



UPPER TROSNANT BAPTIST CHURCH

January 2019



Newsletter

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29 verse 11)

Sunday Services at
11.00 am and 4.00 pm

A very warm welcome to you

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Newsletter Items:

We are always happy to receive items for the newsletter.
Please email articles or features for the February 2019 edition to
uppertrosnantbc@gmail.com by **Sunday 13th January 2019**

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Letter from Pastor Richard

It's that time again!



When you receive this newsletter, it may well still be December 2018, with Christmas very much part of your thinking. And so, I am going to share a lovely seasonal verse to take into 2019. Here is a promise that the prophet Isaiah made about 700 years before the birth of Jesus:

Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel.
Isaiah 7 v 14 (NIV)

Immanuel means God is with us. The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ meant we can now know it in our lives. As he was born, lived, died and rose again, he did everything to make that possible for us. We can have the Lord himself beside us in whatever situations we find ourselves. In the words of one of the hymns we love to sing:

*He walks with me and talks with me
Along life's narrow way.*

And so here is something to take with us as we go into 2019. In our lives individually and as a Church. If there is one thing that we can pray for the coming year, it is that we will, in all our activities, and fellowship with each other know Immanuel – God is with us. In fact, we should not take one step otherwise.

As we plan for how we continue as a church, and how we seek to show the love of Jesus to those around us, let's have that as the most

important thing of all. If God is not with us, then we may as well not do anything. If what we do is just our bright ideas, then we will get nowhere.

Let's pray that we know that he is walking with us at all times.

Happy New Year!

Love in Jesus,

Pastor Richard

Pastor's Preaching Schedule for January

January 6 th	am: All you need is Love – and Truth, Part 1	2 John
	pm: All you need is Love – and Truth, Part 2	3 John
January 20 th	am: Being certain	1 John 5 v 13-21
	pm: A shocking death	Matthew 14 v 1-12
January 27 th	am: The Annoying Brother	Genesis 37

Shoebox Update

Thank you so much to everyone who contributed to the shoeboxes, both by providing items and donating money. **35** boxes in total were sent to Operation Christmas Child from Trosnant, which will be very much appreciated by the children who receive them. We will let you know in due course exactly where they were sent.

Many thanks too to Jane Clay for gathering in so many shoeboxes for us to use.

Greetings from Doreen

The saddest sights in our lovely valley are the many empty, tumbling down church buildings, neglected and no longer bright with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Consider these words, written by the old testament prophet, Haggai:

'Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses while this house remains a ruin?' (chapter 1 verse 4).

There is a story about a group of people who built a church, fashioned and furnished it with care, and planned an impressive opening ceremony. The special evening came, as twilight shadows darkened the valley, and the excited congregation trooped towards the open door of the new building – which was in darkness! Beside the door was a table holding small shaded lamps, and each person was given one to take into the church. Soon the seats were full, and their lights lit up the place. The Pastor stood at the front. He said, 'This church needs you. You carried light when you came in. The church is a convenient setting for us to worship together, but without you, it is just a building – YOU are the real church!' Then he raised his hands, and at his signal every electric light in the building was switched on and the church was truly bright and beautiful. He said, 'When you leave tonight, and we turn off the lights, you will carry your lights with you. You are carrying Jesus in your hearts, and He is the light of the world.'

We are grateful for our church, over 200 years old and always lit up by the prayers and praises of people who have chosen to meet here in Upper Trosnant Baptist Church, to celebrate together that God loves them and sent Jesus to be their Saviour.

Now, as the New Year begins, consider with me these other verses presented by Haggai:

- ❖ **Chapter 1 verse 5:** Give careful thought to your ways!
- ❖ **Chapter 1 verse 8:** Build my house so that I may take pleasure in it and be honoured.
- ❖ **Chapter 2 verse 3:** My spirit remains amongst you. Do not fear.
- ❖ **Chapter 2 verse 7:** I will fill His house with glory.
- ❖ **Chapter 2 verse 19:** From this day on, I WILL bless you.
- ❖ **Chapter 2 verse 23:** I have chosen you, declares the Lord Almighty.



And so, may we all shine for Jesus in 2019. With love as always,

Doreen

'Daffodils in Winter' by Doreen Harrison

Are you somebody who is prone to suffering from the 'winter blues'? The days can seem very cold and short in the dark months of January and February, and sunshine is often in short supply when we venture outside. The bright lights and excitement of Christmas are a long way behind us, and yet the warmth of spring and summer are still a very long way off...

If that is how you feel, then this is the book for you! *Daffodils in Winter* is the latest title in a lovely series of inspiring reads from our very own Doreen Harrison. You can buy it on Amazon, or in the Christian Bookshop in Pontypool. It is produced in the same format as her previous titles, *Fragrance of Faith*, *A Bouquet of Blessings*, and *A Garland of Grace*, with the same mix of eye-catching photographs and short articles that are inviting and inspiring in equal measure.

As Doreen explains in her brief introduction, *Daffodils in Winter* 'contains anecdotes, stories, thoughts which will hold you together

when situations and circumstances are causing you to fall apart. It is a book for a bedside table, a coffee table, for a birthday gift, for a sick friend. It will fit into an A5 envelope. There are blessings in its pages, gathered through a life of variety and events which all underline the truth that Jesus saves, keeps – and satisfies – always and for ever.'

There are 31 short articles in the book, and their order follows through the sequence of the year. For wintertime there is, 'Happy New Year' and 'Sun after Snow'. Spring follows with, 'Find the Crocus', or 'The Quiet of Easter', and then summer – 'Ice Cream Shortage' – and through the autumn and back to Christmas, with 'Christmas Dinner' and 'Nativity'. But each one can be read and enjoyed at any time, and if you just open the pages randomly, your eye is certain to fall on something that will draw you in to read more.

Everyone will have their favourite stories in here. I found it very moving to read Doreen's account of helping a little boy with dwarfism to settle into school, and also her recollection of how her young granddaughter reacted to seeing a spider's web sparkling with raindrops like jewels. Some parts of the book will make you laugh out loud – for example, the champion greyhound that refused to take racing seriously any more after it succeeded in catching the rabbit, or the time that Doreen herself, in an absentminded moment, almost got swallowed up by a Torfaen recycling bin! Both of these incidents are explored and used to remind the reader of some important truths, and to share some excellent advice. Like that disappointed dog, we need to realise that there is nothing to be gained by chasing after unimportant, worldly goals. And like Doreen, we should pray at all times – she did as she felt herself toppling into the bin!; we should trust in the Lord – a bag of soft rubbish was there to save her from injury; and we should be thankful for what we have – a safe community where the rubbish is collected and recycled.

Daffodils in Winter is not a long book, but you will want to read it through several times and come back to its pages regularly. What could be better to have beside you in the long, dark days of January?

Clare Hopkins

Remembering Mr Albert Jones

It was with sadness that we heard of the death of a very good friend of our Church in September last year. Mr Albert Jones was a great supporter of Upper Trosnant, although very few members of our congregation today had met him. But when Richard and Doreen Harrison came to the Eastern Valley as missionaries, Albert was at that time an active member of the fellowship at Noddfa Chapel. He loved to get involved in social and musical events in churches and chapels all around Pontypool, and his kind nature and enthusiasm for the work of the Lord were a wonderful witness and a true inspiration to everyone whom he met.

Albert lived with his sister Phyllis, and he some years ago he moved with her to Pontllanfraith. From there he continued to take a great interest in God's work in Pontypool, and he loved to receive this Newsletter. In fact, we did not send just one copy sent to him each month, but ten, as he shared and distributed them with so many Christian friends!

Albert supported Upper Trosnant in practical ways too. When we held gift days, for example for the new lighting in the Church, or for the refurbishment of the vestry and the Church flat, he would send generous gifts to help with the work.

Albert was 70 when he died. We rejoice that he has gone to be with the Lord, but he will be much missed by his family and his many friends.

A Tribute to Albert from his Sister

Albert was a sweet and gentle man who was kind and generous. He had an integrity and honesty that is rare, and whatever the role, he always gave his best. He was a loyal and dependable friend, an awesome uncle and brother, whose love, loyalty and generosity will never be forgotten by me, his sister, who loved him very much.

These qualities were all the more impressive, as Albert had emotional and psychiatric problems all his life, and was severely bullied as a child. But he found acceptance and kindness at the local Apostolic Sunday School, where he learned of a God who loved him.

The Bible says, 'it is by their fruit you will know them', and Albert was one of the greatest examples of true Christianity I have ever seen. We read in 1 Corinthians 13 that 'three things are eternal, Faith, Hope and Love, and the greatest of these is Love.' Albert's faith in Jesus as his own personal saviour and friend was simple, his hope was secure, and his love was plain for all to see.

He never let the boundaries of denominations hold him back and seized every opportunity to share fellowship, from coffee mornings to prayer meetings and Bible studies, to men's fellowship. Albert was out most days and was well known in so many chapels and churches up and down the valleys.

During his last weeks he was housebound, but found great comfort in the visits of his friends, and in the "power in the blood", yes, even in the darkest hours. At his lowest ebb, Albert's eyes were fixed on Jesus, his Lord, Saviour and friend, always. He asked me and Jeremy my son to play hymns on the computer all through the night.

Albert was a truly good and faithful servant, a lovely man who loved God. He added value to the lives of those who shared his word. Although categorised as 'special needs', he gave more than he took, and knew more than he said, and could teach us more than we realised.

Up until the end he always wanted to buy me something; he always kept £5 for my great-grandchildren. He loved them so much, words cannot express it. All I can say is, he was full of love and never criticised anyone.

Phyllis Johnson

A New Bible Study for Ladies

Ladies, have you ever wondered how the Old Testament and New Testament are connected? Why Jesus is called 'The Lamb of God'? Why Christians are called 'a Royal Priesthood'? How Habakkuk connects to Hebrews, or Chronicles to Corinthians?

In February we'll be starting a new monthly Ladies Bible Study — based on a resource called 'From Creation to Christ.'

We'll meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7pm and we'll be looking at some Biblical History or — His Story!

We'll go through a series of themes...

- Creation
- Corruption
- Catastrophe
- Confusion
- Covenant
- Christ
- Crucifixion
- Culmination

...keeping in mind the question – 'What do these ancient words mean in this modern life?'

All ladies are welcome.

Please see Annmarie if you have any questions.

Are you on the List?!

Have you noticed the Birthday List that appears on page 13 of the Newsletter? We love to celebrate peoples' birthdays at Upper Trosnant – although we won't share your age or sing to you in the afternoon service if you ask us not to! One of my New Year's Resolutions is to re-vamp our list of Birthdays, and during January I will be attempting to ask everyone who is not on the list already if they would like to share their special date. But don't wait to be asked - do come and speak to me if you think you or a friend or family member may be missed off...

Clare Hopkins

LIFE is coming to Pontypool!

The Life exhibition is an exciting, multi-media experience designed for primary school children which complements the current guidelines for Religious Education in the UK. Using interactive tablets, graphic panels, quizzes, film clips, songs and a discussion café, Life helps children learn, in about an hour, about the person of Jesus. It is suitable for Years 5 and 6 (ages 9-11) and besides learning about Jesus it enhances the IT skills of pupils.

Life will be based at Pontymoile Mission. A building that seems purpose built for this exhibition! It is made available by the sponsorship of local churches working together and the Christian charity Counties.

We will need volunteers to help in the café, stewards, presenters in the "pods" and those with technical ability to run the computer. We also need people who will pray as we invite local schools to take advantage of this resource for their Year 5 and 6 children. There is no cost to schools and we provide the transport to Pontymoile Mission. Running from 25th March to 5th April 2019 we have 50 one hour slots. Twenty of those have been booked already and we are in conversation with schools to fill the remaining slots.

The exhibition has been developed by Counties along with education specialists to encourage children to question, discover and form their own thinking about Jesus. We hope to have Life open on some evenings so that local churches can come along and experience it for themselves. Look out for those dates in a couple of months' time.

Priscilla Pearson

WANTED – Flowers!

We are always grateful to those who donate the lovely flowers that decorate Upper Trosnant each week. The 2019 Flower Rota is now on the noticeboard in the vestry – please sign up if you would like to help the Church in this way, or to give the flowers on a particular Sunday, perhaps on a special date or in memory of a loved one. If you have not 'done the flowers' before, it needs no special skill – and can be done by men as well as women! Please ask me for more information.

Clare

Services/Meetings

Sunday 6 th	11.00 am	Pastor Richard Miles.
	4.00 pm	Pastor Richard Miles (Communion).
Sunday 13 th	11.00 am	Mr Ron Spillards.
	4.00 pm	Mr Ron Spillards.
Sunday 20 th	11.00 am	Pastor Richard Miles (Communion)
	4.00 pm	Pastor Richard Miles.
Sunday 27 th	11.00 am	Pastor Richard Miles (BMS offering).
	4.00 pm	Mr Ben Saunders (BMS offering).

Outreach Services

Monday 7 th	3.00 pm	Service for residents at Ty Bryn
Monday 21 st	2.00 pm	Service for residents at Ty Ceirios

Sisterhood Speakers

Tuesdays	8 th	Sharing Together.
at 3 pm	15 th	TBC.
	22 nd	Annual General Meeting.
	29 th	Pastor Richard.

Midweek Bible Study and Prayer Meetings

Wednesdays	2 nd	Evening of Prayer.
6.50 – 8.30 pm	9 th	Pastor Richard.
	16 th	Jill Morley.
	23 rd	Church Business Meeting.
	30 th	Annmarie Miles.

Ladies' Prayer Retreat

Please note that there is no Ladies' Prayer Retreat Meeting in January. Please continue to pray for one another until our next meeting, which will be on Tuesday 5th February.

Ladies' Fellowship Meeting

There is no evening fellowship this month. Please contact Annmarie for details of the next meeting in February.

Eastern Valley Men's Christian Fellowship

Gentlemen, please join us on Tuesday 8th January at 7.00 pm for an evening of testimony and sharing.

Open House

Ladies and Gentlemen are invited to join us from 2.00 – 4.00 pm on Monday 14th January, for a time of friendship and light refreshments. **Please note our earlier meeting time during the winter months.**

Prayer in the Vestry: Monday mornings, from 8.45 - 9.45 am.

Prayer Meeting for Christians Against Poverty:

Thursday 10th January - 10.30 am, at the Lighthouse Church.

Monday Night Prayer Meetings in Torfaen

7 th January, 7 pm	Prayer for S Club and children's and youth work in our valley, at Upper Trosnant.
14 th January, 7 pm	Prayer for S Club and children's and youth work in our valley, at Upper Trosnant.
21 st January, 7.30 pm	ICE Wales Thanksgiving Service at Bethesda Baptist Church, Rogerstone
28 th January, 7 pm	Prayer for Revival, at Penygarn Baptist Church.

Leadership Team Meeting: Tuesday 22nd January at 9.30 am.

Weekly Rotas

<u>Cleaning</u>	January 7 th	Janet Pollard & Jonathan Pollard
<u>Rota</u>	January 14 th	Keith and Barbara Fordham
	January 21 st	Janet Jones
	January 28 th	Phil Norman

Sunday 6th	Flowers	Barbara Fordham
	Door – am	Barbara Fordham
	Teas – am	Barbara Fordham
	Door/Offering – pm	Priscilla Pearson

Sunday 13th	Flowers	Helen Norman
	Door – am	Clare Hopkins
	Teas – am	Clare Hopkins
	Door/Offering – pm	Jill Morley

Sunday 20th	Flowers	Yvonne Walker
	Door – am	Anthea Scott
	Teas – am	Yvonne Walker and Clare Hopkins
	Door/Offering – pm	Clare Hopkins

Sunday 27th	Flowers	Pam Charles
	Door – am	Pam Charles
	Teas – am	Rhowsyn Williams
	Door/Offering – pm	Barbara Fordham

**If you are unable to do your turn on the rota,
please try to arrange to swap with someone.**

If you can't, please speak to Annmarie.

Birthdays in January

1 st	Mary Jones
4 th	Doreen Dixon
17 th	Janet Pollard
26 th	Yvonne Walker
31 st	Tony Janes

Please Pray For...

- Pray for Pastor Richard and Annmarie as they work among us.
- Pray for our services, that God will be glorified in Pontypool.
- Praise the Lord that our new ramp and steps are almost ready to use, and that we are blessed with such a great Hall that we can use for so many different meetings.
- Pray that the Lord will raise up new leaders and workers in our Church; especially new S Club leaders on Sunday afternoon.
- Pray for our organisations and meetings: Open House, the Ladies' Fellowship, Sisterhood, the Men's Meeting...
- Pray for the new Ladies' Bible Study meeting, and for all those who thirst to know more about the Bible and how to read it.
- Pray for Barbara's sister, Brenda Foster, as she needs and awaits a life-saving heart transplant, and for Keith's niece Lindsey Firth, who has a diagnosis of cancer.
- Pray for all those we know who work for God, including Mike and Sue Martin in Exmouth; Margaret and Roy Collins-Reese in Toulouse; Sue and Dave Verwey in Japan; Chris and Debbie Drew in Nepal; Dale and Naomi with Covenant Players.
- Pray for our brother Ron Saunders that God will bless him as he moves to a new home; and for all who are prevented by age or infirmity from worshipping with us on Sundays.
- Pray for Pastor Richard's mother, Jean as she recovers from a fall
Pray for those who are unwell or who are recovering from illness or accidents, including: Doreen Dixon, Keith Fordham, Doreen Harrison, Helen Norman, Janet Pollard, Ann Price, Jo Shanahan, Ann Stephens, Greta and Derek Wagg, Marion Webb, Malcolm Williams...

What's Your New Year's Resolution?

- ❖ **I'm going to walk more closely with the Lord!** See page 11 for details of our services, and don't be afraid to use the contact details below if you need help with transport.
- ❖ **I'm going to read my Bible more!** See page 11 for details of Church Bible studies, and page 8 for an invitation to Upper Trosnant's brand new Ladies' Bible Study.
- ❖ **I'm going to spend more time in Prayer!** Upper Trosnant has many prayer meetings, including at our mid-week meeting on Wednesdays and the Prayer Retreat. See page 12 for details of many other opportunities for prayer.
- ❖ **I'm going to make some new friends!** Why not come along to Sisterhood, the men's meeting, the ladies' evening fellowship or Open House? See p.12.

I'm going to do some work for the Lord! There are so many ways to serve God through the weekly activities of our Church. Please speak to one of the Leadership Team!

Contact Details

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