

CONWAY ROAD METHODIST CHURCH NOTICE SHEET – March 2023



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Dear Friends,

*Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed,
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.*

(J. Montgomery: StF 529)

A while ago I came across this hymn in Singing the Faith. It wasn't entirely unfamiliar to me - although I can't say that I recall singing it on a regular basis - and it's been playing on my mind ever since.

Montgomery's hymn has been described as nothing more than a series of statements on prayer. Many mean that as a criticism but it's delightfully true! 'Prayer is the simplest form of speech that infant lips can cry' he writes. I cannot read this without being reminded of those great words from Romans 8: 26: 'Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.' As children of God we cry out to God, whether in lament, joy, intercession or some other emotion - knowing that God and God alone knows what we truly feel.

The synoptic gospels all record the regularity with which Jesus retreated to a 'quiet place' for prayer and contemplation. The Celtic tradition speaks of 'thin places'; places where the gap between heaven and earth is narrower than is normally the case and where one can commune with God at a higher level - much like the 'mountain-top' experience of the Transfiguration. Ordinary places made extraordinary.

Lent provides us with an opportunity to think about on our own spiritual and prayer lives; a sort of 'Spiritual Spring-Clean'. We're going to be exploring spiritual practices during Sunday worship throughout Lent, but perhaps you might also like to read and reflect on this hymn and see if it speaks to you.

I leave you with the words of the final verse: *'O you by whom we come to God, the Life, the Truth, the Way! The path of prayer yourself have trod: Lord, teach us how to pray!'*

Every blessing,
Laura

Sunday Services

Sunday morning worship commences at 10.30am – and includes Junior Church, who meet with us in the Church and then go down for their own activities part way through the service.

February

Sun 5 th Mar	10.30am	Mrs Avery Pendry
Sun 12 th Mar	10.30am	Deacon Laura Evans
Sun 19 th Mar	10.30am	Deacon Laura Evans
Sun 26 th Mar	10.30am	Rev. Alexis Mahoney and Deacon Laura Evans (Holy Communion)



World Day of Prayer

This will take place on Friday March 3rd at 2 pm in St John's Church, Canton.
All are very welcome!

Junior Church

For a short month it has been eventful. The children (& adults) really enjoyed the Sponsored Sleepover and we were all amazed at how generous people have been! In Junior Church we have been studying Lent and how if we strip our lives of distractions, we can focus on God. The children learnt how to make a simple batter and of course to flip a pancake. We have also discussed what we would like to grow in our vegetable patch and we will be sowing & planting in the coming months.

Junior Church Sleepover



On Saturday the 4th February, 9 excited children and 4 brave parents stayed the night in Conway Road Methodist Church. In aid of the Trinity Centre. Over the past few months the Junior Church of Conway Road Methodist have been studying what Methodism is, so when the call came out for fund raising ideas for the Trinity Centre it seemed a wonderful way to involve the children in the mission part of what being a Methodist meant.

A few weeks before the event, on a cleaning day, we had found a snooker table and table tennis table in one of the many cupboards. These were dusted down and missing parts replaced. In addition, we borrowed a table football. The children loved playing on these and commented on how they were never bored, not for a minute. They helped us cook a sausage hot pot with mash potato, followed by a date pudding with toffee sauce. Deacon Laura joined us for dinner and afterwards we played parachute games. When we had laid out our

beds in the 'New Room' we amazed ourselves at how easy it was to project a film (Disneys' new movie: Strange World) onto the wall, which we all snuggled down to watch. There was a bedtime story and everyone settled by 10.30pm. In the morning one by one the children woke and sneaked out into the Sanctuary to join others playing the card game Uno and I suspect ate the midnight sweets that they had intended on eating a few hours earlier, if sleep had not got the better of them. Breakfast was kindly cooked for us and some of our lovely congregation joined us for cereals, yogurts and bacon sandwiches. It is a night the children (& adults) will remember forever. One 11 year old commented "*It was the best sleepover I have ever been to!*" We are also delighted to announce that we raised £500 for the Trinity Centre! Thank you to all those who helped and who sponsored the children.

Trinity Centre Fundraiser – ‘Eat out with friends!’



Twenty-five of us enjoyed Shelagh Cannell’s New Year Sunday dinner and it was a resounding success. A really delicious roast dinner followed by apple pie and cream.

The idea was that those enjoying the food should pay what they would expect to pay for such a lovely dinner out – and we raised £400 - a fabulous total.

Many thanks to Shelagh for all her hard work!

Message from Shelagh:

I would like to thank everyone who supported my effort last Sunday, I hope you all enjoyed the meal. Thanks, must also go to the three who helped me, Laura, Heather and Jo, I could not have managed without them

Dates for your Diary

Sat 18 th Mar	9.30am	Work Morning – volunteers needed to help keep the Church ship-shape and Bristol fashion! Please come along and help if you can spare an hour or two!
Fri 7 th Apr	10.30am	Good Friday Service
Sun 9 th Apr	9.15am	Easter Morning Breakfast

Conway Road 50+ Group

Wed 1 st Mar	St David’s Day Celebration – in music and song Howard Watt (Piano) and Ruth Watt (Clarinet)
Wed 8 th Mar	RSPB: Nature Conservation from a Bird’s Eye View Sue Ansell: RSPB Community Connector
Wed 15 th Mar	Ayurveda Lifestyle Julie Britton: Lifestyle and Mindfulness coach
Wed 22 nd Mar	Land of Song: A celebration of the male voice choir movement in Wales Dean Powell. Journalist, author, broadcaster and vocalist.
Wed 29 th Mar	Reaching the Arctic Circle: A cruise up the Norwegian coast – in pictures and reflections - Deacon Laura Evans: Conway Methodist Church

Lent Studies

The **Circuit Lent Study** will be following 'Failure' the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book for 2023.

Mondays from 27th February at 7.30pm on Zoom

Wednesdays from 1st March at 2pm at Wesley Methodist, Caerphilly.

Also,

On **BBC Radio 4**, Wednesdays at 8.45pm there are Lent Talks, repeated on Saturdays at 5.45am.

The People’s Prayer, Our Father. Six people well-known in their fields reflect on the story of Jesus’ Ministry and Passion. (Marie says - it’s just 15 minutes but we have always found it interesting in the past)

Family News

It was lovely to witness the blessing of Ross and Selina's wedding on Sunday 12th February. There was of course ... cake ... which they cut in the time-honoured fashion.

We all wish you both well as you start your married life – many congratulations!



Belated birthday wishes to Donald who was 70 in early February!
God bless you, Donald!

And to finish:

An elderly man was walking along the beach. He loved walking along the shore and it was his time to take in the open beautiful landscape and remember good things and good memories. But on this particular day, he came across a sight he would never forget. There were hundreds of starfish stranded on the beach. The previous night there had been a storm and these poor creatures found themselves in another world, unable to get back home, as the tide had turned and the waters had abated. The scale of the problem seemed overwhelming. What could be done?

Then at the water's edge. He saw a figure of someone going in and out of the water repeatedly. As he got closer, he saw a teenage boy picking up the starfish, wading into the sea and placing them down gently. He watched for a while as the boy continued with his rescue quest, not stopping for a moment.

The man approached the boy and told him that it was a wonderful act he was performing, but in the greater scheme of things what difference would it make because after all the scale of the problem was huge. What came next, the man would never forget. The teenager picked up a starfish, gently placed it in the water and said, 'It matters to this one!'

Acts of kindness, little by little just as in the story, can make a difference to everyone. We feel like a starfish sometimes, left on the beach with no hope but we have a greater hope that is available to us in every circumstance of our lives, our rescuer is Jesus. He has big shoulders, big enough to bear us. He understands when we cry out. One thing we can be sure of, when we are in a place where there seems no way back and no way forward this great Shepherd of the starfish, comes to our rescue. He carefully picks us up and places us gently into the water of life, that emanates from His heavenly throne.

There is an old hymn with the line – 'Jesus died for all mankind, but Jesus died for me'.

This Easter pray that even if we do the smallest of things, they will make a difference to others.

A thought for the day from Angela Simon