



Margam

Ministry Area Magazine



February 2024





this season

A Story Worth Telling Spring 2024

Margam Calling returned in January with a new leadership team, and a message to share. This season we will be looking at how and why the message of Jesus is not just good news for us, but for everyone – and we ask the question: what part can I play?

February 4th: the Gospel to the Nations
Speaker: Rev Steve Lock of the Young Faith Matters Team

February 18th: Gospel Unity
Speaker: Charlotte Rushton

March 3rd: Stories of Hearing the Gospel.
Testimonies of those who have come to faith
Conversation Led by: Canon Ian Hodges

March 17th: Where do we go from here?!
James Thomas in Conversation with Paul Booth

St Theodore's Church @ 5:30pm

remember/
**you're
invited!!**

www.margamecalling.org.uk



Happy New Year!

Here we are already well into the New Year and leaping into February! After the hustle and bustle of Christmas, we all look forward to the relative calm at the start of the year, but, as this issue shows, there's been lots happening across the Ministry Area!

Thank you to all our contributors for such a wide range of stories, news, views and announcements – we even have the High Sheriff of Mid Glamorgan on the front cover! A huge thank you too for your donations for the Christmas Sparkle Appeal and the Ty Bronna Appeal – what a fantastic response.

I hope you enjoy meandering through these pages to find things of interest, food for thought and something to make you smile. There's plenty to look forward to and quite a number of dates for your diary too. And if you'd like to get more involved in the Ministry Area, why not consider the role of MAC secretary highlighted on page 7.

Of course, we're also looking forward to welcoming Fr Wayne on 13 February – find out a little more about him on page 6.

Remember, anyone can contribute to this magazine. Please send your articles and photos for the March (Easter) issue to me by 20 February.

Happy Reading!

Helen Murdoch

*Please send magazine or website contributions to me at:
helen@helenmurdochmarketing.com or call me on 01656 773645 or 07721 864493.
or by post to 7 Birch Walk, Porthcawl CF36 5AN*

Cover Image: Fr Jonathan with Professor Jean White CBE MStJ, High Sheriff of Mid Glamorgan, paying a visit to Family Breakfast in Pyle in December.

Keep up with Ministry Area news and updates:

On the brand new website: www.margam.org.uk

And remember the Facebook pages too:

www.facebook.com/PorthcawlParish

www.facebook.com/TheParishOfKenfigHill

www.facebook.com/MargamAbbey/

www.facebook.com/pyleandkenfigchurches

Margam Calling

www.margamcalling.org.uk and www.facebook.com/MargamCalling

Dear Friends,

Fr Jonathan

Firstly, may I wish you a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda. May 2024 be a year of hope, expectation and blessing!

As we will be celebrating the great Paschal Feast of Easter much earlier this year, this is the opportunity to remind you to make sure you have flour, eggs and lemons in the house (or whatever is your preferred pancake ingredients!); to return your palm crosses to church for Ash; or to start reading your Lent book (Fr. Mark's book is widely available and will be a great companion for your Lenten Pilgrimage).

The origin of many of our Lent customs stem far back into our Christian backstory. Shrove Tuesday pancakes were once a way to use up the eggs and fats in the home before Lent began – hence the French name, Mardi Gras. Ash Wednesday is when people go to Church to receive a cross of ashes on their forehead, traced whilst the words "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." are spoken. The Eastern Orthodox experience Lent differently, with no Sundays off for fasting, because they believe increased fasting must be accompanied by greater periods of prayer. The Orthodox also say Alleluias in greater number in Lent, whereas in the Western churches we stop them altogether until the first Mass of Easter on Holy Saturday at the Easter Vigil.

So why do we embark on this period of self-denial, giving alms and meditate upon Jesus' sacrifice for us? The "forty" days follow the time Jesus spent in the wilderness before the public start of his ministry. As we know, forty was a convenient round number in Biblical terms, meaning a considerable length of time. Lent continues through Passiontide and into Holy Week.

So, as we prayerfully fetch our lemons out of the fruit bowl, purchase our Lenten devotions or bookmark our Bible reading plans, may we remember that it's not about earning so-called 'Brownie points,' but rather about deepening our faith and spiritual discipline. So may we ask God for the strength to enable us to do what he desires and follow the example of Jesus.

May our prayer be for all of us as we prepare to prepare, that we

should all have a holy/blessed Lent, without fear of being driven by failure and doubt, but rather encouraged by our wonder at God’s love, waiting on his word for any change we could make. It is through this that we can expect our Lent to be different, to experience renewal of ourselves, our faith and Church. As Jesus says, “When you fast, do not look sombre as the hypocrites do,” (Matt 6:16) so let us wish each other a Blessed, Holy and Joyous Lent!

***Almighty and ever living God,
you invite us deeper into your world, your people, your Lent.
May this time be one of outward focus;
seeking you in those we often ignore.
Help us live a Lent focused on
freedom, justice, generosity, and encounter.
Give us hearts hungry to serve you
and those who need what we have to give.***

*Love and prayers,
Fr. Jon*

WORSHIP IN THE MINISTRY AREA

<p><i>ALL SAINTS, Porthcawl</i> Sunday: Mass: 08.00 & 10.00 Monday: Mass: 12.00 Wednesday: Mass: 10.30</p>	<p><i>ST JAMES, Pyle</i> Sunday: Mass: 11.00 Wednesday: Mass: 10.00</p>
<p><i>MARGAM ABBEY, Margam</i> Sunday: Mass: 08.30 & 11.00 Wednesday: Mass: 10.00</p>	<p><i>ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, Newton</i> Sunday: Mass: 08.30 & 11.00 Evensong: 16.00 Tuesday & Friday: Mass: 10.30</p>
<p><i>ST DAVID’S, Nottage</i> Sunday: Mass: 09.30 & 17.00 Thursday: Mass: 10.30</p>	<p><i>ST MARY MAGDALENE, Maudlam</i> Sunday: Mass: 09.30 Wednesday: Mass: 11.00</p>
<p><i>ST THEODORE’S, Kenfig Hill</i> Sunday: Mass: 10.00 Family Mass: 1st Sunday of the month Wednesday: Mass: 10.00</p>	
<p><i>For details of all other services, visit www.margam.org.uk</i></p>	

Dear Friends,

Fr Wayne David

I'm using this opportunity for you to get to know me a little before I arrive to serve amongst you.

Born in 1974, my formative years were spent in Pontypridd, where I was a chorister at St John's Church, the Graig (a wonderful introduction to the Anglo-Catholic tradition) and attended Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive School.

I developed my love of music, learning to play the piano, organ and guitar. At 16, I became organist and choirmaster at St Mark's Church, Pwllgwaun, at the same time developing youth work in the parish. In 1993, I left to read education at the University of Central England, Birmingham. I spent 4 happy years working with pupils from a variety of ethnic and social backgrounds. In my final year, I took on the post of Director of Music at St Paul's Church, Grangetown building the choir up to 40 voices whilst enhancing the music in the parish.

After graduating, my first full time teaching post was at Llandough Primary School. After 3 years, I decided to test my vocation to the ordained ministry and attended Ripon College, Cuddesdon, Oxford. After much soul searching, I returned to teaching at Gwernllwyn Junior School, Merthyr Tydfil (now Dowlais Primary). I also became organist at St Catherine's, Pontypridd. I spent several happy years at Gwernllwyn working with people in the Merthyr area including children, parents, parishioners from the Parish of Dowlais with Penyardarren, the Merthyr Tydfil Ladies Choir and the Dowlais Male Voice Choir. At this time I felt my calling could be fulfilled through Self-supporting Ministry, with my vocation to teaching and to the ordained ministry working in harmony.

In September 2004, I embarked on the South Wales Ordination Course at St Michael's Theological College, Llandaff (now St Padarn's College). In 2006 I was appointed Deputy Head Teacher at Duffryn Junior School, Newport (now Tredegar Park Primary). It was a challenge to combine theological studies with my Deputy Head responsibilities but the Lord sustained me and I was made Deacon in 2007 and ordained Priest in 2008 by Archbishop Barry Morgan.

My first Curacy was in the Parish of Merthyr Tydfil, St David's, St Tydfil's Well, All Saints Abercanaid and St Tydfil's Old Parish Church. After 3 years I moved to my home Parish of Pontypridd – St John's Graig, St Luke's Rhydyfelin and St Mary's Glyntaff. This was a wonderful paradox - people who had seen me growing up as a child, Altar server, chorister, organist and choirmaster saw me complete my vocation as their Assistant Curate and Priest. Experiencing my Sunday School teachers referring to me as Father Wayne was peculiar but also very humbling. After 6 years, it was time to move on to my own Parish – and this was to take a novel twist, as the Lord works in mysterious ways!

In 2014 I was appointed as full time Chaplain to the Cathedral School in Llandaff and able to merge my two vocations in life – teaching and the Priesthood. I was responsible for the Spiritual Welfare of the whole school community – 800 pupils, 127 staff plus parents, governors, friends and the Llandaff community. I was specifically responsible for the boy and girl choristers of Llandaff Cathedral and came into regular contact with the Cathedral staff. I taught Religious Studies along with Design and Technology. I organised daily worship in the School Chapel alongside 'large scale' weekly school services in the Cathedral. A particular joy for me was the regular need to administer the Sacraments outside the 'school day' to the community. After a happy and fulfilling 9¼ years, I entered a period of prayerful discernment as to where the Lord was calling me and I am thrilled that I shall be based in Porthcawl and the Margam Ministry Area.

In January I turned the grand age of 50. I am conscious that I was the longest serving Deputy Head at my Newport School and the longest serving Chaplain at the Cathedral School. Whilst it is impossible for me to surpass Fr Phillip's record of 30 years with you, I intend to minister faithfully amongst you as long as the Lord pleases. I hope that my focus on daily prayer, pastoral care and celebration of the Eucharist of Jesus Christ will ensure that I truly serve you in the spirit of the 'One who came to serve all'.

In my spare time, I enjoy going to the cinema, cycling, walking, riding my motorbike and playing a variety of musical instruments. I can't

Continued on Page 8

The Ministry Area Council needs your help.....

Do you have one spare evening a month
to undertake the role of Minute Secretary
for the Margam Ministry Area Council (MAC) Meetings?

Meetings take place on the first Wednesday of the month, except for
August and December. The venues for the meetings alternate
between the different churches in the Ministry Area.

If you are interested and would like to know more, please contact
Fr Jonathan Durley, Ministry Area Leader at
JonathanDurley@churchinwales.org.uk

OR

Wendy Xerri, Ministry Area Lay Chair at wendyxerri@gmail.com

We Need Your Help



Continued from Page 7

wait to explore Porthcawl and the surrounding area and meet new people on the journey. As you will be able to tell from my figure, eating out and entertaining guests is something I enjoy immensely! Please don't be afraid to tell me if you see that I am starting to outgrow my cassock!

Please keep me in your prayers as I make the transition from Cardiff to Porthcawl this month.

**I look forward to meeting you at my licensing on
Tuesday, 13th February 2024 at 7pm
in All Saints Church, Porthcawl.**

Whilst that evening will be an occasion to welcome many visitors, I hope to get to know you better as individuals by our worship together during Lent and through my pastoral visiting during the coming months and years.

*In God's love,
Fr Wayne*

ANYONE FOR BRUNCH

details coming soon.



Churches Together in Porthcawl

Every church in Porthcawl is entitled to two places on the representative body known as Churches Together in Porthcawl plus their ordained minister.

This is an opportunity for meeting with other Christians spiritually and socially and helping break down barriers.

The Annual General Meeting

will be held in the YMCA on Thursday 22nd February at 7pm.

Guest Speaker:

Geoff Green, Network Manager at Welsh Water, who will address the issue of sewerage in the sea.

The meeting is open to everybody.

Refreshment will be served

Milking the Pail of Human Kindness

John Berry BEM

The Prison Chaplain, an ordained Methodist Minister, started her sermon saying, "As I go round the prison I frequently hear the words, "Didn't do it Miss." Very occasionally I actually believe the speaker." At the conclusion of the service the chaplain came to speak to me at the organ. I pointed out one young man indicating that I felt he was one who was telling the truth. "Yes", she said, "It was he I was talking about."

At the time I was the volunteer chapel organist; I drove in to play for the services and went home for lunch afterwards!! I was also a Prison Visitor, which meant I would be asked to meet with prisoners who did not have visits.

My visitees included a young Irishman who, at the time, had spent the second half of his 28 years in and out of penal institutes. He phoned me one day to say the office had miscalculated his sentence and he was to be released in two days. I ascertained this was correct, but unusual and that nothing had been organised to help him. I offered to put him up for two nights while the Probation Service sorted out something for him. I was then going to Germany for two weeks to help a friend whose mother and two aunts had died within six weeks of each other. She'd asked me to drive her to Bavaria where she was to conclude the estate of an aunt. So, off I went to Germany leaving my visitor at the Probation offices to finalise his arrangements.

On my return two weeks later I had been burgled and I discovered my key did not open the front door – the lock had been changed! It transpired, around midnight on the day I left to go to Germany my ex-prisoner had telephoned a locksmith as an emergency; he convinced the man he owned the house, and that I had been visiting, but must have left carrying both sets of keys. He then took on my persona, telling the locksmith he was going to Germany the following day to help a friend at a time of bereavement etc. My neighbours were concerned at seeing all the lights on and called the police. The police let themselves in via keys held by another neighbour and questioned my visitor, now burglar, who convinced them he knew me and had my

permission to stay – he was very plausible (something to do with a Blarney Stone?).

To add insult to injury he made a number of spurious complaints about me to the police for which I was questioned under caution. After about twenty minutes the police decided they were wasting time - I think I still have the recording somewhere!

As a Prison Visitor, I would meet occasionally with the first young man mentioned above. His family were not allowed to make contact with him. We were talking about his release; as it was imminent and nobody was meeting him, I offered to do so. He came out of the prison carrying a black plastic bag – the bag and he stank, terribly. He explained when he was taken into custody, all his spare clothing had been put into the black bag, held in a store room and nothing had been washed during the few weeks he was incarcerated.

We went to a local supermarket for breakfast, a shopping precinct for new clothes then to my house where he went into the shower and all his clothes went into my washer dryer. Over a cup of coffee he informed me he was feeling human again! I took him to Brecon where I left him to meet his Probation Officer agreeing where we would meet afterwards. The Probation Service had arranged rooms for him in a shared house, but they would not be available for two days, meantime he had been booked into a hotel B & B for two nights. He had been released with a few pounds cash, which would cover only one night B & B. I also stayed in the hotel, attended to his bill and we went to view his ‘furnished’ accommodation. To describe it as sparse would be over-kind. He went to find local friends. I returned to Porthcawl where with the help of the prison chaplaincy and others we set up his rooms.

I have had occasional messages of thanks and good wishes from him. The last I heard he had completed the Wales Mountain Leadership Course and was commencing training others. His paperwork proved he didn't do it!

You win some, you lose some, but we allow the Holy Spirit to lead where we must go.



News from All Saints

Pam Rossini

The month of December has been a truly hectic one for the church. We have had concerts galore with rehearsals during the day and packed churches at night.

Most of the time the weather has been appalling with wind and rain coming sideways at us. However, Mums, Dads, Grannies, all the family and friends have not been daunted and have been determined to proudly cheer on their talented youngsters. No doubt we will, in the future, see some of this talent on our TV screens!

Early December saw the Rotary Christmas Tree Festival - what an explosion of colour and imagination. Trees from various local groups were displayed in cleverly thought-out decoration. It was a great start to the festivities and I would recommend the viewing of the Christmas trees next year to all – you won't be disappointed.

And now we come to Christmas Eve. The church was full, the choir in good voice and our young organist, Laurence Hunt, who is in his last year studying medicine, kindly offered his services for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. For Judith, our regular organist, it meant that she was able to have a short and well-deserved rest. Judith is a super-talented lady, always cheerful, who puts her heart and soul into all the many projects she runs. We are very lucky to have her.

The Crib Service on Christmas Eve afternoon was another happy event and well attended with lots of families. Judith was again our organist and the beautiful carols were enjoyed by all.

Christmas Day was relatively quiet. The service was humbling as we remembered the reason for this celebration – the birth of a tiny baby, born in a stable by a young girl named Mary. This tiny babe is the reason for Christians everywhere to give thanks, so although a small congregation, we sang with gusto to thank and praise our God.

We were so very sorry to hear of the death of Barbara Davies in December. Barbara was a regular at All Saints and will be sadly missed. We send our sincere condolences to her family.

Although the weather became bitterly cold, our friends, Sue and Walter Coughlin celebrated their Diamond Wedding in warmer climes. Congratulations to them both.

Congratulations

Congratulations

Congratulations too to Peter and Helen Owen who also celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary. We all

joined them for drinks and snacks in the church hall with Peter singing a romantic song to Helen – well done!

Recently we celebrated again in the hall, for Doreen Lewis' 90th birthday. Her many friends enjoyed wine and cake and sang a rousing Happy Birthday. We wish her many more happy days.

HAPPY
Birthday

The Alpha Course has just started and this is being run by Tony and Lydia who generously are using their home for it. All are welcome (as long as space allows), please see Tony or Lydia for more information.

A farewell service was held for Fr Geoff at St Michael's in Cwmavon. He is taking a well-deserved retirement. He is an enormously popular priest and this was seen by the number of friends at the service.

Wednesday 24th January sees the start of our Soup Lunches in the hall. All are welcome to enjoy us for homemade soup with French bread, cheese and coffee. Come and join the chatter.

A little reminder: Fr Mark's book "Journeying with God in the Wilderness – a 40-day devotional" is on sale now. Judith has all the details.

A big welcome to George, Gareth and Alisha's young son, who has become the youngest member to assist in the church service. He is doing famously and his Mum and Dad must be very proud of him.

As you can tell, December and early January have been hectic, especially for the clergy who not only take the services but visit the sick at home and in hospital and do a myriad of other tasks as well. A big thank you for your care of us.

*thank
you*

A big thank you from us both for the many good wishes and cards we received for our Diamond Wedding Anniversary. *Helen and Peter Owen*

Surprise

Adrian Warner

I've found a different topic to write about – what a surprise! How we all enjoy a surprise (provided it is not better classified as a shock). Mary being visited by an angel is a prime example. Exam results, meeting someone in the street, winning a raffle, getting a downpour on a day with a fine forecast, receiving an unexpected present, succeeding against the odds are some first thoughts. Many expressions such as 'I surprised myself', 'That's a surprise', and 'You surprise me' abound.

Someone very athletic and fit suddenly having a problem, a pain, a slip, and (years ago) a train being on time; how quickly an event has arrived and how quickly things are forgotten and lessons not learned. Many a story has a surprise twist at the end which resolves the tale. I was surprised when finding a book 'One Woman Walks Wales' on the bookshelf in the common room of the flats where I live, but not so surprised as reading it, for on every page were places I remember, and descriptions of the problems and pains of long distance walking. She walked nearly 4000 miles raising money for awareness of ovarian cancer. Do read it.

People and their activities are full of endless surprises; crowd dynamics from Palm Sunday to the road to Emmaus give many examples. Being flexible with plans gives regular opportunities for surprises, and in the late evening as you think back over your day there may have been many rewarding surprises. The news is often full of them! Perhaps this topic could be developed into a whole book and what a novel surprise it would be to become an author !

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News from St David's

Pat Parry

Happy New Year to you all. I'm hoping this year will be better for me than 2023 which started with surgery for bowel cancer followed by 6 months chemotherapy. For David, his chemotherapy had stopped working. He started to become very unwell from May and sadly died in September following a month in hospital. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their kind words of sympathy and cards and for all who attended his funeral in All Saints and for the donations to Ty Elis Counselling Service. Many thanks to Fr. Philip and Fr Jonathan for their care.

David was very involved with the Porthcawl Churches. He was on the PCC for nearly 50 years and was church warden on several occasions. He did a lot towards fund raising for the new St David's church and took on the role of Gift Aid secretary. He encouraged people to give regular through Gift Direct with the Llandaff Diocese taking on the task of claiming the Gift Aid and sending the money directly to the Parish bank account on a monthly basis.

During Advent, the children from Junior Church lit an Advent candle each week and read the Advent prayer - they spoke very clearly. This year, unfortunately, we have not had a Christmas Fayre or a Nativity play because of lack of numbers. The morning Eucharist on Christmas Eve was well attended and we celebrated Peter Millis' birthday afterwards with a glass of bubbly.

In January the Porthcawl Inner Wheel celebrated the Centenary of the national organisation with a service in St David's and we were able to have a chat with them afterwards.

Last week a good number from the Porthcawl Churches travelled to Cwmafan for a sung evensong for Fr. Geoff's retirement. He has been working there for the past few years. It was nice to catch up with him again and wish him well.

Congratulations to my granddaughter Ellie who recently passed grade 7 piano and came 3rd in the Porthcawl Rotary Young Musician's Competition in December in All Saints. She also played the piano in the Rotary Festival concert for the schools the following day.

Newton Nottage Mothers' Union

Judith Shawe

A Happy New Year to you all.

We are sad to lose our dear friend Barbara Davies. Her funeral 'promoted her to Glory' with wonderful Salvation Army hymns - what a joy. God bless you, Barbara.

The Crib service on Christmas Eve was enjoyed by over 70 people - how great is that! All items for the stable were hidden and then found, and Mary and Joseph arrived on time. Many thanks to everyone involved in the service, the refreshments and the craft - you know who you are !

MU member Becky Willis has been in hospital for a while - she has been a model patient (!) and she'll soon be home to make a nuisance of herself! Love you really Becky! I'm grateful to Becky for taking over the birthday card job, previously so well done by our lovely Barbara. Thank you x

Congratulations to Doreen Lewis on reaching her 90th birthday - lots of love from us all, Doreen.

A handwritten birthday card with the words "Happy Birthday!" written in a cursive, black ink style. The word "Happy" is on the top line, "Birthday!" is on the bottom line, and there is a horizontal line under "Birthday!".

The AGM was held on a Saturday this year to enable the Thursday Group MU members to come. Thanks to Fr Jonathan for coming too. There was an overview of the year's events and activities, which prompted much comment and a great deal of laughter. Everyone was thrilled with the money raised from the Croeso teas, which enabled donations to MU charities like the caravan sponsored by the MU in Trecco (AFIA=Away from it all). We've come a long way this year, well done everyone. Ever onwards - please check the notice boards in all the Porthcawl churches for news of forthcoming events.

We have speakers from all sorts of organisations this year - at the February meeting on Tuesday 6th, we welcome Sandra Owen who will talk to us about the wonderful work done at the Sandville. Everyone is welcome, although it'll cost you £2 for tea and a delicious biscuit!

The Croeso tea has become an established monthly event. There's no cost to attend but money donations are most welcome. On the whole, people have been very generous, thank you. Bring a friend or relative or anyone who could do with company, it'll be great to see you.

The next tea dates are:

Saturday, 27th January
Saturday, 24th February and
Saturday, 23rd March.

Please check the weekly sheet and the notice board in case there are any changes. Every tea is in All Saints at 2pm - 4pm. Three cheers to the Thursday group for all their cooking (and washing up!)

Lydia and Rosey have taken on the role of correspondent for the 'In Touch' magazine. Many thanks, girls (P.S. the deadline is the end of March - just saying!)

Thanks to Fr Mark for donating 20% of his book sales to the branch, it is very much appreciated, thank you.

Feel free to come to a meeting on the first Tuesday of every month at 2pm in All Saints - there'll be chocolate biscuits!

World Day of Prayer

Carol Pearce



This year the service for The World Day of Prayer is at
All Saints on Friday March 1st at 2pm.

It has been prepared by a group of Christian women from Palestine. It was written a year or two ago before the present situation there and, as such, makes it a very moving service.

Its theme is: 'I Beg You.... Bear With One Another In Love.'

Members from the different churches and chapels in Porthcawl are organising it and we do hope you will be able to join us then.

World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement
led by Christian women
who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice.

Christmas Lunch at St John's

Janice and Linda

It seems a long time ago since we gathered together for Christmas lunch on 23rd December in St John's Schoolroom. Once again we say a heartfelt thank you to all who support these functions as without your continued interest they could not happen.

Amid the festively decorated tables, twinkling lights and many lanterns, a Christmas Lunch was ably and cheerfully served by our young team – well done to all. Even the kitchen had a sense of the season with Chris and Janice working in harmony.... until she discovered that her expensive bottle of wine was used for making the gravy! No wonder everyone said how lovely it was! Sorry there were no seconds of pudding, Gareth, we will try harder next year.

It was lovely to see everyone enjoying themselves – the atmosphere was really special. Our raffle (with extra prizes – thank you to those who gave them) was drawn, as ever, by Fr Philip. Prizes were won by Sheryl Page, George Bentley, Doreen Redmond, Maureen Crew and Liz Singer. The prize for “a sparkly Christmas outfit” went to Mrs Willis. The bar was kept busy and the raffle well supported meaning that:

£400 was given to St John's Restoration Fund

£300 was given to Porthcawl YMCA, and

£150 was given to Newton Flower Guild.

Once again thank you all for without your generosity this could not happen. May we take this opportunity to wish you a happy, healthy New Year and we look forward to seeing you at our events this year.

We were saddened to hear of the death of Barbara Davies in December. She was a stalwart supporter of the 200 Club and many lunches.
RIP a lovely lady.

*In Loving
Memory*



200 Club - For your diary....

Coming soon:

200 Club at St John's Schoolroom on Saturday 17th February.

Pancakes at 10.30am with all the usual attractions.

This will be the end of the 2023-24 200 Club year and subs will be due after this. New members will be very welcome - WE NEED YOU!

2024 - 2025

1st June 2024 - All Saints 200 Club

July 2024 (date to be confirmed) - St John's Summer Fayre

3rd August 2024 - St John's 200 Club

Date to be confirmed - St John's Harvest Lunch

16th November 2024 - St David's 200 Club

8th December 2024 - St John's Christmas Lunch

8th February 2025 - St John's 200 Club

..... and possibly more!

We are looking for soft toys for the Summer Fayre and would be grateful for donations, large and small, single or buy the bagful!

Need help getting them to us, please ring Linda on 01656 772014.

After Dr Who

Andrew Singer

Newton Village Green has returned to its usual routine after the invasion of 500 actors, aliens, technicians for lighting, sound, crew catering, pantechnicons and a helicopter disrupted the peace for three nights of filming an episode of Dr Who at the end of November. Well, not an episode - just 5 minutes of an episode!

Instead of a church and graveyard glowing in red light during those three nights, we (the local church committee) arranged for the tower to be floodlit during the Christmas and New Year period. Bridgend County Borough Council erected the lights for us and committee member, Alison Williams, offered to sponsor the floodlighting. Actually, she persuaded husband, Mark, to do so, with her, through their company The Print Centre and we are very grateful.

The picture on page 35 is the tower of St John's bathed in white light, not the Doctor Who red!

News from St John's

Diane Jackson



First of all, a very happy and healthy New Year to you all.

There is much to look forward to, starting with our new Vicar, Wayne, beginning his ministry in Porthcawl in February. We look forward to welcoming him and hope that he will soon settle down and get to know us - a rather daunting task!

Looking back since the last magazine was issued, December started with our special Christmas coffee morning. Again it was a jolly friendly morning spent in Christian Fellowship. With our super Raffle (as always the prizes were donated), we raised nearly £200. This was closely followed on the Sunday evening, with the Darkness into Light service. It was very well attended with those not only from St John's, but also with people throughout the Ministry Area.

On Sunday 10th December, we celebrated Christmas with another excellent lunch, provided by Janice and her loyal band of workers. This again was another jolly and happy event, thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. Thank you Janice and all your team for all the thought, preparation and hard work on the day. The proceeds of the lunch were divided between our Flower Guild, the Restoration Fund and the YMCA. On behalf of the Flower Guild, many thanks for thinking of them, as these days donations are rare.

Despite the very poor weather, most of the services over Christmas were very well attended. It was good to see that some people still recognise what Christmas is all about. Sadly too many do not. For those of no faith and even those of other faiths, it can still be a time for family gatherings, time spent together and sometimes excessive buying!

As always the church was magnificently decorated by the Ladies of the Flower Guild. This was despite Sandra being incapacitated by breaking her shoulder. Thank you Sandra (and Barry) for organising it all and all the ladies for their imagination and effort in producing another different and inspiring display. We hope Sandra will soon be well enough to be back driving as we have missed her!

At the end of November Joan Hughes celebrated her 100th Birthday!! We haven't seen Joan in church for some time due to ill health. We hope you had a really enjoyable and memorable day with all your family and friends. We understand that at the time of writing Joan is back in hospital. We hope she will soon be well enough to return home. Our best wishes are sent to her.

Happy
Birthday!

Christmas is not always a happy time for everyone. It is always a time when we remember all those who are dear to us, with whom we have spent past Christmas and who sadly are no longer with us.

We were very sorry to hear that Barbara Davies died in December. She was regular at both Bible Class and our Friday coffee mornings. She was actually in church just days before she died. She had not been well for sometime, but nevertheless, made the effort to come to church and be part of our 'family'. We will miss her and send our deepest sympathy to her family.

Another one who will be missing from our Friday morning coffee is Sandra Phillips. Sandra has moved to Newtown to be nearer to her family. We hope she will soon settle down. Through her daughter she already knows some people in the local church so no doubt she will soon feel at home. Our very best wishes go to her and hopefully we will still see her when she visits Porthcawl.

Becky Willis went into hospital just before Christmas and could, we understand, be there for some time. Our prayers and best wishes go to her and hope she will soon be home and well on the way to recovery.

get well
soon

St John's Summer Fayre 2024

Jonathan Lewis, Chairman, Summer Fayre Committee

The committee for 2024 will be meeting on 1st February to kick off proceedings for this year's St John's Summer Fayre. Keep an eye out for the date which will be announced in the near future.

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Liberty lib'ar-ti, n.

freedom from constraint, captivity, slavery, or tyranny: freedom to do as one pleases:

the unrestrained enjoyment of natural rights: power of free choice : privileges:

permission free range: leisure: disposal: the bounds within which certain privileges are enjoyed .

"Chambers"

News from St James' & St Mary Magdalene

Vanessa Evans

Christmas Sparkle Appeal

The enormous amount of preparation that goes into the Christmas season seems far away when January comes but the Advent message still rings true. The Christmas Sparkle appeal was once again hugely successful in the churches of St James' and St Mary Magdalene with just over 150 local families benefitting from the generosity shown in the kind donation of toys, books and games.

The 2023 Sparkle appeal, however, rose to a higher level thanks to the enormous donation of brand-new toys which were added to the much valued "nearly new" ones that are always so freely given. Our branch of Mothers' Union chose Christmas Sparkle for their annual charity donation and bought a huge amount of new gifts for children.

These were distributed among families that were struggling with the financial cost of Christmas - some of whom had actually decided to 'cancel' their Christmas which is something most of us cannot even imagine thinking about.

The Christian act of kindness defines the Advent message of "Glory to God in the Highest and on earth Peace, Goodwill to all men".

Thank you to everyone who showed their 'Goodwill' by supporting the Sparkle appeal - it is appreciated more than any of us will ever know.

Family Breakfast

The Family Breakfast continues to go from strength to strength with an average of 75 people coming to us on Saturday mornings which clearly outlines the need to help those less fortunate than ourselves. Please call in to see us any Saturday between 9am and 11.30am. Everyone is welcome and if you don't really want a breakfast bap then there's always coffee and delicious home made cakes on offer!



A Happy and Healthy New Year to everyone from the churches of St James' and St Mary Magdalene.



Margam Abbey

Festival of 'Celebrating Women'

Friday 1st March – 'Offering Support to Survivors of Abuse' May Baxter-Thornton, Children's Practitioner and survivor of child sexual abuse.

Tuesday 5th March – 'Women in Education' with Pam Scourfield.

Saturday 8th March – 'The Experience of Psychiatry for Women' with Professor Cath Bright.

Friday 15th March - 'My Life as an Immigration Officer' with Bev Gulley.



All Talks 7pm. Free entry & refreshments

Facebook: Margam Abbey Church



News from Margam Abbey

Bev Gulley

Happy New Year to you all.

Following a wonderful and enjoyable Christmas, we have been busy preparing a programme of events for the first quarter of 2024:

Musical Super Saturdays – All can be paid for at the door (where an entry fee is applicable). Refreshments available and free parking.

International Women's Day is on the 8th of March and, in support, we are running our own Festival of 'Celebrating Women' with a strong selection of female speakers across a variety of interesting topics.

These events run from the 1st to 16th of March and include Mthr Ruth's musical 'Super Saturday' event. These events are free and open to everyone and include refreshments. We very much hope that you can join us.

2nd to 16th March 2024

**MARGAM ABBEY**

MUSIC

'SUPER SATURDAYS'

Saturday 24th February 3pm – Dynamic Harps
St David's Day Concert Free Entry

Saturday 9th March 7pm – Cardiff Chamber
Choir Ticket Cost £8 (includes refreshments)

Saturday 9th March 5pm – Swansea Bach
Choir 'Membra Jesu Nostrī' Ticket Cost £15

Saturday 16th March 7pm – Soprano Ruth-
Greenaway Robbins Recital of songs by
Morfydd Owen. Influential 20th century female
composer. Pianist Jane Samuel Free Entry





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News from St Theodore's

Margaret Griffiths

Happy New Year to you all.

It was so good to see both adults and children enjoy the Christingle service which took place at the Family Breakfast in Pyle church Hall on Saturday 16th December.

January saw all the community activities which take place in St Theodore's re-starting after a Christmas break. Harking back to Christmas, I have to confess that my husband won a prize in our Christmas raffle. He won the toiletries hamper!! Safe to say that myself, my daughter and granddaughter shared it between us.

We now look ahead to Lent and are planning our Lent lunches. These will take place at 12 noon on every Wednesday in Lent, starting on Ash Wednesday. The lunches will consist of homemade soup, bread and cheese. All proceeds from the lunches will be donated to Christian Aid.

Women's World Day of Prayer always takes place on the first Friday in March. This year St Theodore's is hosting the service for the women of the churches and chapels from Cefn Cribwr down to Cornelly. The service will take place at 2.00 p.m. on Friday 1st March, followed by refreshments.

On the 24th February, St Theodore's will be hosting a concert arranged by Josef Gray, a young local baritone who is the grandson of one of our church choir members. Josef arranged a concert last year, which was a sell-out and featured a number of young singers. This year he is going to be joined by soprano Anne Wilkins from Bridgend. If you watch Michael McIntyre's Big Show, you may have seen Anne appear on the show when she got to realise her dream of singing with Bryn Terfel!

Anne will be joined by two young singers who are members of LARS (Loud Applause Rising Stars) – Darcey Paris George and Courtney Taylor. The concert will start at 7 pm. Tickets are £10 and available from Theo's Charity Shop, Bridge Street, Kenfig Hill. Don't leave it until the last minute to get your tickets – they sold out very quickly last year!

Old Newtonians Handbell Ringers

Sue Smart

- Who:** A lively group of mixed ability handbell ringers, who like spreading joy through the music produced by handbells
- When:** Every Tuesday & Thursday, 7-9pm (with half time tea break!)
- Where:** Newton Institute, Newton Nottage Road
- Contact:** Team Leader: Tim Tilt 07749 254131 or thetilts@hotmail.com

Hi everybody.

It's been a while since we wrote our last article but December saw a busy month for the Old Newtonians with a flurry of Christmas concerts at local care homes including:

Picton Court Care Home

Brocastle Care Home

Albert Edward Prince of Wales Court Home

- and even Swn y Mor Care Home in Aberavon

We had a warm welcome from the residents and the staff wherever we went – which was very heartening and made all the frantic practice sessions worthwhile.

In addition to the care home concerts, we did one at the Trinity Church in Porthcawl where one lady was so impressed with our repertoire that she wanted to know more about our team. She came to listen to our practice one evening and is now a member of the Old Newtonians! So you never know what effect our playing can have. Welcome Tina – delighted to have you on board. We are now up to 11 members and always looking to grow.

Our final gig before Christmas was for friends and family and, for the first time, we performed at Grace Church Hall (next to the Globe garage). A new venue for us – and a splendid one with excellent acoustics. It was so well attended that we almost ran out of Prosecco and mince pies! Over 50 people came and gave us so many compliments that we are definitely doing another one next year. See the photo on page 35. A video was done of the whole concert and if anyone is interested in seeing a copy please contact Tim Tilt, our leader.

We are now practicing in earnest for our spring/summer repertoire

and have new tunes to master, including Ar Hyd y Nos and Feed the Birds (from Mary Poppins).

As usual, if you want to hear more or just come along to see what it's all about, you'd be more than welcome on a Tuesday or Thursday from 7pm to 9pm at the Newton Institute. We'll even include a cuppa and maybe a chocolate biscuit....

Fascinating February

February is the shortest month of the year. It is unlike any other month as every four years it starts and finishes on the same day of the week because of the extra 'leap' day. This year February starts and ends on a Thursday. The Earth takes approximately 365 and a quarter days to orbit the Sun. The quarter day creates the need for a leap year every four years to correct the imbalance.

If you are born on 29 February, you only have a 'proper' birthday every four years! There are an estimated 5 million people in the world who are 'leaplings' - the name for someone born on 29 February.

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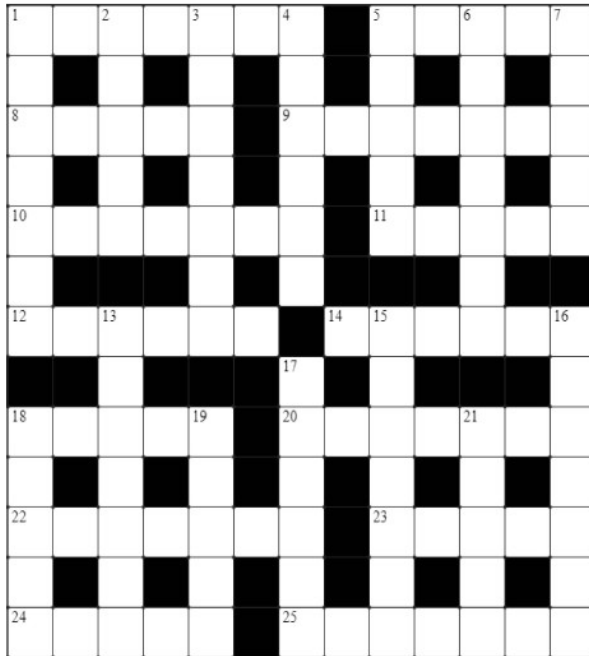
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Quick Crossword



Across

- 1 Dozens (7)
- 5 Movies (5)
- 8 Previous (5)
- 9 Lively, in music (7)
- 10 Not indoors (7)
- 11 Prickly evergreen shrub (5)
- 12 Military pageant (6)
- 14 Minor inadvertent mistake (4,2)
- 18 Lawful (5)
- 20 The God of wine (7)
- 22 Conflagration (7)
- 23 Rub out (5)
- 24 Sortie (5)
- 25 Long, usually wooden seats (7)

Down

- 1 Loftiest (7)
- 2 Decree (5)
- 3 Dizziness (7)
- 4 Weighing machine (6)
- 5 Muck (5)
- 6 Fielding position (3,4)
- 7 Ostentatious (5)
- 13 Diplomatic (7)
- 15 Reading desk (7)
- 16 Own (7)
- 17 Engross (6)
- 18 Dens (5)
- 19 Linger (5)
- 21 Sandy common (5)

Quick Crossword Answer (page31)

1	T	2	W	E	L	3	V	E	4	S	5	F	I	6	L	M	7	S
	O		D		E		C		I		E		H					
8	P	R	I	O	R		9	A	L	L	E	G	R	O				
	M		C		T		L		T		S		W					
10	O	U	T	S	I	D	E		11	H	O	L	L	Y				
	S				G		S						I					
12	T	A	13	T	T	O	O		14	S	L	I	P	U	P		16	
			A					17	A	E							O	
18	L	I	C	I	T		19		20	B	A	C	C	H	U	S		
	A		T		A		S		T		E		S					
22	I	N	F	E	R	N	O		23	E	R	A	S	E				
	R		U		R		R		R		R		T		S			
24	S	A	L	L	Y		25	B	E	N	C	H	E	S				



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Jubilee Gardens,

Pyle Road,

Porthcawl CF36 5TB

Tel/Fax: 783270

e-mail: belleviemason@live.co.uk

Pause for Thought

Prayer for Peace

Father, you are the God of peace;
hasten the day when wars will cease in all the world,
and when all will be your love, glory and righteousness.
Give us the grace to fight courageously
against the spiritual powers of darkness,
and the compassion always to care
for our brothers and sisters.

Amen

Mark Broadway
'Journeying with God in the Wilderness
A 40-day Lent devotional'



Margam Ministry Area

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Dr Paul Smart 01656 788086 pmsmart@aol.com

Safeguarding Officer:

Mr Dave Xerri 07850 129079 dave@xerri.wales

Church subwardens:

All Saints, Porthcawl	Mrs Helen Owen	01656 785763
	Mr Phillip Angell	01656 710948
Saint John the Baptist, Newton	Mrs Liz Singer	01656 785628
	Miss Denver Whale	01656 782573
Saint David, Nottage	Mr Clive Edwards	01656 784698
	Mrs Catherine Powell	01656 773979
Saint Mary Magdalene, Maudlam	Mr John Roberts	07851 122804
	Mrs Eileen Edwards	07530 989433
Saint James, Pyle		

Saint Theodore, Kenfig Hill	Mrs Margaret Phillips	07748 678827
	Mrs Margaret Griffiths	07477 648871
Margam Abbey	Mr Colin Gulley	07576 921005
	Mrs Bev Gulley	07530 421220

Hall Bookings

Parish Hall, Pyle	Sue Roberts	01656 741030
All Saints, Porthcawl	allsaintschurchhall@gmail.com	
St David, Nottage	Clive Edwards	01656784698
St John the Baptist, Newton	Ann Howells	07837 406397
Margam Abbey Hall	Bev Gulley	07530 421220
St Theodore's, Kenfig Hill	sttheodoreskh@hotmail.com	

A Snapshot of the Ministry Area



For more photos, visit www.margam.org.uk



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