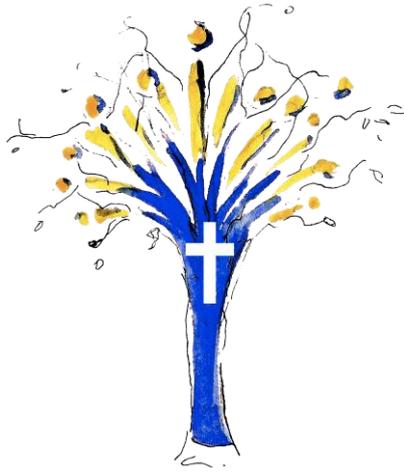


# Off the Record



From **MAGOR  
BAPTIST CHURCH**

*Growing and sharing  
in God's love*



**EASTER 2024**

## A Message from our Minister – Mark Thomas

*Easter : I'd be lost without it!*

Easter - not as glitzy as Christmas, not as lovable as Mother's Day, not as warm as the Summer holidays. So, what's it got going for it?



Well, **I'd be lost without it**. Not in the sense that I need something to focus on and celebrate in April (or March in the case of this year). If it was about that I could look to family birthdays or the coming of Spring to lift my spirits and give me reasons to be joyful, and those things do that. No, it's more than that.

**I'd be lost without it** because of the story that it tells and the events that it retells, about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

It's the time of year when many millions of other people who have given their allegiance to Jesus and claim the description '*Christian*', remember and celebrate the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. And yet, it's more than that.

It is easy enough to read about, hear about, and remember what happened to Jesus way back then, way over there. But in some ways that is like memorialising and celebrating other great events in the past. We need to remember them, but at the end of the day they don't really change one's own life or future all that much. Life goes on, you go back to work, you go home from seeing the relatives, and '*plus ca change, plus la meme chose*'.

**I'd be lost without it** because of the difference that the events in the life of Jesus make here and now. Many of us like to think that our lives make a difference (a good difference) to others. We may even hope that some of that difference will continue beyond our own lives. Indeed, we long for there to be some sort of legacy following the death of our loved ones - that the difference they made will be felt beyond their lives and that we will never forget them.

And because we share that same feeling, that thought process, it's not hard to appreciate that the events of Jesus' life also have an impact beyond the 1st century. Indeed, Christians across the world will be celebrating this Easter the difference that Jesus makes to us now. For we know that his story is our destiny. His resurrection is a harbinger of ours, and a

confirmation that such things really will happen. Jesus' own death and resurrection were regarded as the first fruits of a bumper harvest crop. Indeed, his resurrection is a confirmation that such things really will happen. And that is why **I'd be lost without it**, for my deepest longings revolve around their being a point to life, a purpose in life, a meaning to life, and a hope in life. Jesus' life, death and resurrection give us those very things.

There are of course many things about the resurrection stories recorded in the Bible that I love, not the least of which is, they are not really descriptions of the actual event itself. We have no description of how it happened, no blow-by-blow account of the steps in the process. Instead, what we have are stories of distraught disciples finding an empty tomb and fearing the worst. And yet subsequently they discover their hopes met, their longings fulfilled. That is also the testimony of those who now follow Jesus,

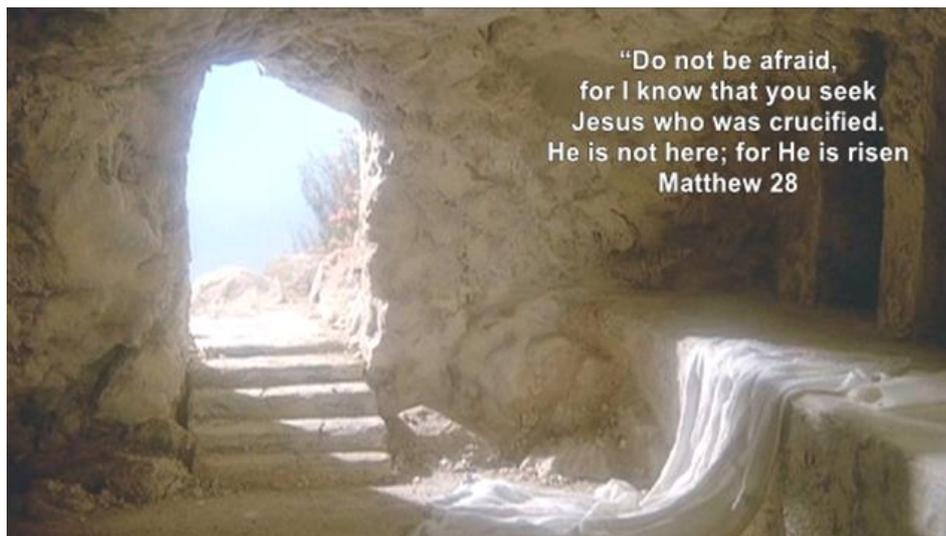
*subsequently they discover their hopes met, their longings fulfilled.*

*That is also the testimony of those who now follow Jesus*

who regard themselves as disciples of Jesus, who acknowledge him to be their Lord and Saviour.

Easter means a lot of different things to different people, ranging from Easter egg hunts with the little ones to a few days off work for time in the garden, with the family, or a chance to 'get away'. Easter, however, at its most fundamental level is not about us. It's about Jesus and the once and future event of resurrection. That is why **I'd be lost without it**.

*His resurrection is a harbinger of ours, and a confirmation that such things really will happen.*



## **EASTER and other dates**

**Maundy Thursday** 28<sup>th</sup> March at 7.00 pm. Joint service at St Mary's

### **Good Friday**

29<sup>th</sup> March at 10.00 am. Joint meditation at the chapel

### **Easter Sunday**

31<sup>st</sup> March at 6.30 am (BST) Sunrise service at Blackrock

11.00 am Easter Family service



## **Baptismal Service -**

**Sunday 7th April at 11am – 3 candidates**

## **May Day Fayre - Monday 6th May**

Fancy a cuppa or a special cake – try the Tearooms for a nice sit down or check out the bric-a-bac stall. All proceeds go to charity.

**Church Anniversary - Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> July at 11am with  
Baptist Union President - Revd Dr Steve Finamore**



## **CHURCH NEWS from Kathy Allen**

We are very pleased to welcome Helen Ellwood to serve as a deacon for our fellowship for the first time, and very pleased to welcome Bev Davies to serve for her second term. We can confirm that John Loebel will serve for another year as church treasurer, and we appreciate his years of service, and that Kathy Allen will serve as church secretary.

Thank you also to Dave Matthews who is now the church member for liaison regarding Safeguarding, part of our Safeguarding team. We thank Chris Seabridge for her work as our church meeting minute secretary, and we welcome Sian Elliott who is stepping in. Thank you Sian!

We acknowledge with thanks everyone who continues to work so hard within this fellowship, in so many different ways, both seen and unseen.

We look forward to our April church meeting Monday April 15th, which will focus on mission and outreach.

### **New Business Waste Regulations from April 2024**

All waste has now to be sorted – this needs to be done at point of use (not after it is in black bags) eg Mothers & Toddlers/Slimming World/Coffee Morning/Knit & Natter/etc.

### **Proposals**

Paper & card in red reusable bag – kept outside side door

Plastic & cans in purple reusable bag - kept outside side door

All glass items to be taken home for disposal

All food waste to be put in kitchen caddy and taken home after Coffee Morning.

Any remaining non-recyclable waste to go in black bags and put in (smaller) green wheelie bin – fortnightly collection.



## Fellowship News from Val Jones



Well, it certainly has been a wet year so far, but the flowers in the chapel wall have bloomed all winter.

Wallflowers, coloured primroses and pansies have been out since October and they have now been joined by crocus, daffodils, tulips and forget-me-nots. These were planted in memory of Eileen Blackaby who tended to the wall, together with son John, for many years. We thank God for the beauty of nature.

If you were passing the chapel on Saturday you would have been given an Easter Egg and an invitation to our services over the Easter. Please come along and join us for a service of meditation on Good Friday at 10am

and an early morning sunrise service on Easter Sunday at 6.30am at Black Rock and an Easter Day Family Service at 11am. Last year we were over 40 people gathered together to see the sun rising over the water and the Severn Bridge and able to celebrate Jesus's resurrection. This is a wonderful service. God gave his only son to save us from our sins and I can't think of anything more worth celebrating.

On 7<sup>th</sup> April we will be celebrating again with a Baptismal service at 11am. Please come along and share with us and the three ladies being baptised. It will be a wonderful service of witness to God's love for each one of us.

In January we celebrated the life of Mostyn Bellamore who had played so many parts in the various dramatic productions at the church through the years. We remember Gill, Nathan, Charlotte and Luke and their families with our love and prayers.

It was with sadness that we heard of the passing of Marlene Hall on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February. Marlene together with her late husband Stewart were members at Ebenezer for over 50 years. Marlene was also a member of the U3A walking group and could always be relied on to attend any charitable function to give her support. We send the love and prayers of the fellowship to daughter Sandra, son Justin wife Mandy and their now grown up children Annie and Evan and their partners. The celebration service for

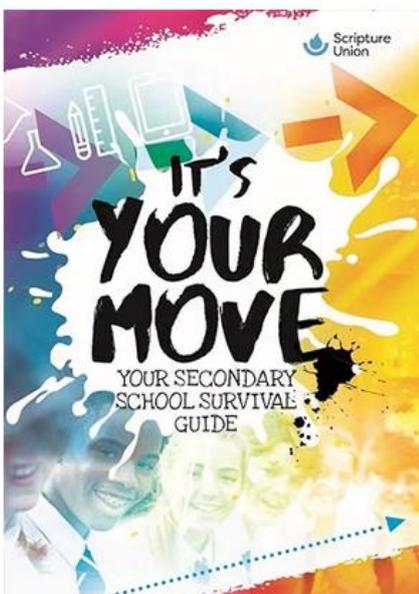
the life of Marlene will be held at Ebenezer on 10<sup>th</sup> April at 11.45am followed by cremation.

It was also with sadness that we heard of the passing of David Dyer. David had been a member at Ebenezer for many years and also volunteered at the Magor Marsh. We extend our sympathy and love to his wife Ann and their daughters. The celebration service for the life of David is on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March at 3pm followed by cremation and tea/coffee at the chapel afterwards.

If you live locally and haven't joined a church please come along and experience God's love as we worship him together. You will be given a very warm welcome and have a chance to have a chat to people over a cup of tea/coffee and meet our new minister Mark who will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

## **Working in our local schools – this past term**

I've had the privilege of being able to represent Magor Baptist at three primary schools – Magor, Undy and ARW Portskewett. As we worked towards Easter we have looked at Jesus' journey to the cross. We've acted out the stories using "Camels"(!!) "Cloaks", Donkeys as well as Voltmeters!! The aim each time is to point the children to Jesus. I tell them the stories come from the Bible which is the best book ever! I am so pleased that the children have responded to me personally telling me they like hearing about Jesus!!



Over the next weeks I'll be working with over a hundred children from year six - helping them prepare for secondary school. I will use a Scripture Union book called "*It's your move*" and a copy will be given to each child. Thank you to you all at MBC for making this possible.

Please pray for the children, there are about seven hundred that attend the assemblies on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Please pray for me as I share the love of Jesus with the children and teachers. Please pray that the seed sown in their hearts will bear fruit.

**Happy Easter with love in the Lord**

**Jeremy Lock**

## A Walk down Memory Lane - from the Archives

Anyone you recognise? (Marlene Hall is in the centre)



Junior Sunday School Champions? (Mostyn Bellamore with David Hammond)



## Passing all understanding

from Hazel Lucas

Easter is coming, it's nearly here. Valentine's Day was not long ago, and I thought then, we waffle on so readily about love as absolutely vital for the world and for our happiness, but we rarely stop to think that love has many meanings. Some mean almost nothing, such as '*I love chocolate Easter eggs*', but the love of God is so profound that we can't get our heads round it. How could God love the worst offenders we can think of, unconditionally, to the extent that Jesus went to the Cross for them (us, even)? In between are other sorts of love, such as parental love for children, easier to understand, often involving self-sacrifice, but sometimes able to be corrupted in horrible ways so that they exploit and harm the recipients rather than helping them grow into better and more complete human beings.

Now it's nearly Easter, a time to celebrate peace. Peace, also, has layers of meaning. Paul tells us in Romans 5:1 that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We don't have to fear facing God on Judgement Day, or at the end of our lives, whichever comes first. If we have repented and asked for forgiveness, Jesus has forgiven us. We are now the Father's beloved children, Jesus's brothers and sisters. God is not going to add up what we've done right and wrong and see if the scales tip in our favour. We know that would never happen; our failings would always vastly outweigh our successes. But thanks to the Cross, Jesus's perfect life is counted as ours, we are reconciled to God. Wow!

This leads on to another layer of peace – peace with ourselves. Do we truly believe that we were made the way we are because that is how God wanted us to be, and we don't have to pretend or try to ape someone else? I still find it very hard to put some of my past misdeeds behind me, but God has done just that, so I have to learn to take his word for it. But then there's the rest of the world! How many times do we pray for peace in Ukraine or Gaza, but are perhaps incapable of taking the simple step of showing love to someone in the Church whom we don't get on with? The apostle John said, in 1 John 2:19-20, '*Whoever loves his brother (or fellow Christian) abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes*'. Recently my daily Bible reading included the following comment. 'Peace, here, does not mean tranquillity, but the daily sacrificial work of reconciliation and unity that the church is to embody. It's time to extend apologies and break down barriers.....' Perhaps that's what taking up our cross truly means. The Christian life is free, and it's wonderful, but it's not for the faint-hearted, as Simon Peter and his friends were to discover all too soon, that first Easter.

# 2023 Report from Peter Kasozi in Uganda

## Rock Ministries - Kitetikka Church.

The year opened with a fast and a belief that it was going to be a year of a double blessing. God has been so good to us that in many respects this has been the case. He also gave us the grace to get over what would have been the inevitable challenges. We saw numerous conversions and 43 baptisms. The church choir involves themselves in seasonal and weekly ministry. They are now practising for Christmas.



Pastor Rose Kasozi has announced next year's programme beginning with a Daniel's fast. Join us if you can.

**The school project** is a far reaching arm of ministry to children, parents, guardians' workers and the whole community. The children are with us from 7:00am to 5:00pm if they are day students. Those in the dormitories are with us all the time. This is plenty of time for one who is called, anointed and available to minister to so many souls. We have seen so many changes in so many lives, mainly as the finished work of the word that dwells in our midst. Some of them come on the school van.



**Scripture Union big day** is always at the centre of all planning. It took place on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2023. Over 2,000 were in attendance. There was reading of scriptures, music and dance. Lunch was availed for everyone and once again many thanks to all the generous people who provided the food. We were also able to use part of our farm harvests to contribute towards feeding.

There have been times of shortage of food supply to the school this year and we thank God for the generosity of friends who helped to provide. We praise God for the farming skills and good soil.



**Kitetikka Primary School** was blessed to have some renovations and painting. We have turned a room into a day care room. Here a few people can leave children temporarily to allow them to do some other things. It is proving to be a worthwhile idea which is well utilized. Many children have suffered after being left in the hands of ill hearted money makers. Our day care facility is a God given remedy.



**Kitetikka High School - Kibanga** has also changed name to Busiika Town Secondary School. This is to reflect the name of the local area of Busiika Town Council.

**Kyambogo Nursery School** (Rainbow) was on the verge of closure for the reason of taxes and other costs. We have been encouraged by friends to trust God for the continuity. For that reason, a renewal of the registration is in progress. All the 98 children have now been assured that school will continue.



**The Bore hole** was repaired to resume an essential supply of water for more than two thousand people.



**Blessings for the new year**

**Peter and Rose.**

Ed - We are looking forward to Peter & Rose's visit to Magor on 19<sup>th</sup> May.

## Dear Friends,

This is a short but heartfelt note to say thank you for your kind gift of an Eden voucher and for all the ways in which you have welcomed, supported and included Heather, Thomas and myself in the life of Magor Baptist Church over the past four and a half years. It seems that such a lot has happened in this time, not least the Covid pandemic which saw the church physically closed, but virtually open over many months.



As a United Reformed Church minister serving in a role that didn't involve being in pastoral charge, and moving to Newport in September 2019, finding a church where we could be part of the congregation without the responsibilities of leadership was always going to be a challenge. But Magor proved to be that place where we could just 'be'.

Being someone who has always enjoyed techy things it's been a delight to be part of the AV team – to sit at the back rather than the front and learn how to 'drive' the sound-desk, PowerPoint, Zoom and camera – you really did need to be an octopus to do this unaided! But it's also been a privilege to have been asked to lead the occasional service, and to share in the life of the church in this way too. Some of you took part in Stepwise as we emerged from the pandemic and it was good to support you in that, whilst also learning from your experiences. I was glad to have been around during your own time of transition and change 'between ministers' and it's been a pleasure to work alongside both Harry and Mark.

And it's been great to be part of the Men's Drop In, which has evolved even over the past four years, although the bacon and sausage rolls have remained a constant! I hope to be able to continue to 'drop-in' if I'm free and look forward to the Christmas Curry Night - a fixture in the calendar!

My new role within the United Reformed Church, as Moderator of the Wales Synod means that I will have to step back from my involvement at Magor, although we hope not to be complete strangers. You will remain in our prayers as you reach out with the love of Jesus to the community of Magor and Undy. God is clearly at work amongst you. Please pray for us too as I begin my new ministry within the URC Wales Synod and the wider challenges and responsibilities that this will bring.

So, thank you once again for your welcome, your love – and just for being the people that God has called you to be!

*May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.*

1 Thessalonians 5: 23 – 24

With every blessing,

**David, Heather and Thomas Salsbury**

Note – David's induction to his new role will take place on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April in Cardiff.

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## Half of young people in East Africa are unemployed – can agriculture offer a solution?

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By Winnifred Mailu, Head of Thematic Expertise at **Ripple Effect** (Send a Cow)

Huge opportunities exist for young people in the business side of agriculture that can meet their aspirations. Our job is to show them it's possible.

### **A young continent**

70% of the population in sub-Saharan Africa is under 30 years old, which presents great opportunities for growth and innovation. It also presents great risks if we fail to ensure they have good life chances. Young people have a right not only to good health, nutrition and education, but opportunities for independence and decent work.

More than half the young people in East Africa aged 15-35 are unemployed. The rate is even higher amongst young women in rural areas (up to 66%).

*Alfred's family (middle) is a child-headed household. He is the head of the family. He lost his mother in 2019 who was taking care of him and his niece & nephew, Lillian and Billy (left and right). They are part of the Empowering Coffee Growing Communities project, Rwanda.*



## **Changing attitudes to agriculture**

Agriculture is one of the biggest employers in East Africa. However, when I was at school in Kenya, the punishment for bad behaviour in class was to “go and do farm work”. You would be given the worst jobs of cleaning out the cow or goat pens. Similar experiences mean that for many young East Africans farm work has little appeal.

As most young people don't own land, farming doesn't feel like an investment in their futures. However, there are huge opportunities for young people to make their mark in agriculture, using new skills to offer much needed inputs or services that are essential to a thriving economy.

## **Access to education and useful skills training**

The African Union defines ‘youth’ as extending from age 15 up to 35. There are important reasons why this higher age limit is relevant.

A young person in their early 30s may still be in education in East Africa – in university, or vocational training - and living with their parents. Young people's access to education, which is such an important part of their transition to independent life, may have been significantly disrupted by their families' inability to pay for the cost of schooling, as well as by family responsibilities, disease, or conflict.

As a result, in 2020, more than a third of young East Africans (37%) had no education, or incomplete primary education. Of the 14% who completed upper secondary or tertiary education, many are still completely unprepared for the world of work. Most countries in our region inherited education systems which are strongly biased towards theoretical curriculums. There is very little emphasis on practical application, or development of skills that prepare them for later life.

In fact, figures show that unemployment tends to be higher amongst well-educated young people. In Rwanda, 62% of young people with university degrees were unemployed, compared with 51% who had only primary education. Lillian (18) is studying in Primary 6 and Billy (21) is studying in high school senior 2.

## **Ripple Effect's youth-focused projects have delivered significant results for young people**

We set up and support apprenticeship placements in our youth-focused programmes, offering practical training in the work that young people want to get into, such as engineering and repairs, tailoring, and agri-businesses.

We are also currently working with Ibanda University in Uganda to influence curriculum development and job opportunities for 50,000 young people in the dairy sector. A similar project will include young people in fruit value chains in the Kenyan coastal region.

### **Why is it so important that we do this work?**

The risks if we fail to engage with our growing population of young people are very real. And they go deeper than the generalised dangers of a population drift from rural areas to towns and cities.

We are seeing young people being actively trafficked from rural areas to cities, and from one country to a neighbouring country, in the hopes of better work opportunities. Investing in rural economies is one way in which we can avoid large-scale unemployment and exploitation of young people.

We are already receiving funding that acknowledges the value of our work in this area, and we will continue to tailor the design of our programmes and improve our data-gathering and reporting to meet this need. Young people like Lillian deserve an education, a career, and freedom from poverty. We show young people every day that they can choose their own futures.

We are working hard to ensure young people are included and championed in our projects. For example, 7,566 young people in Uganda have been given training on how to make, save and re-invest money into their own small businesses, in the Sustainable Outcomes for Children and Youth project. This includes:

- farming
- artisanal skills
- joining savings groups
- entrepreneurship

In Burundi, **57%** of young people are now earning an income as part of our Youth Enterprise & Agribusiness Stimulation project. The figure has increased from **0%** when the project began.

**Ed - We were able to send £490 to Ripple Effect from communion giving in February.**



See [www.rippleeffect.org](http://www.rippleeffect.org) for more information

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**The new name for Send a Cow**

I find it interesting that many of the issues written about 50 years ago, still have relevance today: talk of a forthcoming election, the price of electricity, and speed of motorists.

### **March 1974 – our Silver Jubilee**

This issue started, '*Here beginneth volume 26!*' In March 1949, the first magazine of seven pages had been published and delivered to all church members.

The pastor's letter referred to the current national talking point – the election. It was held on 28 February and although Labour under Harold Wilson gained 14 seats and the ruling Tories under Edward Heath lost 28 seats, there was no overall majority, resulting in a hung Parliament for the first time since 1929. The Conservatives tried to form a coalition with the Liberals and Ulster Unionists, but failed, so Wilson became Prime Minister with a minority government. He called another election in October (the first time two elections had been held in the same year since 1910), which resulted in a Labour majority. Heath, having lost three of the four elections he contested, was ousted as Conservative leader in February 1975 and replaced with future Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

In the church secretary's notes, she wrote, '*Our country needs the prayers of each one of us – that we may all work for the good of each other and the well being of the country*'.

The issue also contained two obituaries:

George Pritchard, from Undy, was born on 6/8/1896 and died 31/1/1974. After leaving school in 1910 he worked for Great Western Railway at Caerleon, Magor and Severn Tunnel Junction, before being released to enlist in 1917. Serving in the French trenches he was captured and spent time as a German Prisoner of War, before escaping back to Britain. After the war he continued working on the railways as well as farming at West End Farm, Undy. He had been baptized by Rev. HE Blackaby in 1915, and in the 1930s became a deacon and church treasurer; he resigned as treasurer in 1966 but he was still a deacon as, in those days, you were a deacon for life!

Clive Jones was only 41 when he died on 23/2/1974. Baptized at Tavernabach, Tredegar, he transferred to Ebenezer in 1956 when he became head of PE at Rogiet Secondary School, two years before it moved to Caldicot. He was one of the regular church minibus drivers. In 1968 he too became a deacon and later was treasurer to the Extension Fund. The

article also mentioned his daughter Ruth, who had just won an international cap to play hockey for Welsh schoolgirls at Edinburgh.

## **April 1974**

The Easter offering aimed to wipe out the remaining £500 debt on the new minibus which had been bought for £1,400 ten months ago. *'The bus is doing wonderful work conveying people to and from Ebenezer to worship.'*

The Sunday School *'are very concerned for the safety of children going across the main road to the shop near the Wheatsheaf on Sunday mornings. This is a needless risk and unfair burden on the Sunday School teachers who feel responsible for the safety of these children.'*

## **May 1974**

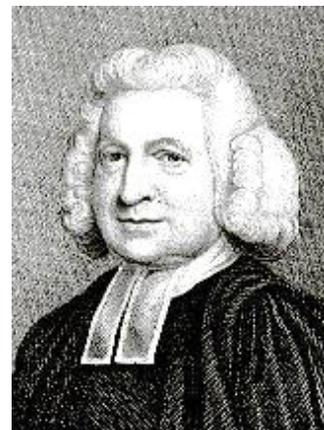
We think electricity prices have gone up a lot but, at the annual Church meeting, it was noted that *'the cost of electricity had risen by 64%. This is considerable when we remember that the cost of electricity is due to rise by 30% soon.'*

The newly-formed choir, conducted by Trevor Saye, *'is in great need of more enthusiastic singers and preferably those who can read music, in order that four parts can be learned fairly quickly to the many hymns we sing of which the tunes are not really known to many of us. I assume they meant more singers, not singers who were more enthusiastic!*

An article for readers who had moved away talked about the changes in Magor: *'the railway station [1964] and Church Farm disappeared long ago, and 30 old people's homes now stand in what was the orchard and paddock at The Lawns. This week the Gwent Council erected the site offices for a new road to by-pass the Wheatsheaf Corner. It will carry the Newport Road from a point near Tythe Farm to rejoin the Undy Road just beyond the Mill. ... Many of us remember seeing plans of this proposed by-pass and surveyors taking measurements in 1935. Forty years on and it looks as if we may be able to use it!'* One of the Sunday School officers who had been in the area for less than ten years asked how many serious accidents there had been on the dangerous Wheatsheaf corner, but the writer could not recall any in over 50 years. But it made him think and he wondered when he'd *'see the first fatality on the new fast bypass. Stark reality when we realize that dangerous twisty roads prevented traffic from going fast and pedestrians could scamper out of the way, but the new clear ways encourage speeding motorists and the snail-like pedestrian just can't scamper fast enough.'* Perhaps 20mph helps us to scamper fast enough!

## Rejoice the Lord is King.

written by Charles Wesley (1707 –1788)



Many of our favourite hymns have tunes that have been written especially for them. Just imagine singing '*All things bright and beautiful*' to any other tune than Royal Oak or '*Abide with me*' to another tune instead of Eventide. Some of the tunes were written sometime after the hymn was written, or it may have been commissioned to accompany a hymn in a new hymn book. The compiler of Songs of Praise, Percy Dearmer asked the then 'modern composers' Ralph Vaughan Williams and Martin Shaw to write some hymn tunes for lyrics to be included in the new modern hymn book published in 1925. In due course this book was used extensively by the BBC, particularly through the schools programmes and the schools weekly service on a Friday morning. Ralph Vaughan Williams had been involved with the editorship of *The English Hymnal* (1906) and for that book he had written the tune Down Ampney for the words of a translated hymn. The blending of words and tune is perfect and no-one today would expect to sing '*Come down O love Divine*' to any other tune.



Famous composers have often composed tunes for a hymn. This maybe so for one of the oldest hymns written '*All Glory, Laud and Honour*'. This hymn is based on the words of Theodulph of Orleans and was written about 820 AD; when written it was 78 lines long, which made it a good processional hymn for Palm Sunday. The tune used now for this hymn, St Theodulph, is the one composed by J.S.Bach (1685 –1750) for his St John's Passion. '*All Glory, Laud, and Honour,*' is one of the chorale interludes in the passion and would have been sung by the whole congregation.

It is not surprising that Charles Wesley asked the then modern and popular composer of the day George Handel to compose some hymn tunes for him. Handel wrote 3 tunes between 1749 - 1752. but it seems that they were not used straight away and then got filed amongst Charles Wesley's papers in the Fitzwilliam Museum library in Cambridge.



They were rediscovered by Wesley's son Samuel in 1826 who had the tunes published as 'The Fitzwilliam Music never before published, three Hymns, the Words by the late Rev. Charles Wesley, set to music by George Frideric Handel.

The text of '*Rejoice the Lord is King*' was published in Charles Wesley's *Hymns for our Lord's Resurrection* (1746). He considered this hymn to be an Easter hymn. Handel's music was first set to this hymn in the *Companion to the Wesleyan Hymnbook* (1847). The tune was then entitled 'Resurrection'. When the tune was published in the *Old Church Psalmody* it was renamed 'Gopsal'. This seems to have been in recognition of Charles Jennens, who arranged the libretto of Handel's *Messiah*. Gopsal Hall was where Jennens lived. In the hymn there are some references to Psalm 97 at the beginning and end of the hymn, and the words from Paul's letter to the Philippians 4:4. '*Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say rejoice*', becomes the refrain for this hymn. In recent years this hymn has been used more as an Ascensiontide hymn than an Easter hymn. Whenever it is sung the words still are true that we adore our King, Lord and Saviour and in that very fact we should rejoice again and again and again.

Rejoice, the Lord is King:  
Your Lord and King adore!  
Rejoice, give thanks and sing,  
And triumph evermore.  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

His kingdom cannot fail,  
He rules o'er earth and heaven;  
The keys of death and hell  
Are to our Jesus given:  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Jesus, the Savior, reigns,  
The God of truth and love;  
When He has purged our stains,  
He took his seat above;  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice

He sits at Gods right hand  
Till all His foes submit,  
And bow at his command  
And fall beneath his feet.  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Rejoice in glorious hope!  
Our Lord and judge shall come  
And take His servants up  
To their eternal home:  
We soon shall hear the Archangels voice  
The trump of God shall sound Rejoice!

**Christine Miles**

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