

Wesley Services – November 2011

	Nov 6th	13th	20th	27th	4th Dec
10-30 am	Rev F Randall	Rev F Randall	Mr J Birch	Rev F Randall (HC)	Mrs N Williams
6-00 pm	Rev F Randall (HC)				Rev F Randall (HC)

Vestry

Nov 6th	Margaret	The Christian missionary may preach the gospel to the poor naked heathen, but the spiritual heathen who populate Europe have as yet heard nothing of Christianity.
Nov 13th	Steve	
20th	Hilary	Carl Jung
27th	Lindsay	To be like Christ is to be a Christian.
Dec 4th	Margaret	William Penn
11th	Annette	
18th	Lindsay	
p.m. 18th	Margaret	Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to a garage makes you an automobile. Billy Sunday

Door

Nov 6th	Marjorie and Paul	The Word of God well understood and religiously obeyed is the shortest route to spiritual perfection. And we must not select a few favorite passages to the exclusion of others. Nothing less than a whole Bible can make a whole Christian.
13th	Jan and Allen	Aiden Wilson Tozer
20th	Connie and Janet	
27th	Mike and Sue	
4th Dec	Marjorie and Paul	We need to stop fighting Christian against Christian. I have no time for anything but trying to love other people. That is a full-time job.
11th	Jan and Allen	Anne Rice
18th	Peter and Sheila	
p.m.	Marjorie and Paul	

Can welcoming stewards please ensure that collection is organised.

The newsletter of Wesley Methodist Church, Carmarthen.
Minister : Rev Felicity Randall (Tel 01267 236004)
Contributions to John Birch by 20th of month please (email john3.17@btinternet.com)

Just a thought

I am sure you cannot fail to have noticed the furore surrounding the anti-capitalist protesters who have been camped outside St Paul's Cathedral in London for the last fortnight. Why the big upset?

There are not that many protesters, (and certainly a good deal fewer at night) and they are protesting about issues of justice that just about all the main-line denominations signed up to eons ago.

However this has been a high profile, headline grabbing affair. First, for the first time since the Second World War St Paul's shut its doors for almost a week citing health and safety concerns, then the prospect of the church taking legal action was mooted to a chorus of disapproval. Next came the resignations of senior clerics, Canon Giles Fraser and then the Dean himself Graeme Knowles.

What a muddle! However I have been heartened by the comments in the last day or two by Canon Pastor Rev Michael Colclough. He was on the TV yesterday morning responding to the criticisms that the chapter (the ruling body of the cathedral) had not acted properly in the matter. The interviewer then picked up on a slogan daubed on a sheet slung high above one of the tents which read 'What would Jesus do?'

Colclough responded that Jesus would speak to all parties involved in the dispute and try to bring reconciliation. Later on yesterday I noticed that the cathedral then dropped the legal proceedings against the protesters and in the hope of beginning a



constructive dialogue with them once again.

Something else that Rev. Colclough said was that, 'Sometimes we make mistakes, we then have the humility to say that, and we set out on another path.'

As observers of this incident there are two ways we could go with this. One is to join in the throng of critics that say, 'The Cathedral staff should know better, they're ministers for goodness sake!' Or we could go another way and remember that those ministers are human and like it or not humans make mistakes. Those same humans have admitted their mistake have said sorry and are taking another path, one that hopefully will lead to reconciliation.

Today we will be thinking about prayer right the way through our service, so whatever our feelings about what is going on in London, I hope that we are holding every party involved (the protesters, the cathedral staff, the London corporation as well as the worshippers and visitors to St Paul's Cathedral) very much in our prayers. Why? Because I have a feeling that Jesus might have done just that.

Felicity

(Felicity's day off is Saturday)

October Coffee Mornings

Here are the figures for October.

October 5 th	£60.33
October 12 th	71.00
October 19 th	92.22
October 28 th	48.04
Total	271.59

This gives an average of £67.90.

However, there were expenses of £16.77 (coffee, biscuits, tea, etc.) which reduces the takings to £254.82 and the average to £63.71. This is an excellent result and gives a welcome boost to the church finances.

Carmarthen Food Bank

If you could afford £21 then consider a gift of 30 fruit trees! Not only will these trees produce a delicious crop of apples, pears and plums, they will also help to hold the topsoil in place, improving the fertility of farmland. This juicy gift of 30 trees will help farmers in Ethiopia to celebrate fruitful harvests for years to come. For more ideas see www.mrdf.org.uk or call 020 7467 5132

MHA, also known as Methodist Homes, is one of the largest charitable care home providers in the UK and has been delivering services in the sector for nearly 70 years. The addition of the 18 new homes will add 1,500 more employees to its existing 7,000 staff.

MHA place a special emphasis on the spiritual, as well as physical well-being of each person for whom they provide care and all homes and housing have a chaplain to provide pastoral support. MHA is at the forefront of quality dementia services, building new services and delivering care and support specially designed for individuals with dementia.

As you know, there is a bin in the foyer for collecting tins and other dry food. This is now almost empty. Please can you help to refill it. Here's a suggestion. When you go shopping and buy a 'BOGOF' (Buy one – get one free) why not donate the free one to the food bank?

With the addition of the 18 Southern

Cross homes MHA will be providing residential, nursing and specialist dementia care to almost 5,000 older people in care homes along with the 10,000 beneficiaries who it supports to live independently.

It said it did not have to raise any finance to take over the homes.

For £16, a breeding ram will enable farmers in Ethiopia to increase the size and quality of their flocks, eventually creating a herd of hardy, disease-resistant super-sheep.

Halloween, All Souls Day and All Saints Day

The first Sunday in November is celebrated in some churches as All Saints Day, and it follows All Souls Day or Halloween. But what do we know of their origins?

The origins of Halloween go back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain (pronounced sow-in) which was a celebration of the end of autumn, a time for stock-taking and preparation for the cold winter months ahead, and the spring that would follow. It was a time often associated with human death in those pre-central heating days. There was also a feeling that at this time of the year the physical and supernatural worlds were at their closest, when the spirits of those who died in the preceding year roamed the earth. To ward off these spirits, bonfires were lit and people danced around in costumes.



If we skip a few centuries, past the Romans and into the Middle Ages, we find that when local people converted to Christianity, the Roman Catholic Church often merged Christian festivals into versions of older religious traditions in order to win converts. This was a process that Popes had been encouraging for many years. So it was that the Church eventually replaced Samhain with All Souls' Day.

All Souls' Day is an opportunity, mainly in Roman Catholics and Anglo-Catholic churches to commemorate the recently departed. All Saints Day is slightly different, where we have an opportunity for believers to remember all saints and martyrs, known and unknown, throughout Christian history, and possibly consider what it is to be a saint'. So where does that leave us as Christians? Can we reclaim anything from the commercial Halloween and its fascination with witches and ghosts?

I think we can confront it, by on the one hand warning that our children should not be dabbling in anything that glorifies ghosts and ghouls and the murkier side of the spiritual world, and yet acknowledging that at Halloween, or All Souls' Day we can celebrate the life of all who we have loved and lost through death, and also celebrate God's eternal protection, provision and purpose for our lives, both here and in the hereafter, where good has triumphed over evil, and over the fear of death itself.

