

CHURCH Magazine

St Hilary's Church, Killay • St Martin's Church, Dunvant

Now these three continue . . .



Of these, the greatest is . . . 1 Cor 13:13

Gower Ministry Area

50p

February 2024

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St Hilary's & St Martin's - Who's Who

Priest:	Reverend Layfetta Masih The New Vicarage, 59a Victoria Road, Waunarlwydd, Swansea SA5 4SY ☎ 01792 410488 Mobile: 07414 268163 Email: LayfettaMasih@cinw.org.uk
St Hilary's	St Hilary's Church & Church Hall 481a Gower Road, Killay, Swansea, SA2 7DZ
Lay Worship Leaders:	Simon Davies, Gareth Lewis, Mike Powell, Barbara Roberts.
Eucharistic Assistants:	Roy Chapman, Alan Pickard, Mike Powell, Catherine Swain.
Subwardens:	Mike Powell ☎ 208955 Marian Williams ☎ 204175
Treasurer:	Diane Holohan ☎ 296272
Sacristan:	Mike Powell ☎ 208955
Church Committee Secretary:	Marian Williams ☎ 204175
Hall Booking Secretary:	Diane Holohan ☎ 07770 788465 (texts preferred) or 296272
Envelopes/Gift Aid Scheme:	Geraldine Rees ☎ 207916
Organists:	Huw Thomas † R.I.P. Martin Draisey (St.Martin's)
St Martin's	St Martin's Church Fairwood Road, Duntant, Swansea SA2 7PE
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Subwardens:	Susan Dimblebee ☎ 299503 Roger Draisey ☎ 515391
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www.eastgower.org

Dear Friends

'Lenten Valentines'

This month both Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day fall on the same day! The link between the two can be summed up in terms of the nature of real love! Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday, focuses on learning to love God more, as we give Him space in our lives. This is what Jesus found when He was led into the desert by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan. (Luke 4:1-13).

Jesus was tempted to turn stones into bread. Yet loving God and His word comes before satisfying physical desires.

Satan tempted Jesus to worship him. However, worshipping God is an expression of loving God and serving Him.

Finally, He was tempted to put God to the test, by jumping off the Temple. Real love for God does not put Him to the test, but wants to obey Him.

Lent also teaches us how to live out the love of God in practical ways, as we follow Jesus in the way of the Cross. We see this clearly demonstrated in the life and death of Saint Valentine.

Valentine was a Christian who demonstrated the importance of sharing God's love with others. We know little about him, except that he was a priest who lived in the 3rd Century AD and that he was martyred on 14th February. Emperor Claudius felt that soldiers in the Roman Army were distracted from their duty by their wives, and so had attempted to outlaw marriage. It is believed that Valentine married couples in secret, which is why today we celebrate our love for one another on his day.

In trying to understand the meaning of her revelations from God, Julian of Norwich found:

'What, do you wish to know your Lord's meaning in this thing? Know it well, love was His meaning.'



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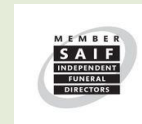
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The deadline for articles for March 2024 magazine is Friday 23 February

St Hilary's Church, Killay

Sidespersons

February Angela Reed, Janet Jones

Mar 3rd Geraldine & Roger Rees

Elements

4th Geraldine & Roger Rees

11th Jan & Jim Proudfoot

18th Sandra Banks, Nansi Evans

25th Lay led service

Mar 3rd Lay led service

Readers

4th Jim Proudfoot

11th Callum Powell

18th Nigel Fletcher

25th Lay led service

Mar 3rd Lay led service

Eucharist Assistants

4th Alan Pickard

11th Cath Swain

18th Mike Powell

25th Lay led service

Mar 3rd Lay led service

Altar Flowers

4th Denise & Dave Coffey, Wedding anniv.

11th Sue Davies in memory of John

18th Lent

25th Lent

Coffee

4th Babs Roberts, Sandra Banks

11th Angela Reed, Janet Jones

18th Eileen & Nigel Fletcher

25th Cath Swain, Nansi Evans

Mar 3rd Pam Davies, Gillian Hutchinson

St Martin's Church, Dunvant

Sidespersons

4th Gareth Dimblebee

11th Sue Dimblebee

18th Ian Dimblebee

25th Roger Draisey

Readers

4th Carol Lewis

11th Margaret Draisey

18th Ann Stone

25th Lynne Lewis

Altar Flowers

4th Tanya Fussell

11th Phyllis Cameron

18th Lent

25th Lent

Holy Dusters

Sue & Ian Dimblebee



All enquiries: Christenings,
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Please contact:
Rev'd Layfetta Masih

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Mobile: 07414 268163

Email: LayfettaMasih@cinw.org.uk



News

We pray for those who are ill at home, in hospital or nursing homes.



Our thoughts are also with those who lovingly care for them by day and night.

Julie Cole, Barbara Davies (Derlwyn), Miriam Evans, Enid James (St. Nicholas Court), Doll Lee, Don Lewis (Cynthia's husband), Eunice Miron, Diane Lewis (Hillside Nursing Home), Diana Mowat (Hengoed Court Residential Home), Olwen Nicholas, Betty Nutt, Mary Osborne (Hillside Nursing Home), Rev'd Judith Phillips, Gwynneth Prestwood (Hengoed Court Residential Home), Rita Trew, Gloria and Brian Wilkins and all others known to Him who need our prayers.

We hold in our daily prayers Janie Thomas at this time. We send our love and heartfelt sympathy to her and all her family on the death of Huw. A truly kindly, courteous gentleman - we respected him as our organist and for the music we worshipped to every Sunday; at weddings his music rang out with joy and celebration and at funerals his music brought peace and tranquility to those who were bereaved. He will be so very much missed by us all as a special person and friend.

May Huw Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory and may music and a choir of angels carry him on his journey to his final resting place.



Please let us know: home communion

We are concerned that for various reasons, a number of our parishioners are no longer able to join us in church as they used to. We hope to reintroduce home communion for the housebound and would appreciate them either making contact with the subwardens themselves or by asking a neighbour or friend to do so for them.

Mike Powell 208955 or Marian Williams 204175

Update from Gower Ministry Area Council: by Team Leader Peter Lewis

We're in a time of new members coming to the team.

Feb 15th	St George Reynoldston;
Feb 22nd	All Souls Tycoch;
Feb 29th	St David's Wernffrwd;
Mar 7th St	Mary Pennard;
Mar 14th	St Hilary, Killay;
Mar 21st	St Hilary, Killay.

In January we were delighted to find that all the funding came in for our ministry area wellbeing project: from a Swansea based fund and a legacy to Oxwich church. We had 3 applicants for the coordinator's role and a steering committee is now in place. Chloe Thomas has been appointed and starts working with us in February, with a commissioning launch of the project on 25th Feb at 11am in St Illtyd's. The search is also on for someone to be our ministry area administrator, with an application deadline of 6th Feb. This is a part-time post, based in Killay - application details are all on Swansea and Brecon diocese website.

We're also coming into a time of getting to know each other better with the ministry area. From February, on the 3rd Sunday of the month, the usual clergy in our clusters will be leading/ preaching in congregations in other clusters. Additionally, we are coming together during Lent on Thursday nights at 7pm using material called START to help us reflect on faith and how we can be energised afresh to live out deep spiritual lives in every-day situations.

We'll be at different parts of the MA:

In the week leading up to Easter, Holy Week, we'll be having a joint evening service on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday; we'll be in our own cluster/ churches for Maundy Thursday; Good Friday has a united Stations of the Cross at 10am around Reynoldston village; Holy Saturday we're together in Llanmadoc church for Easter Vigil Mass; with the invitation to come up to Cefn Bryn for a sunrise service early Easter Day. Also in the diary is an evening Celebration Service to be held in the Marquee at Oxwich Bay Hotel on June 3rd, with the bishop attending and a chance for us to create a celebration of a year as a ministry area.

We're finding it easier to support one another as time goes on. Our MA Property group has started to be a focal point of assistance for our buildings, and our Eco group is offering help as we all undertake an Ecochurch audit this year and to engage with Swansea Council on projects for Biodiversity. Please contact the ministry area lead if you have an interest or skills to join either group.

Thanks, as always, go to our congregational treasurers and Peter Townsend who coordinates their work together. This year we are collating all our individual finance info for a ministry area 2023 Accounts and Report. Later in the year we'll be moving to a digital database, which other ministry areas have found makes life easier for treasurers and helps our congregational committees and MAC know our financial state and management of our funds. The ministry share (quota) is down by about £20,000 for the ministry area this year, but different clusters have re-organised their relative giving so that some churches that are less able to give are supported by neighbours.

And finally, we're encouraged to bless the Lord as we see God's blessings around us. This March we celebrate 30 years of the Lamplighter Shop being with us in Bishopston. Every cluster enjoyed encouraging attendances over the Christmas services, especially building up our connections with children and families. New 'Open the Book' teams are going into our schools and we're finding out more about the ministry area through our Daily Prayer published on social media. At the end of January, Welsh speakers met to consider how we can be more effective in using the Welsh Language for worship, discipling and outreach. Join us in making this prayer our story:

"God of Mission, who alone brings growth to your Church, Send your Holy Spirit to give Vision to our planning, Wisdom to our actions, And power to our witness. Help our church to grow in numbers, In spiritual commitment to you, And in service to our local community, Through Jesus Christ our Lord." Amen.

Ministry Area Lent Appeal.

'Action around Bethlehem Children with Disability' (abcd) is a UK Anglican charity that improves the lives of children with disabilities across Palestine regardless of faith, race or gender. Their centre in Bethlehem suffered recent attacks by the Israeli Defence Force leaving most of their resources & equipment unusable.

What can you or your congregation do this LENT to raise funds and to pray for all who rely upon the support of abcd?

Read more for yourself at:- www.abcdbethlehem.org and incorporate their prayer needs in your church services and private prayer.



What is the point of temptation?

'Happy is the man who doesn't give in and do wrong when he is tempted, for afterwards he will get ... his reward....' James 1:12

Temptation becomes a stepping stone rather than a stumbling block, when you realise that it's *just as much an opportunity to do the right thing, as the wrong thing.* Temptation just gives you the choice!

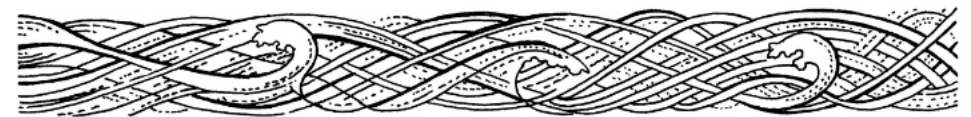
It's helpful to remember that God develops the fruit of the Spirit in us by allowing circumstances in which we're tempted – to express the exact opposite quality! For instance, He teaches us to love by bringing unlovely people into our lives. It takes no character to love people who are lovely and loving you. God teaches us joy in the midst of sorrow by causing us to turn to Him for comfort and strength, when all our other supports are gone.

He develops peace within us, not by making things go the way we planned, but by allowing times of chaos and confusion. Peace comes when we choose to trust God in situations where we're tempted to worry or be afraid.

Likewise, patience is developed through circumstances in which we're forced to wait and are tempted to be angry or have a short fuse.

You can't claim to be good, if you've never been tempted to be bad; or be faithful if you've never had the opportunity to be unfaithful. Integrity is built through defeating dishonesty; humility grows as you refuse to give place to pride; endurance develops as you reject the temptation to give up. The truth is that each time you defeat a temptation, you become more like Jesus.

Adapted from: UCB, The Word for Today.



Still water and still religion freeze the quickest. - Anon

What's so special about Jesus?

The gospels record that people were astounded by many of the things that Jesus said. Even His enemies, intent on trapping Him, admitted: "No one ever spoke the way this man does." (John 7:46) Furthermore, "the crowds were amazed at His teaching, because He taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law." (Matthew 7:28-9)

For in Jesus, we find something without precedent in the span of human literature. While urging humility on others and while giving the impression of the ultimately humble person, Jesus' teaching and claims are basically *egocentric and completely focussed on Himself*. In ordinary life, that would get a person labelled as crazy or as a megalomaniac!

Just think of the few astounding claims Jesus made about Himself. "I am the Resurrection and the Life." (Jn 11:25) "I am the Bread of Life." (Jn 6:35) "I am the Light of the World." (Jn 8:12) "I am the Good Shepherd." (Jn 10:7,9) "...whoever lives and believes in Me will never die." (Jn 11:26) And – most staggering of all – "anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father." (Jn 14:9)

CS Lewis comments on the inescapableness of Jesus' uniqueness: "There is no half-way house, and there is no parallel in other religions."

That Jesus cannot be ranked among a pantheon of religious leaders or prophets becomes further obvious when one

reflects further on His claim of being at both the beginning and at the end of Creation and of History. He said: "I am the First and the Last" (Rev 1:17), as well as: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." (Mt 28:18).

Clearly the disciples accepted this, as John begins his gospel with these words: "In the beginning was the Word (Jesus) and the Word was with God and the Word was God... Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.... The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.... and in Him all things hold together." (Col 1:16,17)

When we look at what Jesus goes on to say about the end of history, we are even more startled, as when He said of any person who follows Him: "I will raise him up at the last day." (Jn 6:40) This was the local carpenter, remember! And when we note that throughout the Bible final judgement is a function reserved to God alone, it is astounding to register that Jesus says of Himself: "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son authority to judge because He is the Son of Man." (Jn 5:26—27)

Yes, between Creation and the end of History stands Jesus. That also means, of course, and we note it with comfort, because everything in between is His also.

During this Lent, why not spend some time just quietly thinking about these claims of Jesus?

By the Revd Dr Herbert McGonigle.



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Mothers' Union

Our first Archidiaconal Eucharist at St Mary's, Swansea for this year, was led by Rev Sue Waite and it was organised by Three Cliffs MU. It was good to meet some new attendees who are always welcome to join us for free refreshments. Everyone is welcome at the service which is usually held on the first Friday of the month, whether you belong to MU or are just out shopping. Rev Layfetta welcomed us to St Hilary's for our first branch eucharist of the year. She explained what Jesus was saying when he talked about putting new wine into old skins. Rev Layfetta told some

Future dates: -

Friday 2nd February 11 am St Mary's, Swansea – Archidiaconal Eucharist, arranged by Gowerton MU.

Tuesday 6th February 2 pm Church Hall, Branch AGM chaired by Marian Williams. Accounts presented will have been inspected by Ken Ellis (All Souls).

Tuesday 20th February NO MEETING IN CHURCH HALL instead 3.30 pm in St Hilary's Church the "Wave of Prayer" until 4.55 pm – led by Carole.

Friday 1st March 11 am St Mary's, Swansea – Archidiaconal Eucharist, arranged by our Diocesan members.

Tuesday 5th March 2 pm Church Hall, "Prayer, Poems & Worship" – Mike Powell (Church Warden).

Anyone is welcome at all of our events; male, female married or single. We usually meet on the first and third Tuesdays in the Church Hall at 2 pm (there are some exceptions).

Alan & Carole Pickard

amusing stories as she tasted diet coke and orange juice to illustrate the point. After the service the members chatted in the church hall, and we held our usual raffle.

Each meeting we collect the following new items for the safe houses/refuges: toiletries, pants, socks, tights for women and children, sanitary products, wet wipes etc, please NO nappies, toys, books or knitting, thank you.

Music Society



Music Society New Year lunch in the Black Boy

The first meeting of the Music Society of 2024 was on Monday 8th January at the Black Boy for lunch.

We were welcomed by our chairperson Barbara Roberts who explained there were many absent due to ill health and visits to families.

Twenty members met for lunch and the meal was excellent with very attentive staff.

After the meal we had a quiz on musical personnel.

Angela thanked Barbara for arranging the meal and quiz. Our next meeting will be on Monday 12th February at 7.30pm for the AGM.

Lunch Club News

Lunch Club continue to meet the first Wednesday of every month in the Church Hall for a fish and chip lunch.

On 6 December we enjoyed our Christmas meal at the Norton Hotel. On 10 January Councillor Louise Gibbard joined us for lunch and kindly presented us with a cheque to help with the payment of the rent for the hall each month.

Our next meeting is on 7 February. Most members arrive about 11am for a coffee and chat with their friends and lunch is served at 12pm. We have a few vacancies if anybody would like to join us but please phone Teressa on 203732 beforehand as we have to order the meals a few days before. Unfortunately we do not have any more room for anybody who needs a lift with our team of voluntary drivers.

Teressa Garner
Secretary



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Don't forget those nestboxes!

On 14th February our annual National Nestbox Week begins.

Now an established part of the ornithological calendar, it aims to encourage people to help out the birds in their gardens each Spring. Everyone is invited to put up more nestboxes in their local area, and a very helpful website gives full instructions on how to do this. More details at:

<https://www.nestboxweek.com>

Winter Now

'Tis winter now; the fallen snow
Has left the heavens all coldly clear;
Through leafless boughs the sharp winds blow,
And all the earth lies dead and drear.

And yet God's love is not withdrawn;
His life within the keen air breathes;
His beauty paints the crimson dawn,
And clothes the boughs with glittering wreaths...

O God! Who giv'st the winter's cold,
As well as summer's joyous rays,
Us warmly in thy love enfold,
And keep us through life's wintry days.

From a poem by Samuel Longfellow 1819-92

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Friday 1 March 2024
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Parish of Killay Magazine, 50 years ago - February 1974

CONGRATULATIONS to Mr Tony Glasson, our church organist, who has recently been successful in obtaining his ATCL (Associate of Trinity College London) for Organ Playing. It is hoped that this will encourage him to go on to achieve further academic success. We appreciate very much his work with the music in the parish and the choir are already busy practising for a programme of special music over Easter.

MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTION

By now, most of the magazine money has been collected. We are grateful to the distributors for their work month by month for their prompt delivery of the magazine and also to Mr Ken James and the members of his family for their part in delivering the parcels of magazines to the distributors. We also take this opportunity to thank Mrs Hoskins who has helped with magazines for a number of years and has now resigned for health reasons and to Mrs Barbara Jones, Gower Road, who has taken on her district.

YOUNG WIVES

The Committee of the Young Wives met recently to discuss the possibility of resuming meetings. Hitherto, there was a ban on both the heating and lighting of the hall on their regular meeting night. Now we understand that the ban on the lighting has been raised. It was therefore decided to proceed with meetings although the hall will be unheated.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Holy Baptism:

Jan 20th Claire Butcher, 101 Broadmead, Killay
Freya Jane Henry, 42 Goetre Fach Road, Killay

Holy Matrimony:

Jan 26th David Tomlinson and Angela Kathryn Evans

Burials:

Jan 7th Beatrice Davies, Camrose, Hen Parc Lane, Upper Killay
Jan 10th Norma Constance Stanbridge, 11 Bro Dirion, Killay



Mr X Appeal

The Mr X Team would like to thank all the lovely people who donated a gift to the Mr X Appeal in 2023. This our 64th year was our biggest yet, with a bag of gifts being donated to over 8,900 needy children in the South/Southwest Wales area, taking in Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, Carmarthenshire, Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff. All names were supplied from over 150 childcare agencies in these areas. We also managed to help other organisations who were struggling.

Thank you to all the Mr/Mrs X in the various organisations who collected lists of names from us, gave the names out to individuals in their organisation, and gathered them in at the end ready for collection by our volunteers.

We are very grateful to, and would like to thank Associated British Ports for once again allowing us the use of their Swansea offices as a Distribution Centre, it has become a home from home for the volunteers who relentlessly worked at sorting deliveries, checking bags and

allocating them to the correct child, We also thank Days Rentals for once again supplying us with a sign written van, Eastside Insurance for supplying the insurance and Daniel Signs for supplying the signs for the van. A special thanks goes to Britannia Robbins Removals and Storage who very kindly lent and transported a large container to Swansea Docks so that we could store all the extra donations we received. We also thank Cardiff Council, Neath Port Talbot Council and Swansea City Council for their help and support. Thanks also to all the 'Drop Off' points in all the areas who willingly took in presents and stored them until they were collected.

We also wish to thank our lovely hard-working individual volunteers, Morryston Rotary Club and the Unite Union Retired Members Branch who worked relentlessly sorting, collecting and delivering presents to the childcare agencies. It was hard work and without this help we would not have been able to go ahead. THANK YOU ONE AND ALL.

EVERY GIFT IS A SMILE ON A CHILD'S FACE, SO THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS.

THE MR X TEAM

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20 years of Facebook

Twenty years ago, on 4th February 2004, Facebook, the social media networking platform, was launched.



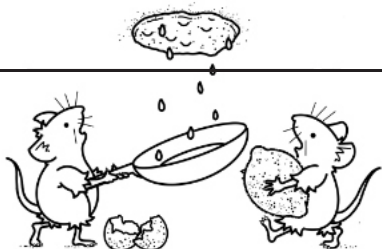
Originally known as thefacebook.com, it was intended by Mark Zuckerberg and four other Harvard students – Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes – to create “a directory of information for college students”, but it soon expanded, and each of the five co-founders developed different roles. All except Moskowitz are now not part of the Facebook empire, but all are extremely rich.

A year after it was launched, Facebook lost the “the” from its name, and the following year it got rid of its students-only restriction. In its new form Zuckerberg, from an early stage the main man of Facebook, said the original aim was for Facebook users to take their online identities with them around the internet without having to register individual accounts for each website or app.

The swift development of Facebook, which went public in 2012, has involved Zuckerberg in many lawsuits, and he has demonstrated a wide-ranging ability to win people over. He is also extremely clever. He has never revealed his own political affiliation or voting history, and is hard to pin down. He was raised as a Reform Jew, went through a period when he espoused atheism, but more recently has said he “believes religion is very important”.

In September last year his net worth was estimated at not far short of £50 billion, but he receives a one-dollar salary as CEO of Facebook, and he and his wife Priscilla Chan give away huge amounts of money, some of which goes to fighting antisemitism and backing educational and community initiatives. Facebook is banned in China.

As of late September 2023, Forbes estimated Zuckerberg's net worth at about \$64.4 billion, making him the 16th-richest person in the world.



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Reflecting Faith: Memorial Stones

by the Revd Dr Jo White.

Last month we began to look at the outside of the church building. When you last visited a churchyard with very old memorials, what did you notice?

The oldest stones probably just had the name of the person, date of death and perhaps their age.

But the slightly more recent stones may well have included where the person had been born, lived, and who they had married. These stones probably belonged to the wealthier people, as they needed to be large, to include all this information!

As for the poorer folk, as cheaper stone became available, they also wanted to mark their loved one's place of rest, even with just the bare details.

With the advent of the railways, a firm in Scotland started a business for shaping the stone with recessing, into which a local stone mason would be able to carve the words. This is why you will see many similar shaped stones in every churchyard in England, Wales and Scotland for that period.

In different areas of the country, both locally sourced stones and the

availability of the stonemason create very different looks – whilst within that area are many reproductions.

Also, the 'floweriness' of the inscriptions grew over the years. What started with just the name of the person later had added before the name, 'With affection', then 'With great affection', then, 'Greatly loved' and so on. It was almost as if people were trying to outdo each other on who loves who most.

Meanwhile, by the early 20th century many churchyards were 'full', and if adjoining land was available this was consecrated, but otherwise separate land was purchased – which became a 'cemetery' and was usually not the responsibility of the church.

A churchyard, on the other hand, is by definition under the auspices of 'the church', whether open or closed.

Because people continued to want to be interred in 'holy land', eventually all cemeteries were set aside and consecrated by and for the different religions and denominations, reflecting the needs of the local communities.

Sometimes women are overly suspicious of their husbands. ...

When Adam stayed out very late for a few nights, Eve became upset. "You're running around with other women," she charged.

"You're being unreasonable," Adam responded. "You're the only woman on earth." The quarrel continued until Adam fell asleep, only to be awakened by someone poking him in the chest. It was Eve. "What do you think you're doing?" Adam demanded. "Counting your ribs," said Eve.



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God in Music by the Revd Michael Burgess



'Glorious the song when God's the theme': the *Nunc Dimittis*

St Luke tells us in his Gospel that the angels sang praises to God at the birth of Jesus, and he has given us three poems that have become part of Christian song: the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus* and the *Nunc Dimittis*.

The first two are full of praise and rejoicing. The last comes as Mary and Joseph fulfil the Law of Moses and bring the child Jesus to Jerusalem. In the temple they meet Simeon and Anna. Simeon represents each of us who can look back over life with gratitude in the face of death as he says, 'Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace.' It is a story that has inspired preachers and artists, and also composers.

In the Christian Church these words of the *Nunc Dimittis* have become part of worship at the end of each day, not just the end of life. Cathedral and parish church choirs have sung settings of these words in that great tradition of Anglican choral music at Evensong – settings that have captured the sense of quiet resignation, but also conveyed the glory of the light that is Jesus shining for all people. Rachmaninov's setting is part of his Vespers, the night-long vigil sung in the Russian Orthodox Church on the eve of great feasts.

Rachmaninov composed the work (and it comprises 15 pieces) at great speed, but even so, the Vespers are now seen as one

of the great masterpieces of religious music.

This was no more so than in his beautiful setting of the 5th canticle, the *Nunc Dimittis*. Just 36 bars long, it begins with a rocking, undulating figure in the upper voices. A solo tenor enters as the voice of Simeon, and it ends with the basses moving down to a low B flat: 'a sigh of wonder and resignation on the threshold of eternal rest and peace,' one critic has called it.

Rachmaninov later recalled, "After I played the passage at the end of the 5th canticle where the basses slowly descend to that low note, the conductor shook his head, saying, 'Now where on earth will we find such basses? They are as rare as asparagus at Christmas!' Nevertheless, he did find them." It was one of the composer's favourite pieces, and he asked for it to be sung at his funeral in the hope that it would send his 'ship of death gently towards the unknown region.'"

On 2nd February we shall hear these words as part of the Gospel on the feast of Candlemas. Simeon prays them because his cup is now overflowing. He has looked on the salvation of God. Music allows us to look on that glory and salvation also, and Rachmaninov, in his moving setting, has captured the calm trust of that moment, which shines out like the brightness of the light of Jesus.

Exercise Classes



Enquiries

Christine O'Rourke

01792 290100

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St James the Least of All

The Rev Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'

The Rectory, St James the Least of All

On why rural church-goers like to freeze in church

My dear Nephew Darren

Winter certainly exposes the difference between those of you who live in cities and us rural folk. While you bask in your centrally heated flat, and complain about the half an inch of slush outside, we country folk wear overcoats in our houses, open all doors and windows to let the heat in and battle through snow drifts, measured in feet, to get the morning paper.

Colonel Wainwright has acquired a new toy: a snow blower, of sufficient power that I believe it could clear the Antarctic. He kindly volunteered to clear the paths around the church. Working outwards from the church door, the path to the church soon became snow-free. Unfortunately, he only realised when his job was complete that the blown snow then formed a ten-foot drift under the lych gate.

Miss Margison, ever helpful in the worst sense of the word, decided to unfreeze the pipes in the church hall. A blow torch was not the ideal solution, although the resulting burst did make some rather attractive ice sculptures round the kitchen equipment. The village badminton team that uses the hall has now temporarily changed sport to ice hockey.

Inevitably, congregations have soared. There is nothing like adversity for making people want to prove they have the moral fibre to overcome it. Much satisfaction seems to be obtained on discovering who has not dared venture out, which is taken as judgement on their strength of character. The Prentices upstaged most people by arriving on a sleigh. Mr Prentice was warmly wrapped in a travelling rug, while his wife pulled it. As they both explained, they couldn't possibly let the pony work in such conditions.

What I momentarily thought was applause during my sermon was merely people keeping their hands warm and the hymns were drowned out by the stamping of feet. Our organist complained that the cold made his fingers so numb that he couldn't play properly – although I didn't notice that things were much different from normal.

No, my dear nephew, a few flakes of wet snow may close your car park for health and safety reasons, but we shall continue to triumph heroically over adversity. We return home after Mattins, knowing we have proved our Christian commitment in being utterly uncomfortable.

Your loving uncle
Eustace



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Church Groups

- Mothers' Union – fortnightly on 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month
- Tots group – weekly on Monday in term-time
- Bowls Club – weekly on Friday evening or Saturday when there is a clash with WBS
- Music Society – monthly on 2nd Monday evening of the month
- Luncheon Club – monthly on 1st Wednesday

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Everyone is welcome to our
services, full details of which
are on the back page

The deadline for articles for the March 2024 magazine is on **Friday 23 February**.

The magazine is printed and published by St Hilary and St Martin Churches in the Gower Ministry Area, Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, Church in Wales.

The views in the articles reflect the views of the individuals contributing the items and are not intended to represent the official views of the Ministry Area or the Church in Wales.

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If you have any news or photos you would care to share please contact Roger Rees



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----- in Killay

Ye Annual New Year Luncheon...

"....and it came to pass on the first week of the first month of 2024, that the tribes of Tycoch, Killay and Dunvant traversed, not by camel nor donkey.... but by "horse power" to that watering hole named Clyne Golf club in the grassy areas of Clyne common where wool backed animals abound and shepherds with sticks try to hit a ball into a hole.... strange locals are they!!

And so 63 tribesmen and tribeswomen assembled in an upstairs room and devoured huge quantities of food called ye carvery.....and within an hour there was nothing left.

And they had come in their besties attire....and even had time to drink local brews of medicinal fluids....called ale and white and red fluid called wine!

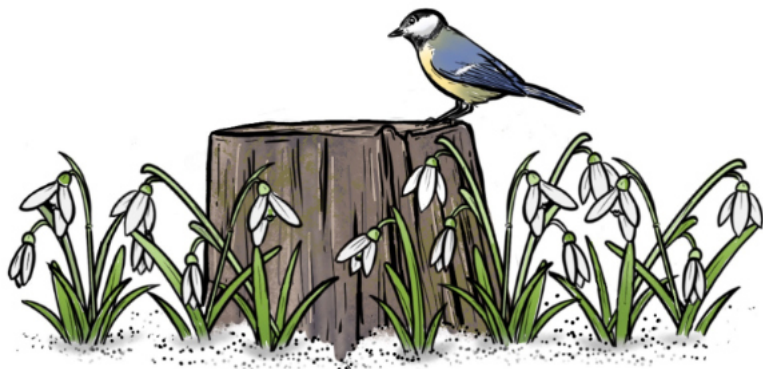
There was much laughter and enjoyment and they played a game called a raffle whilst numbers were announced and folk got up and claimed a prize!!

And soon it was time to depart from the oasis called ye golf club, but not before thanks were given to the handmaidens Sue and Sylvia who were the principal organisers aided by others.

And they departed from whence they came....and dare say the travellers would return...."

Here endeth Michael's gospel....

[Mike Powell
Social and Fundraising Group]



Church Services: *St Hilary's & St Martin's*

FEBRUARY	ST HILARY'S KILLAY	ST MARTIN'S DUNVANT
1 Thursday	11.00am Eucharist	
4 Second Sunday before Lent	11.00am Family Eucharist <i>Followed by coffee</i>	9.00am Eucharist
8 Thursday	11.00am Eucharist	
11 Transfiguration Sunday	11.00am Eucharist <i>Followed by coffee</i>	10.00am Family Worship Lay-led
15 Thursday	11.00am Eucharist	
18 First Sunday of Lent	11.00am Eucharist <i>Followed by coffee</i>	9.00am Eucharist
22 Thursday	11.00am Eucharist	
25 Second Sunday of Lent	11.00am Family Worship Lay-led <i>Followed by coffee</i>	11.00am Eucharist <i>Followed by coffee</i>
29 Thursday	11.00am Eucharist	

*The magazine of St Hilary & St Martin churches
in the Gower Ministry Area, Diocese of Swansea and Brecon.*

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