

# **The Llynfi and Upper Afan Valleys Ministry Area Magazine**



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***Clergy: Rev BEV REANEY***

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**November 2024**

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### **Pattern of Services**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>9am -</b>	Said Eucharist – St Michael's
	<b>9.45am -</b>	Holy Eucharist – St John's
	<b>10:30am -</b>	Sung Eucharist – St Michael's
	<b>6pm -</b>	Holy Eucharist – St Cynwyd's
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>10am -</b>	Holy Eucharist – St Michael's

### **From Your Vicar**

#### **Hope for a New Season: A Reflection for November**

As we step into the month of November, a season often associated with change and reflection, the words from *Romans 15:13* come to mind:

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”*

In these words, the Apostle Paul invites us to embrace a hope that comes from God—a hope that is not fleeting or tied to circumstances but is deep, enduring, and transformative. It’s a hope that fills us with joy and peace, even in uncertain times, encouraging us to trust in God’s provision and guidance.

This November marks a significant time for St David’s Church as it looks to reopen its doors on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. For many, this reopening is a beacon of hope. After a time of waiting and anticipation, the church is ready to welcome back its community, offering a space of peace, fellowship, and renewal. The hope that has sustained the congregation through periods of uncertainty now blossoms into a new beginning.

Yet, this hope extends beyond St David’s - it applies to each and every one of our churches in the Ministry Area, each with its own ministry and mission as we move forward. Every church in our area, from the bustling heart of the valley to the serene hills, has a unique role to play in nurturing hope and faith within its community. As we look toward the future, we hold onto the promise that God’s hope is at work in all of our churches, inspiring new ways to reach out, to serve, and to grow.

St David’s and each of our churches have always been more than buildings; they are places where hope takes shape - in shared prayers, in acts of kindness, and in the comforting presence of God’s love. As we prepare to gather once more, we are reminded that the same God of hope who sustained us through past challenges is leading us forward into a new chapter.

May this season of reopening be a time when our hearts overflow with the hope that Romans speaks of. May we find joy in each other's company, peace in the quiet moments, and strength to trust that God is guiding us every step of the way. Together, let us celebrate this new beginning, embracing the promise of hope that lies ahead in St David's and in each of our beloved churches.

*Rev Rick*

*Ministry Area Lead*

### **From your Editor**

While on holiday in Crete (it was lovely, thank you!), Jane and I went on a day trip to visit Knossos, the ancient, ruined citadel of the Minoans. It was a fascinating outing. We learned lots from our guide, Vangelis, about these fascinating people who flourished between 4,000 and 3,500 years ago. They were a peaceful people who were welcoming to visitors, enjoyed communal barbecues and leaping over bulls (well, whatever floats your boat, I suppose!). Vangelis described them as having pioneered the spirit of "make love, not war" 4,000 years before the Summer of Love. They preferred trading olive oil and crafts across the Eastern Mediterranean while the people of their neighbouring lands and islands invaded, fought and squabbled with each other. "Rough neighbourhood," commented Vangelis ruefully, "even today." Everyone in the group nodded sadly.

While we were away, it was worrying to see that things were escalating dramatically in the Middle East, with attacks on

Lebanon and Iran and subsequent retaliations bringing more suffering, death and instability and the prospect of an all-out war that much closer. A war that could potentially drag in many nations. (The Book of Revelation predicts that a final world-ending battle will take place at *Har Megiddo* - or 'Armageddon' as the Greeks translated it - a citadel established by King Ahab. It's currently a National Park and tourist attraction in Israel just north of the West Bank border and south west of Nazareth. But it makes you think, doesn't it? Rough neighbourhood, even today.)

I think that the Minoans of so long ago put us to shame. After thousands of years of development and civilisation, we still cannot collectively overlook our differences and live together in peace; we still hold grudges that date back centuries; we still squabble over lines on maps and insist that we belong on this bit of land and *you* on that bit and woe betide anyone who transgresses. Jane and I have been lucky enough to visit many distant parts of our wonderful world, and the one thing I've always noticed is that the dirt and dust under our boots is exactly the same wherever we go. It's just dirt and dust.

We can only pray that our political leaders and diplomats manage to persuade all parties in the Middle East to pull back from war and to talk. That a willingness to embrace peace takes the place of belligerence. As we remember before God those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our continued peace this month, may we also remember those who have died and are suffering in the Middle East on all sides - whatever the bit of dirt and dust they might call home.

*Rhodri*

## Events in November

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> – Sanctuary in the Crypt, St Michael's Crypt, 7pm

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> – Remembrance service, beginning at St Michael's, 10am, continuing at the War Memorial at 11am

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> – Inauguration of Rev Rick as Chair of Council of Churches, St David's Church 7pm followed by... Fellowship in the Pub

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> – Messy Church, Noddfa Community Hall, 10am

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> – Bible Study, St Michael's Crypt, 7pm

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> – Ministry Area Council meeting, St Michael's Crypt, 7pm

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> - Bingo at St Michael's Crypt, 7:30pm

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> – Advent Lunch, St Michael's Crypt, 12-1:30pm

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> - Film Night at St Michael's Crypt, 7pm



## Calendar and Readings for November

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November – All Saints

Wisdom 3. 1-9 *or* Isaiah 25. 6-9      Psalm 24.1-6

Revelation 21. 1-6a                      John 11. 32-44

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November – All Souls

Lamentations 3. 17-26                  Psalm 23

Romans 5. 5-11                          John 5. 19-25

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November – the First Sunday of the Kingdom

Deuteronomy 6. 1-9                      Psalm 119. 1-8

Hebrews 9. 11-14                      Mark 12. 28-34

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November – the Second Sunday of the Kingdom

Jonah 3. 1-5, 10                      Psalm 62. 5-12

Hebrews 9. 24-28                      Mark 1. 14-20

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> November – the Third Sunday of the Kingdom

Daniel 12. 1-3                          Psalm 16

Hebrews 10. 11-14, [15-18,] 19-25      Mark 13. 1-8

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> November – Christ the King the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Kingdom

Daniel 7. 9-10, 13-14                  Psalm 93

Revelation 1. 4b-8                      John 18. 33-37

## Parish Notes



**“For the righteous will never be moved;  
they will be remembered forever.  
They are not afraid of evil tidings;  
their hearts are firm, secure in the Lord.”**

***Psalm 112. 6-7***

### **Your Monthly Update**

I'm sure that everyone in the Ministry Area is thinking of Rev Bev Reaney who, all being well, is scheduled to have her much delayed operation on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November. We all hope and pray that the operation is not delayed again, that it goes well and that Rev Bev will soon be back on the road to recovery and able to resume her ministry among us in the near future.

The Tuesday evening activities have been proving very successful and continue this month with ***Sanctuary in the Crypt*** on the 5<sup>th</sup>, ***Fellowship in the Pub*** on the 12<sup>th</sup> and ***Bible Study*** on the 19<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested in joining one or all of these sessions then it's never too late.



The 10am Wednesday Eucharist at St Michael's, followed by a coffee, is also proving to be a success. More room has now been made in the St Stephen's Chapel at the back of the church, so if you haven't managed to get to one of these services, then there will be plenty of room for you.

After the heartache of earlier in the year, it's refreshing to bring you some good news with regards to our buildings. On Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October, Rev Rick sent out an email which I'm pleased to reproduce below:



*Hi All, I am pleased to share with you some exciting news regarding St David's Church in Maesteg. We are preparing to reopen the church from the 1<sup>st</sup> November, providing an opportunity for both the church and the community to explore its future potential. This*

*reopening will allow us to thoroughly investigate various funding options that could support both the continued community use of the building and the preservation of its rich heritage.*

*During this interim period, St David's will be available for a range of activities, and we warmly welcome the community's engagement as we assess the next steps for the church's long-term future. However, due to current clergy constraints, I regret to inform you that we will not be resuming Sunday services at this time.*

*We will keep you informed as plans progress and welcome your input during this important phase for St David's. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or suggestions.*

*Thank you for your continued support of our church and community.*

*Blessings, Rev Rick*

It's gives me a warm glow to know that St David's will once more be proclaiming "Glory to God in the High..st."

## **Remembrance**

Remembrance Sunday this year falls on 10<sup>th</sup> November. St Michael's Church will be hosting the Remembrance service at 10am with, among others, civic dignitaries, the Royal British Legion, members of the armed forces and representatives of the community's schools present. As in previous years, following the service in the church, there will follow a march through town to the War Memorial, where wreathes will be laid, the Last Post sounded and the two minute silence will be held at 11am.

On the same morning, Rev Lisa will lead the Remembrance observances at St John's in Glyncorwg.

On Remembrance Day itself, Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November, Rev Rick will lead a short service at 11am at the War Memorial. Observances will also take place at the memorial in Llangynwyd Square, Caerau Square and in the towns schools.

## Advance Notices for Advent

- ***From Darkness to Light*** – The beginning of the Advent season this year falls on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December and, as is traditional, this will be marked by the contemplative and atmospheric service of Darkness to Light at St Michael's Church beginning at 6pm.
- ***Advent Lunches*** – Tony, Sue and their helpers will once again be serving lunches at St Michael's Crypt to hungry customers throughout Advent, beginning on ***Thursday*** 28<sup>th</sup> November between 12 and 1:30pm.
- ***Christmas Tree Festival*** – This festival, a vital part of our outreach to schools and the community, will take place between Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December. St Michael's will once again be transformed into a wondrous forest of Christmas Trees, there will be schools and children's choirs performing and the usual refreshments on offer in the Crypt. However, to be a success, this event always needs willing volunteers – as they say, "many hands make (fairy)light work". If you are able to help in any way – setting up, providing teas/coffees, manning the church etc – then please get in touch with any of the Festival committee.
- ***Las Posadas*** – The Las Posadas statuette of the Holy Family will be making it's way around the Ministry Area again this Advent. This year, the Holy Family will be visiting homes in the Llangynwyd area for the first week of Advent, Glynorwg for the second and Maesteg for the third. If you are interested in playing host to the Las Posadas then please get in touch with Hilda Jane Jenkins.

## Mothers' Union

It has been a busy few weeks for us in Mothers' Union. On Monday October 7<sup>th</sup> we were treated to an extremely entertaining and interesting talk by Mrs Mavis Tierney on Bee Keeping. Not a topic many of us were familiar with but by the end of the evening there were some potential "bee keepers" among the group! Mavis brought along a selection of the equipment needed and also jars of the delicious honey that her and her husband produce. My thanks to Hilda Jane for recommending Mavis and arranging the evening for us. Look out for new bee hives appearing around Maesteg!



*Mrs Mavis Tierney with some of her "Bee keepers" equipment.*



*Some of us even "dressed to impress" for our talk on Bee keeping!*

Over the past few weeks you may have heard the sound of knitting needles clicking or sewing machines working. Several members (and potential members) have been getting together

to create some wonderful pieces of craft to sell in our Christmas Tree Festival this year. In October, we met in the home of Lynne and Brian where we spent a wonderful few hours together sharing ideas, thoughts and fellowship.

On October 17<sup>th</sup>, I attended the Annual Council Meeting in Cardiff. It was interesting to catch up with Branch Leaders from around the Diocese and to listen to what other branches do. The AFIA (caravan) project is obviously very close to everyone's hearts. Last year over £18,000 was raised for this amazing project. Our branch and Mr Tony Mullins were mentioned as being the instigators of the service now held in the little church during the caravan open week.

Can we continue to pray for our members who are unwell especially remembering those who are unable to join us at our meetings?

Our prayer for November taken from our Prayer Diary:

*May our championing of women's equality and empowerment provide women with the means to lift themselves up in their communities, highlighting God's restoration of human dignity in relationships, based on love and justice not domination.*

*Amen*

Finally some dates for the diary:

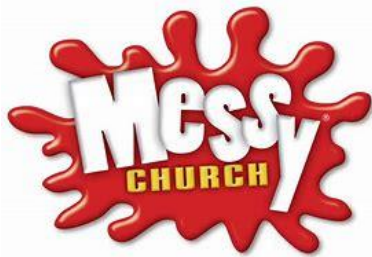
Monday November 4<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Crypt our vicar Rev Rick will be our guest speaker.

Tuesday November 19<sup>th</sup> 2pm - Tea, Chat and Craft.

Tuesday December 10<sup>th</sup> Christmas lunch at the Old House at 12-30pm. Please let me know if you wish to come along.

*Sue*

## Harvest Messy Church



In October we held a Harvest themed Messy Church in Glyncorrwg and what a lovely day it was. The children made Autumnal wreaths, leaf prints, squirrel pictures out of fallen leaves and much more.

We all shared worship when Rev Rick told us a story about a tiny seed needing water and sun to grow, we even got a sprinkling of water too! We sang some great action songs and ended with prayers.

We then had lunch together and it was delicious.

Our next Messy Church is on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November.

Thank you to the Messy Church Team for doing what they do to bring the Gospel alive in our Valleys.

*Pob bendith, Rev Lisa.*



## Eco-Church Autumn Update

The Ministry Area Church Eco-Warriors met recently, a meeting which was attended by Rev Rick who again was welcomed to our midst.

The main highlights of that meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> October were as follows:

- ✿ Celebrating the A Rocha bronze awards achieved by all three churches in the Ministry Area. Rev Rick kindly offered to apply yacht varnish to all three plaques so that they can be displayed on the outside of our church buildings.

- ✿ We are very grateful to Tony Mullins for applying to Maesteg Council on our behalf, for daffodil bulbs to be planted in our church grounds. We made arrangements for bulb planting sessions and I would appeal for some volunteers to help Alex and me plant some bulbs in the grounds of St Michael's on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November at 10am onwards. Perhaps a few of those attending that day's midweek service could bring a trowel and give us a hand after the service?!
- ✿ We made arrangements to meet again at St Cynfelin's Hall on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November to make some eco-themed crafts for the tree that we shall be making for the Christmas Tree Festival in St Michael's from 12-15<sup>th</sup> December. Again, extra volunteers would be welcome at that meeting.

And then as Winter turns into Spring, we shall be turning our minds towards what we can do to prepare our churches and their grounds for the next season.

*With greenful wishes*

*Heather Edwards*





**It's A Wonderful Film Night!**



**"IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE"**

**SHOWING AT St MICHAEL'S CRYPT FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY – FRIDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024 AT 7PM**

**ENTRY £8**

**(INCLUDES A GLASS OF WINE & REFRESHMENTS)**

**IT'S A WONDERFUL FILM... SO DON'T MISS OUT!**

***"REMEMBER, NO MAN IS A FAILURE WHO HAS FRIENDS."***

## Welcoming two new members into our Church Family



On October 20<sup>th</sup> we had a joyous church service at St Michael's, Maesteg. The occasion was the Baptism of two siblings, Skyler and Morgan. It was a joy to welcome them, their parents, Godparents, family and friends into our church family



and for them to make their baptismal promises in front of our congregation. Skyler and Morgan were a delight and appeared to enjoy their special day.

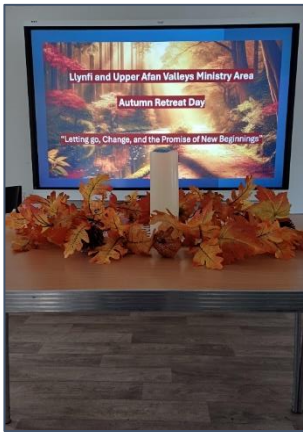
Our Mothers Union Enrolling Member, Sue Thomas, presented the family with a gift basket from Mothers Union and Skyler and Morgan soon spotted two teddies that Sue had made, these were played with straight away.

We wish Skyler and Morgan every blessing as they grow both in years and in faith.

*Pob bendith*

*Rev Lisa.*

## Autumn Retreat



A group of 15 people attended the first Ministry Area Retreat this Autumn at Bryngarw Park. It was a time of reflection, meditation, relaxation and a thought provoking day surrounded by God's wonderful nature. We shared fellowship, hospitality and prayer as we took time away from our daily routine to focus on our personal and spiritual development.

Thanks to Rev Rick for organising such a spiritual day. We will be holding another retreat day. Keep a look out for the next one!

*God Bless, Rev Lisa.*

## Experience Christmas



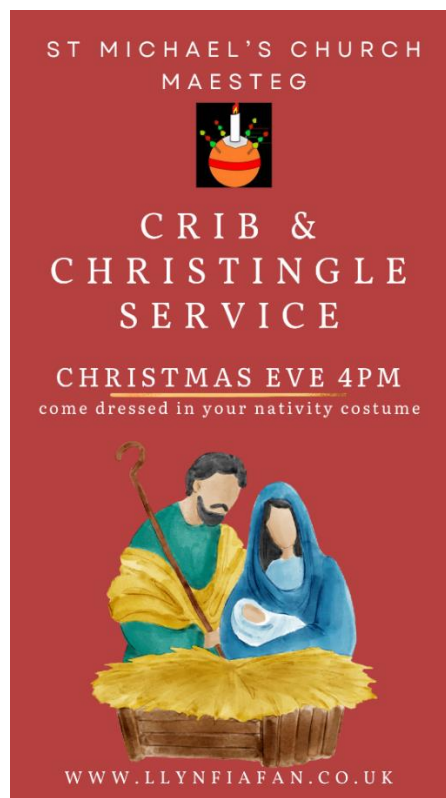
Put the dates in your diary!!

We have 'Experience Christmas' coming to St David's Church, Maesteg, on 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> December every afternoon and all day on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December. Come along and see the interactive stations, telling the Christmas story. Bring your children after school or pop in when you are in town to do your shopping. A warm welcome awaits you.

## Christmas Craft Fayre



## Advance Notice...



## For Your Prayers

We ask for your continued prayers for:

- Rev Rick and Rev Lisa and their ministry among with us.
- Rev Bev Reaney as she prepares for her operation.
- Our Lay Chair Ann, the Wardens, Fiona and Rhodri, and members of the Ministry Area Council as they work to take us forward.
- Those suffering in the Middle East, Ukraine and in any area of conflict in our troubled world.
- Those who are in need in our communities and for whom the onset of winter is something to be feared.
- Each other, as we look to the future of Christian worship in our Ministry Area and work to spread the Good News in our communities.



"If telemarketers call, invite them to church."

# Some Pictures from the Autumn Retreat Day, Bryngarw



## News from St Cynwyd's



*Correspondent – Mandy Millar*

### Harvest Supper



The Parish Harvest Supper was held at the Crypt on October 2<sup>nd</sup> and grateful thanks are given to Sue Thomas, Delyth Lucas and all the catering team for a lovely meal and a most enjoyable evening.

### Wedding Fair

It was lovely to see St Cynwyd's Church decorated so beautifully for the Wedding Fair on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October. There were photos of weddings from years past loaned by congregation members – who did you spot? Rev Rick and Rev Lisa were able to speak to lots of engaged couples about prospective weddings – hopefully this will bear fruit



in the coming year. Many thanks to everyone who helped to make this such a lovely day.



### Spot the Difference!



*Delyth and Gareth Lucas at the Wedding Fair on 5<sup>th</sup> October and at their wedding in 1968 (or is it the other way around?)*



## News from St John the Baptist



*Correspondent - Jane Proctor*

Glyncorrwg has given us some warm, sunny autumnal days and we are grateful to live in such a beautiful place with God's creation all around us.

It has been a busy time for all of us up in the Upper Afan Valley with many new projects getting underway. Our new monthly congregational meetings are attended by at least six members of the congregation all eager to support local events and have their say about the church in Glyncorrwg and the surrounding villages. It has been agreed that members will support Rev Rick and Rev Lisa with their visits to Ty Nant where services are to be held on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 28<sup>th</sup> November and 10<sup>th</sup> December.

We have begun to tidy up and clear out unwanted items from the church and agreed to trial a new (to us) form of Christmas Service 'Carols and Lessons' with the date to be confirmed.

A Coffee Morning with Craft Fair is being held on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November from 10am to 1pm there will be a Tombola, Raffle and cakes.

Glyncorrwg Primary School have booked their Harvest Service and Christmas Concerts to be held in the Church.

Thank you to everyone who has been coming to Glyncorrwg for Messy Church it is making a difference up here in the Upper Valley Area. The atmosphere is cheerful and productive with attendance becoming busier.

Next, I must give huge personal thanks to Rev Rick for coming up to help distribute the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition of the Glyncorrwg Gazette together with flyers advertising Church Services, Messy Church and the forthcoming Coffee Morning. He did have the last laugh after having the houses with steps and frontages (to save my knees) - I forgot the area I covered included a block of flats. I did provide coffee and cakes afterwards!

We will be praying for those former members of the parish who are now deceased, those suffering ill health at home or in hospital and for topics related to the seasons of Harvest and Remembrance.

God bless to all.

## **Deadline**

*For copy to be included in the December 2024 magazine*

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

## News from St Michael's



*Correspondent – Jane Mullins*

*On this Remembrance Day, we come, O Lord,  
in gratitude for all who have died that we may live,  
for all who endured pain that we might know joy,  
for all who suffered imprisonment that we might know freedom.  
Turn our deep feeling now into determination and our  
determination into deed, that as men died for peace, we may  
live for peace, for the sake of the Prince of Peace, even Jesus  
Christ our Lord.*

*Leslie Weatherhead, 1883-1975*

### **Remembrance**

#### ***Remembering the courage of 1944***

“This year marks the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of momentous battles and turning points of the Second World War. The D-Day landings of 6<sup>th</sup> June, the Battle of Monte Cassino in the Italian Campaign, and in India, outnumbered British and Indian forces withstood weeks of siege and brutal fighting at the Battles of Kohima and Imphal. During this 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, the Royal British Legion especially remembers the service and sacrifice of British and Commonwealth armed forces in these and other battles.”

*(Extract taken from Royal British Legion website)*

Our town's Annual Service of Remembrance will be held at St Michael's on November 10<sup>th</sup> at 10am, followed by the laying of wreaths at the War Memorial. As we remember and honour the memory of those who fought and sacrificed themselves to secure our freedom, we think of the current conflicts around the world which are costing so many lives and we pray that there may soon be a peaceful end.

### **Church in Bloom**

We are very lucky at St Michael's to have many talented people in our congregation. One of them is Claire Crawford who makes sure there is always lovely flowers in church.

Would you like the flowers to be dedicated to the memory of a loved one or in celebration of your wedding anniversary or special birthday?

If this is something you would like, please speak to Claire or pop your name on the flower rota at the back of church,

Please then give a money donation to cover the cost of the flowers to Claire in an envelope with your name, amount enclosed and the date of Sunday they are needed. Please also write your loved one's name (if in memory of) or your name if for your wedding anniversary etc. on the envelope. There will be a frame on the bookcase stating who the flowers are dedicated to that week. This will begin in January 2025.

I look forward to seeing the wonderful blooms in church.

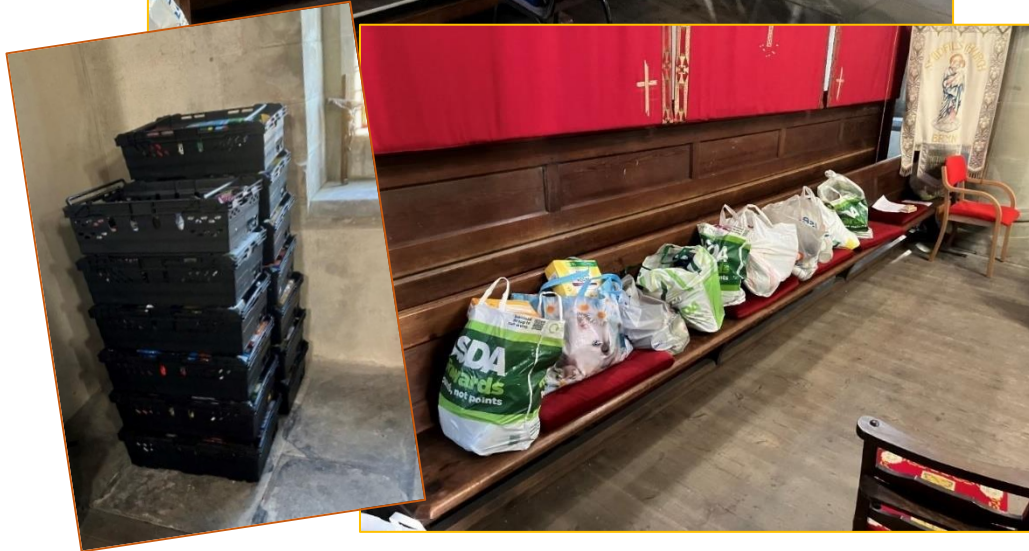
*Pob bendith, Rev Lisa.*

### **Book Launch**

We look forward to the launch of the 3<sup>rd</sup> volume of Jane and Rhodri's trekking diaries, '*Carry on Kili*', which details their incredible journey to Mount Kilimanjaro, the challenge which they completed in 2022. They will be speaking about this amazing adventure in St Michael's Crypt at 7.30pm on November 1<sup>st</sup>, where they will have copies of their book to be

sold in aid of The Alzheimer's Society. I am in awe of their wonderful achievement and I am sure it will be a very enjoyable evening, with an informative presentation, delivered with their usual wit and humour. See you there!

## Harvest



*Many thanks to everyone who donated food or bags and to the trusty band of helpers who picked it all up!*

Harvest was celebrated with a joyful service at St Michael's on September 29<sup>th</sup> in a festal Eucharist led by Vicar assisted by Rev Lisa, and our thanks are given to them and the Choir, led by Mrs Susan Heffey and accompanied by Mr Ryan Wood, for their usual musical contribution to our worship and their

rendition of the anthem *Look to the Day* by John Rutter. Harvest gifts of items for the Foodbank were generously donated as usual and displayed on the window sills, along with an array of fruit and vegetables, which were displayed on the portable altar and a most appropriate bale of hay. The church was again beautifully decorated and we are grateful to Mrs Mair Blackwell and Mrs Claire Crawford for their Autumnal flower arrangements and all who helped to ensure the church was cleaned and decorated, for us to enjoy our celebration of Harvest.

### **Autumn Afternoon Tea**

As part of the ongoing fundraising effort in our churches, St Michael's Tea Room will be open for business from 3pm on November 9<sup>th</sup> and a cordial invitation is extended to everyone to come and enjoy some delicious sandwiches, mouthwatering cakes and other tasty delights in an Autumn Afternoon Tea at the Crypt Cafe. If you would like to join us, please give your name to Sue Thomas or Tony Mullins. As usual, entry will be by donation.

### **Bingo**

The last Bingo session of 2024 will be held on Thursday November 21<sup>st</sup> 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. 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 2024 at the 'Crypt Casino'.

### **Film Night**

*"Every time a bell rings an angel gets his wings."*

The next in our series of occasional film nights will be held in the Crypt on Friday November 29<sup>th</sup>. The film to be shown will be the classic, *'It's a Wonderful Life'* which of course stars James Stewart and is a favourite amongst Christmas films. Indeed, it has been recognized by the American Film Institute as one of the 100 best American films ever made. This pre-Christmas treat of a film will start at 7pm and the entry price will be £8 which as usual includes your first glass of wine and a modest buffet.

### **Advent Lunches**

Sue and Tony will be reopening the Crypt Café in readiness to serve lunches every **Thursday** during Advent from November 28<sup>th</sup> to December 21<sup>st</sup>. (The week of the Christmas Tree festival, the lunch will be held on Wednesday December 11<sup>th</sup>). Lunch will be served from 12pm – 1.30pm and as in previous years, diners will be able to choose warming soups and/or 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 and Special Families.

### **Shoebboxes**

As mentioned in the previous magazine, shoebboxes 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.

### **Flower Beds at the West Door**

We are considering the suggestion that the flower beds either side of St Michael's west door would have more impact and would offer a more cheerful welcome if they were to be planted with large, perennial, long flowering plants, such as hydrangea

for example. This would have the added advantage of less annual planting, weeding and anti-slug protection!

Hilda Jane Jenkins would be happy to accept contributions for the purchase of plants for springtime planting, if you favour the proposal.

*HJJ*

## **Nativity! The Musical**

The members of Maesteg Musical Theatre Society are performing '*Nativity! The Musical*' at the Sony Theatre, Bridgend from November 13<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup>. The musical is adapted from the festive film of the same name and is centred on a class of schoolchildren, who along with their teacher and his hilarious teaching assistant are attempting to produce a musical version of the Nativity story, with chaos ensuing when everyone mistakenly thinks that a Hollywood producer is coming to see their production! It is a feel-good, funny, family show, full of the excitement of the festive season and the Society hopes it will be a successful production with plenty of 'sparkle and shine.'

## **Happy Birthday**

Birthday greetings are sent to all those celebrating in November including Alun Jones and Mair Hawley.

## **100 Club Winners**

### ***October***

First - Richard Lewis - £30

Second - Sheila John - £15

## **Thoughts for Remembrance**

*Thanks to Ann Jones for the following submissions:*



### ***The Last Post***

When the Last Post sounds and in silence we stand,  
to remember those who fought for our land  
The countless who died so that we may be free  
May we never forget them, may they always be remembered  
and loved for all that they gave  
The trauma they went through and all those who paid the  
ultimate sacrifice,  
losing their lives, never returning to their children and wives.  
As we take a moment to pause and reflect,  
to pay our respects to all those to whom we owe a great debt,  
May we always remember, may we never forget.

*(Taken from Salvation Army Magazine)*

“Young men go to war sometimes because they have to,  
sometimes because they want to, always they feel they are  
supposed to. This comes from the sad layered stories of life,  
which over the centuries have seen courage confused with  
picking up arms and cowardice with laying them down.”

*Mitch Albom*

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

May they Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory.

## Caption Competition – Hallowe'en Special

*Congratulations to Ann Jones for coming up with the winning entry for last months spooky Caption Competition. Not only that, she also took the first Runner Up spot with her alternative caption! (And yes, that is the late, great Nicholas Parsons as a Parson!)*



**“Admit it, we're lost! Your 'Boy Scouts Book of Country Walks' might have been OK 50 years ago but next time you organise a rambling trip, we're bringing our mobiles and using Google Maps!”**

*Ann Jones*

\*\*\*

*The Runners Up*

**The new Vicar looked worried. He had been told how big Llan graveyard was but he never imagined not being able to find his way out of there after the funeral!**

*Ann Jones*

**Rev Wainwright waited anxiously. The representatives of the Diocesan Churchyard Health & Safety Inspectorate were due to arrive any minute now!**

*Anon*

## A Meditation for Remembrance



### Taking a Stand

*by John Bailey*

I ask you to stand with me  
For both the injured and the lost  
I ask you to keep count with me  
Of all the wars and what they cost  
I ask you to be silent with me  
Quietly grateful for our lot  
As I expect you're as thankful as me  
For the health and life we've got  
I ask that you wish them well with me  
All those still risking their all  
And I ask that you remember with me  
The names of those that fall  
I expect that you are proud like me  
Of this great nation of ours too  
So enjoying all its freedoms like me  
Support those upholding them for you  
I hope that you are hopeful like me  
That we'll soon bring an end to wars  
So you'll have to stand no more with me  
And mourning families no different from yours  
'Til then be thankful you can stand with me  
Thinking of those who now cannot  
For standing here today with me  
At least we show they're not forgot

## **Matthew 5:1-12**

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

## **A Prayer for Peace in the Holy Land**

Almighty God, hear the cry of our hearts, as we hold before you the people of the Holy Land. Be near those who have lost lives and loved ones and be a sure rock to those who are in terror this day. We pray that, through your spirit of wisdom and mercy, conflict may cease, and that the leaders of the nations may work together for peace and justice between Israeli and Palestinian.

As you wept over Jerusalem, so we ask that you hear the prayers of those who weep this day for your Holy Land. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## **A Prayer for Remembrance**

Ever-living God, we remember those whom you have gathered from the storms of war into the peace of Your presence. May the same peace calm our fears, bring justice to all peoples and establish harmony among the nations and bring a final end to conflict on the earth. Let not the needy be forgotten, not the hope of the poor be taken away. Make us instruments of Your peace and let Your glory be over all the earth. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*



## **The Last Word**



“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”

*Barack Obama*

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Matthew 21, v12*

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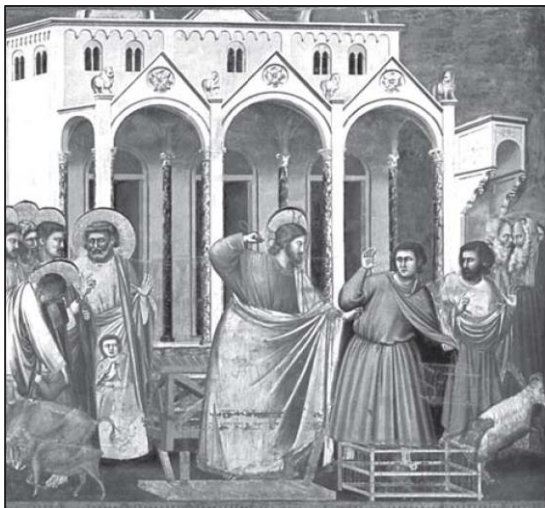
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*Casting out the money changers by Giotto, 14th Century.*

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