

**UPPER TROSNANT
BAPTIST CHURCH**



JULY 2023 NEWSLETTER



In Christ we, though
many, form one
body, and each
member belongs
to all the others.
Romans 12v5

Services on Sundays at 11.00am

Online ministry Sunday@4

Go to Facebook or YouTube

and search for “Upper Trosnant”

Find us on social media @uppertrosnantbc

www.trosnant.org

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Newsletter Items:

We are always happy to receive items for the newsletter.
Please email articles or features for the August 2023
edition to **uppertrosnantbc@gmail.com** by
Sunday 16th July.

Letter from Pastor Richard

Serving Together

In the last Newsletter, I mentioned how the Lord Jesus Christ set the example of servanthood. And he did serve in a way that no one else could as he would, in the words of Mark 10 v 45 *"give his life a ransom for many."*

As Christians, we have an opportunity to follow his example of servanthood. We cannot be a "ransom for many" as Jesus was, but we can live, as his people with a heart to serve one another. Those who are members and regular attenders at Trosnant



have received a list of tasks which need to be completed, and we are so grateful for those who volunteered to complete them. But there is plenty for all of us to do. We don't have to look at a list to find ways to serve. We need to keep our eyes open, and if we see a way we can help somebody else, or the body of Christ in a wider sense, then we do it.

That sense of being connected to one another is so important. Paul the Apostle as he wrote to the church at Rome said:

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us.

Romans 12 v 4 – 6a (NIV)

Each and every one of us has some way that we can contribute as part of Christ's body. If you are not sure what you can do, then speak to me or someone else in the church that you know. And as each of us plays our part, then together we will grow as the body of Christ here in Pontypool.

And the great motivation is what Christ has done for us. If he could go to the lengths of death on a cross for us, we can give ourselves, maybe in a small way, maybe in a larger way for him.

*Move and actuate and guide;
various gifts to each divide;
placed according to your will,
let us all our work fulfil;
never from our calling move;
needful to each other prove;
use the grace on each bestowed,
tempered by the art of God.*

Charles Wesley

Love in Jesus,

Pastor Richard

CIO Update

During May, Christian Williams from the Baptist Union of Wales came to a Church Members' Meeting and presented a new draft constitution for Upper Trosnant to adopt when we become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

The new constitution is a comprehensive document in a legal format and language which is acceptable to the Charity Commission. At a subsequent Church Meeting in June, we voted to adopt this constitution. Very soon, the Church's trust deeds will be looked after by the Baptist Union of Wales, meaning we will no longer have local building trustees.

Over the coming months, I will be writing some articles for the Newsletter to explain the implications of these changes for us as a church as we go forward together.

Pastor Richard on behalf of the Leadership Team

Doreen's Page: Lying Down in Green Pastures

As dry weather is replaced by summer showers and storms, we can really appreciate these wise words from Doreen's book, A Bouquet of Blessings.

When I was teaching, I remember one hot June morning, during a prolonged drought, when a small boy waved his reading book at me and said, 'Miss, this book tells lies. It says, grass is green, but it isn't!' He pointed at the school field which was withered and yellow in the heat. Green is a refreshing colour that sometimes gets a bad press; we say people are "green with envy", or we tell someone "Don't be so green", implying they are rather simple. Yet green is an energetic colour, it is the sign of living action and movement in nature, and just like the traffic light of the same colour, its appearance in Spring tells us to get moving. Green is the colour of growth; after the Spring rains how green our valleys look! On the other hand, some people I know think green is an unlucky colour, and for that reason they will not wear it.

Green is a restful colour too; my eyesight is blessed to see a green landscape. The Bible uses the colour green to describe peace and contentment. Psalm 23 begins,

'The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
He makes me lie down in green pastures.'

After recent rains we will soon be surrounded by an abundance of green growth. Psalm 23 picks up this thought, as it continues,

'He leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul.'

We live in a colourful world. God did not create a black and white landscape; he created it to be colourful for our pleasure. In the days of Noah, after the great Flood, in order to reassure the family as they came out of the Ark, God arched a rainbow over them and said:

'I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the
sign of the covenant between me and the earth.'

As I enjoy the abundance of greenery in our valley – shades of lime green, emerald, turquoise, mint, sea green, dark, light and fresh and all of them so lovely – I am sure that the Bible is certainly a book which doesn't tell lies. It contains the truth about the God who loves us with an everlasting love; and who displays that love around us so we may know him.

Poem: 'Like a River Tree' by Deborah Ann Kalka

Deborah Ann Kalka is an American poet whose work is inspired by her daily readings of the Bible. You can read more on her blog: <https://poetrybydeborahann.wordpress.com>

These lovely words come from Psalm 1, which is a beautiful Hebrew poem comparing someone who walks with the Lord to a tree growing by a river:

*And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water,
that bringeth forth his fruit in his season;
his leaf also shall not wither;
and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. (verse 3)*

I want my faith to grow,
like a river tree . . .
so my life will reflect
Lord, my love for Thee.

I want my hope to tap,
into the blood of life
so I will not wither . . .
underneath all the strife.

I want my assurance,
to always represent
my hope and belief
in the new covenant.

I want my trust to form,
and be firmly grounded
so my fruit will be . . .
abundant and well-rounded.

I want my faith to grow,
like a tree by the river
always giving thanks . . .
Lord, to You my life-saver!

Body of Christ Wordsearch

In Romans 12, verses 4-8, Paul describes how members of a church come together to support one another and do the Lord's work. Find the words highlighted in bold, and the letters that you have left, read from top to bottom and left to right, will give you a well-known line from Psalm 23.

G	I	V	E	Y	I	N	O	I	T	C	N	U	F
N	S	G	N	O	L	E	B	L	E	A	D	T	W
I	E	A	C	H	G	L	G	I	V	I	N	G	I
Y	C	R	E	M	M	I	U	L	F	E	Y	L	G
S	L	F	T	A	E	E	V	F	M	S	L	T	N
E	A	S	S	N	M	R	E	E	R	R	T	E	I
H	T	A	U	Y	B	R	G	G	N	E	N	A	D
P	S	M	J	O	E	A	N	R	N	H	E	C	R
O	I	E	D	N	R	V	O	A	E	T	G	H	O
R	R	Y	T	U	S	E	R	C	H	O	I	I	C
P	H	W	O	H	S	E	N	E	T	T	L	N	C
V	C	C	P	R	O	P	H	E	S	Y	I	G	A
E	N	C	O	U	R	A	G	E	G	I	D	A	L
E	C	N	A	D	R	O	C	C	A	M	R	O	F

For **just** as **each** of us has one **body** with many **members**, and these members do not all have the **same function**, so in **Christ** we, though **many**, **form** one body, and each member **belongs** to all the **others**. We have **different** gifts, **according** to the **grace given** to each of us. If your gift is **prophesying**, then **prophecy** in **accordance** with your **faith**; if it is serving, then **serve**; if it is **teaching**, then **teach**; if it is to **encourage**, then give **encouragement**; if it is **giving**, then **give generously**; if it is to **lead**, do it **diligently**; if it is to **show mercy**, do it **cheerfully**.

Bible Notes (28)

Wells, Springs and Cisterns

Daniel Pearson

Part Two

John 4:5 So Jesus came to a town in Samaria called Sychar near a plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph; Jacob's well was there, and Jesus tired from his journey, about the sixth hour, when a Samaritan woman came to draw water. Jesus said, "Will you give me a drink?" She was aware that he was a Jew and did not associate with Samaritans, but Jesus lifts the conversation to a higher level and goes on to tell her about the water, "welling up to eternal life". Read-on for a most instructive



Chapter.

Wells were a great meeting place and almost a marriage bureau; Isaac, Jacob and Moses all met their wives at wells.

The women came at about the sixth hour with their jars to collect water for their house-holds and the flocks depended on being watered. The wells usually had some sort of guard or stone to stop animals falling in. Under Mosaic law (Exodus 21:33) there was a penalty for the well owner if an animal fell into his well.

'The Well of Living Water'. Jesus Meets the Samaritan woman at the well and tells of the living water.

Jacob's well is located at Balata Village, south east of the city of Nablus about 49Km north of Jerusalem in the crypt of the Greek Orthodox Church. It is still possible to drink from the well which has had the same custodian, a priest, for the last forty years. **Right: Jacob's Well, Balata Village.**

Hagar was the (Genesis 16:5) slave of Sarai, Abram's wife. But Sarai, at that time was barren and so she offered her Egyptian slave, Hagar, to her husband and she became pregnant. But all did not go well and Sarai mistreated Hagar and she fled.



The angel of the Lord found Hagar by a spring in the desert by the road to Shur.

Moses (Exodus 17:4) said "Why do you quarrel with me?", when the ever complaining Israelites said "Give us water to drink". They said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?". Moses cried out to the Lord and the Lord answered Moses, "Walk on ahead of the people. Take with you some of the Elders of Israel and in your hand the staff which you struck the Nile, and go. The Lord said, I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock and water will come out of it". *Who would know that here was a hidden water cistern, but the Lord did.*

Focus on Mission: Update from Dale and Naomi

Naomi and I would like to give you an update from the last year. As of this moment I have completed all six of my Masters degree essays over the course of two years. They have been really thought provoking and helped me engage with lots of theology and practice. The topics include: The second coming, hermeneutics and Anti-war, the Psalms, feminist theology, missiology and analysing the claims that Matthew's gospel is an antisemitic text.



My placement at Mount Pleasant Baptist Church in Blackwood has been going really well and it has given me lots of opportunities for preaching and leading. They have had a new minister named Andy Baker while Mark Thomas is moving on to another church.

I have been learning Welsh for the last 6 years and on Pentecost I had my first opportunity to preach in Welsh. I am really praying that the Lord will use this for ministry later in the future. I am open to serving in a Welsh speaking church.

As of May I have increased my hours working at Crickhowell from 16 to 30 hours. I now work 4 days a week Monday till Thursday. If I am not at Mount Pleasant I am usually speaking as a lay preacher around the Valleys most Sundays.

Also, we wanted to inform you all that Naomi has officially retired from Covenant Players after 21 years of service so she can best support and care for Felicity. As a family we are praying how to best care for

Felicity while maintaining ministry and part time work. We are not sure how things will look in the near the future, but we trust the Lord for these things.

We are still looking for a new home and we are praying for something close to Felicity's school. However, I am happy to travel in order to do ministry. July will be the last college week for this year and then we will restart in September 2023. We would like to thank you all for your prayers and support over the years.

Dale Norman

Have you ever wondered – why is the Bible called the Bible?

The term 'Bible' is used both for the Hebrew Bible, which we would call the Old Testament, and for the Christian Bible, which also contains the New Testament. Our English word Bible is derived from the Greek τὰ βιβλία (*ta biblia*), which means 'the books'. Originally the literal meaning was 'the scrolls', as texts would be written on long sheets of papyrus and rolled up around a stick to keep them safe. Papyrus is an aquatic flowering plant that grows in North Africa, forming tall clumps of reed-like vegetation in shallow water. Its pith was first used by the ancient Egyptians as a writing surface, and the Greeks called it by the name of the ancient city and seaport Byblos, situated on the coast of Lebanon, from where it was exported to Greece by ship across the Mediterranean.

The first person to refer to the sacred texts of the Old and New Testaments as *ta biblia* is thought to be John Chrysostom in his sermons *Homilies on Matthew*, written between 386 and 388 AD. John was born in Antioch in Turkey in the year 347 and baptised there as a young man. He trained as a lawyer but grew more and more deeply committed to Christianity and turned to the study of theology, becoming well known as a preacher and teacher. He became a hermit and devoted himself to committing the whole Bible to memory. In 397 he was appointed Archbishop of Constantinople but was later was exiled and died in 407. He is venerated by many churches today as a Saint.

Upper Trosnant Update

- We have recently celebrated Pentecost Sunday, when we read of the Holy Spirit coming in great power upon the first disciples. And his coming made a big difference to their lives – they went from being fearful to full of faith and were able to take the message of the Gospel out. As we consider all of the things that we do in Trosnant, we need to pray that the same Holy Spirit will be very much present with us and be at work in many hearts and lives. We know that he is with us as we meet, and we pray that his power will be clear for us to see and experience.
- Our Sunday @ 4 meeting for June was a time of fellowship, which included Pastor Richard giving a short message on Facebook Live. It was good to be together, and we had a useful discussion about how we will go forward in the mighty power of the Holy Spirit.
- At the end of May was the second Churches United in Pontypool Prayer and Praise evening, at Pontnewynydd Methodist Church. Again, we sang together, and prayed for God to be at work in Pontypool. The July meeting is on Thursday 27th (see p.12).
- Our “Warm Space” has become “Garden Fellowship”, but the aim of the meeting is still the same – an opportunity for informal chat together with refreshments. Open House also is still very much appreciated. Again, details of these meetings are in the Church Diary on p.12.
- Sisterhood continues to be encouraging, as over the past few weeks the ladies have spent time singing, praying, studying God’s Word and generally enjoying fellowship together. The Sisterhood Meal at the Harvester was enjoyed too, there were even a couple of “gentlemen guests” present!
- Our two-monthly Eastern Valley Men’s Fellowship met too. The speaker was the Rev. Jeff Kim from High Street, Abersychan. It is great for men from different churches to meet to encourage one another in this way.
- Teatime @ Trosnant was held on Saturday 3rd June. This was a joyful occasion as those present tucked into sandwiches and cakes and had conversation around the tables. Annmarie and Rhoswyn once again sung a beautiful duet, reminding us of our heavenly home.

CHURCH DIARY FOR JULY

SUNDAY SERVICES AND PREACHERS

11.00 am: In the Church building and later on YouTube;
followed by Tea and Coffee in the Hall.

- 2nd** – Dale Norman
- 9th** – Pastor Richard (Communion)
- 16th** – Pastor Richard
- 23rd** – Ron Spillards
- 30th** – Pastor Richard

SUNDAY AFTERNOONS @ 4 O'CLOCK

- 2nd** – Facebook Live with Pastor Richard
- 9th** – Facebook Live with Annmarie
- 16th** – Facebook Live with Pastor Richard
- 23rd** – **Sunday @ 4 Special in the Hall with Roy and Margaret Reese**
- 30th** – Facebook Live with Pastor Richard

MONDAY

- 3rd, 17th, 24th, 31st** **Garden Fellowship** in the Church garden
- 10th** – **OPEN HOUSE**– from 2.00–4.00 pm in the Hall
- 17th** – **TY CEIRIOS** 2.00 pm service for the residents

TUESDAY – SISTERHOOD 2.30 – 4.00 pm in the Hall

- 4th** – Terry Jones
- 11th** – Pastor Richard
- 18th** – Sisterhood Summer Party
- 25th** – No Meeting (Summer break)

WEDNESDAY – PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY

- 5th and 19th** – 6.50 pm for a 7.00 pm start
- 12th and 26th** – 1.50 pm for a 2.00 pm start

THURSDAY 27th – PRAYER AND PRAISE EVENING

Join with Churches United in Pontypool, 7.00 pm at Pontymoile Mission

PRAYER PAGES

Have you ever prayed using ACTS? It is simple but powerful way of praying that helps us have a conversation with God, rather than focus only on the things that we need and want. Each letter stands for a different focus of prayer:

Adoration

Let us praise God as the all-powerful creator of the Universe and express our own love to him as our kind and loving father. Let us deepen our personal relationship with Jesus as our friend, our guide and our Saviour.

Confession

Let us ask the Holy Spirit to show us the ways and times we have failed to live and behave as we should have, or as we intended to. If we are sorry in our hearts, we have the assurance of God's forgiveness, and his promise that the Holy Spirit will dwell within us as we start afresh.

Thankfulness

There are so many things we can thank God for! His creation. The seasons of the year including both sun and rain. Our salvation. The fellowship that blesses us in Church. Our friends, our families and the food on our tables. The individual gifts and blessings that he has given to us all.

Supplication

The Bible tells us that God wants us to pray constantly for others and also that we should ask in prayer for all that we need.

- Remember the many areas of the World where there is suffering: the Wars in Ukraine and the Sudan; the famines in North Korea and many African nations; the terrible effects of Climate change.
- Pray for our country and for national and local leaders.
- Lift up our town and the organisations which work to make life better for others, including Simon Matheson and CAP, and the Pontypool Foodbank.
- Pray for all our fellow Christians in local churches and ask the Lord to bless opportunities for fellowship together, including the Prayer and Praise evening on July 27th.

Prayers for our Fellowship

- Pray for our fellowship at Upper Trosnant, and for Pastor Richard, Annmarie and our leadership team as they plan and prepare events and service for our church fellowship.
- Pray for our missionary friends around the world: For Margaret and Roy Collins-Reece in Toulouse; for David and Sue Verwey in Japan; and for Angus and Helen Douglas in Nepal.
- Pray for Dale and Naomi Norman as they seek a new home.
- Remember our Blaenavon friend Beryl as she mourns the death of her dear friend Martin.
- Remember all those in our fellowship who are ill or recovering from illness or accidents, or in need of a special touch from the Lord: Val Attwell, Emma Attwell, Barbara's sister Brenda, Pam Charles, Doreen Dixon, Lindsey Firth, Liz Harris, Doreen Harrison, Audrey and Eric Jones, Jean Miles, Helen Norman, Jeff and Judith Parry, Janet Pollard, Ann Price, Ron Saunders, Ann Stephens, Alan Stephens, Linda Swires-Hennessy, Greta and Derek Wagg, Marion Webb.

ROTA for July

	Reading	Door	Teas	Flowers
2 nd	Dale	Anthea	Anthea	Sandra
9 th	Ena	Lorraine	Lorraine	Anthea
16 th	Sian	Mike & Sian	Rhoswyn	Lorraine
23 rd	Tony	Jill	am: Jill pm: Annmarie	Barbara
30 th	Jill	Clare	Clare	Rhoswyn
Communion: 9 th : Annmarie				



Join us for

**UPPER TROSNANT
BAPTIST CHURCH**

Teatime@Trosnant



**Saturday
22nd of July
at 3pm**

**Please let us know if you are coming
via the contact details below.**

**Upper Trosnant Baptist Church
Lower Bridge Street
Pontypool
Torfaen
NP4 6JU**

**Contact Pastor Richard Miles
e. uppertrosnantbc@gmail.com
t. 01495 751020**

www.trosnant.org