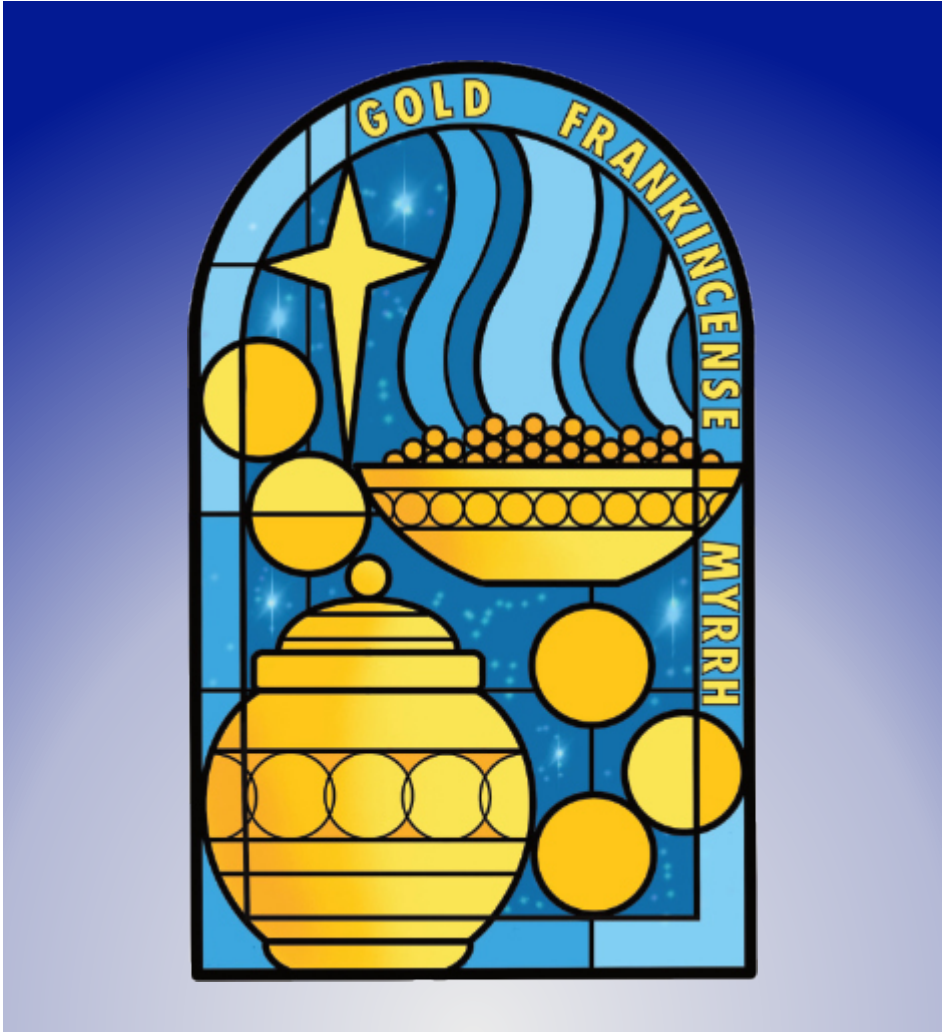


MCHURCHagazine

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



Gower Ministry Area

50p

January 2025

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Dear Friends

2025 is a year of Jubilee in the Roman Catholic Church, a year that takes place every 25 years. It's a special year of forgiveness and reconciliation, in which people are invited to come back into right relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation. This acts as a challenge for all of us:

How can we spend more time talking and listening to God through reading the Bible and prayer?
How can we grow our love for our family and friends?
How can we make more impact at work, by demonstrating an attractive faith to colleagues?

When Joshua led God's people to the banks of the Jordan, ready to cross over into the Promised Land, he said: *'you have never been this way before'* (Joshua 3:4). At the beginning of a New Year, when we don't know what the future holds, how can we grow in our relationship with God?

Keep our focus on God: The people were told to follow the Ark, symbolising God's presence, as they crossed the river. Let's keep our focus on God and His Word throughout this year and keep in step with where He is leading us.

Consecrate ourselves: Joshua said, *'Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you.'* (3:5). God has exciting opportunities ahead for us in this coming year! Let us dedicate our lives afresh to Him, as we let go of known sin and keep our eyes open on seeing God at work in all of our lives.

Will 2025 be a good year for us? *'In the end, it's not the years in your life that count, it's the life in your years.'* Abraham Lincoln



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, Mike Powell, Barbara Roberts.	
Eucharistic Assistants:	Roy Chapman, Alan Pickard, Mike Powell, Catherine Swain.	
Congregational Wardens:	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)
Envelopes/Gift Aid Scheme:	Geraldine Rees	☎ 207916
Organist:	Chris Samuel	
St Martin's	St Martin's Church Fairwood Road, Dunvant, Swansea SA2 7PE	
Eucharistic Assistant:	Susan Dimblebee	
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Weekly Newsletter		
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Church Magazine		
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St Hilary's Church, Killay

Sidespersons

Jan 5th Diane Holohan, Chris Regan
Feb 2nd Jan & Jim Proudfoot

Elements

5th Lay led service
12th Sheila Betts, Roy Chapman
19th Alan Clewett, Spencer Thomas
26th Christine Williams, Pam Davies
Feb 2nd Lay led service

Readers

5th Lay led service
12th Carol Conway
19th Glenda Penzer
26th Gillian Hutchinson
Feb 2nd Lay led service

Eucharist Assistants

5th Lay led service
12th Roy Chapman
19th Mike Powell
26th Cath Swain
Feb 2nd Lay led service

Altar Flowers

5th Jean Gwilym & Sheila Kelly
12th Val Griffiths in memory of Gerald
19th Anne Llewelyn
26th Sylvia Powell
Feb 2nd Denise & David Coffey

Coffee

5th Pam Davies, Gillian Hutchinson
12th Sue Mapp, Sally Bowen

19th Carol Conway, Jan Lewis
26th Jan Proudfoot, Christine Williams
Feb 2nd Angela Reed, Janet Jones

St Martin's Church, Dunvant

Sidespersons

5th Gareth Dimblebee
12th Roger Draisey
19th Ian Dimblebee
26th Gareth Dimblebee

Readers

5th Carol Lewis
12th Margaret Draisey
19th Haulwen Lumsdaine
26th Alun Bessette

Altar Flowers

5th Jan & Barrie Huxtable
12th Ian Dimblebee
19th Jane Riseborough
26th Sue Dimblebee

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The deadline for articles for February 2025 magazine is Friday 24 January

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

Mrs Susan Blackmore, wife of late Reverend Robert Blackmore, sends her love and best wishes to all at St Hilary's for the New Year



A reminder that the flower list for 2025 is at the back of the Church



Music Society



Meeting: Monday 9th December

Guests: A new ukulele group

Our chairperson Babs Roberts welcomed a new Ukulele group with 14 members to our evening, made up of 11 women and 3 men, playing ukulele and drums. The following was their repertoire for the evening:

1. Bill Haley and his comets song 'Rock around the clock'.
2. 'Tulsa time'.
3. 'Move it all over'.
4. Ricky Nelson song 'Hello Mary Lou'.
5. 'Runaround Sue' Dion.
6. 'We love to boogie' by T.Rex.
7. 'Winter wonderland' Bing Crosby featuring the ladies.

8. 'Louis baby' sung by Lauren and joined by the chorus.
9. 'Jambalaya'. Hank Williams.
10. 'Let it rock' with Laura, Maggie and Maddy.
11. 'Shake rattle and roll'. Big Joe Turner.
12. John Denver song 'Take me home country roads'.
13. 'Will you still love me tomorrow' featuring Maggie. Sung with feeling and joined by the other ladies.
14. 'Rocking around the Christmas tree' with the whole band singing.
15. 'Here comes Santa Claus' with the whole band singing.
16. 'That's alright mama' with the whole band singing.
17. Elvis song 'Blue Christmas' with the whole band singing.
18. 'Let it snow'.
19. 'Rock and roll is king' with Laura and Vicky.
20. Jerry Lee Lewis song 'Great balls of fire'.
21. Chuck Berry song 'Jonnie B Goode'.

A varied and very enjoyable foot stamping and clapping evening was enjoyed by all and we joined in with the singing. Angela gave the vote of thanks and invited the group members to join us again. We had a glass of wine with savoury bites and panettoni. Our next meeting will be the meal at the Black Boy.

Phyllis Rott



On Christmas Eve St Hilary's was packed yet again with around 50 grown-ups and over 25 children. Layfetta led a sensory nativity service with light (stars), sound (when the congregation imitated sheep and donkeys) and smell (the distinctive aroma of two donkeys).

The church was converted in to a huge Nativity scene, with most of the children dressing up as kings, shepherds, angels, more than one Mary and a solitary Joseph.

Layfetta narrated the Christmas story interspersed with carols including O Little Town of Bethlehem and Away in a Manger, during which Mary was presented with her real live baby.

As the shepherds and kings arrived on the scene, the crib scene was also constructed in front of the altar.

The service concluded with a rousing rendition of Hark the Herald Angels and a blessing for all to have a Merry Christmas.

The congregation spontaneously applauded showing how much they had enjoyed the live nativity service.



Nigel Fletcher

Persecution of Christians worldwide – new World Watch List coming

On 15th January Open Doors publishes its well-known World Watch List for 2025, naming the countries where it is most dangerous to be a Christian.

More than 365 million Christians worldwide face persecution and discrimination for their faith – that’s a staggering one in seven believers.

The Open Doors website shares the following data from around the world:

North Korea remains at number one as the most dangerous country. It has been at the top 23 times in the past 24 years.

In 2023, 4,998 Christians were killed for their faith. According to Open Doors research, around 90% of these were in Nigeria (just over 4,000), where Christian communities are attacked by armed bandits and Islamic militants. The country with the next highest number of deaths is DRC, with 261.

Militant Islamists are exploiting the chaos in Africa. The sweeping violence against Christians in sub-Saharan Africa is being aided by economic instability, climate change and fractures in governance and security across the region.

But right across the world, as autocratic governments increase their control, Christians are being targeted: in China, Iran, and now Nicaragua, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

An alarming rise in the closure of churches and buildings. Some 15,000 churches or public Christian properties were attacked or closed in 2023 – that’s seven times the number recorded in 2022. Two-thirds of these were in China (around 10,000).

Christians squeezed out of the Middle East and North Africa. The situation in Syria has worsened, and believers face extreme persecution. Ongoing conflict, pressure from the Islamic majority, the influence of extremist groups and a collapsed economy contribute to the vulnerability of Christians.

Meanwhile, Libya has reached third on the World Watch List, due to an increase in violence against Christians. And in Tunisia, pressure on Christians continues to grow as President Kais Saied’s rule drifts into authoritarianism.

More at: <https://www.opendoorsuk.org>

Mothers’ Union

St Hilary’s Mothers’ Union, notice of AGM. Killay Mothers’ Union will re – start on Tuesday 21st January 2025 at 2pm with a Eucharist in St Hilary’s church, led by Revd Layfetta.

This will be followed by the AGM and refreshments in the hall. At the AGM, the accounts for the year to 31st December 2024 will be received and elections made for Branch Leader, Treasurer and Secretary and committee members . As always, all are welcome.

Happy New Year to you all.

Fran Steadman (prospective Branch Leader.)
01792 413163 fransteadman@ntlworld.com

Time to think

By Lester Amann

We all have moments in life when our circumstances change dramatically, and we wonder how things are going to work out.

Perhaps it was like this for Mary. One moment she was planning her marriage to Joseph, when an angel announced she was to give birth to God’s Son. A few months later she had to leave home, while pregnant, and travel to Bethlehem. Following the birth, in a grim environment, some shepherds visited her. They had seen the angels sing, and had heeded their news that the Messiah had been born.

The Gospel record says that Mary pondered (or remembered or treasured) on all this. (Luke 2:19) Quite an

understatement! Mary knew her life would never be the same again. But despite the difficulties, she knew God was with her. God had called her to a task.

As we enter a New Year, how have we seen God at work in our lives so far? Like Mary, we too might need to remind ourselves of God’s special touch, to reflect on what has happened already. Mary was aware that she was ‘favoured’ by God, so whatever was to happen in the future, she knew God was with her, and in control.

God loves us too. We too are special in His sight. Let us step out in faith and obedience to God’s call on our lives this year, and let us be reassured that God is with us in every situation.

Christmas Services in the Ministry Area

I was invited to attend the service on Christmas Day at St. Nicholas' Church in Nicholaston. I hadn't been inside the church before, as it was locked each time when I walked the Gower Pilgrimage Way. I could have contacted someone to open it for me, but was unsure what time I would be there, so didn't think that was fair. Unfortunately I was unable to visit as part of the Cadw Open Doors event in September.

However, I am so glad that I was able to attend the Eucharist there on Christmas Day. The inside of the church is breathtaking, with many of the features being decorated in the Victorian Gothic style. Much of the restoration was paid for by Miss Emily Talbot, daughter of Christopher Rice Mansel Talbot of Penrice and Margam Castle. As the church is dedicated to St. Nicholas, it is fitting that so many of the windows include children. I was particularly taken with the marble used in the floor and the carvings at the ends of the pews in the nave. One of the features which impressed me most was the brass chandeliers which were pulled down for the candles to be lit before being hauled back up using the chains attached to them.

A really uplifting family service led by Rev'd Sue Waite to set the scene for such a special day.

December 29th was the fifth Sunday of the month, so I decided to go to St. Illtyd's Church in Oxwich for Carols and Communion, plus the Baptism of Otto. He was delightful, smiling and nodding to everyone. The church was full and the carols were sung with great enthusiasm. Rev'd Peter Lewis used the carols to tell the Christmas story and the liturgy was woven in to these seamlessly, some of the choruses being used as responses during the intercessions. Following Communion, some of us stayed for refreshments (the chocolate brownies were delicious), general chat and an opportunity to catch up with friends. David and Anne Pope, who created the Gower Pilgrimage Way were in the congregation and while a group of us were chatting after the service, David Stockwell, a resident of Rhossili arrived to stamp his passport, he has completed the walk 10 times. I obviously need to make more effort in 2025, though I might wait until the days are lighter.

I wonder where 2025 will take me – I need to attend a service at St. Andrew's, Penrice, St. Teilo's in Bishopston and St. Cattwg's in Port Eynon then I will have attended services in all twenty churches in our Ministry Area.

Marian Williams

St Martin's Church

Community Candlelight Carol Service at St Martin's Church

With every seat taken for our 6th annual Community Candlelight Carol Service at St Martin's Church. Our Vicar Layfetta Masih welcomed our five readers representing our local Council, the Dunvant club, our local Police, Dunvant RFC, the Headmistress of PEN Y FRO School and our own church member, Carol Lewis.

The stars once again were the pupils from Pen Y Fro School, so enjoyable was their Christmas song with lots of actions, they performed it twice with rapturous applause.

Before Layfetta led us in Christmas Prayers, we sang the Calypso Carol with lots of movement and smiley faces. After our closing prayer and blessing it was time once again to tuck into mince pies and a toast of sherry with soft drinks for the children whilst the adults caught up with old and new friends. *See inside back cover for photo*

St Martin's wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Pray with your shoes

With the rush of Christmas almost over, we tumble into the New Year, sleep for a couple of days, take down the decorations and plod back to work, school or our normal routines. There's a pleasure about getting back to normality, but there's also the challenge of looking forward to what the year will bring.

Not all of us welcome this new year. For some of us, we know it will bring separations and loss: children growing up and growing away, moving away, family and friends moving on.

For some of us, it will bring extra work, new responsibilities, study for exams, looking after others. For others of us, we

will have to start again; to learn to be on our own, perhaps through moving away or the loss of those we have lived with for many years and decades.

Just for this month, when you put on your shoes each morning, ask God to be with you in the day ahead. Ask Him to walk ahead of you, to be by your side and close behind you, to surround you with His presence. For it is His day that we are walking into and not ours. Let His will be done, and not ours.

And then, as you take your shoes off, see what you can thank God for from that day together. To help to remind you, why not leave a single shoe by the main door – that might get visitors asking too!

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Left out in the cold

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services each week, stopped going.

After a few weeks, the minister decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The minister found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire.

Guessing the reason for his minister's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a big chair near the fireplace and waited. The minister made himself comfortable but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the play of the flames around the burning logs.

After some minutes, the minister took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet fascination.

As the one lone ember's flame diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and dead and dark.

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. The two men sat on in reflective silence.

A little while later, just before the minister was ready to leave, he picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the minister reached the door to leave, his host said, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday."



Prayer for New Year 2025

Dear Lord,

We begin a New Year! We all have hopes, expectations, fears and uncertainties, as we move into 2025 – already a quarter of the way through this new century!

We can't know what will happen in the world, in our country, in our lives during this year, but we come before You, thankful that if we put our trust in Jesus and what He achieved on the cross, we need not be afraid; we are safe and secure.

He takes all our hopes and fears and gives us His Peace and His Spirit in return, to sustain and equip us this New Year and always. Thank you, gracious Father. Thank you, Lord of all the years. In Jesus' name, Amen.

ST. HILARY'S and ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH, KILLAY

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE DRAW 2024 - Prizewinners

Prizes	Ticket No.	Name
1 st £100	689	Katie Gough
2 nd £50 Tots Group	187	Jan Lewis
3 rd Food Hamper MU members	683	Natalia Thomas
4 th £50 M&S Voucher Bowls club	799	M. Jenkins
5 th Air Fryer	480	c/o Railway Inn
6 th Slow Cooker	14	Glenda Penzer
7 th £50 cash	704	Margaret Grey
8 th Bottle of Whisky	705	Margaret Grey
9 th Tin of biscuits	243	Jim Proudfoot
10 th £15 voucher from Black Boy	398	Sue Davies
11 th Bottle of red wine	758	Jean Gwilym
12 th Bear Door stop	588	Gloria Nelson
13 th Tin of chocolates	555	Nansi Evans
14 th Pair of Christmas hand towels	650	Mike Powell
15 th Toiletries	643	Sylvia Powell
16 th China mug, coaster and tray	542	Denise Rogers
17 th Crackers and chutney hamper	67	Haydn Osborne
18 th Bottle of Prosecco	607	Andrew Jones
19 th Christmas Crackers	550	Nansi Evans
20 th Bottle of white wine	351	Sally Farah
21 st £20 voucher Nail Beauty	676	Lisa Powell
22 nd Bottle of Mulled wine	545	Denise Rogers
23 rd Seasonal hamper	977	Joyce Hoskins
24 th Christmas Candle	454	Christine Williams
25 th Tin of chocolates	183	Jan Lewis
26 th Voucher Killay Café breakfast	120	Ron Horsey
27 th Toiletries	356	Sally Farah
28 th Card Shop voucher	223	Pat Stratton
29 th Voucher Bear's Pet Shop	56	Carol Clewett
30 th Bottle of Bailey's	244	Jim Proudfoot

Parish of Killay Magazine, 50 years ago - January 1975

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

This year it was decided to hold the Christmas Bazaar on a Thursday evening. The experiment was thoroughly justified as it was a great success. The total realised was the record sum of £430. The vicar introduced Mr W A Sparks who was invited to open the bazaar. Mr Sparks explained that the proceeds would go to pay off the loan of £4,500 the parish had received to purchase a Parsonage House for a curate. He thanked all those who had been busy preparing for the event and encouraged all those who had come to support it to spend freely. The outstanding attraction of the evening was the visit of Father Christmas who was kept very busy. Our sincere thanks to all who worked very hard to make the event a great success.

TOY GIFT SERVICE

There was a splendid response from the children to the appeal for toys which would be given to children in underprivileged families. A total of 138 parcels were presented at a special service held on the Sunday afternoon before Christmas. These were handed on to a local probation officer to be distributed over Christmas and on birthdays during the year. The service was conducted by the children of the Sunday School and all the children were involved in the readings, prayers, carols and tableaux of the Nativity. They were prepared by the teachers of the Sunday School under the supervision of Mr Eric Thomas and Mr Randall Nutt who were also responsible for the very fine Christmas crib which was set up in the sanctuary.

CAROL SERVICES

On the Sunday before Christmas the choir at St Hilary's had prepared a programme of special Christmas music....
Our thanks are due to the choir for an accomplished performance and, in particular, to Mr Tony Glasson, our organist. The following read the Nine Lessons during the services: Mrs Elaine Connors, Mr John Wilson, Mrs Betty Nutt, Mr Ron Pontin, Mrs Harvey, Mr Don Amer, Mr Jason Latham, Mr Massey-Shaw and the vicar.
In St Martin's, the Lessons were read by the teachers and children of the Sunday School: Mrs Jan Peebles, Andrew Smith, Suzanne Giles, Judith Dudley, Janet Dudley, Eileen Hewitt, Delyth Price, Wendy Hope and the Rev'd J W Griffin.
Dunvant Junior School held their carol service in St Hilary's church on December 17th. The church was filled to capacity and the children presented a splendid programme of Christmas verse and music to an appreciative congregation of

parents. The proceeds from this service amounted to £16.35 which was donated to Christian Aid.

Members of the Youth Club went carol singing around the Parish on December 20th and collected £5.10 for Christian Aid.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Holy Baptism

Dec 15th Jonathan Ivor Glover, 7 Pany-y-Dwr, Three Crosses
Wendy Short, 73 Killan Road, Dunvant
Richard Paul James Suggett, 74 Goetre Fawr Road
Elizabeth Ann Edwards, 17 Fairy Grove, Killay
Dec 16th Antony & Andrew Brown, 62 Curry Close

Holy Matrimony

Dec 21st Pauline Ann Honey & Terry Bryan O'Kelly
Dec 26th Linda Williams & Stephen Templeton

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SUNDAY 10:15 – 12:30	Sunday School – 2nd & 3rd Sunday of the month	Drop In
MONDAY 9:00 and 10:30am 9:15 to 11:00am 1:00 to 2:00pm 7:30pm	Slimming World TOTS Group (up to school age) Welsh Story & Rhyme Time (up to 18 months) Music Society – 2nd Monday of the month	Sue - 07813316739 Drop In (Term time only) Patsy - Drop In (Term time)
TUESDAY 9:45 and 11:00am 6:00pm 2:00 to 4:00pm	Flexercise Keep Fit for 50+ 4th Killay Brownies Mothers Union – 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month	Chris - 07738199666
WEDNESDAY 4:00pm 10:00am	Drama Kids Academy Luncheon Club – 1st Wednesday of the month	Steph - 07944430123 Kay - 01792206373
THURSDAY 9:15am 7:00 to 8:00pm	Foot Clinic (once a month by appointment) Holistic Sound Therapy- 2nd Thursday of the month Promotes relaxation and stress relief	Emma - 01792427515 / 07790230195 Faith Challinor-Wheatley 01792290458 - Faithcomplementaryholistics@yahoo.co.uk
FRIDAY 7:00 to 9:00	Indoor Bowls Club	Drop In to enquire
Two well equipped halls available for hire for parties / meetings. One off or regular bookings welcome. Contact Diane - Tel: 07778788465 (texts preferred) or email: sthilaryhallbooking@yahoo.co.uk		

Gower Ministry Administrator



Gower Ministry Area is delighted to say that Andy Harris-John has been appointed as our MA administrator. He starts on 7th January. Many of you will know Andy, he has lived in Pennard for some time, his band played in the church tent at the Gower Show and on the beach for an outreach event in August. He brings the admin skills, pastoral approach and also a strong spiritual desire for growth and care through God's blessing.

We all look forward to working with him.

Income generation 2024

As chairman of the Social/Fund raising group at St Hilary's I am so glad to report on the amounts raised....see details below. I must thank the sub committee for their support throughout the year. A special thanks to Sylvia for being Mrs Box office and chief cashier throughout the year (and not forgetting her leadership in the catering/kitchen field), and supported by Marian. A total of £3270.48 is an amazing amount. Whilst mission and outreach must be our priority, income generation must also be high on our list, otherwise we would struggle to keep our head above water.

So thanks to everyone who attended/supported our events in order to raise the amount.

Happy and healthy New Year to all....

Mike Powell, Leader/Social and Fund raising group

Fundraising 2024

- Table Top Sale
- D-day Celebration
- Harvest Supper
- Christmas Raffle
- Gwalia Concert



Reading the Bible in church *David Pickup considers that daunting task of reading in church.*

'He read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant, which had been found in the temple of the Lord.' 2 Kings 23:2

A friend was unexpectedly asked to read at a service as someone was unwell. He was caught just as he came in the church! Most of us like to look over a reading first and find the meaning of the passage. Some Bible readings are challenging, with difficult names of places and people. If it makes you feel better, no-one else knows how to pronounce these either, because there is no one around from Bible times!

It is not nice to be given a reading at the last minute, but then not good for the minister to suddenly get let down. To tell you the truth I have never liked reading, as it makes me dreadfully

nervous. I prefer to preach or lead than read.

People worry about reading in church. Some of them would happily talk to a class of children or a boardroom, but there is something about church which is different. Perhaps we expect too much of ourselves. The best reading I ever heard in church was by a non-church goer. He did not know the reading, so he put a different emphasis on the passage. If you are reluctant, why not slip into church and give it a trial on a Saturday, when no-one is around?

Reading in church is a genuine ministry and is vital. It is important to give it our best try, as a way of learning about our faith. The Bible is meant to be heard as well as read.



**In God alone my soul quietly rests,
for my hope comes from Him. Ps 62:5**

Exercise Classes



Enquiries
Christine O'Rourke
01792 290100

St Hilary's Church Hall, Killay:	Tues	9:45am & 11:00am	Ladies
St Paul's Parish Centre, Sketty:	Tues	7:00pm	Ladies
	Thurs	10:00am	Ladies

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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 the importance of NOT keeping accurate minutes

My dear Nephew Darren

Since you were the one to ask this parishioner of yours to act as PCC secretary, you have no reason to complain about the minutes of meetings she produces. You should never let anyone act as a secretary unless they cannot speak English or are hard of hearing, and preferably, both. The more significant the committee and the more contentious the issues being debated, the more you should nobly put yourself forward both to chair the meeting and take the minutes. In the majority of cases, that will spare the other members that awkward moment when you ask for a volunteer, and they all feel the sudden need to stare at their feet.

If you act as secretary, then you can be certain that accounts of what took place will only be what you had wanted to happen and that the decisions taken will be what you had already decided before discussions started. Any inconvenient observations from other committee members can be omitted entirely.

Admittedly, the more observant may notice that your accounts of the meeting may not wholly agree with their recollections, but the skill of being a secretary is not to produce the minutes of the previous meeting until the day before the next one. This will mean that the great majority will have long forgotten what actually did happen two months previously, and that many will not have had the time to read them anyway and will avoid having to admit that fact by passing them.

Only the deeply committed will want to pursue apparent discrepancies. In that case, confess to the meeting that your hand-written notes were accidentally left on a bus and so you can no longer check the accuracy of what you have written. As a way of appearing helpful, you could even give the person challenging you the bus route number and time of day you travelled. Further challenges will rally the rest of the committee to your side, and soon someone will suggest you proceed to the next item on the agenda. Since you are also the chairman, you naturally bow to their request.

Just in the way that church rotas bear no resemblance to the people who actually turn up to do the jobs, minutes of meetings need not bear too much resemblance to what actually happened, especially if what did happen is inconvenient for you.

After all, democracy is all very well - provided a benign dictator is in overall control.

Your loving uncle
Eustace

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Reflecting Faith: taking down the Christmas tree decorations

Last month we considered the decorations we put on our Christmas trees, both at home and in our churches.

Many churches keep their decorations – or at least their nativity scene - in place until Candlemas at the beginning of February, but most of us take our domestic ones down around Epiphany, on 6th January, when we recall the arrival of the Three Kings.

But how do we manage them for the rest of the year, after we have taken them down?

Our Christmas 'baubles' come in all colours, in matt and shiny, in all shapes and sizes. They can remind us of people, who also come in all shapes and sizes, colours and tones. Baubles are very fragile, like we are sometimes.

This year as you take down your decorations, have a good look at them and think about the care that you take to store them safely, so that they will not break.

How much more care do you take in looking after the people who make up your life? Your family, friends, neighbours, church, colleagues, local shop keepers, and so on?

It's quick and easy to pick up the decorations and just drop them in a box, but without some gentle care, will they be okay for next year?

It's too easy to pass folk by, and get on with what we are doing for ourselves, our own plans and goals; but aren't people worth more than that?

Who do we know that would greatly benefit if we gave them just a bit more time, a bit more consideration?

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St Martin's Church is available for hire. It can accommodate about 35 people. If you are interested, please contact Church Wardens.



Our Vision: *A family, rooted in Christ, committed to transforming lives by: Gathering as God's people – Growing more like Jesus – Going out in the power of the Spirit.*



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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 February 2025 magazine is on **Friday 24 January 2025**.

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.

www.eastgower.org

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



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Community Carol Service held at St Hilary's Church

On 15th December St Hilary's hosted a community carol service in conjunction with Killay Community Council.

The choir from Hendrefoilan school along with many parents and grand-parents, plus members of Siloam chapel joined the congregation. The church was full to capacity and despite extra chairs being put out in the chancel there was standing room only.

The service started with Once in Royal David's city followed by a reading by Callum Powell describing the Plygain, a traditional Welsh Christmas service.

Over 25 children from Hendrefoilan school, adorned in Christmas jumpers, entertained the packed church by singing Rocking around the Christmas Tree; The 12 days of Christmas and their version of Leonard Cohen's Hallelujah.

Following rapturous and very well deserved applause, the service continued with traditional readings by Morrison Frew (Siloam), Councillor Mary Jones and members of St Hilary's.

During the singing of O Come, All Ye Faithful, a collection was taken which totalled an astonishing £352 which was donated to Matthew's House. Matthew's House is a local charity providing support to those struggling with homelessness, mental health and addictions. Their aim is to provide unconditional support to vulnerable people in Swansea.

Layfetta gave an address reminding everyone of the real meaning of Christmas which was following by a rousing rendition of Hark the Herald Angels Sing.

Following the service the congregation were invited to partake in sherry and mince pies.

Thanks go to everyone who contributed and arranged a hugely successful event.

Nigel Fletcher



6th Annual
Community
Candlelight Carol
Service at
St Martin's Church



House Full at
St Hilary's Church
Carol Service....
no room in the Inn....

GWALIA Singers and Guest artist: Nabeel Masih. Concert at St Hilary's Church



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

JANUARY	ST HILARY'S KILLAY	ST MARTIN'S DUNVANT
2 Thursday	No mid-week Service	
5 Second Sunday of Christmas	9.45am Bubble Church 11.00am Lay led Service <i>Followed by coffee</i>	11.00am Eucharist
9 Thursday	11.00am Eucharist	
12 Baptism of Christ First Sunday of Epiphany	11.00am Eucharist <i>Followed by coffee</i>	10.00am Lay led Service
16 Thursday	11.00am Eucharist	
19 Second Sunday of Epiphany	11.00am Eucharist <i>Followed by coffee</i>	9.00am Eucharist
23 Thursday	11.00am Eucharist	
26 Third Sunday of Epiphany	11.00am Eucharist <i>Followed by coffee</i>	11.00am Eucharist <i>Followed by coffee</i>
30 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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