



# The Methodist Church

## Swansea & Gower Circuit Magazine

# CONNECT

Edition 2 - Summer 2023



Mike Hedges AM visits  
Penlan Men's Shed  
22nd February 2023

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

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**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](mailto:swanseagowercircuitoffice@gmail.com)

# Message from the Superintendent

Welcome to the Summer edition of the Connect magazine. I hope that you enjoy reading the interesting articles concerning the work of the Methodist Church here in Swansea and the wider Methodist Connexion. We are delighted to report on the opening of the new Men's Shed at our Penlan church, the work of the University Chaplaincy and Alan Cram's work Tanzania. These are just a few of the highlights of what has been a busy time in the circuit since we last went to print.

The circuit leadership team have also been hard at work preparing a circuit strategy document that will determine our priorities and direction of travel for the next five years. In December 2021, the circuit meeting agreed to develop a new strategy following a process in which churches offered feedback to a series of questions that focused on their existing work and proposed mission plans.

It was Woody Allen who said that if you want to make God laugh then tell him your plans which is quite funny and not far from the truth. There have been times in my life when even the best made plans have struggled to come to fruition and often turned out completely different from what I had intended. Having said that, I believe that strategic planning is a thoroughly Biblical concept. Here are some of the great leaders in the Bible who thought and acted strategically.

Moses found himself struggling as a leader soon after he led the nation of Israel out of Egypt. His father-in-law, Jethro, observed that Moses was overwhelmed with burdens of leadership and shared with him a God given plan, a strategy for dealing with the issue. Jethro taught Moses how to delegate the works so that the load would be shared. As a result, resources were used more effectively and the ministry was accomplished.

Nehemiah - When God laid it on Nehemiah's heart to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, he began in prayer and then worked through a well-planned strategy to accomplish the vision God had given him. He assessed the damage to the city walls and secured the resources that were needed to repair them. He then appealed for help and distributed the tasks among the people.

David - As a young man David did not defeat Goliath with physical strength or strong armour, in fact the armour was more of a hindrance than an aid. He defeated Goliath using a God-given strategy that pinpointed the weakness of his enemy. Later, as a leader of soldiers, David used strategy in battle. David needed men who could think and plan strategically, and God gave him the men of Issachar (1Chron. 12:32).

Paul - It is obvious in reading the accounts of St Paul's missionary journeys that he visited key cities where he would have the greatest influence on the largest number of people. He was even planning to travel to Spain and take the Gospel into Western Europe, but he was taken prisoner before this happened and this part of his mission was left for others to do.

Jesus - Even our Lord employed strategic planning when he sent his disciples out proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God. They were sent out in pairs to different towns and villages and were told what to say and what to take with them. There was a method to His mission.

It seems to me that strategic planning is not only a biblical concept it is a biblical mandate. Far from making him laugh it is God's chosen method of working to establish how we intend to carry out the great commission and saving us from repeating what we did last year and the year before that just hoping for the results to be different.

Strategic thinking and planning as a church helps us through prayer to discern the will of the Holy Spirit so that we can direct our evangelism and resources to the people and the areas that need us the most.

Churches will be working through the strategy document in the coming months. I hope as many people as possible will take it seriously because it involves every member of our church here in Swansea and Gower. The document is intended to guide and support good practice and encourage forward thinking and action and I commend it to you.

The strategy document can be accessed in each local church and by visiting the circuit website [www.swanseamethodist.org.uk](http://www.swanseamethodist.org.uk)

Every blessing

*Reverend Howard Long*  
May 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

### **Brunswick & Circuit– Zoom**

Time: Alternate Sundays 10.00a.m

Meeting ID 834 1537 4083 Passcode 355450

Telephone 0203 481 5237

### **Mumbles – Live Streamed**

Time: Every Sunday 10.30am

Meeting ID 865 5689 9224 Passcode 430913

Telephone 0203 481 5240

### **Mumbles Wednesday – Zoom**

Time: Monthly Wednesday 12.00pm

Log in Details are the same as Mumbles Sunday Worship

### **Gower Online**

Time: see plan for times

Meeting ID 846 691 2796 Passcode: 181272

For Telephone – 0203 481 5240



# 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



# Capel y Nant Open Day 'Do the little things'

On March 1st Capel y Nant arranged an open day to celebrate St. David's Day and Fairtrade Fortnight. In the main church there were displays about the many activities of Capel y Nant, which included a display on our Wesley congregation in which we included the Guild centenary banner, a photo album of Guild activities, and the beautiful 'Footsteps' banner made for our Morriston church some years ago by Deacon Lorraine Brown's mother. Also included in the larger banners hanging around the gallery was our old 'Sunday School' banner which members used to carry during the Pentecost procession. During the day we were visited by Jenipher, Ugandan coffee farmer of 'Jenipher's Coffee', and film clips were shown about aspects of Capel y Nant and Fairtrade. In the hall was a clothes swap, hosted by Fiona, manager of O Law i Law ('from hand to hand') Ty Croeso's charity shop, and a fair and sustainable trade stall, as well as a 'cuppa' (Fairtrade, of course!).



## Archiving our Circuit history

based on information provided by our Circuit archiver Jeff Coleman

Jeff is our circuit archivist and at a recent meeting gave a presentation on Circuit Archives and why we keep this information.

Some documents due to Methodist, and in some cases legal regulations are required to be kept for different timescales depending on the subject matter.

The Archives of Swansea and Gower Circuit are held in the Richard Burton Archives (formerly Swansea University Archives. These documents are occasionally used to teach students about different periods of time (such as life during World War II). The archives accept anything that may be of interest such as photographs of the exterior and particularly the interior of buildings, memorials, special events such as harvest festivals are of particular interest and suitable for archiving, as are church magazines, programmes etc. Photos where people are named are of particular interest as this keeps a record of life in the Swansea and Gower Circuit for generations to come.

If you have anything that you think would be interesting to be archived or have any questions about what should be kept then please contact Jeff Coleman who will be more than happy to assist you with this.

Details of what should be kept and how long for can be found here

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/4208/retention-schedules-for-retaining-records-0712.xls>

Louise Davies

# Women Led Day of Prayer

by Revd Pam Cram

Every first Friday in March for nearly a century, women of the UK have joined other national women's groups in organising a worldwide Day of Prayer. These days everyone is welcome, though the service is still prepared by women in the selected country. In the UK England, Wales and Northern Ireland work together, while Scotland has its own WDP group.

In Clydach there used to be two services (Welsh and English), but many years ago they were merged, with part of the service in English and part Welsh, participants having copies of each booklet. One of our former members at Wesley, Pam Milborrow, was secretary of the WDP committee for many years. Just before the pandemic struck, I stepped into that position. Our 2020 service took place just days before the first lockdown.

In 2021, I arranged an online bilingual service, attended by many from other parts of our Circuit. In 2022 we were able to meet again in Clydach (and I believe there were other services in Mumbles and Gower). This was a moving service, not just because we were meeting physically, but also because the readings and prayers were very poignant in the immediate aftermath of the invasion of Ukraine.

This year the service was prepared by the Christian women of Taiwan, another nation in the shadow of a much larger nation claiming rights to it (China). The service is on the theme "I have heard about your faith". Taiwan is known as the 'Kingdom of Orchids'. This is reflected in the image offered for reflection in the service. It also includes two birds threatened with extinction, a type of pheasant and of spoonbill. In 2024 we will 'travel' to Palestine, another vulnerable part of the world, and the theme will be "I beg you bear with one another with love".



## Pray without ceasing by Lynne Taylor

In 2022 we held an Easter Prayer Watch where friends from around the Circuit prayed continually for 40 hours from 3 p.m. on Good Friday when Jesus died until 7 a.m. on Easter Sunday when he rose again.

I felt that we were called to do something similar this year. So a call to prayer was made for people to help for a total of 40 hours made up of 30 minute slots.

They were requested to pray using a mixture of their own prayers and the pack of materials which was made available, with a particular focus upon our Lord's Sacrifice and Revival. The initiative was fronted by a zoom service led by Rev. Andy Walker at 2 p.m. on Good Friday.

An excellent response was received with around 60 people including every church in the Circuit and 3 from St. Mary's Rhossili. All reflecting upon Jesus' death and sacrifice and what he is calling us to do - to make new disciples.



# Penlan Men's Shed Official Opening



**Mike Hedges AM at the  
Opening of Penlan's Men's Shed  
and the workbench inside the shed**



Within the grounds of Penlan Methodist Church (now the home of Ogof Adullum) is a small and unassuming concrete building. You would be think it houses a mower or gardening equipment for the grounds but it is so much more than an actual shed. Inside is a purpose made workshop designed for men to get together and work on DIY projects.

*'You'd be forgiven for thinking a men's shed is all about making things out of wood, there is also a huge array of other activities on offer. Shedders are artists, collectors, story-tellers, amateur radio enthusiasts, train spotters, model makers.....Anyone is welcome and any interest, skill or project is given equal consideration – especially if it could attract new members or gain valuable income to support the development of the entire group. The idea originated in Australia in the early 2000's and was developed by the health board to tackle growing concerns of social isolation amongst their male population. They identified that high numbers of men had time on their hands (due to retirement, unemployment, illness etc) and these things often manifested themselves in boredom, men suffering in silence with declining mental health and in the worst cases suicide. While various groups and charities do exist to support men, it has been proven that they are less likely to access and accept support. The Men's Sheds movement is based on the understanding that men are more likely to help themselves and attend something they have set up or have some control over. While they might struggle to talk face to face, men do talk shoulder to shoulder when engaged in some form of activity or shared task. Men's Sheds Wales Website.*

## **How did the Men's Shed at Penlan come about?**

During covid restrictions Brunswick Methodist Church made the difficult decision to sell their building. Sadly, one consequence of this was that Ogof Adullam would need a new home. The circuit made the decision to relocate Ogof Adullam to Penlan. This proved to be a tricky move as the date was regularly changed due to the restrictions being lifted then reapplied. However, one decision that was given the go-ahead was the exploration of a Men's Shed within the Penlan grounds. Rev Long and Huw Davies had discussed this a number of years ago when Huw was working for Action For Children which was accessing Penlan Methodist Church at the time. The idea would be that mature members of the circuit could spend time with younger men from the area who not only needed a positive activity to focus on but were also in need of relationships with positive male role models, something a lot of the youngsters had not experienced. However, the timing proved difficult. With the transfer of Ogof Adullam from Brunswick to Penlan this reopened the opportunity to start a Men's Shed. The process was started through a planning application to the council. Again, due to covid this was another tricky process which took time. Finally, we were given planning approval subject to an ecological impact survey. Another hoop to be jumped through which again brought its challenges and took time.



Last summer 2022, Abertawe Sectional Buildings put the structure together following work by a number of volunteers, local PCSO's and the local area co-ordinator (Dominic Nutt) to prepare the land. The concrete base was put down and the building was erected. Following this, electricity was supplied and the building was insulated with our volunteers spending their summer carrying out the work. Over time a handful of men have already started attending and have built workbenches and seating. Penlan Men's Shed is finally up and running and is a fantastic facility. Planning for Penlan's Mens Shed started on 16 th April, 2021. Due to the delay in both planning approval, ecological impact report and construction issues during covid restrictions the official opening was put back numerous times. Finally, when everything was in place, the opening was intended to be part of the Ogof Adullum open day in September. Everything was planned and we thought all the bases were covered, but sadly this was paused due to the unexpected passing of the late Queen Elizabeth II.

However, on 22nd February 2023, the shed had its official opening. It was very well attended with members of the circuit attending as well as The Chair of Synod Cymru Revd Dr Stephen Wigley and members of the local community. Also in attendance was the leader of the council Rob Stewart who officially opened the centre and the shed, as well as local Senedd Member Mike Hedges.

Penlan Men's Shed is a fantastic facility, which the circuit should quite rightly be proud of. It is currently open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 10:00am to 2:00pm. It is intended as a Men's Shed targeted at men of all ages. Although it is a Men's Shed, there is also the possibility that it could be used by other groups (e.g., ladies upcycling), all it would need is for a number of individuals to be prepared to run it with the support of staff and volunteers at Ogof Adullam.

The staff and volunteers at Ogof Adullam would like to thank Rev Howard Long, Mr Ken Allison and the circuit for their support and encouragement in making this project possible. We have already witnessed individuals stating how the shed has positively impacted their lives and we are sure there will be many testimonies to this in the future.





# Heshima: News from Tanzania

by Alan Cram



As some of you know, I've been going out annually to Tanzania, East Africa for the past 12 years. Initially, I went to support a small community project around 10km from the major town Arusha in N.E. Tanzania. This project, Heshima, set up a textile training centre for local Maasai women. Here they learn basic skills to enable them to make items such as shopping bags and aprons which are sold to tourists and local people. The sale provides an income for the women, giving them some financial independence from their husbands. I always return with 2 cases full of items for sale..

The project also runs a daily free nursery school, which now attracts around 30 children; and a free Saturday school for children about to transfer to secondary school. In addition, a carpentry training centre is about to be established.

Over the past few years I have also been co-ordinating the sponsorship of school children. Government schools have limited resources, with teachers teaching large classes in often rather dilapidated buildings. In order to give their children a better start in life, parents want to send their children to private schools (but when you hear the word "Private", please don't think of Eton!). However, these are fee-paying schools and most Tanzanians cannot afford the fees. Hence the demand for sponsorship. At present, around 30 primary school children are being sponsored (annual cost around £450 per child) by individuals and a charitable organisation based in Glasgow. The first cohort of sponsored children has now finished the equivalent of GCSEs, and some have found employment, and others are proceeding to Advanced level, which almost certainly would not have happened without sponsorship in primary schools. Inevitably, I have become involved in many of the families

of the sponsored children, and have been able to support them in relatively small ways: for instance, buying a water tank for one family so that rain water can be collected in order to irrigate a small tomato allotment, providing a source of income.

More recently, I have been funding, with the help of generous donations from individuals in Swansea and beyond, the building of a primary school, which serves a local township, Kisongo, and a number of Maasai villages.

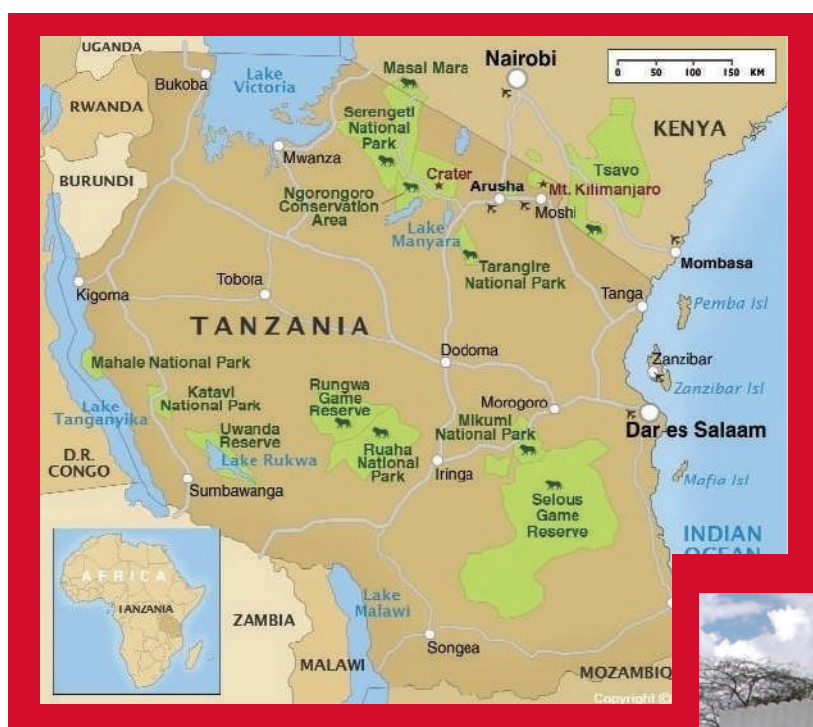
The school, situated on a 3 acre site about 5km from Kisongo, is the brainchild of local Tanzanian Moses, whom Pam and I first met 12 years ago. His aim is to provide good quality education, with fees as low as possible, for local children. However, Moses accepts that some parents cannot afford the fees, or can only pay a fraction of them, so there are around 6 children who attend without paying, and in 3 cases sponsors have been found. 12 months, so therefore water had to be transported at great expense).



At every stage of development, school inspectors have visited and approved the progress and checked the quality of the buildings. The school is registered with the Government. There are now around 70 children on the books, and 3 local teachers are employed. Lessons are taught mainly through the medium of English, giving the children a great start in life (in Government secondary schools, all lessons are in English). In addition to providing employment for teachers, the project has employed local "fundis" ie builders, plasterers etc, thereby putting money into the local economy. Moses hopes to set up a free Saturday school to support the children of parents who cannot afford the fees: but this depends on finding additional funding to pay the teachers.

A new classroom will need to be built each year, and Moses' ambition is eventually, to build a boarding house: it's very common in Tanzania for even young children to board, in order to overcome difficulties of day-to-day travel. In addition, solar panels will need to be installed, and ideally a connection to the mains supply.

If you would like further information, or would like me to come and give a talk (or even feel able to support Moses or sponsor a child!) please don't hesitate to contact me.



For more information please visit

[www.heshima.org.uk](http://www.heshima.org.uk)





# Fair Trade - Where now?

Rev Pam Cram

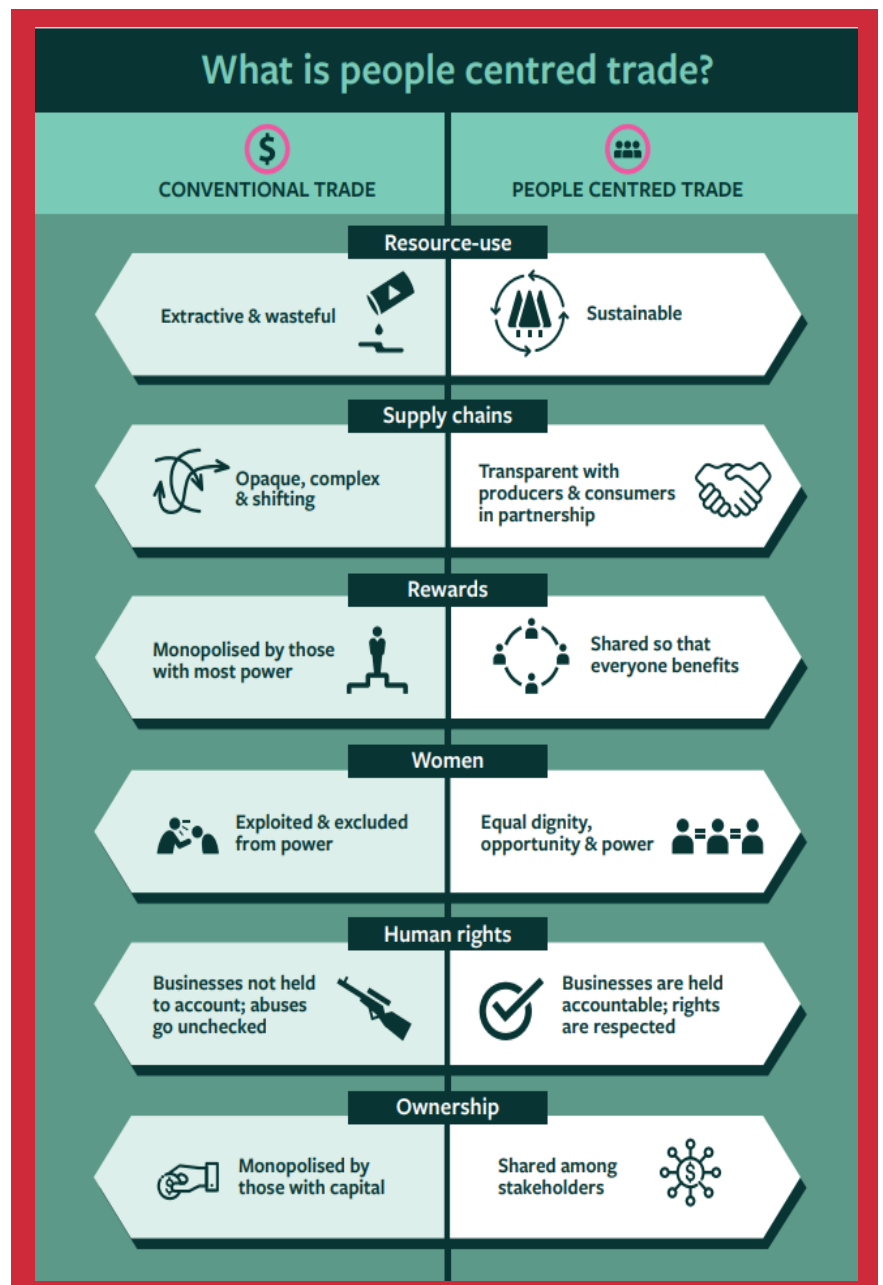
Soon after I wrote the item in the last Connect about Traidcraft and Transform Trade we heard the sad news that Traidcraft, the pioneering Fairtrade company whose produce has been sold in many of our chapels and events through the years, had gone into administration. The news also came just as there were plans to re-start the monthly stall at Sketty.

As I write this, we don't know what might or might not emerge from the ashes of Traidcraft, but both Jackie Coates and I are exploring ways in which to continue with some sales of ethically produced goods (mainly Fairtrade) which are more difficult to get in the shops. These days many supermarkets have at least some Fairtrade tea, coffee, sugar, and chocolate but other items can be harder to get.

I'm hearing that there's a lot of conversation going on 'behind the scenes', and that there are some bids in to 'buy the Traidcraft brand', as well as Transform Trade looking into ways of continuing to offer the Christmas cards and 'everyday greeting cards'. So it may be that in the midst of this shock to the Fairtrade movement, and through the sense of loss and chaos, God is 'doing a new thing'.

Thank you to all who have supported Traidcraft stalls in the past. The charity Transform Trade continues, though it too will struggle having lost the income generated by 'fairtraders' like Jackie and me. Please continue to look out for the Fairtrade symbol, which is the gold standard in just and sustainable trading and listen out for news of the work of Transform Trade, who are currently campaigning on fair fashion.

Please pray for guidance for all those working so hard to move things forward.



# Church Anniversary A Poem by Colin Everett

The walls reverberate to the chords of past voices  
The chimes of the organ hold many an old tune,  
This day is a day of historical reunion  
Between members and teachers, past, present and new.

Memories of times past, of lost friends and companions  
Roll back the pages of the church history book,  
Let us build on the lives and the work of past members  
And go forward together in the faith that we share.

The church is a family to which we belong  
The building a place for meeting, worship and song,  
Each brick has a name etched into its facing  
Bricks bound together by love, hope and faith.



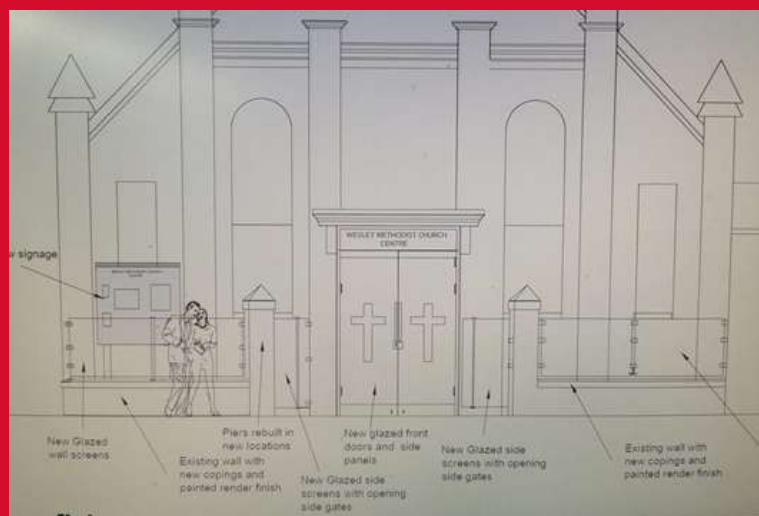
## 2023 Anniversaries

2023 sees the celebration of important anniversaries for two of our churches.

Wesley celebrates their centenary and have recently unveiled the plans for the renovations of the front of the church which they hope will be complete shortly and will give a welcome refresh to the building fitting of the warm welcome that is always received within.

Brunswick celebrates their 150th anniversary this year also. Although they no longer worship at Brunswick (Now Spring Church) and are enjoying sharing St James' worship space. The congregation opted to keep the name Brunswick as it was that building that brought their church family together.

We wish them well as they prepare to celebrate their special birthdays



Wesley Renovation plans

## Thank you

Rev John Jones has asked us to pass on his sincere thanks for the cards he received recently on the occasion of his 90th birthday each one was very welcome.

# UCS Eco Church by Janet Neilson

Since last September, the Eco Friends at UCS, have been holding Coffee and Chat sessions, to discuss various topics which are relevant to Eco Church matters. These topics have included solar panels, electric/hybrid vehicles. We are what we eat, IT products, mobile phones and broadband suppliers.

We have also asked others, not in the Eco Friends group to tick the boxes in the five sections of the Eco Church/A Rocha survey, to ascertain whether church members agree with what the Eco Friends think we have achieved.

We have also played Green Bingo (courtesy of URC Wales).

A larger group has completed a series of sessions with HEAT HACK. This has included discovering where heat is being lost in our building. Our Messy Church sessions continue to be well attended with the youngsters making a boutique bug hotel, planted bulbs and have held other outdoor events as well.

Our termly challenges, for all ages, have continued e.g. making a bird nesting box from corks and growing cress. Our Walking Group meets monthly. Walks this year will include Limeslade to Rotherslade, exploring Clyne Valley, walking parts of Gower, including visiting churches on the Gower Pilgrimage Way.



Synod Cymu also offers grants to combat climate change  
more information here [www.methodistwales.org.uk/grants](http://www.methodistwales.org.uk/grants)

More information on Heat hack can be found on their website  
[heathack.org](http://heathack.org)

Further information for how to become an environmentally friendly church can be found here -

[ecochurch.arocha.org.uk](http://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk)

[www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/environment-and-climate-change/take-action-become-an-eco-church](http://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/environment-and-climate-change/take-action-become-an-eco-church)





# The Ethnic Complexion of Christ:

## A visit to Guatemala

by Colin Everett

As a boy I grew up with images of Jesus Christ as a Caucasian man with brown hair and a brown beard. No doubt it was the same for you. Whilst scholarly debate over the physical features of Christ might have raged throughout history for us, in our sheltered world in Sunday school, we were accustomed to a Westernised image of a Christ who looked very much like many of us.

Given the ethnicity of the Judeans, Christ is likely to have had dark or black hair, an olive skin complexion, and brown eyes. There are no physical descriptions in the Gospels and although we might be curious about His appearance, it should have no bearing on our faith.

My curiosity was though stirred on a recent expedition of Central America where, in Guatemala, we came across Christos Negros – the Black Christ. Some believe that the Black Christ was an invention of the invading Spanish to convert the indigenous peoples to Christianity in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. The truth more likely lies in the first known statue of Christ here having been carved out of a local wood which, exposed to the air, darkened over time.

The Catholic cathedral of Esquipulas (1737) was built to house the original Christos Negros statue as the gradual change in colour of the statue was extolled as a miracle. Today, over one million people from the Americas make the pilgrimage to this otherwise unremarkable town each year.

We were fortunate to visit close to the feast day of 15 January when the festival of Christos Negros was at its height. Hundreds of pilgrims, including throngs of Mayan people in traditional costume, were crowding the cathedral and square, many of whom still have a 'hybrid' faith in Christianity and traditional deities. This was an illustration of how inclusive the church has to be to reach across the peoples of the world.



Cathedral Basilica of Esquipulas in Esquipulas, Guatemala



Christos Negros  
Esquipulas Guatemala





Mumbles Green Churches together Walk of Witness



Maundy Thursday at Murton Church



Maundy Thursday at Murton Church

Floral Easter Sunday Cross at Mumbles



Brunswick joins in the City Centre Walk of Witness





Setting up for breakfast at Wesley



An Easter cross at Wesley



UCS Easter Banners



Flags on Easter Sunday at Reynoldston





# Book Review: The Wesleys by Julian Wilson

by Caroline Buckler

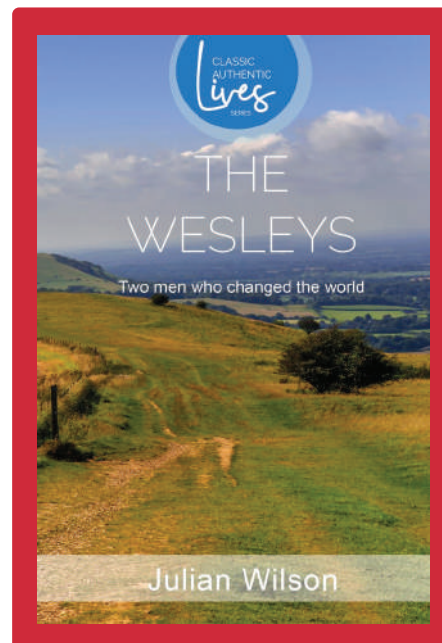
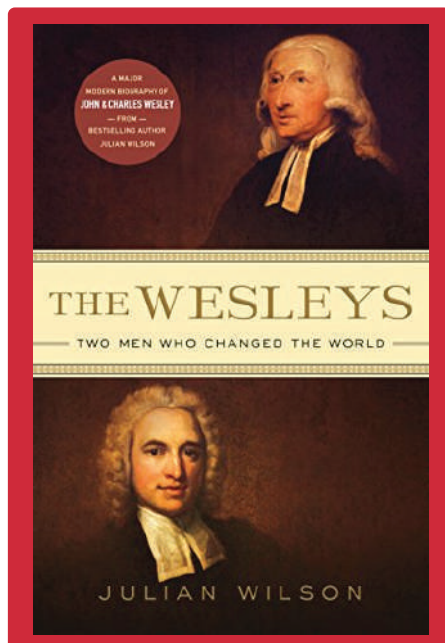
I was recently given a book which I'm really enjoying and wanted to share a passage with you. At the end you'll see the Publisher's details so do try and get it. I have been given permission to share it with you.

Extract from the Preface

'Peter Martin, former ostler of the London Inn in Redruth, Cornwall, used to reminisce fondly how that in 1786 he had driven John Wesley to St. Ives to fulfil a preaching engagement. While Wesley was engrossed, as usual, in reading and writing in his carriage, Martin drove the 12 miles to Hayle, but when they arrived, the sands along the shore, into which the road disappeared, were fast becoming submerged by the rising tide.

A frantic ship's captain approached the carriage and begged them to return at once. But Wesley was adamant that they must press on as he had to preach in St. Ives at a certain hour. Looking out of the window, he shouted to Martin, 'Take the sea!' Soon the horses were up to their necks in the water, and Martin expected any moment to be swept away and drowned. But Wesley poked his head out of the window again and enquired, 'What is your name, driver?' 'Peter', the ostler replied. 'Peter' he said, 'fear not; thou shalt not sink!'

At last after battling through the rising tide, they arrived at St Ives and Martin was convinced it was a miracle. Wesley's first concern was to see Martin comfortably lodged at the tavern. Wesley ensured the ostler had warm clothing, a roaring fire, and refreshments, then completely oblivious of himself and drenched to the skin by the sea, he proceeded to the chapel, where he preached as though nothing had happened. He was then in his 83rd year.'



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# St Madoc's Christian Youth Centre

by Rev. Mick Ellor



**ST MADOC • CENTRE**

I have been asked to take on the role of Chaplain at St. Madoc's Christian Youth Centre at Llanmadoc on Gower where I have been involved for over five years, my job is to be a presence hopefully a Godly one. If you've heard me Preach recently I have spoken on the need for us to carry the presence of God with us wherever we go. Now you know why and what a challenge that can be!

St. Madoc's is a place where during weekdays we have schools staying on residentials and I hope to take some assemblies about how God fits in and the relevance of Jesus. At weekends we have Church Groups of all kinds staying but mainly youth groups. The reason I have been involved and have taken on this role at St Madoc's is because it is obvious to me as I travel around various Churches that we haven't been too successful in passing the Gospel baton on to the next generation but for your encouragement one local Church can take up to 150 youth! All is not lost!



Of course, we cannot bring a presence of God without praise and worship so I will be conducting Morning prayer on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9.00am in the Chapel on site. We will also be starting an Evening Worship at 6.00pm once a month on the third Sunday of the month. This will start on 23rd April due to Easter but after that it will be the third Sunday and will run from April through to October then stop for the winter months. We may even have some Camp Fire worship on the headland depending on the weather!

I would ask for your prayers as I take on this role for the Trustees, Centre staff and of course for Jan and myself.

## **Rev Andrew Pearce's Chaplaincy at the University of Swansea**

Rev Andrew Pearce first became involved in the Swansea University Chaplaincy in 1991 - little imagining that he would return to the University as an Associate Methodist Chaplain three decades later. The role has somewhat changed in that time.

There used to be 5 Chaplains (1 Fulltime 4 Part time), however the team has now grown to include 3 Full-time Chaplains and 8 Part-time Chaplains. There are also 9 Faith Reps (principally members of university staff who provide pastoral contact & support for their respective faith communities in a voluntary capacity) and 4 Office Staff (mix of full-time / part-time shared with other departments).

The University itself has more than doubled in size and includes 20,375 students and now operates over two sites with Chaplaincy centres on each campus (The Lighthouse and The Haven). The University is now seeing more overseas Students from mainly non-European countries since Brexit. The religious mix & balance of students has also changed which was reflected through 'Interfaith Week' (Nov 2022), 'Bigger Picture Festival' (March 2023) & working with Swansea Interfaith Forum as well as more 'traditional' features, e.g. Remembrance Day observances, Christmas Carol Service.

My work as a Chaplain is more integrated with other elements of 'Student Support': which is there for Support for Refugees & Asylum Seekers, The Listening Service, Bereavement Support and LGBT Support.

## Time for Lunch: Circuit Lunch clubs by Louise Davies

The work of a Circuit Administrator is a very busy one but one of the perks is I have got to meet a lot of wonderful people that volunteer in the Circuit in various roles. From the door greeters to the ones that provide the tea after services, there really is a place for everyone in the Circuit. Whilst at a service at Wesley at Christmas I noticed the sign for their lite bites cafe and was also told about Murton's Light and Full Lunches and Thursdays and thought it would be a lovely thing to try out one week to get to know more people and see the great work they are doing.

**Murton's Light Lunch** consists of a 2 course meal (and tea and coffee) all for just £5 (for an extra £1 you can buy a raffle ticket too!). On the two occasions I have eaten with Murton, I have enjoyed Sausage and Mash and Cottage Pie followed by Cheesecake and a raspberry roulade both of which was served with ice cream and were delicious. What was interesting about Murton's luncheon was that there is a mix of people that are members of the congregation but there also seemed to be diners that not only didn't come to the church but had travelled specifically to be there, which tells you how great the food and the company is there. I am yet to try the Full lunch yet but I will certainly put it in my diary to go!

**Lite Bites** at Wesley have recently restarted in March after a short break and I was lucky enough to enjoy tuna rissole, faggots and gravy and strudel with custard. All of which were wonderful. I felt very much at home and stayed to join in with the singing of happy birthday to Pat Jones, I left with a full tummy and a piece of Pat's delicious birthday cake as well.

Both are given 5 stars and a big thumbs up from me and I am very much looking forward to seeing them all again soon. Why not give them a try too?



Rev. Andy makes some circuit announcements after Lunch



Faggots and mash at lite bites in Wesley

## Messy Church at Penlan

Penlan MCC wanted to extend our mission to the families in Penlan and it was decided that running a Messy church, maybe once a month, would be a good approach. Messy church is a form of church for children and adults that involves creativity, celebration and hospitality. Parents must accompany children at Messy church and are asked to sign in giving contact details so we can build up a picture of those attending. The first session was held on Thursday 15 th December 2022 from 4-6pm with a Nativity themed craft session followed by a You Tube film of the Nativity story and Christmas carols. Pizza and drinks were served followed by a visit from Santa! The children each received a selection box. A great time was had by all although numbers in attendance were low. The sessions are advertised on Social Media via Penlan Facebook page. Also, by leaflet distribution at the local Penderry food bank, library and local schools.

The second session followed on Thursday 2 nd February 2023 and the craft was themed around the Love of Jesus based on the coming Valentine's Day. A film was shown telling the story of St. Valentine followed by children's songs. Numbers were slightly up and we hope to improve on this in the future through more advertising. We intend to hold monthly sessions, however, we need more volunteers so if anyone in the Circuit is interested in helping, please inform Lynne Taylor, Cynthia Mumford or Caroline Buckler.





# Healing Services in the Circuit by Revd Mick Ellor



“I am the Lord who Heals you”

As many of you will know the quote above is from Exodus 15:26. I have used this verse because right from the start of Israel's journey with God He assures them of His healing power which is displayed in Numbers 21:9 with the healing of snake bites. John in his Gospel (John 3:14) picks up on this as a means of salvation and healing for the whole world as Jesus is lifted up on the Cross. Healing people was a major part of Jesus's ministry not only because they didn't have an NHS at the time but also as a signpost pointing to who Jesus really is.

A group of us have started a healing service in the Victoria Hall, Mumbles on the first Sunday of each month and if the offer is taken up some of us are happy to travel to other churches in the circuit otherwise it will remain at Mumbles.

God doesn't force healing on us, we have to seek it but He can and does heal all sorts of things and over the years Jan and I have seen many answers to prayer. We have also seen significant answers to prayer in the short time we have been meeting at the Victoria Hall with someone coming back to thank us for praying for their situation as God answered their prayer exactly as they had asked for.

I do encourage you to come along on the first Sunday of the month. A warm welcome awaits with a cup of tea or coffee served from 5.40p.m with the short healing service commencing at 6.00p.m

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#### Monday 25th September

Depart Pennard 9:30 am, Pick up Murton 9:45 am. Depart Murton 10:15 am for journey to Paignton, with appropriate stops including for lunch. Arrival mid afternoon.

#### Tuesday 26th September

Excursion to Buckfast Abbey & Dartmouth.

#### Wednesday 27th September

Day at leisure in Paignton.

#### Thursday 28th September

Excursion to Brixham Harbour & National Trust Coletton Fishacre.

#### Friday 29th September

9:30 am load up and depart Paignton for Swansea.

### Price includes:

- ✓ Luxury coach travel
- ✓ 4 nights dinner, bed & breakfast
- ✓ 3 nights live entertainment and 1 night in-house entertainment
- ✓ 2 included excursions: (1) Buckfast Abbey & Dartmouth (2) Brixham Harbour & National Trust Coletton Fishacre (\*admissions payable)

**Deposit of £30 a.s.a.p to: Rev Andy Walker Tel: 01792 232867 Email: [andrew.walker@methodist.org.uk](mailto:andrew.walker@methodist.org.uk)**



# Swansea & Gower Circuit Supporting Swansea Foodbanks



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Dear Friends,

Firstly, Happy New Year to you all! We hope you all had a wonderful Christmas.

We are getting in touch just to say a huge thank you to you all for your generosity not just over Christmas but throughout the year. We wanted to let you know how much we appreciate your continued support. It was such a busy year for all our foodbanks last year and it is only with the support of people like yourselves that has enabled us to help so many individuals and families. In 2022 Swansea Foodbank fed 8339 adults and 4281 children, that's a total of 12620!

There are sadly so many people that have been affected by the Cost-of-Living Crisis, but we want to say thank you to you all for helping us to make such a difference to so many.

God Bless you all

Swansea Foodbank Team

xxx



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Annaliese Gower ▸ Penderry Community Hub  
23 May at 12:42 · 🌐

Great big thank you to all at Mumbles Methodist Church for another fantastic donation this morning. We really do appreciate your continued support.

Annaliese Gower ▸ Penderry Community Hub  
30 September 2022 · 🌐

This weekend marks 2 years since we opened as part of [Swansea Foodbank](#). I'd like to thank each and every volunteer past and present and every individual and group who have donated to us over the past 2 years, we couldn't make it without you.

Special thanks to...

[Jayne Davies](#) our Asda champion

[Cornerstone Church Swansea](#)

[Mumbles Methodist Church](#)

[Wesley Methodist Church - Brynhyfryd, Swansea](#)

[Dennis and his sister Geraldine](#)

And everyone else who donates to us





# Understanding the Poetry of the Psalms

by David Wood

You may not have thought about poetry in the Bible before, but poetry makes up a large part of the Bible but it has to be read in a certain way in order to understand it. Around one third of the Old Testament comprises of poetry, these are the books of Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs and Lamentations. Modern poetry can be difficult to interpret in all its forms, and why poets write in certain ways, but modern poetry is easy compared to understanding how the Psalms for example were written, why they were written and how to interpret them.

Most of the Psalms were written between 1010 and 930 BC during the time of David and his son Solomon. The oldest Psalm, Psalm 90, was written by Moses in approximately 1500 BC. Over this period of time there may have occurred some distortion, we will never know.

One must consider that the Psalms are not in essay format, they are poems that were and are meant to be sung. The poets gave their psalms to the temple choirmasters who gathered them into collections we know today. So, how do the psalms work?

Hebrew poetry in the Psalms consists of a parallelism of poetic lines and most lines have at least two segments. Usually the first segment starts at the left margin, the rest of the segments are indented to show their relationship. We can see this in Psalm 1:1 below where Unit A forms the first Line Segment and the rest of Psalm 1:1 are aligned in columns as Units A, B and C as you read Psalm 1:1.

Here are the parallel elements of Psalm 1:1 aligned in columns:

	Unit A	Unit B	Unit C	Unit D
Line Segment 1	Blessed is the man			
Line Segment 2		who walks not	in the counsel	of the wicked
Line Segment 3		nor stands	in the way	of sinners
Line Segment 4		nor sits	in the seat	of scoffers

Psalm 1:1

We can see Units A, B and C comprises of the parallelism relationship between the poetic lines, and this is key in interpreting the poetry of the Psalms.

The difficulty arises in the version of the Bible that you are using which you can see if you look at the NIV, King James Version, English Standard version NRV or even the Good News Bible.

David is a member of Wesley Brynhyfryd and has written three poetry booklets and has had poems printed in the Evening Post

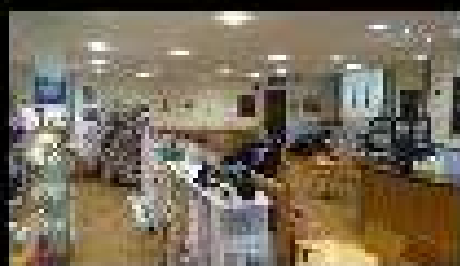
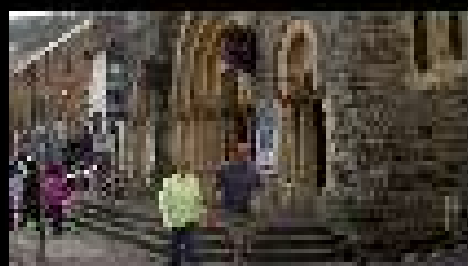
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