Covid has had on residents, staff and families and the need to create connections with people in different ways. Mr Ryan thanked everyone for their support, care and compassion and said how this time is a significant moment for care, both in terms of staffing and funding. He said they will champion their sector and called on people to support their #FixCareForAll campaign, make links with local MHA services, consider becoming a rep and continue to pray for MHA and the work they do.

Methodist Diaconal Order Rule of Life

The Conference approved a new Rule of Life for the Methodist Diaconal Order, which had been reviewed and revised following the adoption in 2019 of the report, The Theology and Ecclesiology underpinning the Diaconate and the Methodist Diaconal Order . The new Rule is anchored more explicitly in the Scriptures and gives clear expression to the commitments contained in the ordination service liturgy. It has been developed collaboratively, working through the deacons' area and regional groups as well as the Convocation.

Marriage and relationships

The Conference received a Faith and Order Committee report on marriage and relationships. The Conference resolved that the 1992 Conference Statement on A Christian Understanding of Family Life, the Single Person and Marriage should no longer have the status of a Conference Statement, bearing in mind the considerable changes in society and in the Church, the growth of understanding of human relationships and human sexuality, and the decisions that the Conference has made over the past thirty years. The Conference directed the Faith and Order Committee to bring a report on singleness to the 2024 Conference and to report to the 2025 Conference on whether any further work on marriage and relationships is required.

Covenant Relationship between the Church and its Ministers

The Revd Paul Wood, Director of the Ministries Team, presented the report on the Covenant Relationship between the Church and its Ministers. The Conference adopted the Commitments and Expectations and directed that they be printed in the Guidance section of CPD, and resolved that these commitments should be affirmed annually, beginning in the MDO Convocation and the Conference in 2023.

Local Lay-Pastors

Following the decisions of the 2021 Conference to establish the office of Local Lay-Pastor, the Conference adopted a set of competencies for the role. The Conference also adopted a new section of Standing Orders which define the office, making provision for the appointment of people to it, their training, support and accountability as well as termination of the appointment.

Anniversaries

The Conference marked the 250th anniversary of the birth of Hugh Bourne, one of the founders of Primitive Methodism, and the 150th anniversary of the foundation of Southlands College which opened in Battersea in 1872 as a training college for women teachers and is now part of Roehampton University. The Revd Paul Davis, the Interim Chair of Methodist Insurance, addressed the Conference to mark the 150th anniversary of Methodist Insurance. He talked about the formation of the company, set up to protect Methodist Churches from fire. He told representatives that they have consistently given profits away, to date giving away over £1.75m. They have worked with the All Churches Trust (as the Benefact Trust) and since 2016 have given £11m to 236 churches. £50,000 has been donated to All We

Can to be used to alleviate the trauma suffered by those affected by the war in Ukraine.

Action for Hope

The 2021 Conference, seeking to build on past work, and with a renewed sense of urgency, agreed an aspirational target to become a net zero Church by 2030. The Council reported to the Conference that it had received a report which set out a plan of action for reaching that target. This plan is designed for the Church to work and measure progress on reducing carbon emissions, focusing on key areas of assets, wisdom and lifestyles. The Conference also received a number of memorials in this area, which will be taken into account as the work continues.

Forces Board

Alongside receiving the annual report of the Forces Board, the Conference welcomed the new Chaplain-General and Deputy Chaplain-General to the British Army, who are both Methodist ministers and the representatives of chaplains in the other armed forces. The Chaplain General, the Revd Michael D Parker, thanked representatives for the welcome and told representatives: "You as the Conference send us to do this work and to station us. Both we and the wider defence community thank you for your ongoing support. We ask that you will pray with us sometimes but pray for us all the time."

Justice, Dignity and Solidarity (JDS)

The Conference received the report from the shadow JDS Committee, which updated the Conference on the progress so far with the Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity. The Conference adopted Standing Orders to establish the new JDS Committee, and also received a summary report from the JDS Scrutiny Group. During the Conference communion service, an Act of Repentance was shared. This liturgy will be offered to Districts and Circuits later in the year.

Oversight and Trusteeship

The Conference considered the Oversight and Trusteeship proposals. The Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler opened the presentations, emphasising that not all the discussions have resulted in agreement and that while changing structures will not in itself make the Church more effective in mission, it should free it from what holds it back. The wide-ranging proposals were put before the Conference in order to reflect more accurately the size of the Church and to reduce the burden of administration on Districts, Circuits and churches. The Conference agreed to reduce the size and duration of

the Conference, with effect from 2024. It also agreed to establish a new trustee body, the Connexional Council, which will replace both the Methodist Council and the Strategy and Resources Committee; it will be the charity trustee body and will have general control and management of the connexional administration of the Methodist Church. With around 20 members, the Connexional Council should be small enough to be nimble and flexible and large enough to have different views and balance. The amendments to the Deed of Union to enact this are the subject of a Special Resolution, upon which consultation will be sought with the Synods and the Law and Polity Committee before being brought back to the 2023 Conference.

The Conference declined to receive proposals which aimed to reduce the number of districts and subsequent resolutions were withdrawn. The Secretary of the Conference told representatives that a number of districts have already started work on boundary changes and these will be considered by the Methodist Council. Dr Hustler said that discussions with representatives will take place over the summer and it is hoped these will enable new and imaginative ideas to be explored as the Connexion discerns the way ahead.

The Conference received a report on the work undertaken so far in respect of all the connexional committees, and in particular it received proposals to establish a Nominations Committee for such committees to ensure that those appointed have the right skillset, as well as representing the diversity of the Church. Work is also continuing on the discernment processes for senior roles, and will report to the 2023 Conference. The Conference received a report from the Faith and Order Committee which offered some reflections on Oversight, Trusteeship and Leadership, and directed the Faith and Order Committee in consultation with the Ministries Committee to bring a report on the role of the District Chair to the 2023 Conference.

The Conference noted that, following the decisions of the 2021 Conference, work has continued to support the creative examples of local church governance such as multi site churches. There have been conversations about online church arrangements, and the Conference directed the Faith and Order and Law and Polity committees to consider the issues involved in establishing and operating an online church, and to report to the 2023 Conference.

Wales Synod Cymru

The Conference endorsed the establishment of a single new Synod for Wales, in place of the Wales Synod and

Synod Cymru. The new Wales Synod Cymru, which will be bilingual, will come into being on 1 September 2022.

3Generate

3Generate, the annual Children and Youth Assembly of the Methodist Church, had a successful first year at its new venue, the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham. Following Covid, significant work was undertaken to build confidence in attendance, with 750 young people participating, supported by 250 leaders. The resolutions put before the Conference were based on Covenants made at 3Generate. The Conference agreed to encourage Circuits to explore a range of worship styles which include open discussions about faith and celebrating intergenerational learning, to urge circuit staff teams to review how young people under the age of 23 might be more intentionally and actively supported to consider their calling and be guided onto relevant pathways, and to encourage Church Councils to include the question 'how can we make our church a more praying church?' on their agendas.

Budget

The budget was presented to the Conference by the Connexional Treasurer the Revd Tim Swindell and the Director of Finance and Resources, Mr Matthew Tattersall. Mr Swindell told the Conference there were financial consequences of not supporting the district review proposals. Whilst the Connexional Team budget is making cuts of £1.4m over 5 years, these will not be sufficient and therefore the cut in District Assessment in 2023/24 needs to be postponed. The Conference adopted the budget and the district allocations of the assessment.

Notices of Motion

The Conference expressed its concern in the following areas:

- Healing ministry and neurodiverse conditions;
- Ukraine;
- Transportation of asylum seekers;
- Churches of sanctuary;
- Support for disposal of property;
- Fossil fuel.

Memorials

Memorials are messages from Circuit Meetings and District Synods to the Conference. They play a vital part in enabling the Conference to hear and to respond to concerns from across the Connexion. This year, the Conference considered and replied to 22 memorials on topics including work with young people, ethical investments, connexional levy and property

improvements, IT provision for ministers, Council Tax rebate for energy costs, Living Wage, Israel Palestine, Korea, Tenant Farmers, climate change and energy efficiency, and safeguarding.

President and Vice-President designated for 2023-2024

The Conference designated the Revd Gill Newton to be President and Deacon Kerry Scarlett to be Vice-President of the Conference 2023/2024.

Appointments

The Conference made a number of appointments and reappointments, including:

The Revd Sonia Hicks as Chair of the Methodist Council from 1 September 2022.

The Revd Mark Rowland as Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee from 1 September 2022.

The Revd Andrew Charlesworth as Chair for Wales Synod Cymru from 1 September 2023; the Revd Philip Gough as Chair for the Lancashire District from 1 September 2022; the Revd Loraine Mellor as Chair for the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly District from 1 September 2022; the Revd Dr Andrew Lunn as Chair for the Bolton and Rochdale District from 1 September 2022; the Revd Helen Cameron as Chair for the Nottingham and Derby District from 1 September 2022.

Future dates of the Conference

The Methodist Conference will meet in Birmingham from 22-29 June 2023

Zoom Developments at Uniting Church Sketty

by Les Want

During the COVID lockdown we, like many churches, found ourselves with a bigger congregation on Zoom than we had before in person. We did not want to lose this when we returned to the building.

It was much easier to set up Hybrid Services than we expected. We already had a projector that was previously used for PowerPoint, with the sound channelled through the PA system. We also had a tape recorder plugged into the PA system to record services. All we had to do was replace the PowerPoint computer with a dedicated Zoom computer and run Zoom on it. This was sufficient to

get the voices of those on Zoom audible over the PA system. We then reconnected the tape recorder cable to the "Line input" of the computer. The rest was all just a bit of nifty configuration within Zoom, which is beyond the scope of this article, and a series of "understandings" about how to operate things without doorbells ringing etc in people's homes, disturbing the service.

The system was greatly enhanced by the installation of a PTZ camera (PTZ stands for Pan, Tilt and Zoom). This has positions which we have setup focusing on Lectern, Pulpit, Communion table etc, operated by a simple remote control. The people on Zoom therefore get a good view of whatever is happening in church. We no longer have the tape recorder but record all the services through Zoom. Initially we ran PowerPoint, shared by Zoom from someone's home.

We have since found a method of connecting a computer to run PowerPoint, into the system, alongside the Zoom computer. We have now embarked upon a project which should end up with us being able to Zoom hybrid meetings from virtually anywhere in the church building, so that those who physically find it difficult to get to church



Online services/ meetings - a way to be together whilst apart



Uniting Church Sketty
Zooming to a home near you

Which way for our Murton congregation

by Revd. Andy Walker

The gradual ending of Pandemic restrictions and a welcome 'return to normal' have seen significant uptake in demand for our Toddler Group, Coffee Mornings, Luncheon Clubs and Youth Club at Murton. These activities based in the Church Hall are thriving! They are a great outreach of service to our local community.

But what of 'spiritual space' and proclamation of the gospel? Whilst this can take place in any setting of course, it does help sometimes to have a designated 'place of prayer' readily available. With Youth Club equipment being put away, or with Luncheon Club staff busy in the kitchen, or the clatter of cups being washed up, what our Hall really needs is an adjoining 'Chapel' or 'Sanctuary' that can be open as often as possible, to offer peace and space and an encounter with God. With that in mind the Murton congregation are reflecting prayerfully how all of our worship, mission, and outreach might take place on just one site. (The Chapel and the Hall are a small distance apart and on opposite sides of a busy road junction – not ideal!) This would also address our running and capital costs, and enable us to completely renew one premises rather than a piecemeal approach to maintaining two.

But what - then - of the Chapel building? The Church Council recently accepted a resolution that gives us a year (to 29 th November 2023) to consider all options, but that would envisage putting the Chapel building 'on the market' as a last resort. The important principle is that the congregation needs to be able to focus its limited practical resources (people and finance) on just one site, in order to be less distracted by property, and instead have a renewed focus on sharing the Gospel of Jesus. With our groups there is so much potential, and there is much reason to hope and be encouraged. None the less, as we reflect in scripture, 'the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few' (Matt 9:37). Please remember our Murton congregation in your prayers.

May we as a congregation truly become the 'Lord's building', whatever the outcome of our review.



Christmas at Murton December 2022

Refreshed at Nicholaston House!

But for how much longer?

by Revd. Andy Walker

"Could we have a retreat at Nicholaston House again?" That was asked of Rev. Andy Walker by some Chapel members at Murton who fondly remembered going to Nicholaston many years ago, one of the many organised by Margaret Bizzell.

With commanding views over Oxwich Bay, and with lovely grounds nestled beneath Cefn Bryn, Nicholaston House is one of those "thin places", that invites encounter with God. This is especially true within the round walls of the wonderful, intimate, cosy Celtic-style Chapel. The scripture that permeates the House and Chapel, and that is featured around the buildings comes from Haggai 2:9 '...in this place I will give peace'. Hearing from the Trustees of the 'House' that it may be closing in the coming months, Andy quickly made arrangements to take two groups. The first attended for a half day with simple lunch, and afternoon retreat back in October. We enjoyed the café space, the grounds and the Chapel, and some of us managed a walk to the top of the Bryn! The second occasion was a day retreat on a recent Sunday in November, where the Reynoldston congregation and friends had their Sunday worship with Communion, and then had an enjoyable meal and an afternoon retreat. Sadly, Nicholaston House is due to close at the end of November 2022. The main house needs urgent repair work which at the time of writing is unfunded. Please hold the staff of the House, including Lorraine Hossington of our Reynoldston congregation and the Trustee bodies in our prayers as they seek God's direction for the future; whether a new Trust can take on the work, and how the life-changing ministry might continue where possible



The view from Nicholaston House over Oxwich Bay



Members enjoy a retreat at Nicholaston House



The exterior and interior of the Celtic Style Chapel at Nicholaston House

For up-to-date information please visit
: www.nicholastonshalom.life

Mumbles Coronavirus Memorial

A Coronavirus memorial service took place at Mumbles church attended by members of the community and families who lost ones to the virus. During the service loved ones were remembered in prayer and a beautiful oak memorial was dedicated. The memorial was presented to the church by Mr Neil Norman and his family in memory of Neil's wife Anne who died of Covid in 2020.

If you lost a loved one to Covid and would like to include their name on the memorial please call into the church which is open daily from 10.00a.m to 4.00p.m and pick up a form with all the details or e-mail Rev Howard Long.

Revd Howard Long and Mr Neil Norman



The Ogof Adullam Project and Penlan Men's Shed

Ogof Adullam is the name of a Drop-In Centre project based at Penlan Methodist Church, Heol Gwysydd, Penlan, Swansea. The centre is open three days a week (Mon, Wed, Fri - 10.00 a.m to 2.00p.m) offering a 'place of refuge' to individuals experiencing homelessness and alcohol and drug addiction as well as providing a point of contact for prison leavers and asylum seekers. They offer tea and toast between 10am and 11am, bible study 11am - 12.15pm, a free lunch is served between 12.15pm and 13.15pm and arts and crafts between 10am and 2pm.

There is a community garden established to provide food for the project and there has been the recent addition of The Penlan Men's Shed which is a workshop and space available for men to meet, chat and learn new skills. In September 2022, an official open day was due to be held, however this had to be postponed due to the passing of our late Queen. This will be rescheduled to be held sometime in 2023.

The Project and Men's Shed is a valuable part of the circuit and can only continue to thrive with the help of volunteer. Since their move from Brunswick in the city centre to Penlan, their volunteers have diminished so they are appealing for anyone that may be interested in finding out more to contact them and get involved. Please contact ogofadullam@gmail.com for more information.



Reynoldston's Stable Trail

The Stable Trail first appeared in Reynoldston village in 2013. Inspired by a similar event at a large Church centre in Cardiff, Sophie Kett-White of Penmaen Church spoke to her friends Emily Walker and the Rev. Hilary Evans. Whilst the three of them agreed that there wasn't a single Church centre on Gower that would be capable of hosting all the scenes, there was a village that potentially had the space, and safe walking routes between them! Reynoldston, with its spacious village hall, stage and back room, St George's Church and Reynoldston Chapel. And so with a huge amount of work and a large supporting team, this truly ecumenical event has welcomed over 1200 visitors since it began as a bi-annual event, running again in 2015, 2017 and 2019.

The latter two trails in 2017 and 2019 were co-ordinated by Rev. Andy Walker and the Reynoldston congregation in partnership with our Church in Wales congregations. Following the bi-annual pattern, 2021 would have been a Stable Trail year, but that became a casualty of the Pandemic. The uncertainties caused by 'Covid' continued into early 2022, making a commitment to an event this year unrealistic. So, with hopefully a more - ahem - 'stable' - prospect of being able to go ahead next year, we boldly announce that the Stable Trail will be back in 2023!

So we are recruiting! Do you know of any family who may be welcoming a new baby into the world between January and June next year? Ideally a 6,7,8 or 9 month old baby is the most ideal for a 'Baby Jesus' in the Stable Trail, rather than a new-born!

We are also recruiting a new generation of helpers, actors, tour guides, craftspeople to help bring this amazing event to life.

You can please register your interest with Rev. Andy Walker, e-mail: andrew.walker@methodist.org.uk or Tel: 01792 232867.

Also look out for an invitation to the first planning meeting (on 'Zoom') in late February.

And please pray that as the plans get underway, we can provide once again a really special event where, as one visitor commented, 'I felt like I actually met Jesus'.



Mumbles Foodbank Collections

Every fortnight on a Tuesday morning, members of Mumbles church and friends in the community make their way to the Victoria hall car park carrying bags of donations to support the foodbank.

It started during lockdown and has kept going for the past two years with no let-up in the amount of donations and gifts received.

Rev Howard Long said, ' It works like clockwork with everyone delivering their gifts within one hour. The car is filled up to the brim and delivered to the Penderry Foodbank that morning



Carole Wooldridge receiving foodbank gifts from Cynthia Mumford



Could you host a Ukrainian refugee?

Thousands of Ukrainians are still trying to escape war

The Methodist Church can help settle refugees among our own communities

As a member of the Methodist Church, please consider welcoming a refugee



methodist.org.uk/methodistsforukraine

The **Methodist** Church 

Morriston Coffee Morning

Earlier this month Morriston held it's first coffee morning at it's new home at the Community Centre. Thanks are extended to all that supported this wonderful event that raised much needed funds for the Church. Thoughts turn to their next event in the new year, watch this space.



Revd Andrew Pearce, Jen James, Janice Heslop and Irene Harrison
pictured at the Coffee morning at Morriston

UCS Christmas Project

by Linda Jones
(co-ordinator of project)

Once again members and friends of UCS have risen to the challenge of providing Christmas bags for our local refugees and asylum seekers. We were requested to provide 100 bags for adults and 60 bags for children and this total has been well exceeded. The bags are to be blessed on Sunday 11th December before being handed over to Adella and members of UID who will be responsible for their delivery.

It is hoped the bags of toiletries, items to wear, things to eat and use will bring as much enjoyment to the recipients as the pleasure given to those filling the bags. I am very grateful to those who filled or donated items of money to obtain items to fill bags. Thank you UCS for your generosity. Photo shows some of the filled bags and children's stockings



Some of the filled stockings and teddys that have been
donated to the UCS Christmas Project

Theo's

Enjoy delicious coffee and homemade food in the beautiful surroundings of one of Mumbles' oldest buildings.



Based in the grade 2 listed, Mumbles Methodist Church, Theo's Coffee Shop offers a range of hot and cold drinks and delightful homemade snacks and cakes. All profits go towards some great local causes.



**Theo's Coffee Shop, Mumbles Methodist Church, Mumbles Road,
Mumbles, Swansea SA3 4DH | Tel. 01792 363 803**