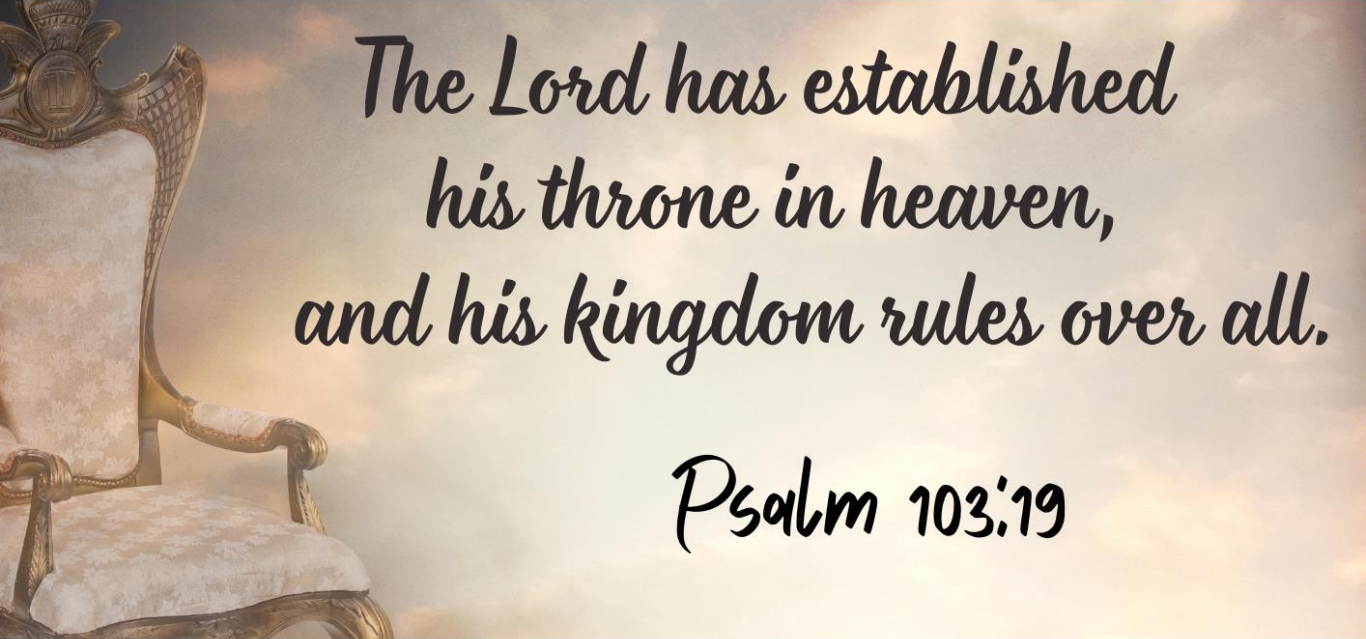


**UPPER TROSNANT  
BAPTIST CHURCH**



**MAY 2023  
NEWSLETTER**



*The Lord has established  
his throne in heaven,  
and his kingdom rules over all.*

*Psalm 103:19*

**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](http://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 June 2023 edition to **uppertrosnantbc@gmail.com** by **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May.**

## **Letter from Pastor Richard**

### **Ascension and Pentecost**

I trust that you had a good Easter. It's great to remind ourselves of all that Jesus has done for us by his death and resurrection. He has paid the price for our sins and given us the hope of life for evermore.

The story does not end with the resurrection of Jesus. We say, rightly, that it is the basis of our faith. But more happens after Jesus is raised from the dead. In the next 40 days Jesus went around and showed himself to many people. He wanted them to know that he was really alive. In particular, he wanted to encourage his disciples as they were to continue his work.



And then, one day, he was teaching them and telling them something of what their ministry would look like. Then suddenly, something very dramatic happened:

*After he had said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.*

Acts 1 v 9 (NIV)

This is the event that we call the ascension of Jesus. Jesus went up into the sky, we are told, and a cloud hid him. Now I don't know about you, but I have never seen that happen to anyone! The reality is that Jesus had gone back to his Father in heaven. His work on earth was finished. Those of you who are or have been working, know what it is like to finish at the end of the day. You don't (usually) stay in your place of work, you go home. And that is exactly what Jesus did.

The great thing is that Jesus is not sitting idly doing nothing as he is at home with his Father. He is still concerned about each of us here on earth, and he promises that he will be with us. But he is not with us in person, and that brings us to the next event.

*Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.* Acts 2 v 2 – 4 (NIV)

They were filled with the Holy Spirit. And now they were able to continue the work that Jesus had started and passed on to them. They were even given the ability to speak in other languages so that they could be understood by all who listened to them.

But what has all this to do with us? It is not simply a lesson in what happened after the resurrection of Jesus. The ascension and the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost affects our lives as Christians. We know that the ascended Jesus is there at his Father's side, concerned about us. Yes, when we pray, he listens to us. And the same Holy Spirit has been given to us, so that we too can do what God wants us to do and live in a way that pleases him. Here is a lovely hymn about the Holy Spirit in our lives:

*Breathe on me, breath of God: fill me with life anew,  
that as you love, I too may love, and do what you would do.*

*Breathe on me, breath of God, until my heart is pure,  
until my will is one with yours to do and to endure.*

*Breathe on me, breath of God; be all my heart's desire,  
until this earthly part of me glows with your heavenly fire.*

*Breathe on me, breath of God; so shall I never die,  
but live with you the perfect life of your eternity.*

Edwin Hatch © Praise Trust

Be encouraged! The good news of Easter continues in the Ascension and Pentecost.

**Love in Jesus,**

**Pastor Richard**

## **Doreen's Page: Sweet Treats!**

*At Upper Trosnant we will be celebrating the Coronation of King Charles with a special tea party on May 6<sup>th</sup>. It is the perfect occasion to enjoy again this lovely article from Doreen's book, Bouquet of Blessings.*

When I was growing up in an industrial town in Northern England, there were only two special tea-time treats (if I'd been good)! One was a sandwich filled with sugar, the other a sandwich filled with chocolate, sweet rewards for good behaviour! Apparently GPs believe that sugar is to be avoided when possible. It lurks in many foods; we are advised to read with care the label on each tin, jar, packet, bottle or box to ensure we are not taking too much. I wonder when Valentine writers will be forced to rephrase the well-known verse, "Roses are red, Violets are blue – sugar is sweet, and I love you." In view of present health information chocolate might no longer be considered an indication of undying love!

We all want to live healthy lives, but I can't help wondering if all this preoccupation with health is a bit too much. Are we creating a "sour" society? Surely there are occasions – on most days! – when a sweetener of some kind would be most acceptable. Tea just isn't the same without it! In Psalm 119 we read, 'How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!' (Psalm 119:103.) And in Psalm 19, we read, 'The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the Lord are firm, and all of them are righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb.' (Psalm 19: 9-10)

The sweet truth of God's grace and goodness to humankind should never be made to look sour by current opinion. The unfailing sweetness of God's grace is a certain antidote to all the cares and calamities of life.

When I reconsider the occasional excess of sugar in my childhood diet, it was because sugar was in short supply in those post war years of austerity. The fighting had finished but the war was not over. Even so, in the battle of everyday living there need be no shortage of the sweet supply of the grace and goodness of God. Don't let public opinion diminish your appreciation of the sweetness of faith, hope and love. The words of the Lord are sweeter than honey, so try them for yourself!

## **Remembering our Sister Dorothy Lewis**

*Upper Trosnant was full of people and singing as family and friends gathered on 31 March for the funeral of Dorothy Lewis. Dorothy and her husband Tony were regular in attendance at our afternoon service for some years, and Dorothy was known to many in our town as a wonderfully strong and caring Christian woman. She will be greatly missed, even as we rejoice that she now at rest after a life well spent, and free from the cruel illness that she had endured in recent years.*

Dorothy was born on 7 February 1936, in Southhall, Middlesex, to Cyril and Iris Leahy, who had moved there from South Wales to find work. At the onset of World War Two, Cyril volunteered for the army, so Dorothy and her mother moved back to Wales, settling at 9 Upper Bridge Street, Pontypool. Dorothy often related the story of how she nearly didn't make it back to Pontypool. Aged 3, she was sent to her bedroom for being a naughty girl and climbed out of her cot, onto the rocking chair, onto the window ledge and jumped two floors, landing on her head. She was taken to hospital, but miraculously survived!

The family grew, with the arrival of Maureen, Michael and Janie. The children attended Park Terrace Junior School, where Dorothy was an excellent pupil, always top of her class. As a teenager she was equally talented at sport – representing Pontypool Athletic in running, and playing Netball for the school – and music, obtaining all the top grades for her piano playing.

Dorothy met Tony at Pontypool Methodist Church (Nicholas Street). In fact, Tony was the reason she had transferred there from Trosnant Baptist Church! Aged 17 and 18 they attended a Billy Graham Rally in Pontypool – via a film link from London – and, together, they gave their hearts to the Lord. The young couple were married on 17 February 1956, when they were 20 and 21. They shared the same faith in Jesus and that set the seal on their married life together. Their first home was 1 Moreton Street, Pontypool, now demolished. It was a small two-up two-down cottage, with the toilet outside in view of the road, and the only washing facility the kitchen sink. After one year of marriage, Tony joined the RAF for National Service; fortunately he was able to come home most weekends and enjoy married life.

In 1959 they moved to Croesyceiliog, where John and Joanne were born. Dorothy devoted her life to her children and the church. Always busy, she travelled to Pontypool at least three times a week in her beloved Mini car, to care for her sick Mother and attend church, and 1982 Dorothy and Tony moved to Twmpath Gardens, in order to be nearer to the church.



Throughout her life, Dorothy was a devoted member of Nicholas Street. She served as an officer in the Life Boys, and as a Sunday School Teacher, pianist, and Superintendent. She would put great effort into Anniversaries, involving the children in singing and reciting, and putting on special presentations at Christmas. For many years she attended and was Secretary of the 'Wives' ladies meeting. She also formed a new group called 'Young Mothers', meeting in her home for many years – until the Mothers became much older Mothers! Many can testify to the huge influence this meeting had on their lives.

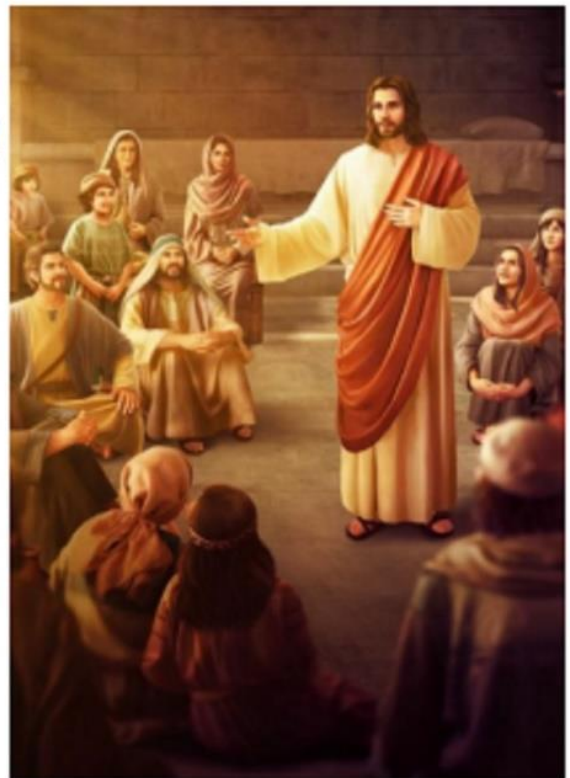
Dorothy herself was a shining example of a wonderful mum. At her funeral, Joanne spoke movingly of her inspiring letters, the reassurance of her constant prayers, and her joyful singing as she went about her daily activities. Despite her great fear of spiders and bugs of all kinds, she visited Joanne in Malawi not once, but twice, and there too made a lasting impression as a wonderful woman of faith.

Dorothy was a founder member of the Christian Bookshop. People loved to come in and share fellowship there, responding to her loving and caring character. She was always busy; it was said she didn't walk but was always running! She was an amazing example of a devoted wife, a wonderful Mother to her children and a true and faithful servant of Jesus Christ. She was a true friend to so many, and all those whose lives she touched thank God for her life, full of hope for others, and with deep devotion for her family. She was a true servant of her Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

## Bible Notes for Easter Continued Daniel Pearson

### Part two Easter Sunday to Pentecost

On the evening of the first day of the week, Sunday, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them (John 20:19) . . . A week later his disciples were in the house again and Jesus came and stood among them again and said, 'Peace be with you!' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe. Thomas said, 'My Lord and my God!'



On the same day, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus. They were talking about everything that had happened. Jesus came up and



walked with them and asked what they were talking about. 'About Jesus of Nazareth,' they replied. 'He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. Our chief priests had him crucified but some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb and early this morning and said he was alive-he has risen, as he said. As they approached the village, Jesus continued, as if he were going further.

They urged him strongly to stay with them as it was nearly evening. When he was at the table he took bread, gave thanks and broke it. Their eyes were opened. They go up and returned at once to Jerusalem. Luke 24:13



Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: the disciples were together and Simon Peter told them he was going out to fish and they said they would go with him. Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, and He called out to them, 'Friends, haven't you any fish?'. 'No', they answered. He said, 'Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some'. The loaded, untorn net, with 153 large



fish is landed and Jesus invites the disciples to breakfast and gives them the Great Commission. Jesus said, '**Feed my lambs**', '**Take care of my sheep**', and '**Feed my sheep**'. John 21:12

On the the 40<sup>th</sup> day of Easter we celebrate **Ascension Day**, when Jesus ascend to heaven to be with the father. This year Ascension day is on the 18 May. Acts 1:1-12 tells how Jesus was taken up before their very eyes and a cloud hid him from their sight.

On the 50<sup>th</sup> day after Easter we celebrate **Pentecost Sunday**, which this year is on 28 May. Acts 2 describes how 'suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in another language as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were God fearing Jews from every



nation under heaven. Utterly amazed, they asked, 'aren't these who are speaking Galileans? This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people" '.

## **New Beginnings – Come and See our New Shop!**



Here at the Pontypool Christian Bookshop, we are thanking God for our reopening. After 20 years of serving the community and witnessing for the Lord Jesus Christ, we now have a coffee shop where hot drinks, cakes and snacks are on sale. We were blessed with a grant because of Covid closures, and this was used in refurbishing the shop. New heating, plumbing and electrical work was carried out – decorating and a kitchen area has made a cosy and light area to meet and have fellowship one with another.

The trustees, volunteers and supporting churches and friends welcome you to visit us and see our new stock and a wider range of books, cards, gifts, and refreshments. “Come taste and see that the Lord is God.” We want this work to continue, and we need your support. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Jayne Harris (Manager) on 01495 750 680 (Bookshop) or 0741 596 9104 (Mobile). The shop is open every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 11:00 am – 4:00 pm.

**David Breese**

## **Warm Space – Come and join us!**



Upper Trosnant’s support of our local community in welcoming local people to drop in to our ‘Warm Space’ and other events has been recognised by the award of a special “Opening Doors” plaque. It was presented to Pastor Richard by Caroline Andrews, the Opening Doors Development Officer for Torfaen, at a Sisterhood meeting in April.

## **Promises of God from Isaiah 40**

When my turn comes around to lead our Bible Study, I am concentrating on Scriptures that, if you've been reading your Bible for some time, you'll know well: The Lord's Prayer, verses from Romans 11 & 12, and the most recent one is Isaiah 40.

After 39 chapters of warning and judgement, God gives Isaiah a message of comfort for his people in chapter 40. The chapter is not just a reminder of who God is, but who his people are in him. There is difficulty ahead for the people of God and this chapter is a promise of restoration after their coming exile to Babylon.

The final verse of chapter 40 contains the promise of strength for those to trust, hope, wait upon the Lord. Trusting, hoping and waiting are not easy, and many our church family are in that place of waiting for answers to prayer. Trusting and hoping for ourselves and those we love.

So **how** do we wait? Here are some verses I shared in our Bible Study, that I hope will help.

**Annamarie**

**We wait patiently** – *Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him.* Psalm 37: 1-7

**We wait with trust** – *I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him" ... it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.* Lamentations 3: 24-26

**We wait expectantly** – *Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you... Blessed are all who wait for him!* Isaiah 30:18

**We wait prayerfully** – *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* Philippians 4:4-7

**We wait in worship** – *Sing to the Lord... declare his glory... Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name... worship the Lord in the splendour of his holiness.* 1 Chronicles 16:23-31

**We wait in God's Word** – *The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.* Psalm 19:8

## Upper Trosnant Update

- It was a particular joy to celebrate Easter. Once again, we have known God being with us by his Spirit - and we are so grateful for that. On Palm Sunday, Dafydd from Malpas Road reminded us that Jesus is the King and the Saviour. On Good Friday a few of us gathered for a Communion service to remember what Jesus did for us as he died. Then on Easter Sunday Morning in our service, we celebrated the reality that Jesus is raised from the dead. In the afternoon, on Facebook, Annmarie looked at how the truth of the cross and resurrection impacts our daily lives.
- And that was not all. We were pleased to welcome a good number for our Easter Tea, enjoying sandwiches and cakes as Pastor Richard spoke about how important Easter is to our faith.
- **AND** we had opportunities to do things with other churches. On the Wednesday before Easter in the Market a good number of people from a few different churches sang Easter hymns. Then, on Good Friday, again with other churches, there was a witness in town centre where we sang and shared the message of Easter. Please pray for these opportunities that those who heard would be touched by the message said and sung.
- The Lord is continuing to bless the other meetings of the church, too. Warm Space, Open House and Sisterhood have continued. In particular, it was good to welcome members of the Covenant Players to Sisterhood just before Easter. Let's pray for them as they look to the Lord for wisdom for future ministry.
- For our Sunday @ 4 this month, we are looking forward to the visit of Simon Matheson on 14 May, who will be giving us an update on the work of Christians Against Poverty in our valley.
- It is so great to be able to meet with other churches for services of Prayer and Praise. The next one will be on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May. The venue will be announced in Church.
- We will be marking the Coronation of King Charles with an Afternoon Tea on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May at the later than usual time of 4.00 pm. The Bank Holiday Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May been designated as a day to show what is being done for others in the community. Therefore, we will be holding our monthly Open House from 2.00 until 4.00 pm in the hall. Everyone is welcome to come.

## **Focus on Mission: A Tearfund Report – Caring for God’s Creation**

*The question of how far as Christians we should be worried about 'Saving the Planet' is one that has come up several times recently during Sunday morning fellowship. This article is based on a recent Tearfund publication; you can read more at <http://www.tearfund.org>.*

Talking about the climate crisis in evangelical circles is not always straightforward. Some see it as the church conforming to the world and putting its faith in humankind to change how it lives, or in politicians to change legislation to put an end to the climate crisis if the world is to survive. Where is God in this? Where is the desire to bring people to Christ? And what about where it says in the Bible that the earth has been groaning since humanity first brought sin into the world and will only be restored and renewed when Christ comes again? (Romans 8.)

There is also the challenge to Christian climate campaigners of whether they put the same passion and energy into pointing people to Jesus as they do to their activism. Some would say that campaigning brings them into contact with people who have no faith, creating an opportunity to share that their faith is the reason behind their activism.

Tearfund is a Christian charity that has worked and campaigned on climate change for over 30 years, because of the heavy toll that it takes on countries around the world. Unprecedented numbers of people need humanitarian assistance due to climate change (as well as conflict and covid). One example is the West African country of Burkino Faso, where 80% of people rely on farming for food and income, but one family in ten is in need of emergency help because the rains have failed so frequently. A project run by Tearfund’s local partner working through local churches offers real solutions, bringing the community together in farming cooperatives and giving training in sustainable farming and introducing seeds and tools to grow drought-resistant crops.

As Christians, we can thank God that despite climate change, we have eternal hope in Christ, knowing ‘the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed in us.’ (Romans 8:18). We can also believe that God has called us to care for His creation, as well as to love our neighbours and to act justly and show mercy.

## CHURCH DIARY FOR MAY

### **SUNDAY SERVICES AND PREACHERS**

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

**7<sup>th</sup>** – Pastor Richard (Communion)

**14<sup>th</sup>** – Ron Spillards

**21<sup>st</sup>** – Pastor Richard (Communion)

**28<sup>th</sup>** – Pastor Richard – **Pentecost Sunday**

### **SUNDAY AFTERNOONS @ 4 O'CLOCK**

**7<sup>th</sup>** – Facebook Live with Pastor Richard

**14<sup>th</sup>** – **Sunday @ 4 Special in the Hall - Simon Matheson:  
Christians Against Poverty**

**21<sup>st</sup>** – Facebook Live with Annmarie

**28<sup>th</sup>** – Facebook Live with Pastor Richard

### **MONDAY**

**1<sup>st</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>** – **No Meetings – Bank Holidays**

**8<sup>th</sup>** – **OPEN HOUSE**– from 2.00–4.00 pm in the Hall.

**15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>** – **MONDAY FELLOWSHIP**

from 2.00-4.00 pm – in the Hall.

**22<sup>nd</sup>** – **TY CEIRIOS** 2.00 pm service for the residents.

### **TUESDAY – SISTERHOOD** 2.30 – 4.00 pm in the Hall

**2<sup>nd</sup>** – Coronation Special

**9<sup>th</sup>** – Pastor Richard

**16<sup>th</sup>** – Clare Hopkins

**23<sup>rd</sup>** – Annmarie

**30<sup>th</sup>** – Sisterhood Lunch Out

### **WEDNESDAY – PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY**

**3<sup>rd</sup>** – 6.50 pm for a 7.00 pm start

**10<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>** – 1.50 pm for a 2.00 pm start

**17<sup>th</sup>** – **SPECIAL MEETING FOR CHURCH MEMBERS ONLY**

We will be discussing the new church constitution, and Christian Williams from the Baptist Union of Wales will be joining us.

## **PLEASE PRAY FOR**

- 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 that the Lord will raise up new leaders in our Church, and will inspire others get involved in our regular meetings and activities.
- Pray for King Charles and Queen Camilla as they are crowned at Westminster Abbey on May 6. Pray that the new reign will be a time of peace and justice for all the nations of the Commonwealth.
- 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.
- Lift up Tony Lewis and all his family as they mourn for Dorothy.
- Pray for Dale and Naomi Norman as they seek a new home.
- 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, Beryl our 'Blaenavon friend', 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 May**

	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Door</b>	<b>Teas</b>	<b>Flowers</b>
7 <sup>th</sup>	Clare	Anthea	Anthea	Sandra
14 <sup>th</sup>	Ena	Sian and Mike	am: Sian pm: Annmarie	Anthea
21 <sup>st</sup>	Jill	Clare	Clare	Clare
28 <sup>th</sup>	Val	Jill	Jill	Ena
Communion: 7 <sup>th</sup> : Annmarie; 21 <sup>st</sup> : Clare				

May



**UPPER TROSNANT  
BAPTIST CHURCH**

Join us for a  
Coronation Tea



Enjoy the coverage of the  
Coronation at home  
then come to our church hall  
for afternoon tea.

**Saturday 6th of May  
at 4pm**

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

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