



St David's Uniting Church Monthly Magazine – March 2026

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Link for Live Stream - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1ftWuXHexnfFdo1FKwXBZA>

Link for Zoom service -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89461145366?pwd=S3ExNTVjdGVGdXlGVlNQc2k3eldudz09>



Message from our minister, Clare

Annwyl ffrindiau/Dear friends

An unexpected bonus of having four children is that at four times in my life I got to step back from my usual pattern of life and work and discover a new perspective. Four lots of maternity leave meant that I had to put things down and rediscover who I was, what was needed of me, how I wanted to use my time, what brought me life in that new phase. I remember walking through the town where I worked on a midweek morning early in my first maternity leave and realising that there was a whole community of people that I had never noticed or thought about before - some of whom were pushing prams just like me. I was conscious then and I'm conscious now that - the sheer exhaustion and relentless responsibility of caring for a new baby aside - it was a gift to be able to get off the gravy train and ask different questions, see life a different way. Would I have stopped and taken stock as I did? Probably not. It's hard ordinarily to step back from the pattern of life, and the need to pay a mortgage, and take the time to check in with ourselves about how we feel and think.

Which is why I think Lent is an important time. I fully hear how Lent is celebrated more by other church traditions than our own and how its association with penitence doesn't sell it to everyone. But I also think that taking time out, even if it is simply for five minutes a day in Lent, to check in with God and ourselves with honesty, to step back and reflect on where we are, who we are, on our relationship with God and place in creation, is a precious thing. It can feed and nurture us, it is an opportunity to peel back some layers and get to what is underneath, to ask questions that we are too preoccupied to ask in the usual rhythm of life. Far from its rather negative associations with austerity, Lent can be a time that allows new perspectives, deeper reflections to emerge and can be rich and creative.

Ramadan started at the same time as Lent this year and when I have talked with Muslim friends and colleagues about Ramadan they have shared how special it is to be part of something as a community, how it brings people together as well as helping them to focus on serving God. This month at St David's we have an opportunity to journey together in different ways by following the book *Receiving Jesus, The Way of Love* (Catherine has copies if you would like to buy one and it is also available as an e-book). We can read it individually and it will shape at least some of the sermons we hear

throughout Lent. With a big thank you to Ray there will also be three 'study' sessions looking at different chapters – the first led by me on March 3rd and then by Ray on 17th and 31st, all at 2pm in the chapel. I say 'study' because I wouldn't want anyone to be put off, they will be opportunities to share and discuss and everyone is welcome, whether you have had chance to read the book or not.

However you spend it, here's wishing you the chance to pause and reflect this Lent – without needing to have a new baby to do it.

Pob bendith/Blessings

Clare

March Services

Services start at 10.45am unless otherwise stated. Services are also available online to view live, or afterwards.

1st March - We will be celebrating St David's Day with our minister, Revd Clare Nutbrown-Hughes and will be followed by a church meeting and Cawl lunch.

8th March - Our monthly Zoom service will be led by Revd Ray Vincent

Link to join:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89461145366?pwd=S3ExNTVjdGVGdXIGVINQc2k3eldudz09>

15th March - We welcome once again our good friend Haydn Blackey

22nd March - Our service will be led by Revd Stephen Best. Many of you will remember Stephen who supported us as we made our decision to move to Castle St. This is the first time he will be leading worship with us and we look forward to hearing him and to celebrating communion with him.

29th March - We welcome Revd Branwen Rees as we celebrate Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week.

What's happening in **March:**

Lent

As Clare has said above, our Lent studies will be based on the book 'Receiving Jesus - The Way of Love, by Marianne Budde', the Episcopal Bishop of Washington. The Right Revd Budde leapt into public consciousness a year ago when in a sermon at an interfaith service to mark the inauguration of Donald Trump she pleaded with him directly for mercy — for migrants, for children, and for the LGBTQ community. In a way that she did that day, the book encourages us to bring spirituality and a lived-out faith together by drawing on seven practices of a Jesus-shaped life: to turn, to learn, to pray, to worship, to bless, to go and to rest. Books are available from Catherine, or alternatively, as an e-reader on Kindle.

In addition to the options of reading and following the book and/or the sermons there will also be three afternoon study groups which will start at 2pm and will be held at the church with an opportunity to share and reflect. This is open to all and not contingent upon having read the book:

Tuesday 3rd March - led by Revd Clare Nutbrown-Hughes

Tuesday 17th March - led by Revd Ray Vincent

Tuesday 31st March - led by Revd Ray Vincent

Guild

St David's Guild is held at the **Museum on Wednesdays at 2pm**. Marilyn Leach has once again booked a variety of interesting speakers for December. All are welcome to join in and experience the pleasure and joy of this mid-week fellowship. Refreshments are always served.

Wednesday 4th: Caryl Williams - A mystery afternoon/Prynhawn o ddirgelwch Caryl, well-known in Wales for being part of Y Triban—a group who performed mostly in Welsh on radio and television, has accepted our invitation to come along to guild once again to entertain us. She has called the afternoon a mystery and all will be revealed through looking and listening.

Wednesday 11th: Stephanie McNicholas - Ponty Movers and Shakers Stephanie is a former newspaper reporter who has put her life long passion for music to good use. She has written a book 'Ponty Movers and Shakers' which focuses on the stories of musicians and bands who burst on the Pontypridd musical scene during the 1950's, 60's and 70's.

Wednesday 18th: Kath and Dave Live Music

Listening to Kath and Dave is such a treat for us. They will be singing different songs from their repertoire but also one or two new ones which Kath says she has been wanting to sing for a very long time. All will be revealed that afternoon!

Wednesday 25th: Call my Bluff

A re-creation of a panel game enjoyed on television back in the 70's and 80's. Members of the panel will be guild members.

Other Church Events

Language classes are held on **Monday mornings at 10am** in the Hall.

Sunday 1 March - Church Meeting followed by Cawl Lunch.

Monday 2nd March – 6.30pm - Justice & Peace meeting on Zoom. The link is below, or please let Catherine know if you are interested in attending.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89461145366?pwd=S3ExNTVjdGVGdXlGVlNQc2k3eldudz09>

Thursday 19 March - Open the Book at Coed y Lan Primary School

Sunday 22 March – 6.00pm - Elders' Meeting on Zoom

Community and Other Events

Saturday 7 March – 10am – 12.30pm - Tonteg Community Spring Market (see poster in hall).

Saturday 7 March – 10am-2pm – International Women's Day 2026 – "Give to Gain" hosted by Cllr Jayne Brencher & Cllr Cathy Lises at Pontypridd Museum. Hot drinks and biscuits at 11am and buffet lunch at 12.15pm. There will be sessions with Clara Thomas, the Pontypridd Philanthropist with Huw Thomas Davies, Giving and Gaining Soroptomists and PONT, and Women's Health with Dr Nashwa Bryant. **This event is free to attend but booking is essential on 01443 490740.** Please give details of any specific dietary requirements.

Tuesday 17 March 10am – 12.45pm - Christian Aid Event 'The Gathering' at Stanwell Road Baptist Church, Penarth. Register online: [The Gathering \(Cymru/Wales\) 2026 | Christian Aid](#) (see poster in hall)

Wednesday 18 February until Thursday 19 March 2026 - Ramadan at the USW, Chaplaincy. Michelle Romaniw, Head of Chaplaincy Services any church members would be pleased to hear from you if you would like to volunteer to help serve and tidy up the break-fast meal. There are between 30-80 students every evening from about 5:30pm until 8pm – seven days a week during Ramadan. You can volunteer just once or as many times as you would like. If you are interested or would like any further details please contact Michelle on 01443 654060 or e mail michelle.romaniw@southwales.ac.uk

Looking further ahead to Holy week:

Services will be held on:

Maundy Thursday (2 April) at 6:30pm - we will continue our tradition of serving bread and soup. The service will be led by Iestyn Henson.

Good Friday (3 April) at 10:30am - our service will be led by Revd Ray Vincent.

Easter Day:

Our **Easter Sunday (5 April) Service starts at the usual time of 10:45am** will be led by our minister and will include Holy Communion. New members will be welcomed at this service and following the service all are welcome to stay for a cuppa and a hot cross bun.

Community Events



The Park Ramblers meet at **10.15am every Monday** outside B&M for a walk around our beautiful park followed by coffee at The Gatto Lounge. If any arrangements change, walkers will be notified by email of any changes. All are welcome to join at their own pace or just join for coffee around 11am. If the weather is very bad they may just go straight for coffee!!



Birthdays in March:

1st March - Pam Mahoney
3rd March - Stephen Webber
8th March - Gwyneth James
8th March - Marilyn Leach
10th March - Ugo Agunwa
11th March - Pat Cooke
14th March - Tomos Henson
14th March - Margaret Wicks
26th March - Kath Couchman
28th March - Dorothy Davies
31st March - Sue Skym

Easter cards, both in English and Welsh, **will be available from 8 March**. Personalised cards are now £3.00. Please give Colleen plenty of notice if you would like her to make any personalised cards.

Thank you & Good News

- A very big thank you to Marcia for organising the annual guild dinner. Marcia presented each member with an individual memo outlining what meal has been ordered, the balance to pay and all in different colour inks. With that system it is impossible to forget!
- I have had a meet up with my son Christopher last Monday. It was very emotional as you can imagine but apart from that it went very well. Next meet up in the next few weeks - *Jayne Bright*
- **Greetings to all my friends in Pontypridd!** I hope this finds you well and wonderful.

As you've all been such an important part of my journey of ministry, I wanted you to hear that I've accepted a new church role.

"Head of Ministries: Learning and Development" for the United Reformed Church. Sounds a little Harry Potter, doesn't it? And a little grown-up!!! But it also feels like a Spirit-led unifying of my time in teaching, PhD work, and experience of different ministries.

So, there we go! I'll be in my current role until May and will find it hard to say goodbye but new adventures loom and I think I'll still keep a hand in fostering so I'll still get my fix of troubled teenagers!

Please do pray for me...and for the United Reformed Church!!!...and receive my thanks for your continued encouragement along the way.

And as the new role will see me travelling to different Synods, hopefully see y'all soon. (Maybe to offer some pastoral counselling for the rugby fans...!)

Much love,

Phil

April Newsletter

The April edition of the Newsletter will be sent on Saturday 28 March. On that evening not only will we be a quarter of the way through 2026, but we will also be putting our clocks forward an hour marking the start of British Summer Time!!!

Please send any Church News, Pastoral news or articles which you would like to be included in that edition directly to me either by email to news.sdudc@gmail.com or by phone. My phone number is in the church directory. Any personal news should only be sent by (or at least with the permission of) the person who has news to share, especially if any personal details are included. Please ensure this reaches me at the latest by **Monday 23 March**.

Best Wishes

Alison

Thought for March



“Reflect upon your present blessings – of which every man has many – not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some.” – Charles Dickens.