



UPPER TROSTNANT BAPTIST CHURCH

April 2019



Newsletter

“God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5 verse 8)

**Sunday Services at
11.00 am and 4.00 pm**

A very warm welcome to you

Contents

	Page
Letter from Pastor Richard	2
Pastor's preaching schedule	3
Don't forget LIFE!	3
Greetings from Doreen	4
An Update from the Leadership Team	5
The New Access to the Hall, by Daniel Pearson	6
Our New Ramp and Steps – in Pictures	7
The Growth of the Church around the World, by Jill Morley	9
Services and Meetings	11
Weekly Rotas	13
Birthdays in April	14
Please pray for...	14
Invitation to the Thanksgiving Service for the New Hall Access	Back page
Contact details	Back page

Newsletter Items:

We are always happy to receive items for the newsletter.
Please email articles or features for the May 2019 edition to
[**uppertrosnantbc@gmail.com**](mailto:uppertrosnantbc@gmail.com) by **Sunday 14th April 2019.**

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Letter from Pastor Richard

New Beginnings

It is very often at the beginning of a New Year that we consider what it means to make a fresh start or a new beginning. However, there are other times in the life of a church when there are new opportunities. I believe that we are in one such time at the moment.

Why do I say that? The work on the ramp and steps is finished, and we are nearly ready to move back into the hall for many of our meetings. That is a great opportunity for a fresh start. Even though most of our meetings have continued in the Vestry while the work has been going on, moving back gives an opportunity for a new start. We will, once again be able to have our Teatimes at Trosnant; and so we will be re-launching them. AND there will be some new things happening too – watch this space!

It is also extremely important to remember that during this month we will be celebrating Easter. The death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ provide what is needed for each of us to make a new start, we can know our sins forgiven and a new relationship with God. We can put our faith and trust in him. It is an opportunity to do so for the first time, for some, and for those of us who are already trusting to renew our faith and confidence in him.

The lives of those who put their trust in him are completely transformed. In the words of the Apostle Paul:

*Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!*

2 Corinthians 5 v 17 (NLT)



New Beginnings is also the theme of our All Age Service on the afternoon of Sunday 7th April. Make sure you're there!

A very Happy Easter to you all.

Love in Jesus,

Pastor Richard

Pastor's Preaching Schedule for April

April 7th am: The needy brothers **Genesis 42**

 pm: **ALL AGE SERVICE:** New Beginnings

Easter Sunday

April 21st am: He has risen! **Luke 24 v 1 – 12**

 pm: An encounter with Jesus **Luke 24 v 13 - 35**

April 28th am: The satisfied brothers **Genesis 43**

 pm: Witnesses of Jesus **Luke 24 v 36 - 53**

Don't Forget LIFE!

Please continue to pray for the LIFE Exhibition which will be running at Pontymoile Mission until April 5th. Pray for all the children and their teachers as they travel to the Mission, and as they learn about the life, miracles, death and resurrection of Jesus. Please pray too for the volunteers who will be talking to the children about Jesus and helping to make sure their visit runs smoothly.

Don't forget that the members and friends of Upper Trosnant have an opportunity to experience LIFE for ourselves on Wednesday 3rd April at 7.15pm. Please make your own way to the Mission, but do speak to one of the Leadership team if you are not sure where it is or need a lift.

Greetings from Doreen

So – where was the angel choir, singing Hallelujah with heavenly harmonies on that first Easter morning, a day above every other day since time began – and when time will be no more? Matthew's laconic statement introducing just one angel actually says it all. I quote: "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here. He has risen just as he said!!" Of course the tomb was empty – of course Jesus had risen from the dead – of course, just as He said he would. This early morning event was a predictable fact: the angel said, "I know that you are looking for Jesus," and with this statement he was emphasising the truth that wherever, however and whoever we are, heaven is aware of us and nothing can ever separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Human kind looks for the large demonstration of power and glory, but the certainty of God's complete and continuous care and kindness is so absolute that just one angel, rolling away the grave stone to reveal an empty tomb because 'He, Jesus, has risen just as He said,' is proof enough that God is in complete control and never makes a mistake. Hallelujah for that impeccable truth.

And now, maybe, what I experienced just a few days ago will accord with this glorious confidence of faith.

I had an operation to remove a basal cell cancer on my nose. The surgeon volunteered to play music – anything I liked – to occupy my attention while he concentrated upon my little nose. I chose a classical selection. The procedure began and then, just as he announced "That's clear; now for the stitches," the music erupted into a triumphant rendering of The Hallelujah Chorus. Perfect timing!

In every situation, remember God is with you. He gives His angels charge over YOU – to keep you in all your ways. And Jesus, who is RISEN – just as he said – always keeps His promises. He assures you and me 'I will never leave you, or forsake you. I am with you always.'

And the heavenly choir with an amazing Hallelujah chorus? One day – if you put your faith in Jesus Christ, Saviour and Lord, you will hear the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand, in a loud voice, proclaiming, ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise!’ See you there?

Love, as always, Doreen

An Update

As I write this, we are within touching distance of completing the work on the ramp and steps access to the hall, and we hope to be back in there very soon. The boiler was fitted in the second week of March, and the carpets in both hall and vestry are going to be industrially cleaned in the weeks before Easter.

Cleaning Day – Saturday 6th April

We have arranged a cleaning day for the hall on Saturday 6th April from 10.00 am. We will move things back into the hall, as well as do any spring-cleaning jobs that are needed. If you are able to join us on that day, please do so. A light lunch will be provided.

We continue to be grateful to God for his financial provision for us. The latest total for our Gift Day stands at £3600 – an amazing amount! We are now able to sign off on the work.

Don’t forget our Service of Thanksgiving when we officially open the ramp and steps. It is on Saturday 27th April at 3.00 pm. It is an opportunity for us to look back and thank God for his goodness to us, not only in this most recent project, but in previous years as well. If at all possible, please make sure that you are there.

In the meantime, thank you to everyone for your generous support.

Pastor Richard, on behalf of the Leadership Team

The New Access to the Hall

Built around 1908, our hall was an economical solution to accommodate all the activities of a growing Church. Metal clad, possibly with oil lighting, and heated by a large iron stove, these ubiquitous buildings were often referred to as scout huts because of their common use. The original Upper Trosnant kitchen was where the kitchen is now, but about three feet lower and fitted out in utilitarian pre-first World War tradition. The main hall came with central stanchions which could inflict injury on the unwary.

By the millennium the hall had fallen into a serious state of dilapidation; things grew inside as well as out; the old kitchen had been abandoned and without heating or toilets a once well used building was a useless liability. Hall access was a mystery with a churchyard fronting the east elevation and a difficult set of access stairs at the back.

Renovation of the hall was started in 2007 jointly with changing the use of the churchyard into a carpark. The better gravestones were kept, not to mark graves, but to represent an urban graveyard. The cleared space gave clear access to both church and hall but here we ran into trouble. Although we had Building Regulation approval for a new hall access the Planners would not accept it. We had constructive help from the Conservation Officer but the plans lay dormant with the Planners until last year when added pressure resulted in approval.

The whole plan for the hall is that we have a safe and serviceable facility to aid us in our mission. Safe means that we comply with legislation for all ages and abilities to access our church and hall from the street, with a car park and bays reserved for disabled persons. Serviceable means that we are using the building to invite people to join with us for all manner of functions, meetings and occasions.

The access design embraces easy-going steps, kindly graded ramps, easy to grip handrails and colours to show a change of surface gradient. Winter is not the best time to build with over 50 tonnes of bricks, blocks, concrete, aggregate, sand, pavers, steel and electrical parts to fashion into a new access. Old grave stones have been used on shorter ramps and planting areas to connect with the past and emphasise new life for the future.

Daniel Pearson.

Building the New Ramp and Steps – in Pictures



It was back in September 2018 that the work on the new Hall access began, and the first job was to dismantle and remove the old wooden steps. Although built as a temporary measure, they had served us well for the past 11 years.



The Hall looked very different without any access at all! This picture shows the great difference in height from the car park to the door. The new ramp and steps were built



Our new access was designed by Daniel Pearson, but all the building work was done by Brian and Culley. They shifted and laid many tons of bricks and paving slabs and we are so grateful to them for their great care and attention to detail. What a fantastic job they have done

in sections, starting from the top. Great care was needed to get the slope correct. The space inside the ramp is filled with 'scalpings' – these are the small chips left over when stone is dug from quarries.



This photograph, taken by Annmarie from the flat window, shows the size of the project, and how the different levels were built up in layers. The winter weather was not always kind, as the slabs could only be laid on dry days.



The slabs are in two different colours, so that visitors can easily see the difference between the sloping and flat sections.

The steps have non-slip surfaces, and the handrails have additional wires to ensure that nobody can fall off or slip through.



And finally...the job was completed in March. God has been so good to us that we have such a fine way up to our lovely Hall. But of course, there's still one job left to do –

does anyone have any plants or bulbs to beautify our new flowerbeds?!

The Growth of the Church around the World

When Jesus' disciples asked Jesus, "What will be the sign of Your coming, and the end of the age?" one of the things Jesus told them to look for was that "the gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations" (Matthew 24:14). It has been estimated that in our day and age, Evangelical Christianity is the fastest growing faith in the world by the number of converts and increase in church attendance. Although the growth rate in the western world is slow, in Africa, Asia and South America it is truly remarkable. Here are a few facts and figures:

- In 1900, there were fewer than 9 million churchgoers in Africa, but in the last 15 years alone, the church in Africa has increased by 51%, so that now there are more than 540 million Christians, with an average of 33,000 people coming to faith in the Lord every day. Muslim North Sudan has seen a 10-fold increase in the number of Christians in the last 40 years.
- South America had 50,000 Protestant believers in 1900. By the 1980s this was 50 million, and it is now over 137 million. The numbers are rising so fast that by 2025 there could be over 600 million.
- In China, there were about 1.2 million Christians in 1949, but since 1979, the number of Christians has been growing by an average of 10% each year, and now totals over 100 million believers. At the present rate of growth, China could have the world's largest Christian population by 2030.
- The first Protestant Church in South Korea was planted in 1884, but just over 100 years later, there were 60,000 churches in the country, and South Korea is now the largest sender of missionaries of any country in the world.
- In Hyderabad, India, a church known as Calvary Temple was started in 2005 with just 25 people. By 2016, it had 155,000 people regularly attending. Since 1980, the number of pastors sent out by the Delhi Bible Institute has grown from 100 per year to nearly 7,600 in 2015, and part of India's so-called "tribal belt," which runs across central and northeast India, is becoming India's "Bible belt."

In 2016, the evangelist, Marilyn Hickey, held a series of evangelistic meetings in Karachi, the largest city in Pakistan, and preached to

over one million people. During one of Marilyn's earlier missions in the 1990's, Anwar Fazal was converted and in 2001 began a church with just his family and four others. Now his church has become the biggest in Pakistan, with over 15,000 attending each week. In 2006, Fazal launched Isaac TV, the first Christian satellite television network in Pakistan, that reaches every home in Pakistan, and broadcasts to more than 70 countries in Asia and the Middle East.

- Through Christian radio beaming into Vietnam since the 1980s, over 400,000 of the million members of the Hmong tribe are now believers.
- In 2006, a Christian satellite TV channel started to beam gospel programmes into Iran, and World Mission reported recently that Iran has now one of the fastest rates of growth in the numbers of house churches in the world. 16 million Iranians are regularly watching Christian satellite channels (there are now 4 channels beaming in Christian programmes 24/7), and many watch on their phones. So through modern technology and media, there is an unprecedented opportunity to reach every tribe and tongue and nation with the gospel. Others are coming to faith through dreams and visions.
- In Sydney, Australia, the Christian City Church has grown to such an extent in recent years that it has been able to plant over 450 churches in 64 different countries in the world.
- In Russia, the Good News church in Moscow began in 2000, and now has 3,500 regular worshippers. In parts of Europe, there is encouraging growth. In Spain, 12 new evangelical churches are opening every month, and 3 per month in France, where the number of evangelical churches has increased 10-fold since the 1960's. There are now an estimated 650,000 evangelical Christians in the country.
- Charles (Chuck) Colson spoke about the explosive growth of Christianity around the world saying - "This is one of the great untold stories of our time. Everywhere it is proclaimed, the Gospel is changing lives and societies. In this scary new world of globalisation one thing remains true - it's Jesus who people of every realm and tongue bless."

Jill Morley

Services/Meetings

- Sunday 7th 11.00 am Pastor Richard Miles
 4.00 pm **All Age Service**
 Pastor Richard Miles
- Sunday 14th 11.00 am Rev Howard Jones
 4.00 pm Rev Howard Jones (Communion)

Good Friday

- Friday 19th 10.30 am Shared service at High St., Abersychan

Easter Sunday

- Sunday 21st 11.00 am Pastor Richard Miles (Communion)
 4.00 pm Pastor Richard Miles
- Sunday 28th 11.00 am Pastor Richard Miles (BMS offering)
 4.00 pm Pastor Richard Miles (BMS offering)

Outreach Services

- Monday 1st 3.00 pm Service for residents at Ty Bryn
Monday 15th 2.00 pm Service for residents at Ty Ceirios

Sisterhood Speakers

- Tuesdays 2nd TBC
at 3 pm 9th Richard Harrison
 16th Sharing Together – Easter
 23rd NO MEETING (Easter week)
 30th Terry Jones

Midweek Bible Study and Prayer Meetings

- Wednesdays 3rd Visit to LIFE – see page 3.
6.50 – 8.30 pm 10th Phil Norman
 17th Jill Morley
 24th Annmarie Miles

Ladies Evening Bible Study: Tuesday 12th February at 7.30 pm.

Ladies' Prayer Retreat

Please join us on Tuesday 2nd April, when our speaker will be Pastor Richard. Coffee is served from 10 am, and you are warmly invited to stay and share in some light refreshments after the meeting.

Ladies' Fellowship Meeting

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

Eastern Valley Men's Christian Fellowship

Gentlemen, please join us on Tuesday 9th April at 7.00 pm when our speaker will be Angie Sampson of the Seven Corners Centre in Abergavenny.

Open House

Ladies and Gentlemen are invited to join us from 2.00 – 4.00 pm on Monday 8th April, for a time of friendship and light refreshments.

Prayer in the Vestry: Monday mornings, 8th, 15th, and 29th April, from 8.45 - 9.45 am.

Prayer Meeting for Christians Against Poverty:

Thursday 11th April - 10.30 am, at the Lighthouse Church.

Monday Night Prayer Meetings in Torfaen

8th April, 7.00 pm Prayer for LIFE and other children's work in our valley, at Upper Trosnant.

15th April, 7.00 pm Prayer for LIFE and other children's work in our valley, at Upper Trosnant.

29th April, 7.00 pm Prayer for Revival at Penygarn.

Leadership Meeting: Tuesday 30th April at 9.30 am.

Weekly Rotas

<u>Cleaning Rota</u>	April 1 st	Janet Pollard & Jonathan Pollard
	April 8 th	Keith and Barbara Fordham
	April 15 th	Janet Jones
	April 22 nd	Phil Norman
	April 29 th	Janet Pollard & Jonathan Pollard
Sunday 7th	Flowers	Helen Norman
	Duty Deacon	Dale Norman/Annmarie Miles
	Door – am	Clare Hopkins
	Teas – am	Yvonne Walker and Clare Hopkins
	Door/Offering – pm	Barbara Fordham
Sunday 14th	Flowers	Pam Charles
	Duty Deacon	Keith Fordham/Clare Hopkins
	Door – am	Barbara Fordham
	Teas – am	Barbara Fordham
	Door/Offering – pm	Priscilla Pearson
Sunday 21st	Flowers	Jo Shanahan
	Duty Deacon	Keith Fordham
	Door – am	Anthea Scott
	Teas – am	Clare Hopkins
	Door/Offering – pm	Jill Morley
Sunday 28th	Flowers	Clare Hopkins
	Duty Deacon	Dale Norman
	Door – am	Pam Charles
	Teas – am	Barbara Fordham
	Door/Offering – pm	Clare Hopkins

Please Pray For...

- Pray for Pastor Richard and Annmarie as they work among us.
- Pray for our Leadership Team, especially for our 2 new deacons Keith and Dale.
- Pray for our Easter services, that we can proclaim the Good News of the resurrection of Jesus to a great many people.
- Pray for Service of Thanksgiving for the New Access to the Hall, that it will be a wonderful celebration and witness of what we have been able to do through the power of God.
- Pray that the Lord will raise up new workers in our Church; especially new S Club leaders and helpers on Sunday afternoon.
- Pray for our organisations and meetings: Open House, the Ladies' Fellowship, Sisterhood, Prayer Retreat, 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 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 Norman with Covenant Players.
- Pray for our brother Ron Saunders as he settles in at Plas y Garn, and for all who are prevented by age or infirmity from worshipping with us on Sundays.

Pray for those who are unwell or who are recovering from illness or accidents, including: Doreen Dixon, Lindsey Firth, Keith Fordham, Brenda Foster, Doreen Harrison, Jean Miles, Helen Norman, Janet Pollard, Ann Price, Jo Shanahan, Ann Stephens, Greta and Derek Wagg, Marion Webb, Malcolm Williams, Marion Williams...

Please join us on

Saturday 27 April at 3.00 pm



at a

Service of Thanksgiving
and the Official Opening of the
New Access to the Hall
Followed by tea and cake in the Hall

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