

The Llynfi and Upper Afan Valleys Ministry Area Magazine



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November 2025

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Pattern of Services

Sunday 9am - Said Eucharist – St Michael's

9.45am - Holy Eucharist – St John's

10:30am - Sung Eucharist – St Michael's

6pm - Holy Eucharist – St Cynwyd's

Tuesday 10am - Holy Eucharist – St Cynfelyn's

7pm - Contemporary Service - St David's

(2nd Tuesday of the month only)

Wednesday 10am - Holy Eucharist – St Michael's

Friday 10:30am - Eucharist/Warm Hub –St David's

From Your Vicar

November Reflections – Time and Light

November always arrives with a mixture of feelings. The clocks have gone back, the days feel shorter and suddenly we are walking the dog, collecting the children or returning from work in the dark. Many of us feel the tug of winter drawing near, and it can be easy to let the gloom settle on our spirits.

Yet this month also offers us reminders of brightness. Fireworks split the night sky with colour, Bonfire Night gatherings remind us of warmth and community, and soon the glow of Advent candles and Christmas lights will be upon us. Even in the darkest season, light still has the power to break through.

The Bible speaks about time and light in profound ways. The writer of Ecclesiastes tells us that there is “a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven” (Ecclesiastes 3:1). Time is not simply something we measure with clocks and calendars; it is a gift from God. The turning back of the clocks might serve as a small reminder that our days and seasons are in His hands. How we use this time matters: to draw closer to God, to care for one another, and to live lives that reflect His love.

And into the shortening days comes the great promise of Jesus: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). Fireworks burn bright and fade quickly, but the light of Christ is steady and eternal. It shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it (John 1:5).

So as our clocks go back and our evenings grow longer, let's set our hearts forward. Let's use this season to be people who carry the light of Christ into the world: offering kindness where

there is need, hope where there is despair, and joy where there is sorrow. A single candle can transform a dark room; in the same way, the light of Christ in us can bring transformation to our communities.

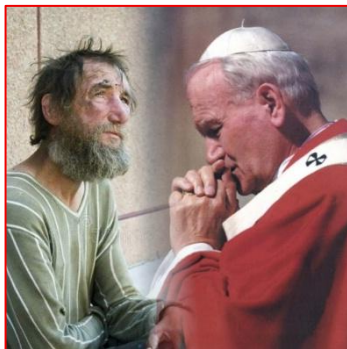
May this November be for us not just a season of longer nights, but a season of deeper faith, renewed hope, and the steady glow of God's eternal light.

Every Blessing

Rev Rick

From Vicar Bev

Pope John Paul II and the Beggar Priest



In this week of the momentous meeting between King Charles and Pope Leo at the Vatican, I would like to share with you a story about Pope John Paul II.

A Priest from New York went to Rome for an audience with Pope John Paul II. Whilst in Rome, before his meeting he decided to go to a church to pray. As he walked through the door, he saw a beggar sitting on the steps, which is not uncommon, and yet he sensed something familiar about him. When he had finished praying, he walked back out and decided to speak to the beggar, at which time they realised that they knew each other and had gone to Seminary together. The beggar revealed how he had been a Priest and had 'crashed and burned' in his vocation.

Later, when the Priest had an audience with the Pope, he joined the line of people who were processing past, and when his turn came, he gave in to a holy impulse and fell to his knees asking the Pope to pray for the beggar he had met earlier, telling him of how he was a Priest but had now fallen on hard times. The Pope gave the Priest an invitation to bring the beggar to dinner with him that evening.

The Priest immediately went from St Peter's to the small church and found the beggar was still on the steps. The Priest told the beggar of the invitation they had been given from John Paul II. The beggar said that he could not possibly do such a thing, but the Priest insisted telling him he was not going to this meal without him. He then took the beggar to his hotel room and gave him a loan of his razor and some clothes.

The two men arrived an hour later at the Papal apartments and sat down and ate a meal with the Pope. After the meal, the Pope asked the Priest to kindly leave him alone with his friend. The Priest found out, later that evening, what had happened when he left the room: The Pope turned to the beggar and said, "Would you hear my confession?" The beggar replied, "but I am not a Priest anymore!" The Pope then told him, "once a Priest, you are always a Priest." But the beggar told the Pope that he was out of good standing with the church. The Pope replied, "I am the Bishop of Rome, I can reinstate you right now," which he then does. The Pope then knelt before the beggar and confessed his sins. The beggar-Priest barely got the words of absolution out before he fell on his knees and with tears in his eyes asks the Pope to hear *his* confession.

Once the beggar-Priest was restored to Christ and in a state of grace, the Pope asked the other Priest to come back into the room. The Pope asked him which church he had found his friend at, upon learning he then told the beggar-Priest, "for your first pastoral assignment I want you to go to this church and report for duty, because you will be an associate Priest there, with a special outreach to your fellow beggars on the street." And that is where the beggar is today, fulfilling his new priestly role ministering to the homeless and the beggars on the steps of the very church where he himself had begged.

Rev Bev

From Your Curate

This past month I have been in lots of primary schools to conduct their Harvest Assemblies and delivering the message of Harvest – sharing, caring and thanksgiving. All of the schools have been doing wonderful work to support their local foodbanks and one school inviting the local community to come in to enjoy a bowl of soup made in school by the staff.

As followers of Christ, we are called to look beyond ourselves and see the needs of those around us. Community is not just about living near one another — it's about sharing life together. When we offer a listening ear, lend a helping hand, or simply show kindness, we reflect God's love in action. In a world that often feels divided or hurried, small acts of compassion can make a great difference.

This past weekend the clocks have gone back an hour and our nights will be getting darker earlier, for some this will mean not going out as often, not having as much contact with people and perhaps even feeling lonely.

So let us be people who notice, who show compassion, who care, and who support — within our church family and beyond. Together, we can be a living reminder of God's grace at work in our community.

Pob bendith

Rev Lisa xx

From your Editor

One of my pet hates when watching a quiz show on TV is when a clueless young contestant, faced with a question about e.g. the Beatles, bleats "I don't know. It was before my time!" It happens with depressing regularity – even "*Only Connect*" isn't immune these days – and is usually accompanied by a furious tirade from me (Jane will testify to this). Something that I've come to realise in my 52 years is that 99% of recorded history happened before I was born (I've looked this up!) and some of

it was quite interesting. I would encourage people everywhere to check out the works of Dickens, Mozart and Laurel & Hardy; to look up the Moon landings, the Industrial Revolution and the Battle of Hastings; maybe even find out what was going down in Judea about 2000 years ago. There's loads more!

November is a month of Remembrance. On Remembrance Sunday we will commemorate all who gave their lives in service to ensure the freedoms we enjoy today. There have been some voices out there questioning why we continue to do this so many years after the end of the World Wars. Among the many and various important reasons that we **do** and **should** continue, is this: "*Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it*" (George Santanaya).

I don't know about you, but I was very disturbed by the 'Unite the Kingdom' rally held in London, organised by a far-right activist with some very unsavoury views, which attracted such a worryingly large crowd. Perhaps some in that crowd will be standing in silence on Remembrance Sunday to honour those who died fighting fascism in the 1940s?

There are many issues to deal with at the moment in our beleaguered country, but the news this year has been dominated by stories of protests and riots regarding immigration and small boats. Watching violent 'protesters' on TV rioting and setting fire to hotels put me in mind of the antisemitic attacks of the 1930s on London's Jewish community by Oswald Mosely's Blackshirts. I confess that it's all left me feeling very uneasy and I pray to God that we can ultimately rely on the traditional British sense of justice and decency to prevail in the long term.

When we stand before our God to honour the Fallen this Remembrance Sunday, let's also pray for a renewal of peace,

compassion and tolerance in our nation, and that we don't repeat the mistakes and iniquities of the past.

Rhodri

Events in November

Monday 3rd - Poppy cascade at St Cynwyd's open 11am-2pm

also Friday 7th & Saturday 8th 11am-2pm

Sunday 9th - Remembrance Sunday (*please see pages 10-11 for details of services*)

Tuesday 11th - Contemporary Service at St David's, 7pm
followed by Fellowship in the Pub

Saturday 15th – Christmas Fayre, St Cynfelyn's 10am-2pm
Messy Church, Noddfa Hall, Glyncorrwg 10am

Tuesday 18th – Bible Study, St Michael's Crypt, 7pm

Wednesday 19th – MAC meeting, 7pm St Michael's Crypt

Thursday 20th – Bingo Night, St Michael's Crypt, 7:30pm

Tuesday 25th - Sanctuary in St David's, 7pm

Thurs 25th – 28th – Experience Christmas, St David's

Thursday 27th – Advent Study Group, St Michael's Crypt 11:15am
Advent Lunch, St Michael's Crypt, 12-1:30pm

Saturday 29th – St Cynwyd's Cheltenham Trip

Sunday 30th - From Darkness to Light, St Michael's, 6pm

Calendar and Readings for November

Saturday 1st – All Saints

Daniel 7. 1-3, 15-18

Psalm 149

Ephesians 1. 1-23

Luke 6. 20-31

Sunday 2nd – the First Sunday of the Kingdom

Isaiah 1. 10-18

Psalm 32. 1-7

2 Thessalonians 1. 1-12

Luke 19. 1-10

Monday 3rd – All Souls

Lamentations 3. 17-26 *or* Wisdom 3. 1-9

Psalm 23 *or* 27. 1-5, 13-14

Romans 5. 5-11 *or* 1 Peter 1. 3-9

John 5. 19-25 *or* 6. 37-40

Sunday 9th – the 2nd Sunday of the Kingdom – Remembrance Sunday

Job 19. 23-27a

Psalm 7. 1-8

2 Thessalonians 2.1-5, 13-17

Luke 20. 27-38

Sunday 16th – the Third Sunday of the Kingdom

Malachai 4. 1-2a

Psalm 98

2 Thessalonians 3. 6-13

Luke 21. 5-19

Sunday 23rd – the Fourth Sunday of the Kingdom

Jeremiah 23. 1-6

Psalm 46

Colossians 1. 11-20

Luke 23. 33-43

Sunday 30th – The First Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 2. 1-5

Psalm 122

Romans 13. 11-14

Matthew 24. 36.44

Parish Notes



“He shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

Isaiah 2:4

United Service

As Sunday 30th November is a fifth Sunday, there will be one joint Ministry Area Eucharist held on that morning at 10:30am in the warm and comfortable surrounds of St David's Church.

Please Note – there will be no other *regular* services held in the Ministry Area on this day. But please read on...

From Darkness to Light

The beginning of the Advent season this year falls on Sunday 30th November and will be marked by the traditional 'From

Darkness to Light'. This contemplative and atmospheric service of Advent carols and readings is a wonderful introduction to the Advent season and well loved by those who attend and take part. It will be held at St Michael's Church beginning at 6pm

Remembrance

Remembrance Sunday this year falls on 9th November. St Michael's Church will be hosting the Remembrance service in Maesteg at 10am, led by Rev Rick, in the presence of, among others, civic dignitaries, the Royal British Legion, members of the armed forces and representatives of the community's schools. As in previous years, following the service in the church, there will follow a march from the church down to the War Memorial in the town centre, where the wreathes will be laid, the Last Post sounded and the two minute silence held at 11am.

On the same morning, Rev Lisa will lead a Remembrance service at St John's, Glyncorwg at 10:15am. This will be followed by the observations at the village War Memorial.

There will also be a Remembrance service and observations led by Rev Bev Reaney held at the Caerau War Memorial, Caerau Square, beginning at 10:30am.

On Remembrance Day itself, Tuesday 11th November, Rev Rick will lead a short service and the 2 minute silence at 11am at the War Memorial in Maesteg.

Harvest Festival

This year's United Harvest service was held at St Cynwyd's Church on Sunday 19th October. It was a pleasure to see the church so full and to see all the food contributions that had been brought along to be donated to the Foodbank. The church had been decorated beautifully in time for the service – well done and “thank you” to those who had given up their time to do this and also to Susan Thomas who made the harvest loaf.

It was a joy to welcome our new Archdeacon, Rev Anne-Marie Renshaw, on the morning, to hear her Harvest message and to have the opportunity to meet her after the service. Rev Anne-Marie has been in post as the new Archdeacon of Morgannwg since 21st September, having joined the Diocese from the Benefice of Thurstable and Winstree, Chelmsford. We look forward to many more visits in the coming years!

Harvest Celebrations

On Wednesday 22nd October we were treated to a wonderful Harvest Supper prepared by the ladies of St Cynwyd's Church. Sue, Delyth, Mair, Sandra and lots of others did a wonderful job of decorating the tables in the Crypt and preparing the food. A huge thank you for everyone's hard work as this evening was a wonderful evening of fellowship, friendship and giving thanks to God.

Pob bendith

Rev Lisa

Please see the next page for photos of our Harvest activities...



Harvest in Schools

Over the past six weeks, I have attended many schools delivering their Harvest assemblies alongside Rev Rick, Christoph or Sue. It has been a delight to share our faith with so many children and teachers.

This year I told them the story of Stone Soup. This

is a European folk story which has many versions in various countries but they all have the same meaning. It is about sharing with and caring for people within our own communities. The children also heard the story of Jesus feeding the 5000 and we sang some lovely Harvest songs.

We also talked about sharing and how so many of us, both church and schools have shared by donating a tin of food to the local foodbank. It



has been a great joy to attend our local Primary Schools and talk to the children and teachers.

I look forward to the start of the Remembrance assemblies for this month.

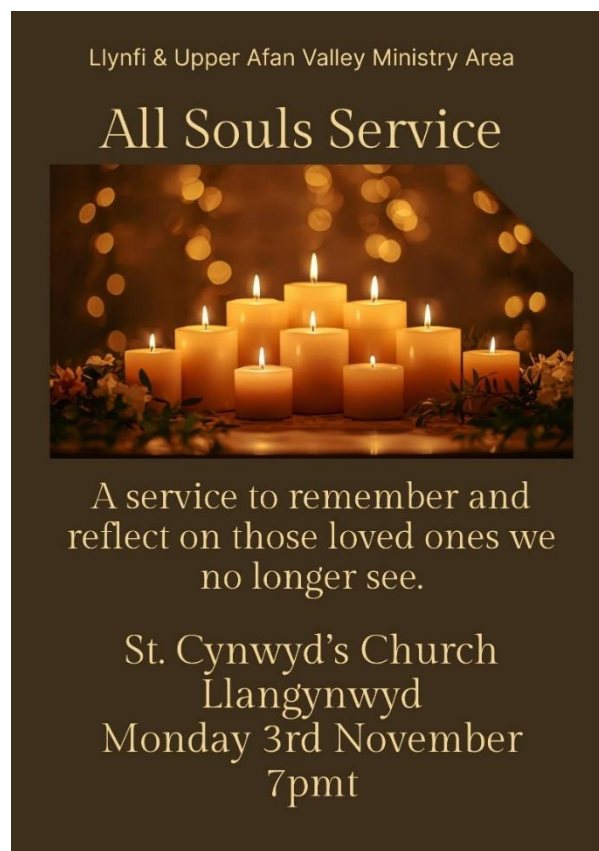
Pob bendith, Rev Lisa.

All Souls Service.

You are invited to join us at St Cynwyd's Church, Llangynwyd, on Monday 3rd November at 7pm. This is a service of remembrance and reflection for those of our loved ones that we no longer see.

Come and light a candle in their memory. There will also be readings and hymns.

Pob bendith, Rev Lisa



Notices for Advent

Advent Lunches

Tony, Sue, and their helpers will once again be serving warming lunches and companionship at St Michael's Crypt to hungry customers throughout Advent, beginning on Thursday 27th November between 12 and 1:30pm, supporting the Mother's Union and a charitable cause to be confirmed. Prior to the Lunches and ***Advent Study Group*** will meet in the Crypt foyer for the course "*Prophecy – Permission to Dream*" between 11:15am and 12 noon. All welcome!

Christmas Tree Festival 2025

The Christmas Tree festival is a vital part of our outreach to schools and the community and will take place this year between Thursday 11th and Sunday 14th December. St Michael's Church will once again be transformed into an enchanting forest of Christmas trees, there will be schools and children's choirs performing and the usual refreshments and craft stalls on offer in the Crypt.

However, to be a success, this four day event always needs willing volunteers to help set up, man the church, serve teas, coffees etc. If you are able to help out in any way then please get in touch with any of the Festival committee.

Meat Voucher Scheme

Rev Rick will soon begin taking donations toward the annual Meat Voucher scheme run by Llynfi Valley Churches Together (formerly the Council of Churches). This enables the LVCC to purchase vouchers for meat to be donated to those in need or financial hardship in our community for Christmas.

St Michael's Church Sunday Club



Join us every Sunday morning in
Term Time 10.30–11.30am
Beginning Sunday 21st September
St. Michael's Church Crypt,
Maesteg.

SUNDAY CLUB

Experience story, fun, crafts, and singing
for everyone! All Welcome.

www.llynfiafan.co.uk
fb - Llynfi and upper afan valleys ministry area

Llynfi and Upper Afan Valleys
Ministry Area

Sunday Club

A reminder that the Children's Sunday Club continues to run every Sunday morning during term-time between 10:30-11:30am at St Michael's Crypt. Please bring along your child or grandchild for crafts, stories, singing and fun!

(Please note – everyone running the above sessions has been fully DBS checked.)

Mothers' Union



On Monday 6th October, the Llangynwyd with Maesteg branch of the MU, completed a very serious experiment.

- Stage 1 -  Complete, in teams, the Dingbats Quiz.
- Stage 2 - Eat Fish and Chips (beautifully cooked and delivered by Jean and Charles in the Talbot Restaurant).
- Stage 3 - Complete, in teams, a quiz.

The object of this very serious exercise was -  to check if fish really is 'brain food'.

Well, being honest, based on our findings, the answer was no.

We had excellent results on the dingbats round, but the results of the quiz (out of 20 questions, the **highest** score was still under 10!)... but it could be said that the Dingbats were very easy and the quiz was a tad hard (not quite MENSA, but not far behind.) 

However, everyone seemed to have a good time, though I'm sure will be very glad to have Sue back at the helm in November.

PS – A 'post quiz' investigation (I think) has the answer to the unexpected quiz results – we all ate the wrong fish! We should have eaten herring, mackerel, salmon, sardines or tuna, **not cod**. 

Well as the nights draw in, and the earth has a rest – we still have lots of activities in MU:

- Monday 3rd November at 10:30am – The poppies are to be cascaded down the tower of St Cynwyd's Church
- Monday 10th November 7pm – Corin Morgan will be coming to speak on the work of 'Invisible Walls'
- Monday 1st December - Deanery Advent Service in St David's Church, Pencoed

- Thursday 11th to Saturday 14th December – Dishcloths and tea towels to the ready, to help in the Christmas Tree Festival
- Monday 15th December – Christmas Lunch, in The Old House.



The world is more than a bit crazy at the moment, and many people, both at home and abroad, are in need of our prayers, so please pray for peace in the world, and peace of mind, for those in distress.

Take care and God bless

Lynne

Bingo Nights



If you haven't tried a Bingo night yet, then Thursday 20th November is the night for you! (Oh yes, it is!)

As well as the usual five rounds of Bingo called by

our resident caller Tony, with amazing prizes for a line and a full house, there is a raffle, a reasonably well stocked bar and lots of fun, excitement and laughter. If all that's not enough, as there's no Bingo in December, this month's session will be an early Christmas treat with some extra fancy nibbles and a dash of tinsel!

Over the last ten months of 2025, the Bingo evenings have raised over a £1000 for Ministry Area funds, which is a brilliant achievement. Many thanks to those who have supported these evenings over the year – please keep coming and tell all your friends!



Harvest Messy Church



On Saturday 18th October the Harvest Messy Church was held at Noddfa Community Hall, Glyncorrwg. It was a fabulous morning of fun, crafts and storytelling. Rev Lisa told the story of 'Stone Soup' and the Feeding of the 5000.

"We gave thanks for all we have and thought of what we can do to support others. We sang songs, had fun and did crafts," said Rev Lisa.



Some Photos of the Mother's Union Deanery Autumn Retreat at Bryngarw Country Park, 2nd October 2025



Christian Aid

The shops are filling up fast with Christmas goods, and this year even the Lamppost Decorations have already been erected, but along with the euphoria of Christmas comes a great deal of despair for many, when trying to choose gifts for those who have all they need.



Well – you can change all that, just by selecting a gift from below, and give an everlasting Christmas Gift:

Olive Tree Sapling

Why an Olive tree?



Your gift of an olive tree could help keep hope alive for a local farmer in the occupied Palestinian territory. These small saplings could show the farmer's family a ray of light in a time of darkness. With your gifts, our partner is planting olive tree saplings that can

sustain the livelihoods of many Palestinian farmers. Together we are standing in solidarity with farmers in the hope of building a better future.

Thanks a bunch!

Where does the money go?

Each Charity Gifts purchase is a donation to Christian Aid's work globally, enabling us to respond effectively wherever the need is greatest.

£20.00

Train a tailor

Why tailoring training?



Your gift could provide training for someone like Morsheda in Bangladesh to set up a sustainable tailoring business. As a child, she'd wanted to study but was expected to leave school and marry young.

Now she is an accomplished tailor with the skills to develop her own business. And through this, Morsheda is bringing in extra income to continue her education.

Continued on page 25...

Services for November

Monday 3 rd	St Cynwyd's	7pm	All Souls Service
Tuesday 4 th	St Cynfelyn's	10am	Holy Eucharist
Wed 5 th	St Michael's	10am	Holy Eucharist
Friday 7 th	St David's	10:30am	Eucharist & Warm Hub
Sunday 9 th	St Michael's	10am	Remembrance service followed by march to the War Memorial
	St John's	10:15am	Remembrance service
	Caerau Square	10:30am	Remembrance service
	St Cynwyd's	6pm	Holy Eucharist
Tuesday 11 th	St Cynfelyn's	10am	Holy Eucharist
	St David's	7pm	Contemporary Worship
Wed 12 th	St Michael's	10am	Holy Eucharist
Friday 12 th	St David's	10:30am	Eucharist & Warm Hub
Sunday 16 th	St Michael's	9am	Holy Eucharist
		10.30am	Holy Eucharist
	St John's	9.45am	Holy Eucharist

	St Cynwyd's	6pm	Holy Eucharist
Tuesday 18 th	St Cynfelyn's	10am	Holy Eucharist
Wed 19 th	St Michael's	10am	Holy Eucharist
Friday 21 st	St David's	10:30am	Eucharist & Warm Hub
Sunday 23 th	St Michael's	9am	Holy Eucharist
		10.30am	Holy Eucharist
	St John's	9.45am	Holy Eucharist
	St Cynwyd's	6pm	Holy Eucharist
Tuesday 25 th	St Cynfelyn's	10am	Holy Eucharist
	St David's	7pm	Sanctuary Service
Wed 26 th	St Michael's	10am	Holy Eucharist
Friday 28 th	St David's	10:30am	Eucharist & Warm Hub
Sunday 30 th	St David's	10:30am	United MA Eucharist
	<i>(no other regular services in the MA on this day)</i>		
	St Michael's	6pm	From Darkness to Light

Ab-sew-lutely life-changing!

Where does the money go?

Each Charity Gifts purchase is a donation to Christian Aid's work globally, enabling us to respond effectively wherever the need is greatest.

£45.00

Send a child to school

Why send a child to school?



Your gift could support a mother in Burundi – one of the world's poorest countries – to send her child to school. You could help to keep alive her dream of providing a sustained education for her child. And her belief that they can live a life free from poverty.

A gift that's top of the class!

Where does the money go?

Each Charity Gifts purchase is a donation to Christian Aid's work globally, enabling us to respond effectively wherever the need is greatest.

£25.00

So, if you have a person who is problematic to buy for, please consider one of the gifts above, or find more gifts at caid.org.uk ...and give a gift for life, not just for Christmas.

As we embrace the Festive Season, let's do all we can – to remember that...

'Jesus is the reason for the season.'

Take care and God bless

Lynne pp Christian Aid Committee

For Your Prayers



We ask for your continued prayers...

- For Rev Rick, Rev Bev, Rev Lisa and Christoph and their ministry among us.
- For Our Lay Chair Ann, the Wardens Sue, Fiona and Tony, Sub-wardens and members of the Ministry Area Council and anyone who plays a part in the running of the Ministry Area.
- For those who are in need, grief, distress or who are unwell in our communities.
- For our political leaders, that they may put God's love, Jesus' teachings and the needs of the people at the heart of their service.
- For compassion, peace, security and justice in our country and in our world; For those working against racism, intolerance and hatred; For those fleeing persecution in their homelands and searching for sanctuary; For those suffering due to the many conflicts in our world, including in the Middle East and Ukraine.

News from St Cynfelyn's



A reminder from our Reader Dr Jill Evans about the weekly Eucharist service at St Cynfelyn's which take place every Tuesday at 10am.

Dr Jill writes: "I cannot make it sadly because I am not good in the mornings but there is a regular attendance followed by a cup of tea etc and possibly someone who would like to attend might not know."

It's wonderful to see St Cynfelyn's open again for regular worship after the trials of last year. The Tuesday morning services have been running since June and it would be good to see this endeavour continue to grow and flourish. So please, spread the news that St Cynfelyn's is back in business and let everyone know who might be interested in coming along to a service. A warm welcome is assured!

*

On Saturday 15th November, St Cynfelyn's will be holding the annual



Christmas Fayre. These will be stalls of crafts and assorted goodies to peruse and refreshments on offer for. Help will be needed to make this another success, so if you are able to help out in any way then please let any of the clergy know.

News from St David's



New Eucharist Service at St David's Church

**Every Friday morning at 10.30am
All Welcome**

**Join us after the
Eucharist for our
Warm Hub at
11.30am.
Come in and have a
warm drink and a
warm lunch.**



**Friday 31st
October**

Llynfi & Upper Afan Valleys Ministry Area

Warm Hub @St. David's



Hot Soup & a Drink - All Free!
Join us every Friday from 11.30 - 1.00
St. David's Church. Maesteg.

We are thrilled to announce that St David's Church, in addition to the monthly Contemporary service, will be holding a new weekly service on a Friday morning at 10:30am, beginning on Friday 31st October. This will be a different kind of service and will also offer a 'Warm Hub,' with teas, coffees etc. It would be wonderful to see you there.



As you can see for the above poster, 'Experience Christmas' is returning to St David's Church. This, along with the 'Experience Easter' earlier this year, is a wonderful opportunity to introduce the key seasons of our faith to children in a new and exciting way. If you are able to help out with this event, then please let Rev Lisa know.

Don't forget that on 30th November, the first Sunday of the liturgical year, St David's will be hosting the MA United service at 10:30am. See you there!

It's exciting times for the little church still glorifying God in the High_St!

News from St Cynwyd's



Correspondent – Mandy Millar

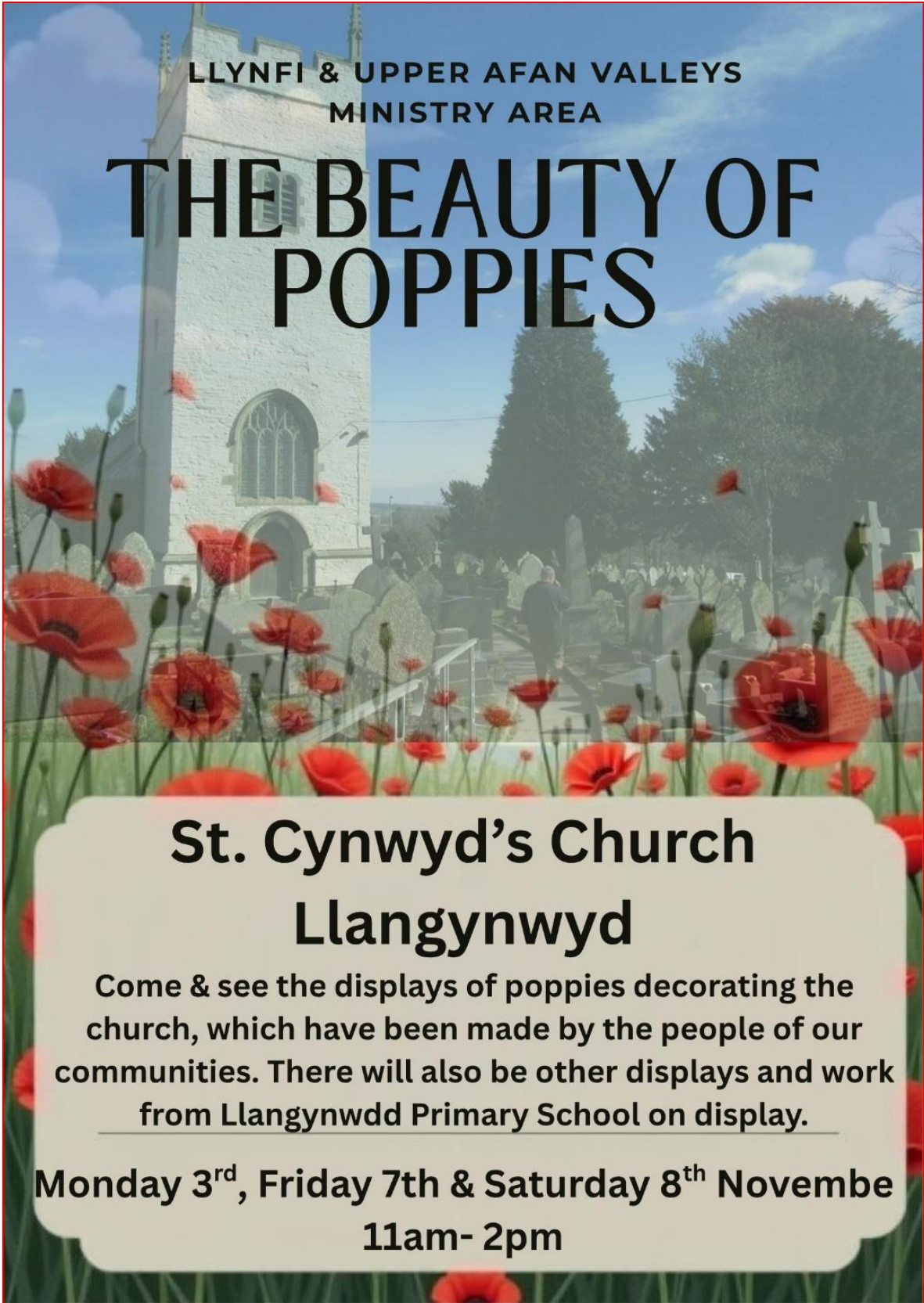
Many thanks to Sue Thomas for stepping in while Mandy is unwell

Mandy, our regular correspondent is still in hospital but is hoping to be home soon. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers.

While Mandy has been unable to join us on Sundays, we are extremely grateful to Diane Seldon for taking over “bell ringing” duties.

The Harvest Festival celebration held on 19th October was a hugely successful and uplifting service. We all had the opportunity to meet and chat with Archdeacon Ann-Marie Renshaw while enjoying refreshments after the service. A huge thank you to the ladies who helped to clean and decorate the church so beautifully. During the two afternoons we were in the church several groups of people came to look around. Every one of them had a story to tell about their association with the church.

Poppies continue to flood into church. At present I have about 2,500! These will be cascaded down the tower on Monday 3rd November at 10.30am. I'm not sure Vicar knows what he's letting himself in for yet, it will be the first time for him to venture up the tower!



**LLYNFI & UPPER AFAN VALLEYS
MINISTRY AREA**

THE BEAUTY OF POPPIES

St. Cynwyd's Church Llangynwyd

Come & see the displays of poppies decorating the church, which have been made by the people of our communities. There will also be other displays and work from Llangynwdd Primary School on display.

**Monday 3rd, Friday 7th & Saturday 8th November
11am- 2pm**



Our Christmas Shopping trip to Cheltenham is on Saturday 29th November. Please let myself or Delyth know if you wish to join us. Cost will be £20.

Our grateful thanks to the Men's Shed who have completed the partition in the schoolroom.

Please remember the members of our congregation who have been unwell recently. We wish them a speedy recovery and hope to see them soon.

Sue

News from St John the Baptist



Correspondent - Jane Proctor

REMEMBER –

Sunday 9th November 10:15am - REMEMBRANCE DAY service in Glyncorrwg begins in the church.

PEW END Memorial Flowers Saturday 20th December
10:00am – 4:00pm

Bright autumnal days are giving way to colder, greyer, wintry days but what a joyous time we have been having in Glyncorrwg. Glyncorrwg Primary School treated their parents, grandparents and villagers to a delightful Harvest service here at St John the Baptist. The children, as ever, sang and read beautifully. Eight members of our congregation joined the Ministry Area Harvest celebration at St Cynwyd's, where we received a warm welcome.

The congregation got together to have a thorough clean of the altar and chancel at St. John's even after managing to clear the very high cobwebs off of the arches, giving the carpet a deep clean. Much laughter and fun was had removing those cobwebs. We will be back, to shine the brass, later.



The whole village is preparing to remember the fallen soldiers from all wars on Remembrance Sunday to be led by Rev Lisa and with the attendance of a representative from the Lord Lieutenant's Office.

Looking ahead there will be:

Messy Church in the Noddfa Centre Glyncorrwg 15th November
10:00am

A visit to Ty Nant 20th November 2:00pm

Preparation of Christmas trees for the festivals at Noddfa
Community Centre and St. Michael's.

God bless to all.

News from St Michael's



Correspondent – Jane Mullins

*Lord of all,
give wisdom to all who work for peace,
so that a more secure future may be ensured for all.
Give courage to those who strive for justice,
so that the causes of conflict may be overcome.
Give strength to those who seek to break down barriers,
that divisions over race, colour, creed and culture may be
ended.
Grant that wherever war, or the threat of war, continues to
haunt lives, a way of reconciliation may be found,
and harmony established between people and nations.
(Taken from Prayers for Public Worship, Nick Fawcett)*

The Harvest Supper was held at the Crypt on 22nd October and
the venue had been beautifully dressed for the occasion with

decorations and flowers in seasonal colours, including a fabulous floral display to greet guests in the foyer. Grateful thanks are given to Sue Thomas, Delyth Lucas and all the catering team for all their hard work in preparing the lovely meal and ensuring that we all had a most enjoyable evening.

As we know, this year is the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and there have been many events throughout the year to commemorate and remember the service and sacrifice of those who fought to defend our freedom. Our annual service of Remembrance will be held at St Michael's on Sunday 9th November at 10am, followed by the laying of wreaths at the War Memorial.

At the end of the month, the lovely service of 'Darkness to Light,' which marks the beginning of the Advent season, will be at St Michael's at 6pm on Sunday 30th November.

Coffee at the Crypt

As mentioned in last month's magazine, St Michael's Choir will be hosting a Coffee Morning at the Crypt on 8th November from 10.30am–12.00pm, in aid of Ministry Area Funds. As usual, there will be coffee, tea and cakes on offer along with the inevitable raffle! The entry price will include a beverage of choice and a cake with lots of opportunity to purchase additional baked delights if required.

Bingo

The last Bingo session of 2025 will be held on Thursday November 20th in the Crypt at **7.30pm**. Thanks to all those who have supported the Bingo evenings during the year; your generosity has resulted in us once again being able to raise over £1,000 for church funds so far this year and your support

is much appreciated. We are also very grateful to those who have not only attended these evenings but have kindly donated prizes as well. It is of course an ongoing money raiser, and as usual all are welcome to join the 'dabbers' of the parish for the last Bingo evening of 2025 at the 'Crypt Casino'.

Let's go to the Movies...

Following the success of previous Film Night evenings, we are hoping to arrange another one before the end of the month but may possibly change the time to make it an afternoon event, rather than the evening. No details available as yet but if a suitable date can be found, it will be advertised in church notices.

Advent Lunches

Sue and Tony will be reopening the Crypt Café in readiness to serve lunches every **Thursday** during Advent from 27th November to 18th December. (The week of the Christmas Tree festival, the lunch will be held on **Wednesday December 10th**). Lunch will be served from 12pm – 1.30pm and as in previous years, diners will be able to choose warming soups or /and a selection of filled baked potatoes. There is no fixed charge for lunch but any donations will be gratefully received and shared between two chosen charities which this year are Mothers Union with the other one yet to be chosen.

Shoeboxes

As mentioned in the previous magazine, shoeboxes are now available to collect from St Michael's and as in past years they need to be returned to church by the first Sunday in December in order to be dispatched in time to arrive at their destinations for Christmas.

New Arrival

Congratulations to Alex and Ethan on the birth of their son Jesse Oliver in October. Jesse was brought along to church by his parents and his three year old brother Elijah on Sunday 26th October, much to the joy of the 9am congregation. Welcome to the world Jesse Oliver!

Condolences

We were sad to hear of the passing of Lynne Jones on Tuesday 9th September at the age of 80 years old. Lynne had been a regular attender at St Michael's 9am Sunday services and will be missed by the congregation. Her funeral took place at Margam Crematorium, officiated by Rev Lisa. We extend our deepest condolences to Lynne's children Richard and Louise and grandchildren Lucy, Millie, Ollie and Lali and to all her family and friends. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

Happy Birthday

Birthday greetings are sent to all those celebrating in November, including Alun Jones and Mair Hawley. Enjoy your individual celebrations!

This year, however, will be a special occasion for Alun as he celebrates his 90th birthday on 18th November. As we know, he has been a faithful member of our church for many years and, before handing over his conductor's baton to daughter Susan in 2023, had served as a longstanding, long suffering, dedicated choirmaster of St Michael's Church Choir for over 35 years, having been appointed in December 1988. He arranged all the music for church and choir and ensured the choir was prepared, not only for the many special occasions that he directed, but for every Sunday service, overseeing the musical celebration of countless festivals of the church year. For his notable and significant contribution to the musical life of our

church we express our heartfelt gratitude and send best wishes to him for a very happy birthday. Enjoy this special occasion with your family. Happy 90th birthday, maestro!

Lt Charles Oxborrow

Every November, our thoughts inevitably turn to Remembrance; our churches hold special services to remember those that have died in time of war and conflict and indeed the buildings themselves have memorial plaques and windows dedicated to those whose lives were lost, but how many of you have noticed the small brass plaque on the altar rails in St Michael's Church or realise that those rails are themselves a 'war memorial'? The plaque reads:

To The Glory of God and in Memory of

*Lieut. Charles Ernest Oxborrow, D.S.C. R.N., Yeoman Sydney
B. Bennett and Able Seaman Charles Thorn of the submarine
P.54 Unshaken who lost their lives at sea*

25th November 1942.

*These rails are the gift of Mrs Hazel Oxborrow and the
members of the ship's company.*

Dedicated 29th June 1944.

Charles Oxborrow was born in 1916 in Suffolk, his father died in the Great War when he was only 2 years old. Charles joined the Royal Navy as an ordinary seaman; he was clearly an excellent naval rating and in 1937 he was commissioned as an officer. On 23rd September 1939, just after war was declared, he married Hazel Elaine Bowser, daughter of Idris John Bowser and Mary Eliza (née Marks) of 'Redlands', 67, St Michael's Road, and Maesteg became his home when he was not away at sea.



In October 1939, he transferred to the submarine service and was involved in many patrols against the enemy, receiving the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC), one of the highest decorations for naval gallantry, in May 1942 “for daring enterprise and devotion to duty in successful patrols in H.M. submarines”. That same month he took his first command of a submarine, HMS *Unshaken* P.54 (*pictured here in Malta, 1943*), providing cover for convoys in the arctic. In October 1942, *Unshaken* was ordered to sail to the Mediterranean as part of a successful invasion of French North Africa, “Operation Torch”, and then to hunt German ships in the area.

Late in the afternoon of 25th November 1942, HMS *Unshaken* surfaced in the Gulf of Lyon in very rough seas and Lt. Oxborrow and two crewmen, Yeoman of Signals Sydney Bertie Bennett (aged 26, and who had himself recently been awarded the Netherlands Bronze Cross for bravery whilst serving on a Dutch submarine) and Able Seaman Charles Richard Thorn (23), went up on to the conning tower on lookout. Suddenly the submarine was hit by waves and slid back underwater washing the three men overboard; although the submarine resurfaced quickly, no trace of the men was ever found.

On 19th December 1942, Mrs Oxborrow gave birth to their son, Roger Charles, but further tragedy was to strike as little Roger died less than two months later.

So next time you kneel at the altar rail in St Michael’s, please remember these three young men and their families and the supreme sacrifice that they, and so many others, made.

Hywel Morgan

Did You Know...

“The Merchant of Death is Dead”

That was the headline for an obituary that caused Alfred Nobel, the inventor of Dynamite to make a course correction in his life. The newspaper however had made a mistake, as Alfred was very much alive. It was his brother, Ludwig who had died. It is believed that when Alfred realised he would be remembered for a dangerous invention that claimed many lives that he decided to donate most of his significant wealth to establishing an award for those who had benefitted humanity. It became known as the *Nobel Prize*.

(Submitted by Ann Jones)

100 Club Winners

October

Kevin Doyle	£30
Lynne Harris Seal	£15

Book of Remembrance

We remember those whose names are written in our Book of Remembrance for the month of November:

Megan Eluned Williams	January 24 th 1913 - Nov 8 th 1994
Ivor Truman Tucker	April 28 th 1911 - Nov 16 th 2002
Josephine Loving Treasure	April 8 th 1938 - Nov 14 th 2004
Leonard James Mullins	May 2 nd 1918 – Nov 17 th 1970
Betty Morgan	March 10 th 1927 - Nov 9 th 2005
Colin Uppington	Dec 5 th 1917- Nov 30 th 2008
Catherine Preece	March 30 th 1915 - Nov 24 th 1991
Christina Vaughan Thomas	Nov 24 th 1929 - Nov 4 th 2011

May they Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory.

A Meditation for Remembrance

The Crosses *by Bill Mitton*



I stood there before the crosses
glowing white in row on row
Everyone a young life cut short
as the names upon them show.
The dates they died below the names
tell of wars now past and gone
Passchendaele, the Somme, and Mons
of battles fought, and lost or won.
History remembers, as it should
these men who fought and died
Whilst for their families left behind
a dull sorrow tinged with pride.
The faces of boys held now in Sepia
who died in days long gone
yet living on in memories
and hearts, still holding on.
Yet despite the hurt and grief here
what with horror makes me fill
Is that when I look behind me
there are more new crosses growing still.



John 15. 9-15,17

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. This is my command: Love each other.

A Prayer of Commemoration for the Fallen

Father of all, look with love on all your people, living and departed. At this time of remembrance, we especially ask that you would hold forever all who have suffered during war - those who returned scarred, disillusioned and wounded by warfare; those who waited anxiously at home; those who mourned; those communities that were diminished and suffered loss.

Remember too those who acted with kindly compassion - those who bravely risked their lives or made the ultimate sacrifice for their comrades and communities; and those who, in the aftermath of war, worked tirelessly for a peaceful world.

And as you remember them, remember us, O Lord; grant us peace in our time and a longing for the day when people of every language, race and nation will be brought into the unity of Christ's Kingdom. This we ask in the name of the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*

A Prayer for Peace in the Holy Land (Christian Aid)

O God of all justice and peace, we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land. Be with those who need you in these days of suffering; we pray for people of all faiths - Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of the land. While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the establishment of peace, we also call for you to bring justice and equity to the peoples. Guide us into your kingdom, where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children, for to all of us you are our Heavenly Father. *Amen*

A Prayer for Peace in Ukraine (CAFOD)

Loving God, we pray for the people of Ukraine, for all those suffering or afraid, that you will be close to them and protect them. We pray for world leaders, for compassion, strength and wisdom to guide their choices. We pray for the world, that in this moment of crisis, we may reach out in solidarity to our brothers and sisters in need. May we walk in your ways so that peace and justice become a reality for the people of Ukraine and for all the world. *Amen*

*They Shall grow not old as we that are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*

The Last Word

“We look forward to the time when the Power of Love will replace the Love of Power. Then will our world know the blessings of peace.”

William E. Gladstone

“And He (Jesus) overturned the tables of the money changers . . .”

Matthew 21, v12



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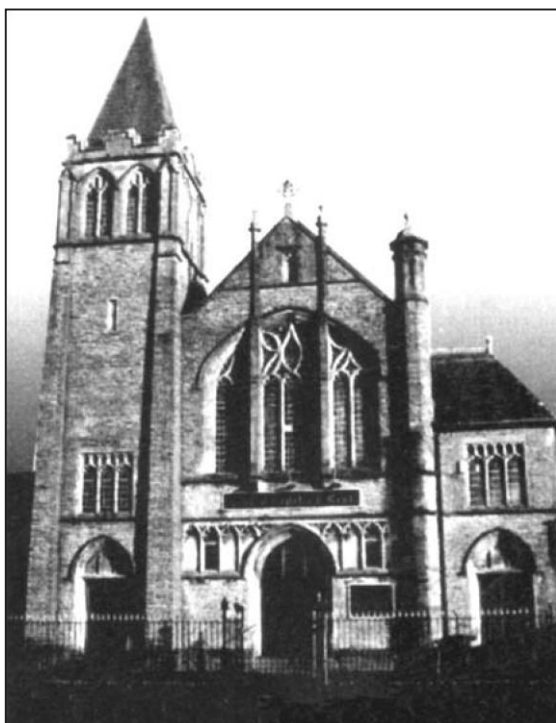
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