

TOGETHER

A newsletter from Churches Together in Llanishen and District

February 2021

Welcome to our newsletter!

Dear Friends in Christ

As you may have realised, most of the usual activity of Churches Together in Llanishen and District has been suspended for the last year.

We know that local churches have been working to maintain worship, prayer, fellowship and pastoral support in different ways, though some have found this a real struggle. As the Executive of Churches Together, we know we have a calling to enable communication among different churches. We have therefore decided to circulate a newsletter, which we hope will help us learn from and support each other.

We have called this newsletter "Together" but the name is not set in stone – other suggestions welcome. We hope churches will find suitable ways to sending this on to individual members.

We are also looking at ways in which we could resume communication among CT Council members, address the need for an annual meeting and update you on our finances (no grounds for panic at present!). We aim to update you later in the spring.

We don't know how often we will be producing this newsletter; it will depend on what you send us. For more information on that, please see the last page.

A Personal Welcome

We are delighted to welcome **Father Christopher Smith** as Vicar of St Isan's and St Faith churches. We wish him health and every blessing in his work and fellowship here.

Updates from Churches

St Faith, Morris Avenue

At St Faith, our Sunday morning services are normally taken at present by retired clergy. Our new vicar, Father Christopher Smith, is in post but has been unwell, though he is now returning to work on a phased basis. Although we are once again having Sunday services, those who are unable to attend are encouraged to join us spiritually, so we are encouraging everyone to pray together at 9am on a Sunday, whether or not they can attend in person.

Since Easter 2020, we have been sending out a weekly set of readings, collects, psalms and hymns, together with church news and notices, and requests for prayer. These are sent by e-mail with a printed copy for those who do not have e-mail. We also include general news, birthdays, celebrations and prayers for the sick.

We also arrange for everyone connected with St Faith church (not just those who come to services) to have a regular phone call.

If anyone would like to see a copy of the St Faith Newsletter, or would like to receive it, please contact Anita Gibbins, a_gibbins@sky.com.

Park End Church

A strange but busy 12 months for Park End: an update on 2020 and plans for 2021.

Church Life

- **Services** live streamed each Sunday at 11am via YouTube (see below), available to watch any time; **DVDS** copies available for those without internet access.
- Last summer we offered a walk up / drive-through **Car Park Communion**.
- We re-opened our building in the summer for (socially distanced) **private prayer**
- **The Bible Hour** – We read the Bible together nightly with our Minister. All recordings available on our Bible Hour playlist on YouTube.
- Our Christian club for primary school aged children **Big Fish** has moved to YouTube (please see the Big Fish playlist on our channel).
- **Bible 45** is a Zoom chat for high schoolers (first Sunday of Month, 6pm). E-mail us for Zoom details – all high schoolers welcome.
- **Weekly Prayer meeting** – this is on Zoom every Tuesday at 7pm; please just email for details. You can phone-into this meeting also.

New for 2021 - The Feasts And Foundations Course

- An easy-to-follow, flexible course for anyone wanting to know more about the Lord JESUS Christ. Open to all - friends, neighbours, and **fellow churches**. Please see our website (below) or get in touch to find out more.

Administration

We have found several useful IT tools, including tickettailor.com for booking places at in-person services, a re-launched church website using churchinsight.com, a free design tool canva.com for our newsletter, **Zoom** meetings with landline phone-in option and smartsurvey.co.uk to record voting decisions (saves in-box space).

Social

- **Zoom Coffee** – every other Saturday at 10:30am. Please e-mail for Zoom details.
- We've held **social evenings** on Zoom including Harvest Supper and curry night!

Prayer is the engine of all fruitful activities; please pray that we will reach many people with the good news of Jesus.

Glory to JESUS, may His name be praised in Cardiff.

Contact details:

- www.parkendcardiff.org.uk
- www.youtube.com/parkendchurch
- FB: /parkendchurch
- Email: admin@parkendcardiff.org.uk

Llanishen Methodist Church, Melbourne Road

At present we have weekly services on Zoom, some jointly with other local Methodist churches. We circulate a weekly pastoral letter and fortnightly newsletter. We print copies for those

without internet access, as well as weekly services with readings, reflection and prayers. Our congregation have prayer handbooks and hymn books for distanced worship. We were able to have outdoor in-person services in early autumn. Winter and Covid have paused that for now, but we did hold a (distanced) outdoor Christingle service – the wind dropped and the candles stayed alight!

Personal support is also maintained with pastoral phone calls and some members take part in a church Whatsapp group. Distanced gatherings (bring your own chair) were held on the Court School Field when weather and Covid restrictions permitted.

Cardiff-wide, Methodist churches came together for a 6-week study course via Zoom: “A Methodist way of life”, seeking to deepen our understanding and commitment to Christian faith. After a Cardiff-wide Advent Course, a Lent course based on Mark’s gospel is now planned.

We post on our Facebook page: a daily prayer and weekly service sheets. We took “Christingle in a bag” to all our neighbours so that they could join us, in person, on their doorstep or from home. We invited everyone in the street and congregation to add a bauble to our Christmas tree; many did so. We have just delivered Lent ‘goodies’ to our neighbours and to Thomas House - our 120th anniversary card, chocolates and a Lent prayer card.

We pray for God’s blessing on our fellow churches and the community of Llanishen.

The Newsletter Editor hopes to hear from other local churches soon!

Good Neighbours in North Cardiff (GNiNC)

As with most charities, the pandemic has had a major impact on what we do, how we do it, and how we pay for it. At the outset, following legal requirements and government guidelines, we agreed and implemented policies for supporting clients and office arrangements. These are reviewed regularly.

Inevitably, our services have reduced and changed, especially due to social distancing. We have had to suspend all transport services (taking people to GPs, social groups, hairdressers, shops etc.), which will remain the case for the foreseeable future. Recognising the impact of social isolation, we have introduced a new telephone companionship service which has proved popular. For now, our other main service is unaccompanied shopping for clients. At the start we spoke to all our existing clients to discuss their requirements. With new clients who have joined, we are presently supporting nearly 60.

Sadly, we have lost the support of about half our volunteers, isolating for various reasons. However, we are very grateful for the dozen or so people who have joined us during the past year. We hope that they will return or stay on in future, as much will depend on that. Two of our three part time office staff have left, which leaves one in the office and me working from home.

Financially, we have taken a big hit, which could affect our long-term future. We cannot do “hands on” fundraising, so we have been applying to charitable trusts etc., but they are inundated.

We have an “exit strategy” looking at future options and what may be our “new normal”, but it is hard to envisage life returning to what it was. The vaccination programme gives us cause for optimism. There is light at the end of the tunnel, but no-one can be sure how long the tunnel is!

Duncan J Pugh, Co-ordinator, 8 February 2021

Updates from Cytûn

Cytûn (Churches Together in Wales) circulates regular policy bulletins with news and information of interest to churches. The February bulletin includes items ranging from Climate Sunday to charity registration of churches, the Welsh Assembly's cross-party group on faith to a Church of England scheme to help UK citizens living in France and Spain. For more information see <https://www.cytun.co.uk>.

Fairtrade Fortnight 22 Feb – 7 March 2021

Each year Fairtrade Fortnight gives people – including many hundreds of Fairtrade churches across the UK – the opportunity to celebrate Fairtrade achievements and learn more about the difference that Fairtrade makes.

In Fairtrade Fortnight 2021, we will highlight the growing challenges that climate change brings to farmers and workers in the communities with whom Fairtrade works. The facts are straightforward. Farmers and workers in the global south, who have done the least to contribute to climate change, are disproportionately affected. They have told us that:

- Climate change is one of their biggest challenges right now.
- Low prices for their crops mean that they are struggling to fight back.
- With more money through Fairtrade they feel more equipped to meet their everyday needs and deal with the challenges posed by climate change.

Fairtrade works to raise the voices of farmers and workers and prioritise what they need to respond to the environmental crises unfolding in already vulnerable communities. This Fortnight, we are asking you to Choose the World You Want and use your voice to tell others about the challenges that farmers face from climate change.

For more information see <https://fairtradewales.com/get-involved/fairtrade-fortnight-2021>.

Resources for Lent

Bible Society has a range of resources available for church or individual prayer and study during Lent. See <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/easter/>.

The Church in Wales Llandaff Diocese also has a useful web page with Lent materials: <https://llandaff.churchinwales.org.uk/en/faith-and-ministry/lent-2021/>.

Future newsletters

We would like to hear from you about:

- updates and news from churches
- requests for prayer
- hints and tips about fulfilling our mission in lockdown
- information about resources that we may know about.

If you have any news, information or requests that you would like us to include, please e-mail Ian Thomas (ian@taliesin01.plus.com) or call 029 2075 4255.

May the Father bless you, may Jesus walk at all times, may the Spirit guide you.