

**UPPER TROSNANT
BAPTIST CHURCH**



APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER

Christ Jesus who died –
more than that, who was
raised to life – is at the
right hand of God and is
also interceding for us.

Romans 8:34



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 May 2023 edition to **uppertrosnantbc@gmail.com** by **Sunday 16th April.**

Letter from Pastor Richard

Death and Resurrection

As I said in last month's Pastor Letter, in many ways Easter is the most important time for us as Christians. And I am in good company thinking that way. Paul the Apostle thought so to because he wrote this to the believers in Corinth:

I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said.

1 Corinthians 15 v 3 – 4 (NLT)

You may be thinking; "what is so important about the death and resurrection of Jesus?" We know that Jesus came into this world and did a lot of wonderful things. As we have been going through the Gospel of John, on Sundays, we have seen some of the miracles he performed. And there is all of the wonderful teaching which he gave. Now I don't want to make light of either of those, indeed as Christians we need to take them very seriously for ourselves. We must always be asking what can I learn from them, and how will they help me in my life?

However, the death and resurrection of Jesus are even more important than his miracles and teaching, Paul in the quote above says they are "most important". And that is because they are the reason he came to earth. God has put all of us in this world for some purpose, and he gives us what we need to fulfil that purpose. That could be what we do in our family lives or our work lives. We must never underestimate those things. But in the case of Jesus, his purpose was to die and rise again from the dead.

Why is that so important? Because it is the means that God uses to bring us into relationship with himself. Because Jesus died and took upon himself the wrong things we have done, we can know his forgiveness.



And because he rose from the dead, we are guaranteed life for evermore.
And there is nothing more important for any of us than those things.

A Christian song from 1985 sums it up well:

*You laid aside your majesty,
Gave up everything for me
Suffered at the hands
Of those you had created;
You took all my guilt and shame,
When you died and rose again;
Now today you reign
In heaven and earth exalted.*

*I really want to worship you my Lord,
You have won my heart and I am yours
For ever and ever I will love you.
You are the only one who died for me
Gave your life to set me free,
So I lift my voice to you in adoration*

Noel Richards

A very Happy Easter to you all!

Love in Jesus,

Pastor Richard

Thank You All

We are so grateful to all those who have contributed to the BMS appeal for money to be sent to Syria and Turkey in the aftermath of the terrible earthquake there on 6 February. We will be sending a sum of £560 which will be distributed through the BMS's local partners working in Syria and Turkey. Recovery and rebuilding after a natural disaster can take decades, and psychological scars don't heal when the TV crews move on. Therefore, the BMS directly supports people who are on the ground and understand the situation. They don't send goods manufactured in the UK that threaten local economies there, instead, they make grants focused on long term recovery, such as paying for trauma counselling and rebuilding businesses.

Doreen's Page: The Quiet of Easter

Praise God for answered prayers that Doreen is now home from hospital. This article is taken from one of Doreen's beautiful books, Daffodils in Winter.

Why was it so quiet that first Easter morning? We would have expected the heavenly host to be there, singing "Alleluia!" as Jesus Christ strode out of his death cave, alive for ever more. But there was just one angel, sitting nonchalantly on the stone he had rolled away – no trumpets, no obvious triumph, just the clearness of early dawn, the sweet song of the birds, and the faithful women, who came to mourn the dead.

Why so low key? Why? Because God always wins. He is infallible, ineffable, inexpressibly accurate in everything He does, and because He is so great and glorious we must always expect amazing acts of grace and not be amazed when miracles are presented to us.

Of course Jesus came back from the dead! He is God, Saviour, Prince of Peace. We can depend on Him to be with us now and throughout all eternity. He is the mighty conqueror.

The quiet loveliness of the early morning in the garden underlines the fact that, "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not die but have eternal life." (John 3:16). This glorious truth needs no decoration to improve its wonderful impact on time and eternity. The scene in the garden is a declaration of Jesus' promise, "Peace is what I leave with you; it is my own peace that I give you. I do not give it as the world gives. Do not be worried and upset; do not be afraid" (John 14:27)

One day, at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue will acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the father. (See Philippians 2: 10-11.) Then the heavenly host will sing – then the sky will thrill with rapture – but on the first Easter morning, bird song was sufficient for the undeniable fact that Jesus Christ **IS** risen. He is risen indeed.

A Night Song

In the night I send a song, that song dear is of you.
Every soul is crying out a message dear for you.

The stars up in heaven, they seem to understand,
They know that I am calling into a far-off land.

The clouds glide by in glory, they smile at me and say,
That you are thinking of me too, in just the same sweet way.

Merrily the moon winks on, it winked at you, I know;
For the greeting that it gave me was just enough to show.

Old nighttime brings me nearer, to the one I love so well,
And twinkling stars and moonbeams, ne'er get a chance to tell.

And although we are far apart, your face I still can see,
For stars that take your message are smiling back at me.

The night you love is my night too, you're King and I am Queen.
For night is God's and free to all, where man is king of dreams.

This lovely poem has been sent in the Newsletter by Rhoswyn, in memory of her beloved husband Malcolm, who went to be with the Lord in April 2022. He is greatly missed by all at Upper Trosnant; we thank God for his life and for all that he meant to so many people.

The Miracles of Easter

The sleeping earth awakens, the robins start to sing
The flowers open wide their eyes, to tell us it is spring.
The bleakness of the winter, is melted by the sun,
The tree that looked so stark and dead becomes a living one.
These miracles of Easter wrought with divine perfection,
Are the blessed reassurance of our Saviour's resurrection.

Helen Steiner Rice

Visitors to Upper Trosnant always say how much they enjoy the music. As a church we are greatly blessed by Phil at the piano and Annmarie at the microphone with her guitar. And we are equally blessed by the mix of old and new hymns and songs that they lead us in each week. Did you know that a great favourite of many, 'Great is Thy Faithfulness' was written one hundred years ago this year? It was first published in America, and we don't know how long it took to arrive in South Wales – but we can imagine the scene when the Upper Trosnant congregation, ladies all in their hats and children in their Sunday best, got to sing it for the very first time. No doubt it was sung with the same gusto that we sing in Trosnant today!

Some hymns have amazing stories, written by Christians who were called out of great darkness, or who experienced terrible traumas or suffering. But the author of 'Great is Thy Faithfulness' was just an ordinary man who lived an ordinary life. Thomas Chisholm was born in a log cabin in Kentucky in 1866. He had various jobs – a teacher, editor of a newspaper, an insurance agent – then retired to an old peoples' home in New Jersey. His life saw no great dramas, only a humble realisation that God was at work during every moment of every day. He wrote, "My income has not been large at any time due to impaired health [but] I must not fail to record here the unfailing faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God and that He has given me many wonderful displays of His providing care, for which I am filled with astonishing gratefulness."

It's easy to get carried away when singing a hymn and not notice the words. But aren't these verses amazing! The everlasting reliability of God's creation – 'summer and winter and springtime and harvest, sun, moon, and stars in their courses above' – and of his daily provision – 'morning by morning new mercies I see' and 'all I have needed his hand hath provided' – aren't these worth singing about! Like Thomas Chisholm we can see that the Lord has never failed us in the past, and so why should we doubt his faithfulness in the future? We have 'pardon for sin and a peace that endureth', plus Jesus's 'own dear presence to cheer and to guide; strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside.' What great Faithfulness indeed!

Bible Notes for Easter

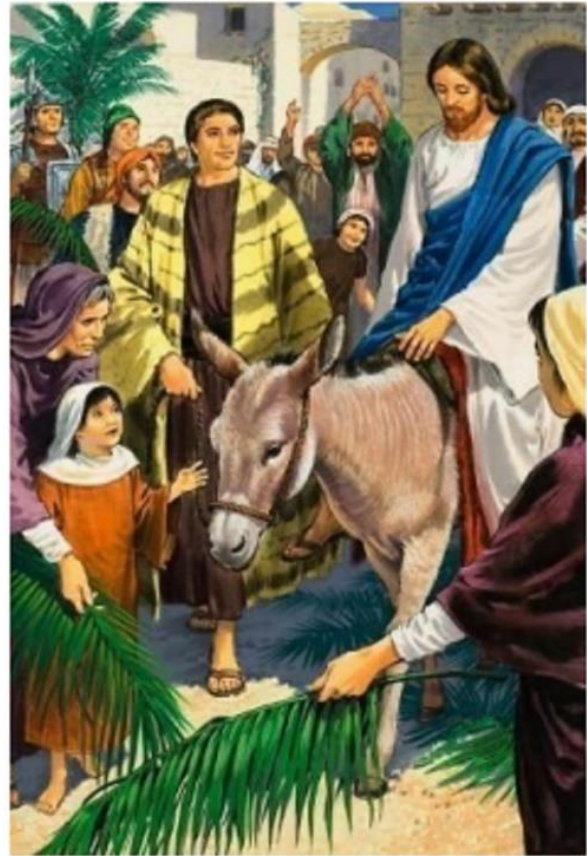
Daniel Pearson

Part one Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday when Christians remember Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when palm branches were waved in celebration (John 12:12).

This year Palm Sunday falls on 2nd April although Easter is a moveable celebration and Easter Sunday can be any date between March 22 and April 17 based on the Gregorian calendar. It is based on the Lunisolar calendar (solar year plus moon phase) and is similar to the Hebrew Calendar. This date calculation can be complicated.

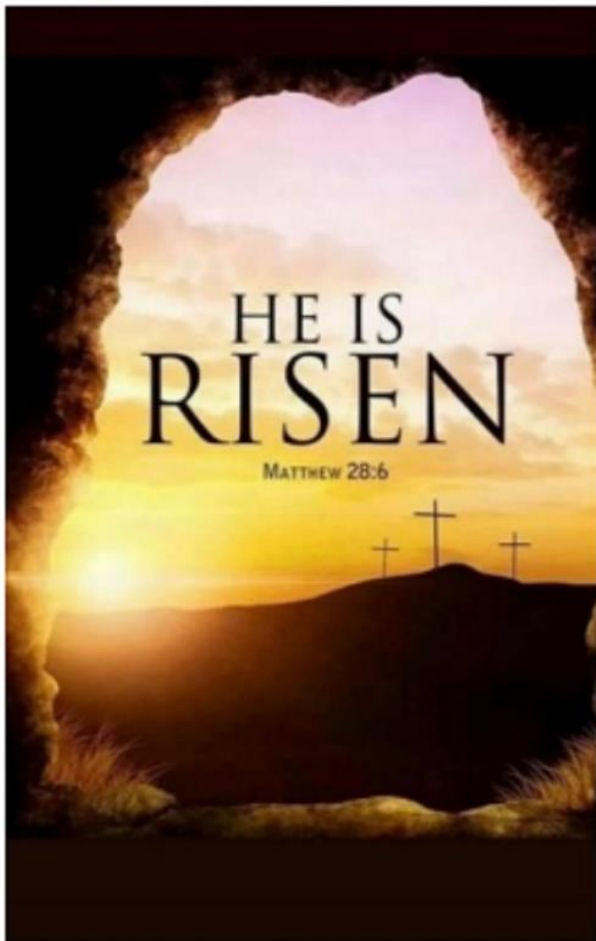
Jesus is anointed at Bethany in the home of Simon the Leper by a woman with a jar of expensive perfume (John 12:6) before the next celebration in Holy Week being Maundy Thursday or the Last Supper (John 13:1) when Jesus



and his disciples celebrate the Feast of the Passover.

Left: The Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci

That very evening Jesus foretold that one of the twelve would betray him (Matthew 26:21). Jesus gave thanks breaking bread and taking a cup of wine (verse 27). They then sang a hymn and went to the Mount of Olives. After Jesus had prayed three times he is arrested and (verse 57) taken before Caiaphas and then Pilate with show trials and false witnesses. Pilate washes his hands and gave Jesus over to be crucified and the people accepted that the blood of Jesus was on them and their children.



Jesus cried out with a loud voice (verses 27:45-54); the curtain of the temple is torn from top to bottom and the earth shook. We remember this day as Good Friday.

As evening approached, a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, asked Pilate for the body of Jesus and placed it in his own tomb (verses 57-65). Remembering that Jesus said he would rise again on the third day the chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate asking for the tomb to be sealed and a guard to be placed to stop the body being stolen.

At dawn on the first day of the week, that we celebrate as Easter Sunday, (Matthew 28:1) Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the tomb. There was a violent earthquake and an angel rolled back the stone. The guards were terrified and became like dead men. The angel said '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'.

Focus on Mission: Messianic Testimony

For many years Upper Troisant has had a special relationship with Margaret Collins-Reece, who lives with her husband Roy in Toulouse in the south of France, near the border with Spain. Roy pastors a small evangelical church, while Margaret works with the Messianic Testimony, reaching out to members of the Jewish community with the good news of Jesus – or Yeshua, as he is known in Hebrew. Margaret grew up in South Wales, and it is always a wonderful blessing when she has been able to visit us and services and meetings at Upper Troisant. As a church we support her work as part of Upper Troisant's annual tithing.

Compared to some global missionary organisations, Messianic Testimony is not very well known. But it has a long history, which began nearly 150 years ago with a personal evangelism ministry of a single man, John Wilkinson, in the East End of London. John was raised as a Methodist, and came to faith at the age of 14. He studied Hebrew and had a deep knowledge of the Old Testament and understanding of God's plans for Israel, and using the prophecies in Isaiah 53 would visit Jewish families in their homes and shops to talk to them about the Messiah. In 1876 he founded the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, and, living by faith, also became involved in social outreach and support of Jewish refugees from Eastern Europe. Meanwhile, in 1893, David Baron, an Orthodox Jew who was converted by John Wilkinson, founded the Hebrew Christian Testimony to Israel, which worked to print and distribute tracts. In 1973 the two organisations came together to form the Messianic Testimony.

The work today is still very much based on personal evangelism. The missionaries are always careful to protect the privacy of the people they work with, many of whom Holocaust survivors or their children. Copies of the Messianic Testimony newsletter are available in Church, and in the latest edition you can read about the importance and meaning of the Passover, and news of the work of missionaries in the UK and around Europe. This is Margaret's latest account of what she has been doing in Toulouse, where she runs a weekly book stall in the market:

"Who knows what, and how, God works in hearts that seem to us to be impenetrable! In contact with Jewish friends who describe themselves

as being against any idea of God, I have to remind myself that I, too, called myself an atheist for 6 years before my new birth at the age of 28, despite a positive witness from family and a good Sunday School!

"My very first meeting with one lady was 23 years ago, when she came up to my bookstall at the Wednesday morning market to chat. She explained she was Israeli, scientific and unbelieving, but noticed the small menorah on display with my books. [The menorah is the seven-branched candlestand used in Jewish worship.] This led to a friendship. We were invited to the Passover Seder at her home. Another year, she came to a Messianic Seder in our home with our family. At that time she said, 'I understand what faith means when I see your boys.' She helped me with modern Hebrew. Later she went through a marriage separation and suffered from cancer. Roy was invited to give a blessing at her elder daughter's wedding. Then, due to her illness, I had very little contact with her for a few years.

"Recently, on a Tuesday, she phoned me saying, 'You said you'd visit me one day after your Wednesday market, (she lives a few kilometres away from this location) so why don't you come up tomorrow?!' With some apprehension, I went to see her the next day. We caught up on family news and I was relieved to see that she was in reasonable health and that her cancer was in remission. I told her about our Christmas concert programme but I avoided being too spiritual in my conversation. As we were saying goodbye at the front door she said, 'Next time, tell me about your beliefs.' Please pray that I choose the "right" Wednesday, when the Lord has prepared her heart.

"In contrast there are other Jewish friends whom I have know for a few years. We read the Tenach/Bible regularly and they are eager to know my interpretation of the various passages and to pray with me or have me pray for them. Please pray for these friends too.

"As we approach the Passover season there are many openings to share about the Lamb. May we be filled with His spirit for this!"

Margaret

Upper Trosnant Update

- It has been a great joy to be able to be together again as a Church family. Our times on Sundays continue to be blessed by the Lord, and we have been encouraged by the numbers attending in recent weeks.
- The other meetings of the church are going well, too. Warm Space, and Open House continue to be opportunities for fellowship together. Sisterhood is always a great blessing too. There was even a lunch out in March which was loved by all.
- At our AGM, we thanked God for his goodness to us as a church over another year. We rejoice that he has provided all that we need financially and trust him for the future. As we have said on many occasions, this is HIS church, and he will build it. Once again, we were able to allocate money to be sent to those involved in the Lord's work locally, nationally and internationally.
- Our Soup on Saturday was once again greatly appreciated. This was the last one of these for the moment, as during the late Spring and Summer we will have Afternoon Teas instead. Everyone is just as welcome, and the first will be our Easter Tea (see back page.)
- It has been such an encouragement to be part of the Lent Lunches during the last few weeks. Numbers have been good, and it is so great to meet with people from other churches in Pontypool. Unfortunately, the week it was due to be in Trosnant, we had to cancel because of the snow (remember that day?).
- Speaking of doing things with other churches, there are a several Easter events in which we can be involved – Easter Praise in the Market and the United Witness in town on Good Friday. Please see page 13 for details. We are also planning to have joint Prayer and Praise evenings once a month. The first will be at Trosnant at the end of April – watch this space for the date.
- Upper Trosnant's Easter Services are detailed on the back page of this Newsletter. The Communion Service in the hall on Good Friday evening will be followed by tea/coffee and hot cross buns. Then we will meet to celebrate the resurrection of the Lord on Easter Sunday at 11.00 am. Also, remember our Sunday @ 4 Specials which are happening in the run up to Easter on Sunday afternoons.

CHURCH DIARY FOR APRIL

SUNDAY SERVICES AND PREACHERS

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

2nd – Dafydd Williams (Communion)

9th – EASTER SUNDAY: Pastor Richard

16th – Evan Millership

23rd – Pastor Richard

30th – Dale Norman

SUNDAY AFTERNOONS @ 4 O'CLOCK

2nd – **Sunday @ 4 Special, Easter #3, in the Hall**

9th – Facebook Live with Pastor Richard

16th – FaceBook Live with Annmarie

23rd – **Sunday @ 4 Special, in the Hall**

30th – FaceBook Live with Pastor Richard

MONDAY

3RD – **OPEN HOUSE**– from 2.00–4.00 pm in the Hall. Please join us for a relaxing afternoon of tabletop games or knitting and crafts (bring your own), or just sit, chat and enjoy a cup of tea.

10th – No meeting on Bank Holiday

17th – **TY CEIRIOS** 2.00 pm service for the residents.

17th and 24th – **WARM SPACE** from 2.00-4.00 pm in the Hall. Everyone is welcome to join us for tea and coffee and biscuits, and a friendly chat in the warm.

TUESDAY – SISTERHOOD 2.30 – 4.00 pm in the Hall

4th – Covenant Players **11th** – No Meeting (Easter Week)

18th – Annmarie Miles **25th** – Sharing Together

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

Prayer Page

- Please pray for Christians around the World this Eastertime. Pray that nothing will stand in the way of the Gospel being preached, and pray for the hearts of all who will hear the good news.
- Lift up the coverage of God's church on our TV screens, that praise services will bring a blessing to many, that the truth of Jesus's death and resurrection will be accurately portrayed, and that nothing will stand in the way of the Gospel.
- Pray for peace in the World, remembering all those in war zones including Ukraine, Armenia and Azerbaijan, the Yemen, and Iran.
- Lift up the people of Syria and Turkey as they struggle to survive the aftermath of the earthquake. Remember those whose homes and lives have been destroyed by storms and flooding, in Malawi and New Zealand. Remember refugees, in our own country, across the channel, and in camps in the Middle East, India and Africa.
- 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 the months ahead. Pray that the Lord will raise up new leaders in our Church, inspire others get involved in our regular meetings and activities.
- 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 Norman as he continues his studies and ministerial placement, and for Naomi as she works with the covenant players and seeks to renew her visa. Pray that the Lord will provide them and Felicity with 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, Dorothy Lewis, 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.

Dorothy Lewis

It was great sadness that we heard that Dorothy Lewis, a lovely Christian lady and good friend to many in our church over many years, has gone to be with the Lord. The sympathy of all is extended to Tony and the family. Dorothy's funeral will be on Friday 31st March at 1.00 pm in Upper Trosnant, and then at 2.30 at the Crematorium, followed by refreshments at Greenmeadow Golf Club. A tribute to Dorothy will appear in the May edition of the Newsletter.

Easter Events in Pontypool

Everyone is invited to join with local Christians
in celebrating Easter together:

**Wednesday 5th April 10.30 am:
Easter Praise in Pontypool Market**

**Good Friday 7th April 11.00 am
United Service of Witness in the town centre**

ROTA for April

	Reading	Door	Teas	Flowers
2 nd	Sian	Clare	am: Clare pm: Annmarie	Sandra
9 th	Tony	Anthea	Anthea	Pam
16 th	Anthea	Priscilla	Sian	Rhoswyn
23 rd	Tony	Jill	am: Jill pm: Annmarie	Barbara
30 th	Dale	Mike and Sian	Clare	Janet P.
Communion: 2 nd : Barbara				



**UPPER TROSNANT
BAPTIST CHURCH**

**Join us over
Easter weekend**

**Good Friday 7th April at 7pm
Communion Service in our Hall**

**Saturday 8th April at 3pm
Easter Tea**

**Sunday 9th April at 11am
Easter Celebration Service**



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