

NEWSLINK

APRIL - MAY, 2024

CANTON UNITING CHURCH



The Road to Emmaus, Robert Zund (1827-1909)666y

Canton Uniting Church Deacons in October 2023

Alison Walker (Chair)	Chair@cantonuniting.org.uk
Audrey Takle	Bookings@cantonuniting.org.uk
Barbara Morgans (Minutes Secretary)	
Eva Elliott	Garden@cantonuniting.org.uk
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Megan Atherton	
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Sian Jones	
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Dear Friends,
2024

April

Happy Easter! I (Martha) remember our first Easter in the UK. I walked into the church and a lady immediately said, 'Christ is Risen!' I think I said, 'Yes, he is.' She said, 'No, no! You are supposed to say, "Christ is Risen indeed!" Let's try it again.' We did and I did it 'properly.'

There is much joy in marking Easter and reflecting on the power of the resurrection, of God overcoming Jesus' crucifixion by bringing Jesus back to life. When we experience Good Friday, we don't have to linger there long, because we know Easter is coming, with its own hope and good news.

However, on that first British Easter I was uncomfortable. Not just because I didn't understand the culture! I was also uncomfortable because despite the hope of resurrection, we live in a broken world. The joy of resurrection isn't always where we find ourselves.

Anne Lamott writes, 'We're Easter people, living in a Good Friday world.' I feel this most acutely this year--following the attack on 7 October, the deaths of a variety of friends, the political climate worldwide, and the climate crisis. Our world is definitely a Good Friday world--a place where sin and self-interest seem to have overtaken other values.

What does Easter look like in a Good Friday world? Maybe the texts about Good Friday give us a clue. Before his death in the Gospel of John, Jesus commended his mother to the care of the beloved disciple. (John 19.25-27) In all the Gospels, women who followed Jesus through his ministry remain nearby to watch what happened to him. Perhaps, then, witness and connection are part of our calling as Easter people.

In a Good Friday world, perhaps our calling is to witness injustice, to not turn away or hide from it. Maybe, like Mary, after her encounter with Jesus in the garden, we can then tell people about the injustice in order to create change. In addition to witnessing Jesus' death, the women were together. Connection is part of being Easter people. To address injustice not only do we need to see it, we need to connect to give power to our voices for justice and change and energy to do what is needed. It is in connection we find the energy and the vision to carry on--even when the powers of Good Friday seem overwhelming. It is together that God's love and energy carry us forward in faith, hope and love.

We are Easter people. We are not Good Friday people--we simply live in this broken world. As Easter people, love and hope are the foundations of our living. When we say, 'Christ is Risen,' may God's actions in Jesus, through the resurrection, in his teaching and in the ways he connected with people, give us courage to be Easter people. As Easter people, we don't just proclaim 'He is Risen,' we address the Good Friday world--sitting with those in pain, feeding the hungry, addressing injustice and living the resurrection.

Christ is Risen Indeed! Happy Easter.

Yours, Martha and David

Open To All

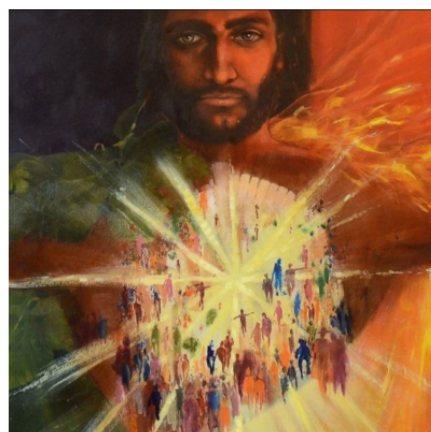
Art Exhibition @ City URC, Cardiff

7th April to 4th May 2024 (12-4 Mon-Fri, 10-4 Sat)

Come and see how God's love for each of us - and *all* of us - is at the centre of a painting exhibition which **City United Reformed Church** is hosting throughout April and early May.

Fine artist and theologian Elizabeth Gray King will be showing 13 intriguing and affirming canvases which explore the equality and inclusivity of God's love.

For love of resurrection, Revd. Elizabeth, whose insights arise from being both an artist and an ordained minister, is currently working alongside the **Open Table Network** [OTN], a national charity which works to urge and facilitate a wider, safer, authentic inclusion for LGBT+ people across all UK churches.



Ac
Go

Retirement

I RETIRED fifteen years ago. The trauma still haunts me. One day I was doing everything engaging with or responding to others, planning together with the elders, working with the church staff, meetings after meetings, the intimacies of calling and the silent togetherness at the bedside of the dying. The next day I was alone, watching day-time television shows about second-hand furniture bargains and house auctions, taking three naps a day and sinking into depression. A couple friends came to the rescue, getting me involved in projects that tickled my supply of endorphins. Has anyone else had a similar experience? I've lost three close friends who died almost immediately after retirement. It's traumatic.

We are made for life together. When I was leaving the church I served in Birmingham, I asked my office secretary what she thought my message to the congregation had been over the past nine years. Without hesitation, she said, "The body of Christ!" I suppose that is old fashioned these days. I grew up on Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Gustavo Gutiérrez and a host of other theologians of my parents' generation who, like those who founded the United Nations, said 'Ein Mensch ist kein Mensch,' a human being alone is no human being at all. That doesn't fit very well in a world where "My Way" is the most popular funeral music, where a world tired of engagement wants to ship asylum seekers to Rwanda, a world where some salesman can run for president on the isolationist platform of America first. A new international order is emerging populated by autocrats. I had always understood this as the message of Baal.

One would think that globalisation, in large part brought to us by the invention of giant container ships, should have brought us all together. The Washington Post says the enormous ship that snapped the Baltimore harbour bridge was built by a Korean firm, its crew was from India, it was owned by a Singaporean company and it was carrying its containers for of a Danish shipping giant. And the ship was *en route* to Sri Lanka. The Post says the ultra-giant container ship industry as a whole is run by an “oligopoly” with a lack of competition. They are swallowing unimaginably huge profits simply because they can. And the accident caused by a power cut may have been due to the cost-cutting “dirty fuel” they use when these bloated ships come into port. Apparently, this cheap dirty fuel clogged with harbour muck is a global problem. Greed is a problem. The whole larger story is the symbol of our age. Globalisation has simply led to greater isolation.

I am depressed again. I see the ultra-maga-super-XXX size ships and their profit margins increasing. The ship that hit the bridge in Baltimore was twice the size of the one that got stuck three years ago in the Suez. As the entrepreneur celebrities of our culture get rich, the rest of us are hit by what they are calling greed-flation. By contrast, our churches are shrinking. Is it because our life together message is out of fashion?

Or it may be that we are preaching a me-and-Jesus emotional feel-good high with zippy songs to match that just cannot compete with an advertising industry that does it better. I once reflected on this when I was visiting an elderly lady. While she was in the kitchen making a cup of tea, I counted 37 paperback Catherine Cookson novels on her bookshelf. And several more by similar authors. I realised that my sermon only accounts for 10 or 20 minutes of her week, but the world of romance with a prince charming was the gospel she was getting all week, plus the 24/7 heavy sell from the equally romantic marketing industry. My ministry by comparison, particularly now as I reflect on it, was like spitting into a 100 mph wind. I'm depressed again. I should have worked in the shipping business.

Tom Arthur

A note from Andrew:

We've hosted a number of concerts in the sanctuary starting about a year ago. Those on Sunday afternoons (starting at 3pm) are specifically intended to raise money for the CUC rebuilding fund. We have had some very well known artists – from Canada and Germany as well as the UK. The flute player last Sunday (Catherine Handley) was played on Radio 3 this last week. So it's high calibre stuff!

And each concert has raised near to £350 so I guess we are already past the first thousand (only another 99 to go). There are three more concerts before the summer break: May 26th piano duets, June 16th (baroque trio) and July 7th (Catherine Milledge, solo piano recital).

Now that the weather is improving, do please consider coming along for an excellent cause and have a good time as well. Of the 30 – 40 members of the general public only a handful come from our fellowship. It's an opportunity to welcome others to the church. Further details are on the website (under CONCERTS). Be there or be Square!

Canton Uniting Church Services Rotas: APRIL - MAY, 2024

If you cannot do duties, please find someone to replace you. Thank you.

Sunday 7th April, 2024

Lectionary Readings: Acts 4.32-35; Psalm 133; 1 John 1.1-2.2; John 20.19-31

Worship Leader: Rev Dr Tom Arthur

Deacon/Steward: Richard

Readers: Sian and Abi

Refreshments: Rob

Sunday 14th April, 2024

Lectionary readings: Acts 3.12-19; Psalm 4; 1 John 3.1-7; Luke 24.36b-48

Worship Leader: Rev Dr Tom Arthur

Deacon/Steward: Fiona

Readers: Nikki and Jan

Refreshments: Sian and Josh

Sunday 21st April, 2024

Lectionary readings: Acts 4.5-12; Psalm 23; 1 John 3.16-24; John 10.11-18

Worship Leader: Rev Martha Mc Innes or Rev David Dean

Deacon/Steward: Alan

Readers: Marieke and Taiwo

Refreshments: Megan

Preparation of communion: Marieke

Serving at Communion table: Ceri and Audrey

Sunday 28th April, 2024

Lectionary readings: Acts 8.26-40; Psalm 22.25-31; 1 John 4.7-21; John 15.1-8

Worship Leader: Rev Craig Gardiner

Deacon/Steward: Eva

Readers: Steve and Alison

Refreshments: The Munniks

Sunday 5th May, 2024

Lectionary readings: Acts 10.44-48; Psalm 98; 1 John 5.1-6; John 15.9-17

Worship Leader: Mrs Katie Munnik

Deacon/Steward: Steve

Readers: Ken and Richard

Refreshments: Abigail

Sunday 12th May, 2024

Lectionary readings: Acts 1.15-17,21-26; Psalm 1; 1 John 5.9-13; John 17.6-19

Worship Leader: Rev Gareth Dyer

Deacon/Steward: Rob

Readers: Mike and Megan

Refreshments: Hiroko

Sunday 19th May, 2024

Lectionary readings: Acts 2.1-21; Psalm 104.24-34,35b; Ezekiel 37.1-14; John 15.26-27; 16.4b-15

Worship Leader: Rev Martha McInnes or Rev David Dean

Deacon/Steward: Jan R

Readers: Alan and Hugh

Refreshments: Hugh and Bence

Preparation of Communion: Alison

Serving at Communion table: Megan and Eva

Sunday 26th May, 2024

Lectionary readings: Isaiah 6.1-8; Psalm 29; Romans 8.12-17; John 3.1-17

Worship Leader: Rev Dr Tom Arthur

Deacon/Steward: Megan

Readers: Ceri and Ken

Refreshments: Ann

Sunday 2nd June, 2024

Lectionary readings: 1 Samuel 3.1-10, (11-20); Psalm 139.1-6,13-18; 2 Corinthians 4.5-12; Mark 2.23 - 3.6

Worship Leader: TBA

Deacon/Steward: Richard

Readers: Fiona and Eva

Refreshments: Marieke and Alison

CANTON UNITING CHURCH was established in 1995 when New Trinity United Reformed Church joined with Llandaff Road Baptist Church and in 2013 joined with Grand Avenue United Reformed Church Ely which in 2005 had united with Saintwell URC. We are committed to ecumenism through our links with Cytûn, the Covenanted Churches and Churches Together in Canton. Our previous minister was the Chair of the Committee of the Covenanted Baptists which, with the Church in Wales, the Presbyterian, Methodist and United Reformed Churches seeks to bring about the goal of uniting together.

CONTACTS

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Website: www.cantonuniting.org.uk

USUAL WEEKLY DIARY & MONTHLY EVENTS -

The Wednesday evening prayers on Zoom have finished.

CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

AND FINALLY ... Please hand in material for the next Newslink to Hugh Morgans by the end of the Morning service on **Sunday, the 19th of May, 2024.**