

UNITING CHURCH SKETTY

JULY & AUGUST 2026



**‘There was a
garden...’**

**UNITING TOGETHER – CARING
FOR ALL – SEEKING GOD**



Minister: The Revd Louise Gough

Senior Elder: Pat D

Senior Steward: Maggie C

Church Related Community Worker: Adella P
(Swansea Region of URC Churches)

SEPTEMBER 2026 MAGAZINE: All items for inclusion in the next edition of the Magazine to be sent to Noel D by **13th AUGUST** at the latest, but sooner, if possible. Issue date: Sunday, AUGUST 25th.



Wesley Chapel
1876

150
mlynedd
:
150
years



Uniting Church Sketty
2026

Uniting Church Sketty, Dillwyn Road, Sketty, Swansea, SA2 9AH.
Website: www.unitingchurchsketty.org.uk

The building development was funded by the following

The Methodist Church



Ariennir gan
Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Assembly Government



THE
NATIONAL
LOTTERY®

The refurbished hall was funded from the sale of the Bethel building

LETTER FROM THE MANSE

Dear friends

One of the fun things about being a Methodist Presbyterian is that, as ministers stationed by the connexion* to particular circuits, we are expected to be active in both connexion and circuit! All of us undertake roles outside the churches in our care, and my current bonus task is to serve on the Methodist Church Liturgy and Worship Subcommittee – which is an honour and a privilege (as well as being occasionally intimidating!).

So it was that I spent a fascinating Tuesday in June sitting in a meeting room in Birmingham, enthusing alongside an esteemed and varied group of ‘liturgy nerds’. I have not been formally trained in liturgy to the extent of most of the members of the committee, but since becoming accredited as Methodist Local Preacher in 1996, and having been participating in leading worship since the late 1980s, I have relished the ample opportunities I’ve had to prepare services and lead the people of God in worship. I love that in the Methodist Church we have gold standard, approved, more formal liturgies (currently in the Methodist Worship Book), but also the complete freedom to shape and create our own material for worship, as long as it is in accordance with Methodist doctrines. (Apologies that I can’t speak with the same experience about the URC, but I know it creates wonderful resources for worship and has produced some of the finest hymn writers – more recent than Charles Wesley!)

Our task that day in Birmingham was to think about the Liturgical Principles of the Methodist Church. It was fascinating to hear about the history and development of Methodist worship, and to think about what worship is – including words by William Temple (slightly paraphrased) about how worship:

- prompts our consciousness to a new awareness of God
- feeds our minds with the truth of God
- fills our imaginations with the beauty of God
- opens our hearts to the love of God
- devotes our wills to the purpose of God.

There’s a lot to think about there!

I remember from my training as a local preacher that good public worship consists of a diet of various elements (praise, confession, thanksgiving, hearing and reflecting on God’s word, prayers for others, chiefly among other things), and that the structure of the service and the

flow of worship should be like invisible scaffolding. But what is most essential is that worship is the act of the whole people of God (the word 'liturgy' means 'work of the people'). At the Birmingham meeting we talked about how worship comes to life when it is offered to God by the entire congregation. Worship involves active participation.

All this reminded me of what has been on my mind for some time. How can our worship at UCS become more deeply the 'ministry of the whole people of God'? How can we all be encouraged to use our gifts and skills in preparing, leading and participating in worship? Participating in worship doesn't necessarily mean being 'the one at the front' – we all participate just by being there and by having the attitude of and the mind to worship. But wouldn't it be great if we had more opportunities to contribute to worship in new and varied ways? Wouldn't it be enriching if our services fully reflected and celebrated the fact that liturgy/worship is indeed 'the work of the people'.

We have got some different kinds of services lined up for the summer – Breakout Church (19th July) and a café-style service (23rd August). I'm looking forward to those. But perhaps there are other ways we could broaden the scope of what is offered in worship by encouraging contributions from those who aren't usually at the lectern or in the pulpit! I have a few ideas... Watch this space. If you are enthusiastic about worship too, let me know! I'd love a conversation.

I hope the summer months bring some refreshment, and pray God's blessing and strength for you, especially if life is a challenge (as it often seems to be).

With love and prayers

Louise

**In Methodism, the Connexion (an older word for 'connection') is the foundational theological and organisational system where all local churches, districts and conferences are linked to a network of mutual support, shared resources and accountability. The Connexion refers to the global or national church body as a whole. All ministers are 'received into full connexion' before their ordination.*

UCS WORSHIP SERVICES IN JULY & AUGUST

July	5	Revd Louise Gough (Communion)
	12	Revd Linda Woollacott
	16	Thursday Communion: Revd Louise Gough
	19	Revd Louise Gough
	26	Revd Pam Cram
August	2	Revd Noel Davies
	9	Revd Louise Gough (Communion)
	16	Revd Andrew Pearce
	20	Thursday Communion: Revd Louise Gough
	23	Revd Louise Gough
	30	Revd John Atkinson (United Service)

All services are at 10.30am unless otherwise indicated.

Evening Prayer is held on Zoom from 7.00pm until 7.30pm, unless otherwise notified in the Weekly Notices.

PASTORAL CONCERNS

- We remember those who are in hospital, in care homes and nursing homes, those who are being cared for at home, those who are awaiting treatment and those who are convalescing. We pray that they will know God's strength and peace, and be able to trust in God's presence with them.
- We pray for those who are recently bereaved. May they know 'the peace of God that passes all understanding', through Jesus Christ, our Risen Lord.
- Congratulations to Bill and Alice J who have recently celebrated their 70th Wedding Anniversary with their family. It's lovely to know they have spent so many happy years together.
- Congratulations to Linda and Alan J who celebrate their Diamond Wedding Anniversary in August; we send them our love and best wishes.
- We were sad to hear that our friend, Esme K, died on June 2nd at St Mark's Care Home. She would have been 101 on June 14th. (Thanks to Lynne W. for bringing flowers to church on that Sunday in memory of Esme). We give thanks to God for her long life of love for family and friends, and her faithful Christian commitment in Pantygydr Baptist Church, and UCS, where she was a regular member of our Sunday evening congregation and of Wesley Club. We thank God for those who faithfully visited her during her years in St. Mark's, offering her love and friendship.

- Bethel friends were also sad to hear of the death of Vicki P in hospital on June 12th. Vicki, and her husband Martin, were both serving elders in Bethel. We give thanks for her quiet commitment during those years and remember Martin in our prayers. There will be a private funeral.

COMMITMENT FOR LIFE – ZIMBABWE PROJECT



Our church project this year will be looking at Zimbabwe. We hope to learn more about the country and also what Commitment for Life and the Methodist Church are doing there.

We tend to think of African countries as powerless but in the 11th to 15th century there was a powerful kingdom in the Zimbabwe area involved in long distance trade with China, India and the Middle East.

Zimbabwe has 16 official languages with Shona and Ndebele the most popular. English is widely used in government, education and business. Zimbabwe has one of the highest literacy rates in Africa as education has historically been a strong national priority.

Land reform remains an issue. Zimbabwe had a land reform programme beginning in 2000 which reshaped land ownership, redistributing farms from white commercial farmers to black Zimbabweans. Although this addressed historical inequalities it had complex economic consequences and remains a key aspect of the country's political identity.



Susan G.

150TH ANNIVERSARY – 19TH & 20TH SEPTEMBER

1876-2026



This year
we celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Wesley Chapel, the building
that is the focus of our worship, our activities and our service to the
community.

To mark the occasion there will be a special weekend of events:

Saturday 19th September 2pm until 4.30pm

**Anniversary Celebration Open Afternoon - cake and
company...**

Sunday 20th September at 10.30am

Celebration Service

Sunday 20th September at 6pm

Cymanfa Ganu

FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP : WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

During July and into September and October we will continue to think about the Bible as a whole, its origins, its structure and the way the various books relate to each other. Who are some of its key characters? What does the Bible mean for us today and how does it speak to us now?

Five sessions were arranged – all on Tuesdays. There are three sessions remaining, as follows (please note that the topic of the last session has been changed) and in each session we will look at the Hebrew Scriptures of the Old Testament and the Christian witness of the New Testament to Jesus as Lord and Saviour:

July 7th: The Bible as a handbook for worship and prayer

**September 1st: The Bible as a guide to moral living, to living out the
love, justice and peace of God, as seen in Jesus.**

October 4th: How do different Church traditions view the Bible?

COFFEE MORNINGS

Saturday 4th July 2026, 10am-12 noon

Proceeds for Stand Up for Downs

Saturday 1st August 2026 10am-12noon

Proceeds for Church Funds

Saturday 5th September 2026 10am-12noon

Proceeds for MacMillian



COMMUNION COLLECTIONS



Our collection in July will be for Water Aid.

Worldwide 696 million people, almost 1 in 10, don't have clean water close to home. Water Aid aims to reach everyone with clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene. They work with local communities to build sustainable solutions that meet their need.



Our August collection will be for Commitment for Life, the URCs world justice programme. It facilitates prayer, advocacy and effective action for the most vulnerable

people in the world. Zimbabwe is one of the three areas they currently concentrate on (the others are Bangladesh and Israel/Palestinian Territories).

Susan G.

The Circuit Plan notes that Sunday, July 12th is Action for Children Sunday and Sea Sunday. So here's some information to remind us about what they stand for:

ACTION FOR CHILDREN: Is about giving a child in crisis a brighter future. 4 million children in the UK live in poverty. That's 27% of all children living in the UK. Child poverty is rising and your donation helps children in crisis today. Our donations go to help frontline service staff reach the children that need help the most, from putting food in the fridge to preventing neglect, abuse and homelessness.



HARBOURS OF HOPE - THE CHURCH ALONGSIDE SEAFARERS.



Sea Sunday is a moment each year when churches around the world come together to pray for seafarers, give thanks for their vital work, and support The Mission to

Seafarers' life-changing frontline ministry.

MURDER IS SERVED

WRITTEN BY JO WEST | PERFORMED BY MADCAPS

Friday 10th July
and
Saturday 11th July

7pm

Uniting Church Sketty Hall



£15

donation to church funds,
supper included

Contact John on unitingchurchsketty@gmail.com

For two nights only, you are invited to attend a special surprise birthday party at "Chez Lindsay", a Spanish-themed restaurant where food, entertainment, mystery and murder are all on the menu...



GARDENS – A REFLECTION

I had been planning an extended reflection for the summer magazine. I had invited photographs of gardens to illustrate what I had in mind. Some of the words were in my head! Then, I saw this piece in Capel y Nant's monthly magazine, 'Bwrlwm', (a title that echoes the bubbling stream [nant]), written by Dr Fiona Gannon, leader of Capel y Nant:

'Any garden is a haven of peace, offering quietness, and an opportunity to be still amid the busy-ness and noise of the world around us. Planting and maintaining a garden draws us closer to nature and makes a small stand against



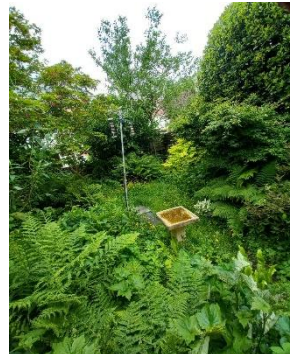
the pollution of our world. In the Bible, gardens are part of the human journey towards God: the innocent Paradise of the lost Eden, the suffering and anguish of Gethsemane, the empty and victorious tomb of Jesus (in a garden), and the promise of the Book of Revelation of Paradise restored.'

Capel y Nant, in collaboration with Wesley, have recently established a new garden at the front of the church (see *photo above*) as a place of reflection and refreshment not just for church members but for whoever walks by and sits in its peace for a moment of stillness.

So what can we learn from our gardens? First of all, they are places of exuberant and extravagant growth and flourishing, where we can be immersed in a



corner of the creation that the energy of God's creative love has brought into being (as illustrated by our garden after last year's 'no mow May'! It's been tamed a little since then.) Gardens can often be on the edge of wilderness! So we are called to be stewards of these 'wild places', to 'tame' them to God's purposes. Gardens are also places of extravagant





beauty. Here you see something of the wonder and colourfulness of nature – organised and planned, of course, but still a wonder!

Some gardens are places of carefully managed production, where the potential of soil and plant are harnessed for the sake of healthy human and ecological

flourishing, through nourishment and beauty. They are places where – as Genesis reminds us – we become co-producers and co-creators with God.



Gardens are also places of patient waiting: we plant now but we will not



see or taste the fruit of our efforts for some time. A lesson in patient and caring waiting and nurturing.

In the Garden of Eden there was a river (as in John's

vision of the river of life in Revelation). Not many of us have streams in our gardens. But some people have ponds that remind us of the refreshment, renewal and cleansing brought through water – no water, no life!



‘God leads
me beside
still waters;
and refreshes
my soul’
(Psalm 23)

They too become places of flourishing life – look at this first wonderful,



exuberant damsel fly of the season in Janet's garden!



But all this reminds us of baptism: 'The water used for baptism looks gentle. It is clear and still, poured with care and received with hope. Yet, to enter it was to surrender the old self and rise into a new life in Christ. The water of faith reminds us of both

chaos and creation. It carries the memory of the flood and the promise of renewal. At the moment of baptism, the water touches our skin, and we are joined not only to Christ but to one another. We are not baptised alone. Baptismal water has touched generations before us, carrying their prayers, tears, and hopes through time. And this water does not stop at the doors of our own congregations. It moves beyond our histories, touching churches that begin in the same grace' (*The Revd Dr Seoyoung Kim, in the URC Daily Devotions for June 1st*). Gardens, too, extend beyond us, we touch past and future generations.

Gardening, not unlike life itself, is not always about success. We learn as



much from our failures as from our successes. These two containers were planted with sweet pea plants from the same batch, on the same day, using peat-free compost from the same bag and placed within two metres of each

other! Soon after these photos were taken, the failures were disposed of!

It's not wise to get your gardening tips from the Apostle Paul – generally, he was better at tent-making – but he was right, as Jesus was, to advise that branches (or plants?) that do not bear fruit (or flowers) should be cut out and disposed of. We too need God's forgiveness so that we can be brought to newness.

I had not heard of ‘the Chelsea Chop’ until last month. Towards the end of May, when the Chelsea RHS Flower Show is held, we are encouraged to chop back some perennial plants, such as geraniums or heleniums, that are coming into bud, by a few inches, so that they develop more flowers and flower for longer. I have never tried this, but sometimes drastic actions are needed to produce better and longer-lasting results. In life as in gardening.

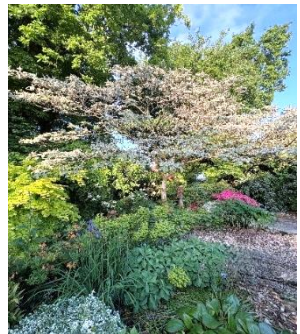
Christian discipleship challenges us to recognise where we have failed, when we need forgiveness through God’s grace in Jesus, and where we need to be re-grafted into the rootstock of Christ. Such radical change, that may be a reminder of our baptism, is sometimes the only way we can bear in our lives the fruits of the Spirit: ‘love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control’ (Gal 5.22)



There is also, of course, the ECO imperative. Cultivating, planting, feeding and harvesting in ways that do not damage the environment and that attract wildlife – especially pollinators. The UCS garden is currently being made increasingly eco-friendly, as we read in last month’s magazine. Being stewards of our little patch of earth is a call from God.

Ultimately, gardens are about promise, beauty, refreshment and hope. They point us to what the world can be, and they point us to God. ‘I saw a new heaven and a new earth... And I heard a voice, saying, Look, I am making all things new!’ (Revelation 21.1f)

‘When our hearts are wintry, grieving or in pain,
Then your touch can call us back to life again;
(Gardens) of our hearts that dead and bare
have been;
Love is come again, like (seed) that springs up
green. (JMC Crum)



Our gardens can be Easter places too – sources of renewal, joy and hope!

*(Thanks to Anne, Janet, Linda and Maggie (and Bwrlwm) for these photos.
There were many more!)*

Noel

From Green Friends

WHAT'S ON YOUR CUPBOARD SHELF?

Do we need all the cleaning products we keep in our cupboards, or should we think back to what our grandmothers had available? There are resources to hand that nature has provided which do the job without the downside of harsh chemicals.



Baking Powder and Bicarbonate of Soda are invaluable cleansers. The soda deodorises, brightens and whitens with the added benefit of being mildly abrasive.

- Burnt pans? No problem just add a little water to the soda and spread the paste over the stain, leave overnight, rinse and job done!
- Tea stained cups and mugs? Add soda and water, leave overnight and they will be sparkling in the morning.
- Scuffs on walls and paint work? Wipe away with a soft cloth and a soda paste.
- Tarnished cutlery, clothes iron or jewellery? Rub with a soft cloth and soda paste.
- Spills on carpet? Blot with soda and wipe away.

White vinegar may not be on our cupboard shelves, but it is on supermarket shelves and it's a great, cheap household asset.

- Those nuisance labels that you remove - wipe away the sticky residue with white vinegar.
- Cleaning windows and mirrors - mix half and half white vinegar and water, wipe with a clean soft cloth and polish with newspaper.
- Rusty tools - soak overnight in white vinegar and rinse to restore the metal.
- Use white vinegar as a rinse aid in your dishwasher and instead of a fabric softener add white vinegar in your washing machine (I haven't tried this, but I'm assured it doesn't make the clothes smell!).



- Your stainless steel sink will sparkle with a white vinegar clean.

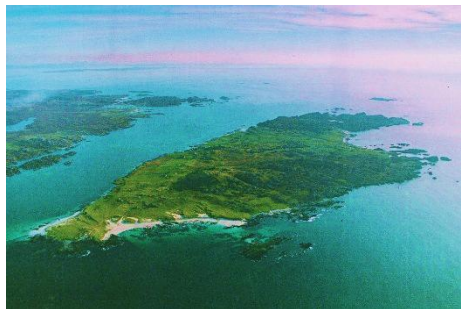
And finally, the two together, if you have a blocked plug hole add soda then white vinegar, when it foams, cover with a plug or cloth, wait 15 minutes then rinse with hot water.

Happy Cleaning

Sonia B

IONA: AN ISLAND AND COMMUNITY DEDICATED TO JUSTICE, PEACE AND RENEWED WORSHIP AND SPIRITUALITY

Inspired by Janet N's talk about Iona in the Wesley Club open meeting on June 8th (Thanks, Janet), I thought it would be worth reminding ourselves very briefly of some of the island's history and its importance as a place of pilgrimage today. We remember that our friend Graham B was deeply influenced by Iona when he visited as a young man. Photos of the Abbey and the McLean Cross taken by Janet.



The Island of Iona is located to the West of the Isle of Mull, off the west coast of Scotland. Janet's journey to get there involved trains, coaches, ferries and, in Janet's words, 'Shanks' Pony'! It is, in her words, a thin place, a place where the human and divine touch, where our souls feel close to God. It's why

Saint Columba, the Irish monk, sailed to Iona - with twelve companions - in the 6th century to establish a monastery. So it became the birthplace of Christianity in Scotland, a holy place and a place of pilgrimage throughout the centuries since. In those early years there would have been close connections between such holy places – such as Lindisfarne in Northumberland, St Michael's Mount in Cornwall, St David's in Dyfed and Ceanannas Mór (Kells) in Ireland. These were places of learning and teaching, places of prayer and worship, centres for evangelism, and communities that offered Christian service to those in need.

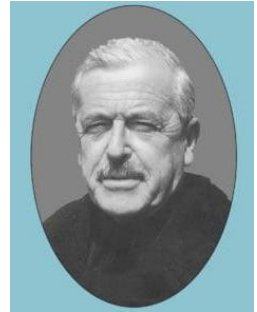
An abbey was built on Iona, surrounded by facilities that were needed to sustain a monastic community. In the 13th century, a Benedictine nunnery was established there. The nunnery and the associated St Ronan's church



continued as a centre for prayer and service until the 16th century and, unusually, as a burial place for women and children until the 18th century.

After almost four centuries, when the monastery and nunnery were no longer in use, and the buildings declined into greater and greater ruin, the

Iona Community was formed in 1938, at the initiative of the visionary Revd George McCleod (later Baron McCleod of Fiunary, 1895-1991), who was then a minister in the Govan area of Glasgow and had a vision of closing the gap between the Church and working people.



The Abbey was rebuilt using skilled workers and others, from Glasgow and elsewhere.

The Community grew to become a key Scottish and international renewal movement that has had a deeply transforming influence on the life of the global church ever since. It describes itself

as: '...an international, ecumenical Christian movement working for justice and peace, the rebuilding of community and the renewal of worship.'

It's probably best known to most of us for its worship resources and for the hymns by John Bell (who was at one time the Leader of the Community) and Graeme Maule, much of it published via Wild Goose

Wild
Goose
Publications



Publications. But it has a much wider role within the life of our churches, as the list of themes for daily prayers that Janet sent me, reminds us: Monday - the peace of the world; Tuesday - the care of creation; Wednesday - economic and trade justice; Thursday - gender and sexuality issues; Friday - Civic law and justice; Saturday- intercultural relations.

These are themes that we should all be thinking and praying about, since they're at the heart of any renewal in the life of the Church, of our nations and the global community.

My first 'encounter' with George McCleod was in his book, 'Only one way left', published in 1956. It's based on the premise that '...the only way left for the church (*to be engaged in the turmoil that was society in the post-war period*) is to recover the full proportions of the Faith.' Nothing has changed for the Iona Community since then. It still equips us to engage with our society as we work, empowered by the Gospel faith, for justice and peace, and to seek renewal of our worship, witness and spiritual life.

Noel

St Quernan's Well, Troqueer

This is a green place,
trees, thistles, nettles,
a place of power,
a place to go barefoot,
a place of prayer.

Here yellow leaves float and dance,
bubbles surface and burst.

This water is cold.

Clean cold,
stone cold,
pure cold and holy.

The earth's warmth shivers here.

This is a place of meeting,
a whole place,
a place of healing.

Celt of water,
Christ of earth,
touch me,
wash me clean.

Keep me in holiness
through my nights
and days.

Ruth Burgess

*From 'Summer', edited by Ruth Burgess, published by Wild Goose, and
free to use for non-commercial purposes.*



St Quernan's Well, in Dumfries, is named after a 9th Century Scottish Saint and is considered to be a special place of offerings and of giving hope. The well is surrounded by a number of stones which would have probably marked a path to the well. Ruth Burgess is a member of the Iona Community and was a pupil at Glanmôr School for Girls.

**ON 24TH JULY AT UCS WE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO
EXPERIENCE A QUITE UNIQUE MUSICAL
PRESENTATION**



Lola A, granddaughter of John and Lynda, is visiting as part of a UK tour with her colleague Juana Casas Farras, under the name Phrygian Clouds. Although Lola is already a professional orchestral harpist, she has gone on to study medieval harp and song. Those who attended Lynda's memorial service will probably recall her playing the triple harp and singing in Welsh. She was deeply influenced by her grandma's singing and also by visiting folk nights here at Tŷ Tawe, where she first experienced improvised accompaniment on the triple harp. She is currently completing her studies at the University of the Arts (HfK) at Bremen, Germany, and has had specialist tuition with medieval specialists in Lyon and Paris. On this occasion she will be accompanying herself and Juana on a small Gothic harp – somewhat easier to transport! She sings chants by Hildegard of Bingen as well as folk songs and her own poems. To quote her own publicity: *'Inspired by poetry in Welsh, English and French, as well as chant, polyphony and jazz, she creates her own musical language that transcends time and connects cultures.'*

Juana is a Spanish vocalist and pianist who is currently studying Jazz (voice), also at Bremen. Rooted in storytelling and jazz, her practice moves fluidly between folk and interdisciplinary performance.

It promises to be a special event.

Note it in your diary!

Admission will be free, but donations will be welcome.

WAS IT NATURE OR NURTURE?

This is an age old and very ongoing argument. If you are like me, when you look at your children and grandchildren, or indeed any children, you often think of your own childhood and maybe recall all those people who influenced your upbringing.

In his book, "Is that you again, God?", the late Richard Adams was "chatting to God" on this very subject. Towards the end of their conversation God made the comment, "the nurture that made you what you are, wasn't just confined to the family was it? Think of all the people you've known over the years; talked to, listened to, worked with, argued with, partied with and grieved with: those who have encouraged you, hindered you, resented you or loved you, all the millions of words and interactions you have either rejected or absorbed to make you what you are." Richard thinks, and like I guess you and I would have said, "the thought took my breath away. A lifetime of experience" he said. "All those people." "All that influence", added God.

But having thought, Richard replied "But wait a bit. Don't you come into it somewhere?" "Was I ever out of it?" said God, and as so often happened in these conversations, Richard was left to ponder the answer. Was it possible that without each other, we would be without God? And without God in each other, none of us would be the unique human beings that we are?

I hope you enjoyed the thoughts and memories that came with reading this piece. I know I did.

Jan C

METHODIST PRAYER HANDBOOK 2026/2027: The Methodist Prayer



Handbook 2026/2027 is themed "Sorrow ~ Joy", based on John 16:20. It guides daily prayers for a year, exploring the balance between recognising life's difficulties and finding peace and joy.

If you would like a copy of the Prayer Handbook for 2026/27, please contact Gwen by 15 July 2026.

Handbooks will be delivered in August, and the cost will be approximately £5 to include p&p; payable on receipt

of your Handbook.

UCS ANNUAL REPORT TO CHURCH MEETING (cont'd))

N is for UCS Weekly Notices produced to provide a diary of services, meetings and events.

- **for the Nuts and Bolts document** which sets out the structure of the church meetings and their purposes. This document was updated in April 2025 having been in existence since the formation of UCS ten years ago.

O is for Organ music provided by church organists to enhance worship

- **for Outside Organisations** using the church building and for those in UCS who make all the arrangements for this to be possible

P is for Pastoral Care offered by all the Pastoral team to all those who attend the church, one of the priorities of the church

Q is for Coffee Queues and for those who provide refreshments

R is for Reading in Cover to Cover, Bible Study, and reading the Bible in worship.

S is for Safeguarding, a priority of the church involving **ALL OF US** with the support of the Safeguarding Officer, and the relevant Safeguarding Training courses for all those who require them.

- **for Sunbeams** meeting every week in term time for pre-school children, parents and carers – a time of fun and games, snacks, singing and bubbles!

T is for Trustees who are the legal decision makers of the church.

- **for the Talking Magazine** which is produced and circulated regularly

U is for Uniting Church Sketty that is **all of us** worshipping, working and sharing fellowship.

V is for Volunteers - there is always much to be done but we are never short of help when it is needed.

W is for Worship conducted by our Minister as well as by retired Ministers and Local Preachers. We are blessed as a church to have helpful, thoughtful and challenging services every week including evening prayers and a monthly morning communion service led by our Minister.

- **for Wesley Club**, a weekly opportunity for hearing interesting talks, for talking and sharing fellowship and fun; and for
- **Welcome** – seeking to provide a welcome to all who enter our doors.

X is for over two hundred Xmas (Sorry! Christmas!) bags filled by church members to be distributed to Asylum and Refugee families in Swansea.

Y is for YouTube where our services are accessed by a large number of people, sadly mostly unknown to us but to whom we have sent an invitation to contact us

Z is for Zoom which provides a very valuable service to all those unable to attend worship in person either permanently or during a short illness. It also enables attendance at meetings and funerals for those unable to be there in person

Pat D, May 2026

After Joyce J moved to her new home at Brynhyfryd House we were sorting a few things that she wanted to keep. One of these was her bible, presented to her by her Sunday School when she was 14 years old, to mark her becoming a member of Gwensell Wesley Church, Stourport on Severn in 1949. In the bible was this intriguing poem which she thought you might like to read.

He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman.
He grew up in still another village where He worked as a carpenter's shop until He was thirty.
Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher.
He never wrote a book. He never held an office.
He didn't go to college. He never travelled two hundred miles from the place where He was born.
He did none of the things one normally associates with greatness.
He had no credentials but Himself.
He was only thirty three when the tide of public opinion turned against him.
His friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies and went through the mockery of a trial.
He was nailed to a cross between two thieves.
While He was dying, His executioners gambled for His clothing, the only property He owned on earth.
When he was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.
Twenty centuries have come and gone,
and today He is the central figure of the human race and the leader of humankind's progress.

All the enemies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed,
all the parliaments that ever sat and all kings that ever reigned,
put together, have not affected the life of humans on earth
as much as that one solitary life.

Author unknown, sent in by Jan C. on Joyce's behalf

THE ECUMENICAL PRAYER CYCLE



Some years ago, I regularly included details of the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Prayer Cycle in the Magazine. This has not been done in recent years. So I thought it might be good to revive this practice. We are restarting with July and August. It will remind us that we are not alone. We belong to a worldwide family of Christians:

28 June – 4 July	Kenya, Tanzania
5 – 11 July	Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda
12 – 18 July	Eritrea, Ethiopia
19 – 25 July	Djibouti, Somalia
26 July – 1 August	Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda
2 – 8 August	Republic of Congo, Gabon, Sao Tomé
9 – 15 August	Cameroon, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea
16 – 22 August	Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger
23 – 29 August	Liberia, Sierra Leone

As part of our prayer discipline, we might want to look in an atlas to see where these countries are. Try to find out what issues they face at this time.

A PRAYER

God of all peoples and places, we give you thanks for our sisters and brothers in Africa, for their courageous faith, their vibrant worship and their faithful witness and service. We pray especially for people of all faiths in Africa who are suffering because of war, conflict, injustice, oppression and poverty. Enfold them in your love, sustain them with your compassion and encourage them to hope in Jesus, their Lord and Saviour, and ours. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.



MARIE CURIE SENDS THANKS, AND ASKS: DID YOU KNOW...?



Here is some information that Heulwen J shared recently at the Coffee Morning on June 6th in aid of Marie Curie Cymru Care. It was part of the thank you that she gave for the wonderful support they received.

THE COFFEE MORNING RAISED £460 PLUS GIFT AID

“Most people know that our Hospice at Home Team give specialist nursing care to someone in their own home near the end of their life. Some time ago we were known simply as Marie Curie Cancer Care and it is often said that we only provide care to cancer patients. Not everyone knows that our nurses provide this end-of-life care, whenever possible, to **anyone** who requests it.

In recent years, we have added a Companion Service, Bereavement Support Service and Specialised Dementia Companion Support.

Details for all of these can be found at mariecurie.org.uk

I also gave some figures that highlight the level of care and support given in Swansea in 2025. The Hospice at Home Team delivered almost 3,000 hours of nursing care, which supported 125 people who wished to remain in their own home. Across Wales 2,250 people received care.

So, again, thank you. Together we are making a difference.”

Heulwen

A CULTURAL SUMMER QUIZ FOR THOSE HOURS SPENT RELAXING ON A GOWER BEACH WITH NOTHING TO DO, EXCEPT EAT AN ICE CREAM!

How much do you know about classical music, plays and poetry? (You may need to do some research to find the answers, but probably not! Think back to school days....)

1. SYMPHONIES

- How many symphonies did Beethoven compose – 3, 9 or 12?
- How many symphonies did Haydn compose – 104, 75 or 54?
- How many symphonies did Mozart compose – 12, 32 or 41?

2. PIANO CONCERTOS

- How many piano concertos did Beethoven compose – 1, 3 or 5?
- How many piano concertos did Haydn compose – 0, 5 or 11?
- How many piano concertos did Mozart compose – 27, 18 or 11?



3. OPERAS

- a. Who composed Madame Butterfly – Verdi, Puccini or Mozart?
- b. Who composed Aida – Wagner, Verdi or Puccini?
- c. Who composed Tristan and Isolde – Beethoven, Verdi or Wagner?
- d. Complete the following Mozart opera titles (each ? represents a missing word):
 - The Magic ?
 - The ? of ?
 - Così ? ?
 - Don ?



4. SHAKESPEARE PLAYS

Complete the following titles (each ? represents a missing word):

- The ? of the ?
- T? and C?
- Much ? about ?
- As ? ? ?
- Richard ? (two possible answers)
- Henry ? (there are six possible answers)



5. POETRY

Who wrote the poems that begin with these words? Finish the line!

- 'I wandered...'
- 'Shall I compare thee to a ...?'
- 'O to be in ...'
- 'There was a Saviour rarer...'
- 'Do not go...'



*Answers – as if you'll need them! – in the next Magazine.
Editor.*