



UPPER TROSNANT BAPTIST CHURCH

January 2018 Newsletter



**“Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has
done marvellous things...”
(Psalm 98.1)**

**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 items for the February 2018 Newsletter to upper.trosnant@btinternet.com by **Sunday 14th January.**

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Letter from Pastor Richard

Preparing for the Season

As I write this, it is the first week in Advent. This is a time when we look forward to celebrating the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. And I trust that you all have a good Christmas.

But, we can look further forward into 2018. There is no doubt, we do not know what the New Year will bring for us as individuals or as a Church. One thing which is absolutely certain is that we can know the Lord's presence with us always. As He promised his people in the Old Testament:



"The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you or forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."
Deuteronomy 31 v 8 (NIV)

And that is a promise that we, too, can know through Jesus. Because of all that He has done in His life, death, resurrection and ascension, we can have that relationship with God. And, therefore, know that He is with us. So, as we consider what we will do in 2018, let's be encouraged by that.

As we meet on Sundays and during the week, we can know that His presence is with us. As we seek to encourage one another in our faith, and build each other up, we can know His presence with us. As we consider how to reach out to those around us with the love of Jesus, we can know His presence with us.

As He is with us, He will give us everything that we need to do what He wants. And, as He is with us, let's ask that, by the Holy Spirit, we will see His blessing in amazing ways during the year.

Love in Him,

Pastor Richard

Pastor's Preaching Schedule for January

January 21 st	am: Death and Life	Genesis 25
	pm: God's Harvest	Matthew 9 v 35 – 38
January 28 th	am: Trusting God?	Genesis 26 v 1 - 32
	pm: Take the message out	Matthew 10 v 1 – 15

How Can I Help?

It is often said that a Church is like a family. And just as in a family, where each person has their own role and takes on certain chores to keep the home running smoothly, so in the church, everyone can play a different part in making sure our building is well looked after and our congregation is made to feel welcome and comfortable on Sundays.

At Upper Trosnant we are very grateful to all those who help out in so many different ways. But this doesn't happen by chance! Take a look at page 13 to see some of the rotas that ensure there will always be a smiling face to greet people as they arrive, fresh tea and coffee to enjoy after each service, and a vase of flowers to beautify our Church. Perhaps the best way to show our appreciation of those church members and friends who carry out these important tasks is to offer to join them! If you would like to help welcome people at the door, serve the tea after services, or donate flowers, or if you would like to know more about exactly what you would have to do in any of these roles, please speak to Annmarie Miles or Clare Hopkins.

We are especially grateful to those who volunteer to clean our Church each week – most of us never see them in action and so it is all too easy to take their vital work for granted. The Cleaning Rota in particular is in need of additional volunteers – if we had eight individuals or pairs of people, each would only be called upon once in two months. If you think you can help, please speak to Phil Norman.

And finally, some special thanks to two people who have made one particular job their own. Hats off to Janet Jones who cleans the Hall every week, and to Steve Summers, our 'afternoon tea man'.

Greetings from Doreen

A new year! 365 days, as yet unspoilt, unused, and with unimaginable potential for blessing and benefit. A bonanza of expectation as 2018 dawns. We have the opportunity to make a fresh start. But how long will our resolution to make this year really happy last? What events – undeserved or unusual or unhealthy – will deter our earnest intentions to get things right this time?!

The Bible is an authority on new beginnings. Consider these words from Lamentations chapter 3. 'Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.' God promises that as long as the earth endures, day and night will never cease. Light will ALWAYS follow darkness.

Jesus – the Light of the world – advises us to live a day at a time. His words are recorded in St Matthew's gospel chapter 6: 'Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself! Each day has enough trouble of its own.' And if the next day apparently contains quite unpredictable, dark situations, consider the closing promise which Jesus made – and which is also recorded by St Matthew. 'Surely I am with you, always, to the very end of the age.'

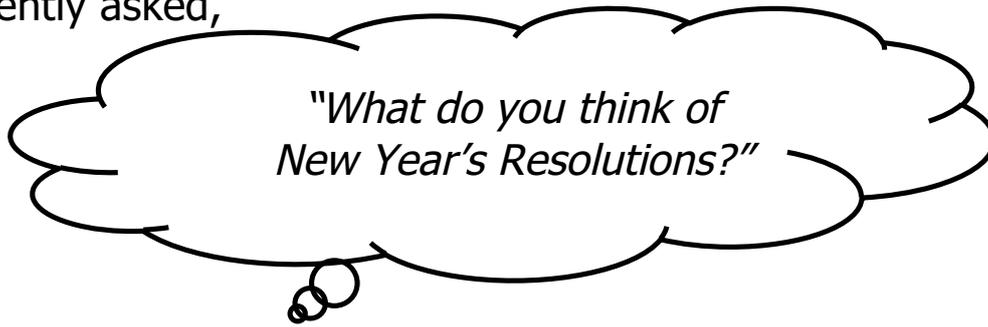
There are two accurate answers to the question, what will the new year bring? The first answer is, 'God knows! Psalm 139 declares, 'All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.' The second answer is, Whatever happens, we are safe with God. Psalm 37 assures us, 'The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in Him. Though he may stumble he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand.'

The ultimate question, of course, is, are you entering 2018 with God? He will be with you, all the way and every way – if you invite Him to be.

With my love Doreen

Ask the Pastor

I was recently asked,



At the beginning of each new year, many people make resolutions to make changes of some sort to their lives. It could be to give up something like smoking, or to eat more healthily, do more exercise, maybe even to be more kind to other people.

All of these things are good in themselves, and I'm sure you can think of many other very worthwhile things to do. But, the reality is, if we are honest, we can resolve to do these things on 1st January, but by the 5th we have broken our resolution.

Some people would then say that it is not worth making resolutions at all as we are so inclined to break them. But, I believe that there is a more positive solution. And that involves bringing God into the picture.

There is no doubt that he can put the desire into our hearts to make changes. And therefore, he can give us what we need to make those changes. Very often, the reason that we give up so easily is that we try to do things in our own strength.

And so, here's how to approach this:

1. Talk to God. Ask him what he wants you to do.
2. Acknowledge that you will not be able to do it on your own, and ask for him to give you what you need to do it.

Don't give up. If you fail one day, start again the next. He will still give you what you need.

4. If appropriate, share with someone else who will be able to encourage you in it.

5. Take on board this verse:

*"Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint."
(Isaiah 40 v 31 (NIV))*

Pastor Richard

A New Year Reflection

Jesus said "Follow me", John 21 v 19.

Let's pause for a moment. At this moment in time, we stand at the threshold of the year of grace, 2018. The new year on which we are about to enter is unopened. We don't know what it will bring, but if we follow Christ closely, we have no need to fear. May we leave our yesterdays in the safe keeping of His faithfulness and go forward in trust and faith into the unseen year.

We will not go into this new year alone. Jesus will walk through our valleys, climb our mountains, cross our streams, rivers and oceans. He will guide, strengthen and sustain us all the way. O let's leave the old year with grateful thanks to God for its mercies, with sorrow for its failures and an earnest resolve in Christ's Name to make the new year the best and most beautiful year we have ever lived.

Valerie Attwell

BMS World Mission News **From Witch Doctor to Church Planter**

The gospel is bearing fruit in India. BMS World Mission is seeing men and women from all kinds of backgrounds coming to find faith in Christ. Even witch doctors. Selim [names changed] wanted to be a witch doctor since childhood. He was committed, studying under a master and honing his craft. He practised where he lived in West Bengal, making his livelihood selling potions and charms to heal the sick. Selim's sister Maya [name changed] is a BMS-supported church planter. She always tried to convince her brother to come along to church with her. They would fight, and he would refuse. But then one day everything changed.

Someone in Maya's church had been severely ill for a long time. The man's family had brought him to Selim many times, but he'd been unable to help. The man couldn't walk, so the people of the village carried him to Maya's church one day and the congregation started to pray. After three days of prayer he was completely healed. He started walking and could do everything he had done before he got sick.

"I thought I was healing people by myself, with black magic," says Selim. "But I knew I had witnessed something amazing; this was a miracle. My eyes were opened to the truth." He started going to church, and Maya gave him a Bible. Selim soon decided to give his heart to God, getting baptised and even changing his name. Now, Selim leads his own congregations and supports his sister in sharing the gospel. "I am thankful to the Lord for leading me to my new work as a church planter."

Selim and Maya's story is just one of many we could tell of how God is changing hearts and minds in India. We are so excited to be a part of this incredible work.

*Help us continue to plant churches and reach people across the world today. Donate here: **bmsworldmission.org/give***

Feeding of the 400

In France, it's hard to be a Christian. BMS World Mission is bringing young people together, helping them find community and spiritual nourishment.

In October 2017, 400 young Baptists descended upon the city of Poitiers, 150 miles north of Bordeaux, ready to worship God at an event called Connexion 2017. Young people travelled from all over France. One girl came completely on her own, and many others came in groups of only five. There was laughter. There were tears. But most of all, there was a sense of family.

Being a Christian in France can be lonely. "Young people are often the only ones in the classroom who are Christians," says Benjamin, a 20-something French man. "With an event like this, we know we are not alone and we can worship the Lord together." Connexion creates a safe place for Christians to express their love for Christ, without fear of mockery, and gives the opportunity to gain spiritual sustenance for when they return home.

Sue Wilson, a BMS worker in Paris, has run Connexion since 2015 with a small group of volunteers as part of her work with the French Baptist Federation. "Often churches have small youth groups, so an event like this lets Christians connect with one another and worship God," says Sue. Through your support for BMS, you've helped to show young French Christians that they're not alone.

In Britain, youth festivals are common, with a wide variety to choose from. In France, this is not the case. Events like Connexion are rare. And yet, the 400 young Christians who gathered to worship there show that there is hope for Christianity in secular France.

Please pray for them.

Pray for the young Christians in France, who left Connexion revitalised in their faith. Pray that God would use them to share the gospel across the country.

What will you do with this Year so New?

As we start a New Year, untouched and unmarred,
Unblemished and flawless, unscathed and unscarred,
May we try to do better and accomplish much more,
And be kinder and wiser than in the year gone before.

Let us wipe our slates clean and start over again,
For God gives this privilege to all sincere men,
Who will humbly admit they have failed in many ways,
But are willing to try and improve these 'new days',

By asking God's help in all that they do,
And counting in Him to refresh and renew
Their courage and faith when things go wrong,
and the way seems dark, and the road rough and long.

What will you do with this year that is new?

The choice is all yours – for God leaves that to you!

Father, grant me the perseverance to keep my resolution to be kinder and wiser. Enable me to reach out to the destitute, the hungry, the poor, the forgotten. Let me have loving and helping hands that readily reach out to others.

Sent in to the Newsletter by Rhoswyn Williams

It's time to Take Notice!

It is important that we take notice of the notices! However – sometimes they are rather ambiguous! With that in mind, consider these three notices, (not from our church!)

1. Don't forget the jumble sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Ladies bring your husbands...
2. The low self-esteem group will meet on Thursday. Please use the back door...
3. Weight-watchers also meet on Thursday. Please use the large double doors at the side entrance...

Now – reconsider these notices,

1. Treasure your husband! He chose to marry you, so he obviously makes wise decisions.
2. Jesus declares, 'You are my friends, I have chosen you.' In which case, you are definitely **not** eligible for the low esteem group.
3. Make sure you are LARGE in 'love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.' Galatians chapter 5 continues with a reminder for weight watchers. 'Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires!'

The front door of our church is wide open for all who want to know more about God – and to enjoy His presence through the coming year. Take a look at all the notices contained in this newsletter – you can be assured of a warm welcome and a blessing at every service, event or meeting that will be taking place in January. Why not make a resolution to try something new and come along?

Doreen Harrison

Services/Meetings

Sunday 7 th	11.00 am	Mr Ron Spillards.
	4.00 pm	Mr Ron Spillards. (Communion).
Sunday 14 th	11.00 am	The Rev. Richard Harrison.
	4.00 pm	The Rev. Richard Harrison.
Sunday 21 st	11.00 am	Pastor Richard Miles (Communion).
	4.00 pm	Pastor Richard Miles.
Sunday 28 th	11.00 am	Pastor Richard Miles (BMS Collection).
	4.00 pm	Pastor Richard Miles (BMS Collection).

Outreach Services

Monday 8 th	3.00 pm	Service for residents at Ty Bryn.
Monday 15 th	2.00 pm	Service for residents at Ty Ceirios.

Sisterhood Speakers

Tuesdays	2nd	No meeting.
at 3 pm	9th	'Team Work' with Doreen and Richard.
	16th	A.G.M.
	23rd	Pastor Jayne Harris.
	30th	Terry Jones.

Midweek Bible Study and Prayer Meetings

Wednesdays	3rd	Prayer for the New Year.
7.00 – 8.30 pm	10th	Jill Morley.
	17th	Church Members' Meeting.
	24th	Anmarie Miles.
	31st	Phil Norman.

Ladies' Prayer Retreat

The ladies are taking a New Year Break – but please continue to pray for one another, and for all the churches represented at the Prayer Retreat. The next meeting will be on Tuesday 6th February.

Ladies' Fellowship Meeting

All ladies are warmly invited to an evening of conversation and fellowship over light refreshments in the Upper Trosnant Hall on Tuesday 16th January at 7.30 pm. See Annmarie for more details.

Eastern Valley Men's Christian Fellowship

Please join us on Tuesday 9th January at 7.00 pm, when our speaker will be Phil Norman.

"Monday Natterers"

You are welcome to join us at 2.30 on Monday 8th January for an afternoon of fellowship and light refreshments. You may bring your knitting – but you don't have to! See Anthea for more details.

Prayer in the Vestry: Every Monday 8.45 - 9.45 am

Monday Night United Prayer Meetings in Torfaen

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| 8 th January, 8 pm | Prayer for Christians Against Poverty, at the Lighthouse Church. |
| 15 th January, 7 pm | Prayer for Youth and Children's work in our valley, at Upper Trosnant. |
| 22 nd January, 7 pm | Prayer for Youth and Children's work in our valley, at Upper Trosnant. |
| 29 th January, 7 pm | Prayer for Revival, at Penygarn. |

Leadership Team Meeting : Tuesday 16th January at 9.30 am

Weekly Rotas

<u>Cleaning</u>	January 1 st	Phil Norman
<u>Rota</u>	January 8 th	Annmarie Miles
	January 15 th	Keith and Barbara Fordham
	January 22 nd	Janet Jones
	January 29 th	Phil Norman

Sunday 7th	Flowers	Clare Hopkins
	Door – am	Clare Hopkins
	Teas – am	Yvonne Walker
	Door – pm	Clare Hopkins

Sunday 14th	Flowers	Helen Norman
	Door – am	Helen Norman
	Teas – am	Rhoswyn Williams
	Door – pm	Doreen Harrison

Sunday 21st	Flowers	Doreen Harrison
	Door – am	Barbara Fordham
	Teas – am	Barbara Fordham
	Door – pm	Priscilla Pearson

Sunday 28th	Flowers	Pam Charles
	Doors – am	Anthea Scott
	Teas – am	Helen Norman
	Door – pm	Jill Morley

If for whatever reason you find you cannot do your turn one week, please try to arrange a swap with somebody else on the Rota. If you can't find someone to swap with, please speak to Annmarie.

Birthdays in January

1st Mary Jones
4th Doreen Dixon
10th Jodie Roberts
17th Janet Pollard

Please Pray For...

- Pray for Pastor Richard and Annmarie as they work among us.
 - Pray that the Lord will raise up new leaders and workers in our Church; pray especially for new leaders in our Sunday School.
 - Pray for our Sunday services, that our worship will be pleasing to God, and will glorify His name in Pontypool.
 - Pray that Soup on Saturday will be an opportunity to share the love of Jesus with one another and with our friends and neighbours.
 - Pray for the work of the Gospel as it is preached in Pontypool town centre every Wednesday morning.
 - Pray for our organisations and meetings: the Sisterhood, the Ladies' Fellowship Meeting, the Men's Meeting, the Prayer Retreat, the mid-week Bible Study...
 - Pray for Pastor Jesse Smith and the Travellers' Church.
 - Pray that Naomi Norman will be successful in her appeal to be given a visa, so that she and Dale can return to the UK.
 - Pray for all those we know who work for God, including Mike and Sue Martin in Exmouth; Margaret and Roy Collins-Reese in Toulouse; and 'our' missionaries Chris and Debbie Drew as they return to Nepal from the UK.
 - Pray for our members and friends who are prevented by age or infirmity from worshipping with us on Sundays, including Kath Jones, David Wigley...
 - Pray for those who are unwell or who are recovering from illness or accidents, including: Doreen Dixon, Keith Fordham, Jill Fryer, Alex Madden, Helen Norman, Janet Pollard, Ann Price, Ron Saunders, Jo Shanahan, Ann Stephens, Greta and Derek Wagg, Marion Webb, Malcolm Williams...
- Pray for Audrey and Eric as they settle in Wallingford.

**A Warm
Welcome...**

**.... to Soup on
Saturday!**



**Saturday 20th January
at 1.30 p.m.**

All friends and neighbours of Upper Trosnant are invited to join us for a delicious lunch of soup and bread (followed by tea, coffee and a selection of desserts) Gluten-free options available.

Please sign up on the list in the Hall or email or ring to book your place.

Contact Details

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