

# The Link



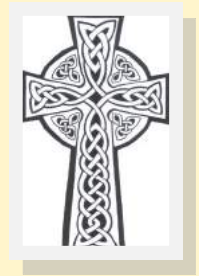
Candlemas Bells

February and March 2024

All Saints Church Dowlais  
and Christchurch Pant

**Rector: Rev. Caroline Owen**

The Rectory, Gwernllwyn Road, Dowlais,  
Merthyr Tydfil CF48 3NA  
Phone: 01685 558660  
Email: calowen18@gmail.com



**Rector's Warden:**

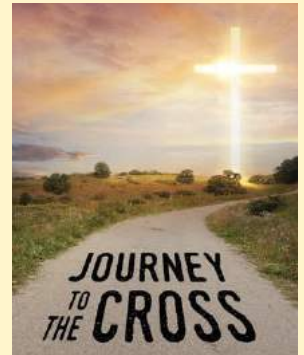
Barbara Edwards  
Home 01685 387 665  
Mobile 07810400068

**People's Warden**

and PCC Secretary: Dorcas Cox  
Home 01685 554 995  
Mobile 07807264009

Dear Friends,

Ash Wednesday this year will fall on the 14th February which of course is also St Valentine's day! Ash Wednesday is traditionally the beginning of Lent, a period of self-discipline, fasting, reflection and prayer; a time of penitence and self-examination and seeing ourselves from God's perspective. The Bible recognises that as we go through life we will be tempted and tested and that our response will help to shape the depth of our spiritual lives.



With ongoing war in Ukraine, the conflict between Israel and Hamas and so much uncertainty in our world, there is a great deal of anxiety in society about the future and a sense of aimlessness and general anger and tiredness. Lent gives us an opportunity to give these feelings back to God and to ask him to heal and restore us.

As Christians we know how the story ends and we have an enduring hope within us because Jesus has conquered death and brought forgiveness to us. We are forever Easter people who live in the light of the resurrection. The rhythm of the liturgical year is a helpful tool to remind us that there is a cost and a purpose to our faith, which is about simple generosity, and humble service. As Christians, we have a message of hope for a better future and Lent gives us the perfect opportunity to prepare our hearts and minds to share the good news.

With every blessing,  
Caroline

# The Parish Online

● Each Sunday at 11am we have a service of the weekly readings and prayers on Facebook and Youtube.

● Each Saturday evening - when the technology co-operates! - we send out an 'information pack', the readings, pewsheets, sermon etc on email. If you don't get one, it means we don't have your email address - please let us know.

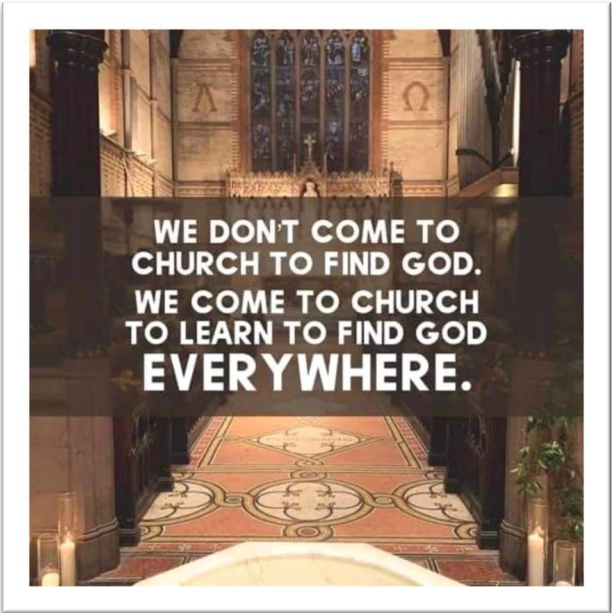
● Each morning I post a 'Thought for the Day' on Facebook, just to let you know I'm thinking of you and praying for you: sometimes it's thought -provoking, sometimes just fun.

● On this page you can read the most popular 'Thoughts for the Day' from the last couple of months.

● Our Parish Facebook page now has 436 members. Invite your friends to join us each day.

## My To-Do list for today

- count my blessings
- practice kindness
- let go of what I can't control
- listen to my heart
- be productive yet calm
- just breathe



**WE DON'T COME TO  
CHURCH TO FIND GOD.  
WE COME TO CHURCH  
TO LEARN TO FIND GOD  
EVERYWHERE.**

# Congratulations and Celebrations



The wedding of  
**Adam Hotson**  
**and Sarah- Wynne Jenkins**  
took place amidst the Christmas  
trees in Christchurch on  
December 16th.

Every blessing on their future  
together.

Congratulations **Misha Kenning** on  
attaining a merit in your Master's Degree in  
Psychology.



**Happy Birthday to**  
**Naleli Anne Parker Mulabwa**  
on her first Birthday  
on the 11th February.  
Love from Grampa, Gramps & Nana  
Parker. Love you lots xx

**Congratulations** to our Granddaughter  
Sarah Rickwood and husband Alex on becoming  
parents, and our daughter Dawn Hubbard and  
husband Alan on becoming grandparents to  
**Megan Faith Rickwood.**

Sending much love to you all from Great  
Grandparents (!) Faith and Roy xxx



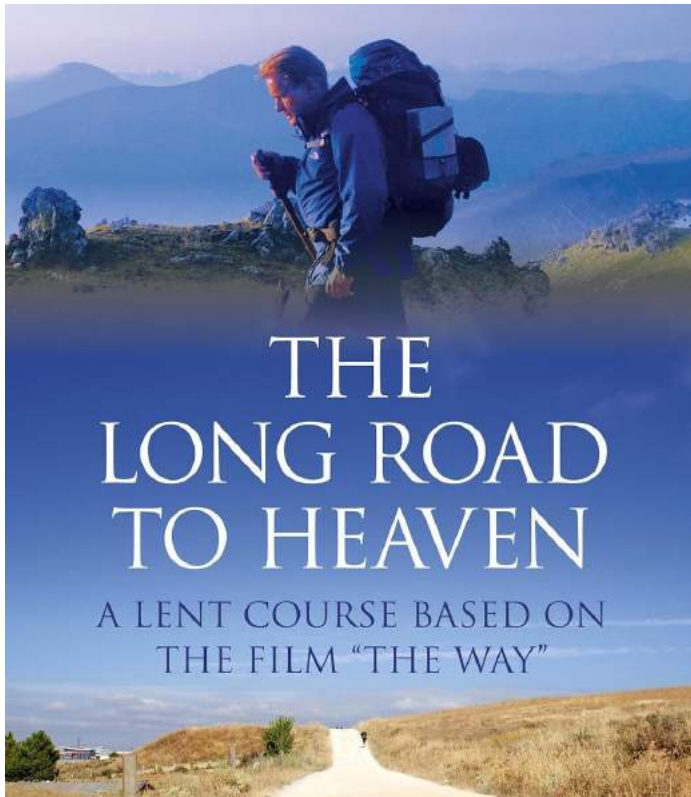
## DATES FOR THE DIARY



- ◆ Sunday 4th February - **Creation Sunday**  
Family Services in Christchurch and All Saints.
- ◆ Sunday 4th February -  
**Church Committee meeting** - 5pm.
- ◆ Tuesday 6th February - **Mothers' Union** - 2.30pm Christchurch.
- ◆ Wednesday February 14th at 10.30am - **Ash Wednesday**  
Holy Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes in Christchurch.
- ◆ Wednesday 21st February at 1pm - **Lent Soup Lunch**  
in All Saints, followed by a showing of the film 'The Way  
to begin the Lent Course 'The Long Road to Heaven.'
- ◆ Wednesday 28th February at 1pm - **Lent Course.**
- ◆ Friday March 1st at 10.30am, the **World Day of Prayer**  
Service will be held at St Mary's Church.
- ◆ Sunday March 3rd - **St David's Day** Family Services in  
Christchurch and All Saints.
- ◆ Sunday March 3rd - **Gymanfa Ganu** Christchurch at 5pm.
- ◆ Tuesday March 5th - **Mothers' Union** - Christchurch at 2.30pm.
- ◆ Wednesday March 6th at 1pm - **Lent Course.**
- ◆ Sunday March 10th - **Mothering Sunday** Services  
in Christchurch and All Saints.
- ◆ Wednesday March 13th at 1pm - **Lent Course.**
- ◆ Wednesday March 20th at 1pm  
- **Lent Course**
- ◆ Sunday 24th March - **Palm Sunday**
- ◆ Sunday 31st March - **Easter Day.**







In 2020 we planned a Lent course based on the film 'The Way' starring Martin Sheen as one of a group of pilgrims walking The Way of St James to Santiago de Compostela. Then Covid came. This year we're going to have another go. As Easter is early this year, the evenings will still be dark during Lent, so we have decided to try moving the meetings to 1pm.

We'll begin by watching the film in All Saints Church Hall on February 14th at 1pm: it's a moving film, but has funny bits too!

Then over the next four weeks we'll follow the course, 'The Long Road to Heaven', talk about the film and what we learned from it. Or just come and watch the film and see what you think. All very welcome.



## History is made as the Church in Wales appoints it's youngest ever bishop.

We were delighted to hear that the Revd Canon David Morris has been appointed Assistant Bishop of Bangor. David served as a curate in Merthyr Tydfil, and is fondly remembered by many. He will be consecrated as bishop on May 11th, and will adopt the title of Bishop of Bardsey, as well as Assistant Bishop of Bangor.

# 1ST MERTHYR BROWNIES IS



Were you ever a member of 1st Merthyr Brownies?

Please help us celebrate our 80th birthday by sharing your memories & photos with us!

Email: [1stmerthyrbrownies@gmail.com](mailto:1stmerthyrbrownies@gmail.com)



## Funerals

- ◆ The funeral of **Dorothy Marshall** took place on January 9th in Christchurch Pant.

*May she rest in peace.*



Newsletter - January 2024



07427 537437



info@merthycynon.foodbank.org

<https://merthycynon.foodbank.org.uk>

*"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8*

The Merthyr Cynon Foodbank Trustees, staff and volunteers wish you a very blessed New Year.

Our heartfelt thanks to all our donors and volunteers for your generous donations of time, cash, food and toiletries.

722 people were fed in December and 5,820 people fed since April 2023 so far, thanks to your amazing generosity.

Our vision is to end the need for food banks. Please join our campaign, "Guarantee our essentials" to call on the UK Government to stop hunger in the UK.

Find out more at [trusselltrust.org/essentials](https://trusselltrust.org/essentials)

Another challenging year lies ahead. Let us hope and look to our amazing God, who gives us his grace and compassion so we can continue to fight on behalf of those in crisis in our communities.

Items we need please!

Tinned meat  
tinned carrots  
tinned fruit  
jams  
long life milk  
Squash  
tinned tomatoes





## World Day of Prayer 2024

Each year, on the first Friday of March, churches and chapels join together all over the world for this special ecumenical prayer service. A wave of prayer will encircle the earth, beginning at dusk in Western Samoa and Tonga and ending 38 hours later at dusk in American Samoa.

**Our local World Day of Prayer Service 2024 will be held at St Mary's Church at 10 am on Friday 1st March - all are welcome to attend.**

Each year the service is written by the Christian women of a different country, and this year it's the women of Palestine. They have chosen the title:

**I beg you, bear with one another in love.**

Palestinians are a scattered population with over 12 million living all over the world. Estimates suggest that just over 5 million Palestinians currently reside in Palestine and Israel. There is a small Christian minority in this predominantly Muslim country, making up about 2% of the Palestinian population.



## My Favourite Hymn

This hymn, widely acclaimed as one of the finest hymns of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was written by Timothy Dudley-Smith in 1967, and is based on psalm 103.

Dudley-Smith grew up in Derbyshire and attended a small village school run by his father. Sadly, when Timothy was only eleven, his father became ill and died. Timothy says that his early years brought him not only a sense of a God who was present in feeling and emotion as well as in words, but also a sense that this God was calling him to ordination.

He went on to study at Pembroke College, Cambridge and was ordained a priest in 1951, and became Bishop of Thetford, Norfolk in 1981.

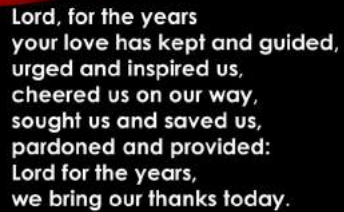
Hymns were a passion for him, and he is credited with writing around four hundred. Many of these started life as poems. Although he longed to write hymns, he was totally unmusical, saying 'I can't even sing in tune and often change key without knowing it!'

Then, in the 1960's he wrote a poem based on the Magnificat, which was later set to music and became the much-loved 'Tell out my soul the greatness of the Lord.' He wrote 'Lord for the years' as a thanksgiving to God for his guidance and provision throughout the years. It has a sense of the God of the Old Testament, a sense of the Holy Spirit, a sense of Jesus who now reigns as King, and a sense of moving forward in this world that God so loves, and into the future he has for us.

Timothy Dudley-Smith challenges us to make God 'the Lord of our lives' and to 'live for Christ alone.'

Although originally this hymn was sung to the tune 'Finlandia' by Sibelius, it is now almost always sung to the tune, also called 'Lord for the years', written by Michael Baughen who, like Timothy, was a Church of England bishop.

*Maureen Prothero*



Lord, for the years  
your love has kept and guided,  
urged and inspired us,  
cheered us on our way,  
sought us and saved us,  
pardoned and provided:  
Lord for the years,  
we bring our thanks today.

# CHRISTMAS MARKET AT ALL SAINTS

The Market has long been a well established event in our calendar, traditionally held on the last Monday of November each year.

It was good to be joined by so many stall-holders, both individuals and organisations, old friends and new, a proper social occasion.



CAROLS AND  
CANDLES  
WITH  
CANTORION  
CYFARTHFA IN  
ALL SAINTS  
CHURCH

Its always a joy to welcome Cantorion Cyfarthfa to the church, but our favourite occasions are our carol services together. They have been supporting us for so many years, and we're very grateful. They sing a combination of ancient and modern Christmas music, interspersed with traditional carols that we sing together.

After the service we enjoyed mulled wine and mince pies. Many thanks to the ladies for taking the time to visit us, and as ever to Maureen Prothero for organising this special event.

This year, for the first time they had to work around our amazing new Christmas tree. Many thanks also to Cerys and Caryn, and the intrepid team who worked so hard to put it up and decorate it.





# Christmas Eve Nativity!

Stories, songs, jingling bells, crafts, glitter, cake and chocolate.

Happy Birthday to Jesus party!







## The Mothers' Union in the Ministry Area



At our December meeting, we held a Christmas service, followed by a planning meeting to organise decorating our 'wedding' tree for the Christmas Tree Festival in Christchurch, reflecting our Wedding Festival there earlier in the year.

After the service we held a Christmas tea, and during tea Barbara Edwards presented Mary Owen with a cake and bouquet to celebrate her 90th birthday.

Pam Owens also received a bouquet to thank her for the beautiful decorations she made for the Mothers' Union 'wedding' tree - and of course, for all the lovely decorations she has made in the past.



## Dowlais 1846

*Transcribed from The King of Saxony's Journey Through England and Scotland in the Year 1844. Trans. S.C Davison. London: Chapman and Hall, 1846.*



As we approached Merthyr Tydvil (*sic*), the iron-works became more numerous; we saw everywhere smelting-houses and forges, little railways and canals for the conveyance of the iron from one place to another. In one valley we saw below a canal, and a railway for locomotive engines; higher up, the road upon which we were, and still higher, a tram-road for the conveyance of materials and workmen belonging to the mines. We met on another occasion, on such a tram-road, a long train of black coal-waggons, and others covered with workmen black and brown with dust – a curious sight! And what mountains of dross were piled up. The quantity of iron produced in these mountains must be enormous...

All other considerations however vanish, when one comes to understand the size and extent of the iron-works themselves. The first we visited, in which six blast furnaces were at work, presented an extraordinary sight. Above the flaming chimneys of the blast furnaces the heated air trembled, and made the outlines of the mountains of dross behind them appear wavy. I could not help imagining these mountains of dross to be volcanoes, and the blast furnaces little burning craters on the sides of the larger ones. The impression produced was a much more powerful one, when we went further and took a view of the great iron-works belonging to Sir John Guest and Company. One could easily have believed oneself in to the blazing city of Dis, mentioned by Dante.

We were first conducted to the mines, the immense quantity of coal and iron produced by which rendered all this possible. In the last five weeks 36,000 tons of coal have been dug out, sometimes 1500 tons in a day, and that all these coals are employed in the works. Close to this mine is that from which a similar quantity of ironstone is produced. The cost, of course, is enormous! The works employ about 6000 work-people daily, and the wages of these workmen, with food &c, amounts to about 26,000l. a month! ...

I was also much interested in standing at the double entrance to the shaft, and observing how, set in motion by a steam-engine, and conducted along a subterraneous railway, on the one side a row of empty waggons, and a number of workmen, with miners' lamps, were conveyed into the mountains; whilst, on the other side, shortly after, a number of waggons loaded with ironstone and coal, and with other workmen, came out from the cavern. The carelessness with which the workmen acted, sufficed to show the influence of daily exposure to danger. Several of the men came out of the sloping shaft, quite without holding, and standing upright upon the rope which drew the waggons out of the centre of the mountain. The slightest inclination to either side, in the darkness of the cavern, would have been sufficient to precipitate the man from his position, and he would have been crushed to pieces by the next waggon. This carelessness is even shown in a similar manner in the interior. Notwithstanding Davy's safety lamp, accidents are continually occurring from cold damp. Only this morning three workmen were killed in this manner, in one of the workings.

*This article appeared recently on Steve Brewer's blog 'The Melting Pot: the Heritage and Culture of Merthyr Tydfil' - always a good read.*

## Diverse Merthyr

Merthyr Tydfil and District Historical Society held a History Day on the theme of diversity at All Saints Church and Hall.

There were several thought-provoking talks on 'Disability in the Industrial Revolution' by Professor David Turner, 'A Little Gay History of Merthyr', by Dr Daryl Leeworthy, and pictured is an illustration from 'The Rise and Demise of Merthyr's Jewish Community' by Professor Christine Trevett. This was followed by the launch of Volume 33 of the Merthyr Historian. Copies are still available.





# Merthyr Tydfil Girlguiding Carol Service



We had an evening of fun with Merthyr's Rainbows, Brownies and Guides. They'd learned carols, poems and readings to keep their audience entertained, and put us all in a Christmassy mood, especially as we were surrounded by so many Christmas trees! Well done girls and leaders!



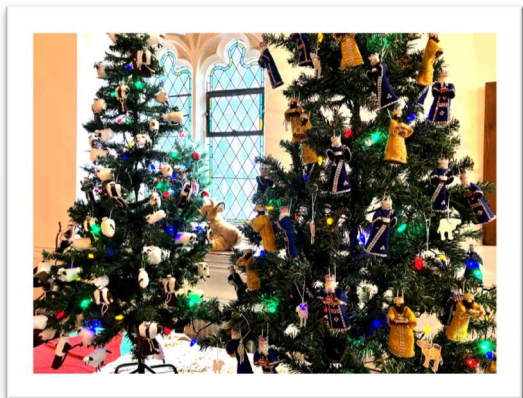
During the service we heard the story of the St Nicholas Day treats - gold coins, spekulatius biscuits and candy canes, then pulled crackers that gave us clues to the Christmas Story, ending with a pop-up Nativity scene.







# Christmas Trees and Floral Decorations in Christchurch







# Archive Page

Thursday, March 20, 2008 local news [icwales.co.uk](http://icwales.co.uk)

## I Remember That

With SAMANTHA MENDEZ  
[samantha.mendez@medicwales.co.uk](mailto:samantha.mendez@medicwales.co.uk)



Springing into summer as pupils get active



**WALKABOUT:** Do you recognise any of the faces at the Pant Church Sunday School sponsored walk?

Can anyone identify any of these walkers? The paper is dated 2008, but this was an archive page in the paper!

## Hot Cross Custard Pudding

6 buttered hot cross buns  
Ready made custard  
Chunks of chocolate

An easy  
Good Friday  
treat!



### Method:

Heat the oven to gas 3, 170°C, fan 150°C.  
Place the bottom halves of the buns into a baking dish, scatter some chunks of chocolate on them, then cover with the custard. Place the tops on the buns. Push more chunks of chocolate between the buns, bake for 30-35 mins until just set.

This is my favourite page in our lovely recipe book,  
*Feasting through the Festivals!*

# DOWLAIS AND PANT COMMUNITY ACTION

## Plans for the Morlais Tunnel?

The Morlais Tunnel was opened on 1st June 1879, took around 2 years to build, is 1040 yards long, had up to 800 men working on it and used nearly 3 million bricks in its lining. 'A masterpiece of engineering', but such a shame that it hasn't been utilised since the line closed around 1964.

Well, that may be about to change if there is enough support from the public. Elected members from Dowlais and Pant Ward, and Vaynor Ward are launching a public consultation to gauge the level of support there would be for it's opening. If the consultation is shows support for the tunnel's opening, further steps will be taken to explore what options are available and to be sure residents have a voice in it's restoration.

This isn't a project that will happen over night as there are lots of details to be worked on such as a bio-diversity study, examinations of the integrity of the tunnel, a detailed feasibility report and, one of the most important aspects of the project, looking at how the necessary funding can be achieved, but anything is possible if you want it enough.

Following the consultation, a public meeting will be arranged where everyone can have their say and find out how they can stay involved and updated on the project going forward.

## Decades of neglect.

All three photos are of the same entrance to the Morlais Tunnel but were taken years apart, and show the decline which has occurred, especially over the last 50 years. We hope, that by working with all interested stakeholders, we can bring this masterpiece back to life before it is lost forever and becomes just a distant memory. This will likely take years to complete but we'll keep you updated.



Happy New Year to you all! We hope you enjoyed the Christmas season and perhaps you saw one of our Carol Services at Morlais Castle Golf Club, The Dowlais Engine House, Horeb Chapel and a Carol Concert (pictured) with Ebbw Valley Brass and Con Voce SATB Choir.



Leading up to December, we were blessed with three new choristers – Ken, Julian and Edwin – all of whom performed in at least one or more of our Christmas

engagements - a reminder that the door is always open to prospective male choristers, who enjoy singing, would like to make new friends and improve mental health and wellbeing. We rehearse at High Street Baptist Church Hall on Wednesday and Sunday evenings from 7-9pm. No voice test required, just a willingness to learn and sing some great music, and perform in front of local, national and (hopefully) international audiences.

It's now time to bring out some traditional and contemporary Welsh music ahead of a celebration of St David – the Patron Saint of Wales – on Wednesday 6th March at 7pm at Merthyr Town Football Club (CF47 8RF). We will be joined by some guests and the evening will also include a light supper of lamb cawl with bread and butter, followed by Welsh cakes. Ticket: £10 (please contact our Secretary – 07528 119223 – for details; tickets will be available in February from choristers and Beacons Pharmacy.

This year will also see the Choir return to Seaton in Dorset, grace the hallowed turf of the Principality Stadium, sing at a number of weddings and corporate events, perform at an Easter Cymanfa Ganu, host our 59th Annual Concert and join in community Remembrance and Christmas concerts and services. Not forgetting the return of our DT Davies and J. Michael Jones Young Musician's Award 2024. More details about all these events will be featured on our website and Facebook page.

Spring of this year will also see the refurbishment of our home venue – High Street Baptist Church Hall – so we look forward to seeing how the project, with its vision of bringing a wonderful community space into the 21st century, develops and flourishes. The plans are available to see on rehearsal nights and on Saturday mornings between 10am and 12noon.



## TWO MARRIAGES: TWO FUNERALS:

This article concludes a series of articles on this theme by  
Huw Williams. This month: TWO IRONMASTER FUNERALS

As in life the two local ironmasters in question here – **Sir Josiah John Guest** and **Robert Thompson Crawshay** – were acutely aware of their impending deaths. Both endured in their later years over a decade of ill health: Sir John, suffering acutely with numerous painful bouts of contemporary “quack” medicinal remedies to relieve him of what today we would recognise as acute gall stones, and Robert Thompson at the very end of 1859 endured a paralytic stroke which rendered him deaf for the rest of his life.



Both men were interred on detailed instructions as to the funeral arrangements, at churches they each had funded and established: St. John’s at Dowlais where Josiah John remains to this day and at Vaynor church where Robert Thompson resides in the graveyard. In some senses the roles are reversed in comparison with their respective marriages. The ostentatious celebrations lasting over half a year in Robert Thompson’s case at Cyfarthfa were rendered superfluous by the simplicity of his funeral. Twenty agents of the Works walked in front of his coffin despite family requests for a private funeral in May 1879; hundreds lined the streets of Cefn Coed and schoolchildren threw flowers under the shooting brake which carried the coffin to Vaynor; two family carriages had proceeded in advance and, yes, the women of the family were present at the grave.

Guest, whose marriage had been on the side of an austere whirlwind courtship and solemnised at London in 1833, had made arrangements for his legacy at the Works to be taken on by G. T. Clark and H. A. Bruce as trustees. His funeral service at St. John’s Dowlais on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1852 was a gathering of most of the iron making fraternity of Merthyr Tydfil and indeed across South Wales.

And again, a female was present against the norms of Victorian etiquette: Lady Charlotte insisted on being present. Pall bearers included Anthony Hill, Crawshay Bailey MP, Robert Thompson Crawshay and H. A. Bruce. Four of Josiah's sons were present; two church choirs sang, one in Welsh and one in English; the Lord Bishop of Llandaff was present but the service was carried out by the Rector of Dowlais, The Rev. Canon Jenkins with Merthyr Tydfil clergy including the Rev. J. C. Campbell and the Rev. John Griffiths in attendance.

A roll call of local iron masters and worthies present included Rowland Fothergill, J. Bruce Price, William Forman and Samuel Homphrey (Homfray). Robert Jones, for the record was the undertaker; last in the "*Programme of the Procession*" were the "*Domestics*": Gardener, Coachman, Footman, Porter, "*The Trade and Inhabitants of Merthyr & Dowlais following.*"

Lady Charlotte Guest's journal entries provide sober details of the last days of her beloved husband. At his death her diary entries cease. The magnificent Guest Memorial, still viewable with prior permission in the former church building, provides the most succinct biography of Josiah John. An extract reads: "*Happy in his Domestic Life, Prosperous in his Business, Full of Years and Honours, having had Time and Inclination to Prepare for his Latter End, He died where he was Born at Dowlais in the Midst of his Family and Dependants. Beloved, Respected, Universally Lamented.*"

In contrast is the austerity of Crawshay's epithet: "*God Forgive Me*" on Robert Thompson's grave which says nothing and maybe everything about that man and his life. *The Aberdare Times* cited at his death that he was "*the last relict of a defunct Welsh industry.*" Merthyr Tydfil was never to see the likes of these two men again.





## THE ROYAL WELSH ASSOCIATION (RWA)

**GREETINGS:** at the start of another year and let's hope it brings peace and happiness and prosperity to one and all.

The calendar of events waits for no one. So, on the third Sunday in January at Brecon Cathedral the **RWA** witnesses once again in memoriam the events at Rorke's Drift on January 22-23 1879, immortalised in military history, in royal history (Queen Victoria more than applauded the bravery shown that day) and in film.

Did you know that this year is the sixtieth anniversary of Sir Stanley Baker's magnum opus in film, *Zulu*: his life's work which took several years to compile and historically accurate enough to pass muster? Filmed on location with a cast of thousands of native Zulus, some of whose descendants we met at Brecon a few years ago in July on a royal visit of their chieftain to South and Mid Wales.

At a luncheon across summer I had the luck to be seated on table with Sir Stanley's son Glyn who spent time on location with his father in making that film. The conversation turned to why Kenneth Griffith was not included in the film and the relationship between Stanley and that other Welsh acting great Richard Burton. The film remained on release in national cinemas for some nine years: no Netflix or streaming of such films on to TV in those days!

The cathedral service, at which the Royal Welsh band plays, is where Siencyn the regimental goat is present (though not allowed inside the building) and a suitable sermon is delivered. One memorable year the speaker was a previous civil servant who had represented HM Government in South Africa and had actually visited the Rorke's Drift site: the Very Reverend Sarah Rowland-Jones, now Dean at St. David's Cathedral, then Vicar at St. John's Church in the centre of Cardiff.





Members of the fellowship would like to wish readers of The Link a happy and Blessed 2024.

Our membership enjoyed welcoming all our speakers over the Christmas period, a lovely Carol service was held and finally a Christmas meal all together at the Harvester restaurant.

Once again it was a joy to share these events as a church family and we are thankful to God for the company, care and love for each other.

New Year started with the wonderful news that our own member Mal Phillips had been awarded the British Empire Medal in the Kings New Years honours list. The fellowships telephones were red hot as the news spread around. It is well deserved for all the work Mal has done with Shire Horses, arranging shows but also as a judge and well known speaker within the principality. We send our warmest congratulations to Mal & Jen and I'm sure there will be a church celebration in the Spring.

We always welcome new faces to our services at 11.15 every Sunday in Christchurch with Sunday school.

Our breakfast service on the first Sunday of the month is especially enjoyed by the children and members bring along favourite hymns, poems, readings or even thoughts which we share over a cup of tea/coffee and of course food.

Prayer meeting/Bible studies are held on a Wednesday night at 6.30 at Dowlais Community Centre and coffee morning on a Thursday morning at 10.30 at the same place.

Finally, we pray that 2024 will be a time of kindness and friendship. Where those who are unwell find support. Where there is conflict, peace may be found and where there is loneliness people will find warmth and welcome.

With our very best wishes to all.

## PATRON SAINTS AND PRAYERS



### Prayer to Saint Brigid

You were a woman  
of peace.

You brought  
harmony where  
there was conflict.  
You brought light to  
the darkness.

You brought hope  
to the downcast.  
May the mantle of  
your peace  
cover those who are  
troubled and  
anxious,  
and may peace be  
firmly rooted in our  
hearts and in our  
world.

**AMEN**

Feast of Saint Brigid  
Secondary Patron of  
Ireland  
1 February



Be joyful and keep your faith  
and your creed. Do the little  
things that you have seen me  
do and heard about. I will  
walk the path that our fathers  
have trod before us

*St David*

March  
1st



# Candlemas Wordsearch

c b c l i f v e n a n p  
b a d m p e o t e r i r  
j b n a g l o r y c s o  
o y w d y b i r t h r p  
s r i o l i g h t y a h  
e c n k t e m p l e e e  
p e t t w i m a r y l t  
h l e f a n n a k a t e  
t h r o m a j e s u s l  
i g e n t i l e s z t o  
s p r i n g n b l e s s  
s i m e o n y j o e g i

**Temple,  
Jesus, baby,  
Mary, Joseph,  
Candlemas,  
winter,  
spring, forty,  
birth,  
prophet,  
light, glory,  
Israel,  
Simeon,  
Anna, bless,  
Gentiles, day.**

**Candlemas, which falls on February 2nd, is an ancient festival which marks the midpoint of the winter,**

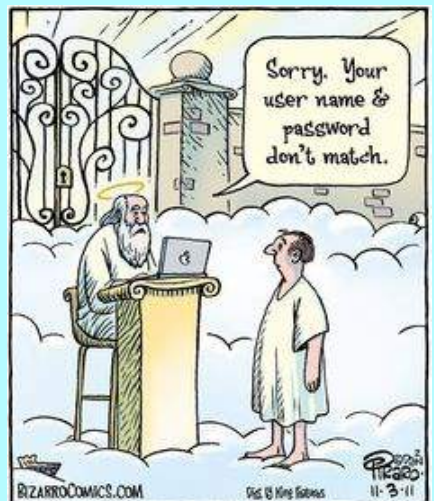
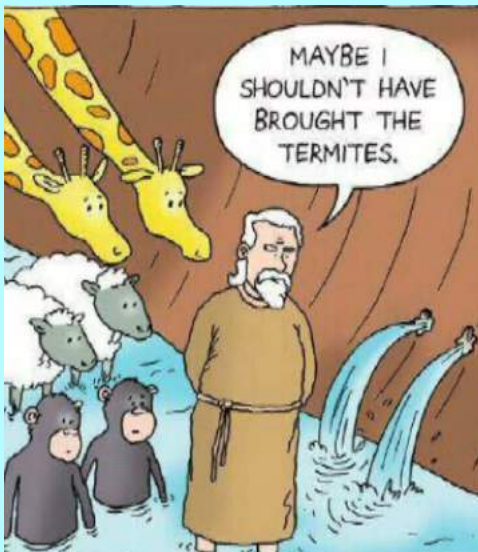
**Forty days after the birth of a Jewish boy, he was taken to the Temple to be presented to God by his thankful parents.**

**Candlemas celebrates the day when Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the temple and met the prophets Simeon and Anna.**

**Simeon recognised Jesus as the promised Messiah, and blessed him, calling him 'a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel' (Luke 2.32).**



"But there's not enough space for Thou shalt not wear socks with sandals."



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