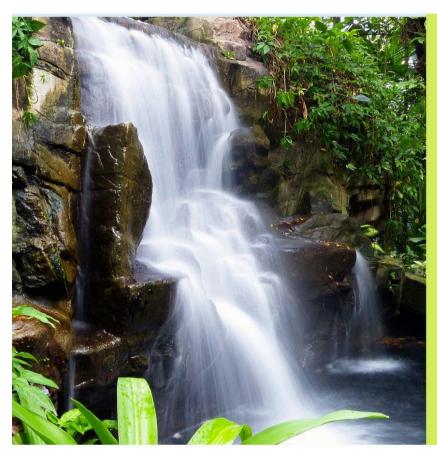
# JUNE 2025 NEWSLETTER





May the God
of hope fill you
with all joy and
peace as you
trust in him, so
that you may
overflow with
hope by the
power of the
Holy Spirit.

**Romans 15:13** 

Services on Sundays at 11.00am in the church and informal fellowship at 4.00pm in the hall Online ministry on YouTube

Just search for "Upper Trosnant"

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 July 25 edition to **uppertrosnantbc@gmail.com** by **Sunday 15**<sup>th</sup> **June.** 

### **Greetings from... Anthea Scott**

In last August's Newsletter I wrote of the adventures my brother and I had sailing to Canada on my father's cargo ship. He left the merchant navy and became a channel pilot again, so no more deep-sea adventures for us! However, he did take us, and our two younger sisters, for trips on the pilot boat, and once we visited the Breaksea Lightship.



The Breaksea, her light in the darkness keeping shipping safe, was just a few miles south of Barry. She was a regular visitor to Penarth pontoon for hull scraping and re-painting. Without regular maintenance the ship would accumulate barnacles and encrustations weighing her down and lowering her water level.

We so enjoyed our visit, although getting on board from the pilot boat, and climbing up the light tower was a bit scary.

Usually, seven of an eleven-man crew manned the ship. One of them passed his time making beautiful scenes in tiny matchboxes. He would paint the inside scenery, carve a tiny ship from a matchstick, make sails from cigarette paper and rigging from the hairs of his head!! We were captivated. Sadly, the Breaksea Lightship was hit and sank on 6 June 1962, and was never replaced.

When I think of a lighthouse, or a lightship, I remember the Bible verse John 8:12. Jesus said, 'I am the Light of the World. Those who follow me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.' AND PRAISE GOD that this light will never fail, or sink, or need to be replaced. Jesus 'the Light of the World', says, 'Surely I am with you always', and 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' (Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13.5.)

**Anthea** 

### **After VE Day**

On page 14 you will see some pictures of our Victory Tea Party, held to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 'Victory in Europe'. It was very moving to hear the stories of three older people there who shared what it was like to live through the Second World War. They spoke about the fear and dangers which they and their families faced every day, and the relief they experienced when the fighting ended. At the Sisterhood Sharing Together afternoon, Yvonne read this inspiring passage from one of the 'Friendship Books' in the Church Library. Anyone is welcome to borrow books from the church library to read at home. What a wonderful example this is of Chistian forgiveness.

We have all heard of the horrors of the concentration camp at Ravensbrück during the Second World War. After it had been captured by the Allies, a piece of torn wrapping paper was found on which an unknown prisoner had written these lines:

"O Lord, remember not only the men and women of goodwill, but also those of ill-will. But do not remember all the suffering they have inflicted on us; remember the fruits we have bought, thanks to the suffering – our comradeship, our loyalty, our humility, our courage, our generosity, the greatness of heart which has grown out of all this, and when they come to judgment, let all the fruits which we have borne be their forgiveness."

### **The Good Samaritan**

'Who then is my neighbour?'

This question prompted the parable of the Good Samaritan. The story Jesus told illustrates an important truth. It teaches that true compassion and neighbourly love should extend to everyone, regardless of their background or perceived status. You're not a neighbour because you live near someone: being a neighbour is about how you behave. The parable for me is about kindness and care, which are close cousins. In a sense it is also about accepting kindness and care. The victim could have rejected the Samaritan's love. The parable carries a very moving message. My version is written from the victim's viewpoint:

I was always quick to judge and slow to understand. Often deliberately so. I found prejudice useful; it saved time. I didn't have to strain my inner resources looking for insights. I could dismiss someone in an instant! Write them off without another thought.

I was looking forward to the football game on Saturday. We were going to thrash Rovers, no two ways about it. Rovers were a bad club – a team of no-hopers. Pity it was away at their shabby ground. I'd travelled to that pokey little railway station dozens of times. It needed a lick of paint or three for sure.

To nobody's surprise we gave them a right going over. Four-nil — and they were lucky to get nil! Their new kit is lousy and what a bunch of losers their fans are. Rubbish songs. At half time I got into a spat with a scruffy young guy selling hot dogs. I suppose I was a bit over the top, but he was charging well over the odds. I guess that wasn't his fault, but what a scarecrow. Even his Rovers scarf looked tatty. Perhaps I needn't have told him so. Still, job done. We got the points.

Trouble was, I'd failed to buy a programme. I had to have one especially cos it was such a convincing win. Someone told me a place where you'd get one after the match. It took me down along the

canal to the other side of the ground. I left my usual crowd to go searching. It was an odd place to find a programme seller, but I got my reward. As I came out under an embankment, a mob set on me and gave me a good kicking. They left me on the path, bloody-faced and winded. They took my phone and wallet and ripped up my programme. My glasses were mangled.

It was a quiet area away from the buzz of the ground, but I thought someone would hear my shouts. Nobody came at first. I scrambled up onto a bench but couldn't sit up straight because my ribs hurt so bad. I struggled to walk.

Then a man came by; he looked cool, professional-like. Despite his slick flannel suit, he wore a city scarf, so he was one of us. Surely, he'd help. I couldn't see his face clearly with my specs all bent but closer up I saw a badge in his lapel which said 'The Law Association'. Impressive or what. I was less impressed when he looked down at his suit and then at the blood on my face. No way was he going to spoil his spotless whistle and flute for my sake! With a look of disdain, he walked on. His car was tucked into a little space where he got free parking for the match. He got into a BMW and glided off, radio on for the rest of the results. I can tell you, I muttered a few words my granny would have been ashamed of...

Next a young woman in a carer's uniform came out of a block of flats nearby. My hopes rose as she noticed me. She had a kind but worried face and kept looking at her watch. She hesitated but I could see she didn't want to get involved. She said something about her next client and not getting held up and off she went. I began to despair. If she wouldn't help me who would?

Then up came someone I recognised. Pushing his bike casually along the path was the hot dog seller. I could expect no help from this quarter. I'd given him a heap of verbal and besides he was a Rovers supporter. More than likely, he'd dish out more grief. He recognised me. He was coming my way. My heart sank.

'You've come off second best mate,' he said. 'Giving them stick was yer? You got to control that tongue of yours.'

Here it comes I thought, another beating. But he smiled. `Let's have a look at yer. Can you stand?'

He wiped the blood from my face with a wet wipe and bent my glasses back to shape. He had a bottle of sparking water which he insisted I drank. He gathered up the scraps of my torn programme and looked at me. Sadly, I pointed to the bin. I felt even more sorry for myself.

'Here lean on this,' he said. Then using his bike to support me, he helped me on to a nearby cafe. He got me something to eat and rang for a taxi paying for my fare home. As I settled gratefully into my seat he smiled at me again.

'Here take this,' he said handing me his match programme. 'I'm sure you'll value it more than I will.'

I was speechless, but I guess my tears said it all.

**Tony Hopkins** 

### **Happy Birthday to the Pontypool Market Chaplaincy**

This year, at Pentecost, the Chaplaincy team are celebrating ten years of service to the stall holders and users of Pontypool Indoor Market. In that time they have been a regular and friendly presence in the Market every week, and through much prayer and hard work they have broken down many barriers and shared the good news of Jesus with many.

Please join them on Wednesday 4 June at 10.30 am (Pentecost Day) for a special celebration and thanksgiving in the Market.

More information from Celia Price or Julie Blake

# Book Review: What God can do with a little oil, by John Funnell

A new book has arrived in our Church Library, and it tells the amazing story of the transformation of Noddfa Church in Abersychan from a place of imminent closure to a thriving Christian fellowship, where lives are changed and the whole local community powerfully impacted. It is well worth reading, and can also be bought for £7.99 on Amazon.

What *God can do with a Little Oil* is a slim book (105 pages), and written in a warm and engaging style that quickly draws you in. John Funnell – Pastor John – opens with a hilarious description of his wife pleading with him not to take his pet ferret for a walk on their first evening in Abersychan, lest people think he is weird. Ignoring her, he sets off, and meets a local man walking a hawk, a 'weird' encounter which made him realise 'Abersychan must be my spiritual home.'

This is not a conventional church history. We never learn when or by whom Noddfa was founded, or anything of the industrial heritage and decline of Abersychan. John describes the local setting, naming derelict churches in the area, and painting a broad-brush picture of social deprivation in the "Valley". By this he means not the Eastern Valley, but the area between Pontypool and Blaenavon, home to some 10,000 people in a 'desperate situation' and hardened to the gospel.

John narrates the revival of Noddfa using 2 Kings 4 as a metaphor, or 'guide'. Each short chapter is headed by a Bible quotation, following the story of Elisha and a widow who had nothing but a small jar of oil, crying out to God for help to save her and her sons. Noddfa's widow was a 'faithful remnant' of elderly church members – devout in service and prayer, desperate but unable to keep their church open. Like the widow, they were 'utterly reliant on God. Is there a better place to be?' Elisha asks the widow what she has – a small jar of oil. And Noddfa Church also had a little oil – a cherished building, and historical links to many local people through former weddings and funerals and Sunday school attendance. It now had a Pastor as well, although John was still working in a full-time job, and had four young children at home.

Elisha told the widow to borrow jars from her neighbours, and with this positive attitude John reached out to his neighbours with a letter. Its reception was mixed but it was the first step to building relationships, and led to an invitation to be Chaplain to the Mayor. John shopped locally, and chatted to other parents in the park. Noddfa hosted collections for local charities, took food to homeless people, and steadily build up a reputation as a centre of compassion and help, using every possible opportunity to show the love of God.

Elisha sent the widow's sons to borrow more jars for the miraculous supply of oil, and Noddfa started reaching out in ever bigger ways. The first 'Carols under the Arch', attracted over 500 people, and had such a impact that the council provided a project manager and repaired the Arch; and the annual carol service has since featured on national news.

It is ten years since John arrived in Noddfa, and the transformation of the 'Valley' has been wonderful. The church is open 7 days a week, and meets the needs of all areas of the community. Hundreds of souls have been saved, and many, many lives turned around. But there is a cost. John writes too of exhaustion, fear, fights, break-ins and vandalism. He has been insulted, attacked, and badly let down. As Pastor he has seen, and been told, some terrible things, and he has endured harrowing experiences; as he says, 'I have been exposed to the worst of humanity. Ministry is hard.'

Part II of *What God can do* includes 'Principles' and 'Lessons' – not tips on how to do it, rather how not to make the mistakes that John did. He comes across throughout as a humble man of God and this is a highly personal account (I'd love to read his wife's story too!). Particularly moving is 'The blessing of 2024': on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his pastorate, 'diary' entries describe a series of services and individual encounters where God's presence is felt so powerfully that John was inspired to write this book. He ends with a brief biography, and we learn of John's high-powered background in business. He was prepared and equipped for this special role – and he gives all the glory to the Lord.

**Clare Hopkins** 

Paul wrote in his letter to the Ephesians about the spiritual battles we face as Christians. Scripture acknowledges the reality of demonic presence and forces. The Bible teaches that we do not fight against flesh and blood, but against the dark forces of this world. This passage in Ephesians affirms that God has not left us on our own. God equips us to resist the enemy and be protected in these circumstances.

The analogies Paul uses match what a Roman soldier would have worn, which would have been easily understood by Paul's original audience. Christians today can still envision the pieces of armour worn, as a system, and how they protect and help us fight. The pieces of the armour of God include a belt, breastplate, shoes, shield, helmet, and sword. The armour of God includes mostly defensive pieces, but the sword is the piece of the armour of God which we can use in offence. It is God's word that we can use to fight false teachings and come against wickedness.

#### Ephesians 6 11-16

"Finally, draw your strength from the Lord and from his mighty power. Put on the armour of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil. For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens.

"Therefore, put on the armour of God, that you may be able to resist when the day of evil comes, having done everything, to hold your ground. So stand fast with your loins girded in truth, clothed with righteousness as a breastplate and your feet shod in readiness for the gospel of peace. In all circumstances, hold faith as a shield, to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."



### Focus on Mission: A Letter from Pastor J

Upper Trosnant is now partnered with Pastor J, who leads the Horaiaos Baptist Church Cambodia. This is part of his most recent letter which you can read in full on the noticeboard in the Hall.

Rejoice in the Lord and again I said Rejoice! Warm greetings from Phnom Penh to all our supporters.

Once again, we are witnessing the marvellous work of God in our ministry. Your prayer is answered by God. Let us rejoice in the Lord as the two new believers in the church hostel got baptised on the exact day we started to worship in the new rented chapel. This is the sign of the blessing of the new chapel for our future ministry. Please remind yourselves that you are one of the persons who take part in this ministry. Let me begin by highlighting some of the key activities we organized or were directly involved over the past two months.

**Two New Believers got Baptized**: On Sunday February 9<sup>th</sup>, a dedication ceremony for the new rented church building took place. Coincidentally, on this significant day, two new believers – a female law student Tey (Sun Sovanbotey) and a young male Meng (Kheng Samheng) an IT student residing in the hostel – were baptized. This is Meng's testimony; he has since emerged as a leader in the Boys' Dormitory and has become a valuable person in the church's activities:

"My name is Khen Samheng (nickname Meng). I am from Stung Treng Province and was born on November 25, 2004. I come from a Buddhist family and have participated in all Buddhist rituals. I first heard about Christ while I was in secondary school through a Korean Christian school in my village. However, I was never interested in Christianity or God. After finishing Grade 12, I moved to Phnom Penh to continue my university studies. Finding a good and safe place to stay was very difficult. Fortunately, I knew some friends who were staying at Horaios Dormitory. Thankfully, there was a room available for me. I was happy to stay in the dorm because it helped me save money. At the dormitory, we had regular Bible study nights, fellowship gatherings, and Sunday services. These meetings always left me with many questions, and instead of finding answers, I became

more confused. I struggled to understand who God really is and had doubts about His existence. At the same time, something in me wanted to know more. I started studying on my own and asked our Pastor (Pastor J) many questions. Slowly, my doubts faded, and I began to trust in the reality of God.

**Digital Evangelism Training**: On 7–8<sup>th</sup> March, Horaios Ministry, in collaboration with Cambodia Campus Crusade for Christ, organized a two-day Digital Evangelism Training at Horaios Baptist Church. The training, attended by 30 participants, focused on using digital technology to share the Gospel. On the first day, attendees learned about the JESUS Film App and its benefits for evangelism. Day 2 offered practical exercises in applying what participants had learned.

**Discipleship training**: On March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, a one-day discipleship training session was organized for a group of Christians in Banlung city, Ratanagiri Provinces, located over 480 kilometres away from our mission station. The group consisted of 17 women and 13 men from local villages, along with 7 missionaries and staff members.

**Village outreach evangelism**: On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2025, we conducted an outreach evangelism mission to Vehpous and Tropeagrun villages. In Vehpous, my wife and Thongsy ministered to the children. Meanwhile, I, along with four evangelists, proceeded to Tropeagrun village, where we engaged in evangelistic ministry with both children and adults.

Please pray for Horaios Baptist Church, the mother and central church of our ministry. We are in great need of a permanent place of worship for the future, as our current location is rented. We deeply appreciate your support and the time you've taken to read our prayer letters. We're pleased to share that, as always, we are ministering together, and the report you've read reflects your ministry as well. Thank you for being an essential part of God's mission in Cambodia.

Psalm 37:4 - "Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart."

Blessings, Pastor J. Lalduhawma and family, Phnom Penh

**Upper Trosnant Update** 

As promised in the May newsletter, here is a photograph of some of the Easter crafts made by the children at Messy Church – wreaths, 'eggs', decorated crosses and windmills were some of the options, and a brightly coloured Bible verse can be seen on the cupboard door in the Hall. The morning was lots of fun and the children who came each went home with a 'goody bag' including what they had made along with some Easter chocolates.

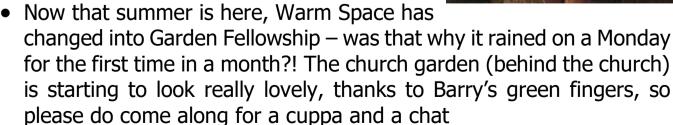
 The next Messy Church is Saturday 28 June, from 10-11 am. It is a free event, open to



family members of all ages, and there's no need to book. Going forwards, Messy Church will be taking place on the last Saturday of every month.

The new Men's Christian Fellowship

held its first meeting in the Hall on 25 April, and the men will be meeting on the last Friday of each month at 2pm. The meeting is a place for a relaxed conversation over a cup of tea and coffee, and an opportunity to discuss difficult questions if you wish. Ideas are also invited for future speakers or topics. If you would like to know more about what happens, please speak to Phil.



 Saturday May 10<sup>th</sup> was the day of Upper Trosnant's 'Victory Tea Party', which marked the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Victory in Europe Day. Over 40 people came, and enjoyed a delicious sandwiches and cakes tea of prepared for us by Anne Orphan and Special the hospitality team. mentions to Anthea and Ena for their heroic buttering of so many loaves of

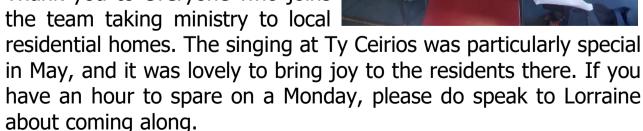




bread, to Lorraine for setting out the tables so beautifully with union jack 'tablecloths', and to Jill and Clare who decorated the hall with red, white and blue bunting. There were

three 'speakers' - Jean Miles, Ken Day, and Daniel Pearson who shared their memories of the fear and dangers of the war years, and of the relief and rejoicing when peace came.

• Thank you to everyone who joins







### **CHURCH DIARY for June**

#### **SUNDAY SERVICES AND PREACHERS**

**11.00 am:** In the Church building and later on YouTube; followed by tea and coffee in the Hall.

1 <sup>st</sup>	Mr Dale Norman (Communion)
8 <sup>th</sup>	Rev Tim Moody (Pentecost)
<b>15</b> <sup>th</sup>	Mrs Suzanne Roberts
<b>22</b> <sup>nd</sup>	Rev Huw Stephens
29 <sup>th</sup>	Rev Marc Owen

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

Meeting together in the Hall, with tea and coffee.

1 <sup>st</sup>	Come and Share
8 <sup>th</sup>	'The 10-minute slot'
15 <sup>th</sup>	Informal Communion
<b>22</b> <sup>nd</sup>	'The 10-minute slot'
29 <sup>th</sup>	Prayer Meeting

### **MONDAY**

### **GARDEN FELLOWSHIP** 2.00–4.00 pm in the Church Garden (in the hall if wet).

Everyone is warmly invited to drop in for tea or coffee and biscuits, and to enjoy a friendly chat.

### SERVICES IN RESIDENTIAL HOMES:

2<sup>nd</sup> - 11 am, at THE REGENCY HOME

### 16<sup>th</sup> - 2.00 pm at TY CEIRIOS

We share songs and friendship with residents who are always pleased to see us and greatly appreciate our visits.

### **TUESDAY - SISTERHOOD** 2 – 3.30 pm

All ladies are welcome to join us every week for fellowship over tea, coffee and biscuits, and to hear God's word and sing and pray together.

3 <sup>rd</sup>	Clare Hopkins
19 <sup>th</sup>	Jill Morley
<b>17</b> <sup>th</sup>	Anne Orphan
24 <sup>th</sup>	Sisterhood Outing: Tea at Annmarie's

### WEDNESDAY — PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY

4 <sup>th</sup>	6.50 for 7.00 pm	Phil
<b>11</b> <sup>th</sup>	1.50 for 2.00 pm	Lorraine
18 <sup>th</sup>	6.50 for 7.00 pm	<b>CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING</b>
25 <sup>th</sup>	1.50 for 200 pm	Jill

# THURSDAY 26<sup>th</sup> – CUP PRAYER AND PRAISE EVENING **7.00 pm** at Griffithstown Congregational Church.

## FRIDAY 27<sup>th</sup> — MEN'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP 2 pm in the Hall. All men welcome!

SATURDAY — 14<sup>th</sup> — 3 PM TEATIME @ TROSNANT 'Strawberries & Cream tea' - See the back page.

### - 28<sup>th</sup> - 10-11 AM MESSY CHURCH

No need to sign up; all families and children welcome.

### **HELPING IN CHURCH – ROTA for June**

	Door	Teas AM	Flowers	Teas PM
1 <sup>st</sup>	Anthea	Jill	Yvonne	Janet J
8 <sup>th</sup>	Jill	Jane & Clare	Anthea	Clare
<b>15</b> <sup>th</sup>	Ena	Julie	Clare	Jane
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Anthea	Janet J	Janet J	Anthea
29 <sup>th</sup>	Priscilla	Lorraine	Jane	Lorraine
Communion 1 <sup>st</sup> , am: Lorraine; 15 <sup>th</sup> , pm: Clare				

### **PRAYER PAGE: Praying at Pentecost**

Pentecost is the day when we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit on the early Church, an amazing occasion which we can read about in Acts 2. Filled with the Spirit, the first Christians began praising God in different languages, and Peter preached with amazing power and authority, bringing many to faith in Jesus. This year Pentecost falls on 8 June. As Christians we believe that the Holy Spirit is one of the three persons of God ('The Trinity'), and he is given to all followers of Jesus. Therefore we can pray to the Holy Spirit just as we do to God the father and Jesus. This beautiful medieval hymn (if you don't know the tune, you can find it on YouTube) is an inspiring prayer that we can use to invite the Holy Spirit to fill and empower us.

Come down, O Love divine! Seek out this soul of mine and visit it with your own ardour glowing; O Comforter, draw near, within my heart appear, and kindle it, your holy flame bestowing.

There let it freely burn, till earthly passions turn to dust and ashes in its heat consuming; and let your glorious light, shine ever on my sight, and make my pathway clear, by your illuming.

Let holy charity my outward vesture be, and lowliness become my inner clothing; true lowliness of heart, which takes the humbler part, and for its own short-comings weeps with loathing.

And so the yearning strong, with which the soul will long, shall far surpass the power of human telling; for none can guess its grace, till we become the place in which the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling.

We can use these words to ask for spiritual encouragement — 'your own ardour glowing' — and comfort. We can seek guidance — 'make my pathway clear' — and help to live more Christ-like lives — may 'earthly passions turn to dust.' We can pray that the Holy Spirit will enable us to recognise and overcome sin with — 'true lowliness of heart which... for its own short-comings weeps.' And as the hymn concludes, we can become 'the place in which the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling.'

### **Please Pray For...**

- Pray for the preaching of God's word each week at Upper Trosnant, thanking him for the preachers whom he sends to us. Ask that our services will be an opportunity for many to meet with the Lord.
- Remember the Bible Studies and Prayer Meetings, asking that they will be powerful in strengthening and enabling our fellowship.
- Pray that many will visit Upper Trosnant this month, whether coming to Garden Fellowship, or the Strawberries & Cream tea, to Sisterhood or the Men's Meeting. May they be blessed as they spend time with us.
- Pray for Messy Church on 28 June, that many families and children will come along, and that everyone will have a great time while learning something about Jesus.
- Remember each member of the Leadership Team asking the Lord to guide them as they plan our church activities.
- Continue to lift up Richard Harrison, asking that the Lord will restore him to full strength and health.
- Keep praying for Liz and her daughter Michelle that they will have all the strength they need as they go through difficult times.
- Remember our missionary friends Margaret and Roy Collins-Reese in Toulouse, and Sue and David Verwey in Japan. Pray for Pastor J in Cambodia, and for Dale Norman as he waits on the Lord for guidance.
- Pray for Upper Trosnant's ministry to Ty Ceirios and Regency, remembering those we love in care homes, including Ann Stephens.
- Thank the Lord for answered prayers. Please continue to pray for all those who are ill or frail, or recovering from illness or accidents, or in need of a special touch from the Lord: Val Attwell, Emma Attwell, Barbara's sister Brenda, Beryl from Blaenavon, Julie Blake, Julie's nephew Jacob, Dave Breese, Pam Charles, Doreen Dixon, Lindsey Firth, Barbara and Keith Fordham, Jeff and Judith Parry, Richard Harrison's daughter Rachel, Audrey and Eric Jones, Jean Miles, Helen Norman, Janet Pollard, Linda Swires-Hennessy, Greta Wagg.

What's on in June

Saturday
14 June 3.00 pm
Strawberries
& Cream Tea

Book your place via the contacts below



10-11 am Saturday 28 June

### **Messy Church**

All ages welcome no need to book

**Upper Trosnant Baptist Church** 

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Torfaen
NP4 6JU

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