

**UPPER TROSNANT
BAPTIST CHURCH**



**OCTOBER 2024
NEWSLETTER**



Rejoice always, pray continually,
give thanks in all circumstances;
for this is God's will for you in
Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18

**Services on Sundays at 11.00am in the church
and informal fellowship at 4.00pm in the hall
Online ministry on YouTube & Facebook
Just search for "Upper Trosnant"**

www.trosnant.org

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Newsletter Items:

We are always happy to receive items for the newsletter.
Please email articles or features for the November 2024
edition to **uppertrosnantbc@gmail.com** by
Sunday 13th October.

Letter from Pastor Richard **Into God's Loving Care**

For nearly 9 years, it has been my privilege to write an introductory article for the Church Newsletter each month. I have always felt that primarily what is written here should be by way of encouragement. And so, I trust that this final article will indeed encourage you.

Throughout the Scriptures we read of God's loving care for his people, probably most famously in Psalm 23. Here is what David the Psalmist writes:



The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,

he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul.

He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,

I will fear no evil, for you are with me;

your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely your goodness and love will follow me

all the days of my life,

and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Those words really speak for themselves. In the same way that David could say "The Lord is my Shepherd", we as Christians can claim it to be true for us. In the Lord Jesus Christ, we can know God looking after us; indeed, Jesus himself said "I am the Good Shepherd." As we trust in him and all he has done we can know his love and care in our lives.

And that is not only for our individual lives, but it is also true for us as Christians together as part of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Together we can say "The Lord is my Shepherd." Into the future at Upper Troisant, you can be certain that the Lord will go with you and look after

So, I want to leave you with this encouragement – Look to the Shepherd and keep looking to him. Please read and spend time in Psalm 23, you will see the different ways that he will look after you – you are safe in his loving care. As I said in the last Newsletter, Annmarie and I will greatly miss all of you at Trosnant, we have thoroughly enjoyed our time with you, and it has been wonderful to see the way God has blessed the church over these years. I am convinced that the Lord will continue to be with you as a church to lead and guide.

Can I take this opportunity to thank Clare for doing a truly excellent job in putting together the newsletters each month. This really is a quality product.

And to all of you, may the Lord richly bless you as you continue to serve him in Pontypool.

To him be ALL the glory!

Love in Jesus,

Pastor Richard

Trusting God

People come and people go
One sure thing, this I know
Christ within, my hope and glory,
It's never changing and writes my story.
Hidden in the secret place,
God's goodness and love I taste.
Living water I drink from his hands,
Upon the rock of Christ I stand.
Fresh oil upon my head is poured,
From within Christ Jesus's name is adored
God's light shall shine for all to see
Trust in the Saviour and it shall be
Not only for you but also for me.

By a member of our congregation

Greetings from... Celia Price

Many of you may not know me, but I am a local preacher with the Methodist Church, and have led services in many of the denominations up and down the Valley. After the closure of Pontypool Methodist Church in Sept 2021 I worshipped in Trosnant, and was invited to join the Sisterhood. The welcome I received since last February has been such that I wanted to express my thanks in writing an article for the Newsletter. Continue to be a welcoming church as you follow the example of Christ who welcomed all.

May God bless you in the days to come.

Celia

Advertisements

In these days of advanced methods of communication, we find ourselves coming more and more under the influence, or pressure, of high-powered advertisements. Television sponsors do their utmost to sell us products with their ingenious commercials between programmes. Others advertise through our newspapers, magazines, or on billboards or buses.

Advertisements have changed a great deal over the years since television began. Some would say for the worse and not the better. Let's have a blast from the past and see if you can identify any of these:

1. Now hands that do dishes can feel soft as your face with – mild green fairy liquid.
2. A million housewives every day pick up a tin of beans and say – Beans means Heinz.
3. There's a glass and a half [of milk] in every half pound – Cadbury's chocolate.

I don't know about you, but adverts don't seem the same to me today!

What about the main supermarkets who tempt us with their jingles? Every little helps – Tesco. Try something new today – Sainsbury's. For fresh offers every week – Somerfield. What about Asda and Morrisons or Aldi and Lidl - which slogan tempts you most today? All the adverts are made in such a way as to promote the products, and often include the voice or even appearance of famous personalities. It is hoped that this will help the supermarkets do well. As Church members we are meant to be living advertisements for the Christian life. Do we make GOOD ones?

The way we act and how we behave towards others should be a way of encouraging them to become part of God's family – the Church! It is your job and mine to promote the gospel and make God's glory known to others. If we do not do so, then we are failing God himself.

People could become followers of Christ because of our example. We must go out and 'ad' more to his family. How can we do this? By being ourselves as we witness to others. Every Sunday we say, 'Your kingdom come, your will be done,' in the Lord's Prayer, but if Jesus were to come again TODAY, would we be READY? What type of Christians are we? What kind of AD? Are you a S-ad, M-ad, B-ad, or a GL-ad Christian?!

SAD. Are you a sad Christian? There are times in life when we are unhappy, or have been badly hurt. Then we can be forgiven for genuine sadness. However, we should not give the impression that being a Christian means being miserable or joyless. Some Christians go through life without any joy at all. Surely with good news to share about Jesus, we need never have cause to be sad!

MAD. Are you a mad Christian? Do you go around looking cross, finding fault, and getting mad at people? If others do not share the same opinion as you, it doesn't mean you are right, and they are wrong. God wants us to be like him – so we should not be mad.

BAD. Are you a bad Christian? It may not be that you are a very bad person – yet is so easy to be a bad 'ad', isn't it? None of us are perfect, but the way that we behave towards one another can show that we really mean business with God. We let ourselves down, and more importantly, we let God down when we are bad.

GLAD. Or are you a Glad Christian? Does it make you feel glad to follow Jesus? Does it show? Do people want to know what product you are advertising? God wants us all to be GLAD! During my youth there was a pop group called the Dave Clark Five. They sang a song that went, 'And I'm feeling, glad all over, yes I'm glad all over, baby I'm glad all over, so glad you're mine!' Let us be GLAD ALL OVER that we are Christians. As followers of Christ, let us go out and 'Ad' some more to his family!

Celia

Nine Happy Years...in Pictures

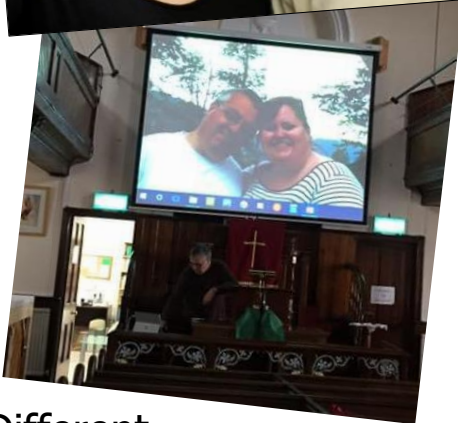
May 2015... a Mr Richard Miles was booked to preach at Upper Trosnant... He and his wife Annmarie came to Harvest in September – and Richard began his ministry as Pastor in December!



Induction service on 30 January 2016:

Introducing new tech...

... and some new glasses!



Different activities in Pontypool:

Open air witness in our town;

Governor of Cwmffrwdor Primary;
Leading at At GSUS Live.



Big Changes at Upper Trosnant: Unveiling the new ramp, Spring 2019:
and the Big Snow, 2018!



Covid Christmas on zoom, 2020:



Anmarie's faithful service to Upper Trosnant:
as Deacon; as Catering Chief; and

celebrating the Coronation!



Two years of study at Cardiff Baptist College, followed by ordination as a Baptist Minister in 2022:

This month Upper Trosnant is celebrating our anniversary; it is 248 years since the church began. What a season of blessings the past nine years have been! Let us thank God for



the ministry of Pastor Richard and Annmarie and pray for them as they begin the next chapter of their lives at Llanwenarth Baptist Church.

A Fond Farewell

You are called from this old church to an older,
To step in faith and shoulder
A new challenge in Christ's name.
Llanwenarth waits
And Trosnant's sadness demonstrates
How blessed we are you came.

There'll be tension and tears after nine fruitful years.
It's all in God's hands, we don't need to fear –
But how we will miss you both being here,
And we'll miss your words and playing.
We'll miss your warmth and cheer
Your preaching, singing, praying...

But you must go where He sends
Where the work of winning souls extends
Beyond your comfort zone.
You do not walk alone.

Trosnant sends both tears and smiles.
Goodwill flies for Miles and Miles.

Tony Hopkins



Psalms 84:3 *'The sparrows have found a home, and the swallows have nests. They raise their young near your altars, LORD All-Powerful, my King and my God'.*

The swallow is considered as a beacon of hope. A small Bird with a wingspan of 320 to 350mm and a weight of 16-25g. It is the most aerobatic of birds, spending most of its life in flight. Swallows are insectivorous, taking flying insects on the wing and drinks as they skim over the surface of ponds or rivers.

Proverbs 26:2 *'Curses will not harm someone who is innocent. They are like sparrows or swallows that fly around and never land'.*

Storks represent peace, happiness, fertility, birth and rebirth

Psalms 104:16-17 *'The trees of the LORD are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted; Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir trees are her house'.*



Storks range from about 60 cm to more than 150 cm (2 to 5 feet) in height. All or part of the head and upper neck may be bare of feathers and brightly coloured. Storks are nearly voiceless but some of them clatter their bills loudly when excited. They fly, alternately flapping and soaring, with neck outstretched and legs trailing. Storks occur mainly in Africa, Asia, and Europe.

The **stork** is fearless of man and known for their tender love between mated pairs and for their young. It is seen to shield its fledglings by using an outstretched wing as a defence against predators.

The account of the **quail** in Exodus 16:13-14 '*That evening, quail came and covered the camp*' serves as a reminder of God's miraculous provision and the importance of trusting in Him to meet our needs, even when the situation seems impossible. It also underscores the theme of gratitude and reliance on God's provision throughout the Israelites' journey to the Promised Land.

Rarely seen in Wales or the west of England, there are only 350 breeding pairs in the UK. They migrate from Africa along two routes; the eastern passage takes then, in the early spring across the Red Sea. At this stage the birds are exhausted and even today the Bedouins catch the birds by hand.



Birds are delightfully coloured and of all shapes and sizes and are used throughout the Bible as illustrations and examples. They encourage us with their song and Psalm 104:12-14 tells us of this precious gift of creation:

*The birds of the sky nest by the waters;
they sing among the branches.*

*He waters the mountains from his upper chambers;
the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work.*

*He makes grass grow for the cattle,
and plants for people to cultivate—
bringing forth food from the earth:*

MISSION FOCUS: The Story of the BMS Part 4

Reaching into China

In the early 1800s, the pioneering work of William Carey and his fellow missionaries in India was amazingly effective. Back in the UK, the amazing and inspiring achievements of the missionaries were stimulating great interest and a desire to reach the wider world with the gospel. The land of China, however, remained a land of mystery and a closed door to people in the West, and China's protectionist government was doing all in its power to resist the influence and pressure of Western imperialism.

By the mid-1800s, times were changing, and China (unwillingly) signed a series of treaties with Western powers, including Great Britain, which opened Chinese ports like Shanghai, to foreign trade. Along with traders, missionaries came, including men like James Hudson Taylor, who began the China Inland Mission, in 1854. Over 90 years, nearly 400 BMS missionaries travelled to the vast country of China to carry out evangelism, establish churches and medical missions, organise famine relief, set up schools and colleges, and translate and distribute the Bible and Christian literature.

One of the early BMS missionaries to China was 25-year-old Timothy Richard - a Welshman from Carmarthen - in 1870. Richard first worked in the trading port of Yantai, then decided to move inland in 1875, to work in the walled city of Qing Zhon, with its large population of 30,000 people. He soon realised what a huge cultural gap there was between himself and the Chinese nationals so he, like Hudson Taylor, decided to adapt his lifestyle to the customs of the Chinese, and take a Chinese name, and wear Chinese-style clothes. He also mastered the language and so was able to share the gospel through the local custom of story-telling in public places. This method brought great results and after two years there had been over 300 baptisms, and a thousand enquirers were keeping him, his fellow missionaries, and the local Chinese pastor very busy!

Despite these encouragements, the missionaries faced many challenges including health problems caused by the climate and local infectious diseases. Many missionaries died and at one point Timothy Richard found himself the sole BMS representative in China. In addition to this, the worst famine in modern China broke out in the north of the country in 1876, caused by a severe drought that lasted for 3 years. It is estimated

that as many as 13 million people may have perished, despite the valiant efforts of Timothy Richard and many other missionaries in organising the famine relief effort and bringing in massive amounts of funding from overseas. This missionary-led famine relief was one of the first major programmes of humanitarian aid in modern history.

Despite all the good work done by the missionaries, they still faced much opposition. Many of the Chinese associated the missionaries with Western imperialism and resented them, especially those from the educated classes who feared changes that might threaten their position. As the foreign and missionary presence grew, so did Chinese resentment. By 1900, a wave of anti-foreign feeling began to sweep across China amongst the peasants which became known as the Boxer Rebellion. It was the worst disaster in missionary history and resulted in the deaths of thousands of Chinese Christians as well as 189 Protestant missionaries, 12 of whom were BMS workers. Children of missionaries were also killed.

Despite this persecution, the church continued to grow, and the BMS expanded its work by distributing literature, and setting up schools and one of the first universities in China. Timothy Richard was appointed by the local governor of Shanxi province to be the university's first chancellor, and although it was forbidden to teach Christianity, Richard as Chancellor was able to appoint numerous Christian missionaries on the teaching staff. By the late 1920s and 30s, the persecution intensified, and many more Christians were martyred for their faith. Droughts, famines, and the Japanese invasion of China in 1937 made the life of missionaries even more difficult, but once again they gave themselves to organising famine relief, feeding thousands of people, housing orphans and training pastors, and the church continued to grow.

Finally, the Chinese People's Republic which was set up in 1949 brought an end to the BMS work, as all mission workers were forced to withdraw. The last missionaries left China by 1952, but the seeds of the gospel they sowed so faithfully are continuing to bear fruit to this day. Despite increased surveillance of the population, the many oppressive laws, and severe persecution, the number of believers, mainly meeting together in secret, continues to grow, and it is estimated that there are almost 100 million Christians in China today.

Jill Morley

Upper Trosnant Update

- October is Pastor Richard and Annmarie's last month at Upper Trosnant. There are lots of things happening! Both of them will be gradually stepping back from certain activities during the month, as things are handed over to others.
- As always, it has been really great to visit to Ty Ceirios and Regency. At both homes the residents and staff have enjoyed joining in with the hymns. As many of you know, Tom Wildy is now in Ty Ceirios, and it was good that he was able to join us.
- Garden Fellowship has now become Warm Space. Each Monday, there is still the opportunity for tea, coffee and chat together.
- Sisterhood is continuing with the same commitment to fellowship and prayer. God's presence is with the ladies in a very real way.
- This Newsletter went to print before our Harvest activities or the Macmillan Coffee Morning – look out for a report next month!
- As mentioned above there are some special events coming up:

Sunday 13th October at 11.00 am

God willing, Jane Seabourne will publicly declare her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as we have a **service of Baptism**. Please remember her in your prayers.

Sunday 20th October at 11.00 am

after months of work, we will be praying for God's blessing upon the **Christmas Shoeboxes**.

Sunday 27th October at 4.00 pm

is a **special service to say farewell to Pastor Richard and Annmarie**. This will be a time to look back to God's goodness over the past 9 years as well as to pray God's blessing upon them into the future.

On Saturday 2nd November at 2.30 pm,

the **Induction service** of Pastor Richard will take place at Llanwenarth Baptist Church in Govilon. Everyone is invited.

- As usual, please remember that Pastor Richard's Day Off each week is Friday. Please do not contact him or Annmarie on that day except in an emergency.

Switch that Light off?!

Everyone is aware of the cost-of-living crisis, and we all want to know, what can we do to help ourselves save energy and money, both at home and at church? Prices for gas and electricity are still much higher than they were, and many are additionally concerned by the ending of the Winter Fuel Allowance. So what can we do to help ourselves? This is an edited version of the article that Keith wrote in November 2022:

One thing is for sure, as we move forward into autumn and winter, we will need comfortable and warm buildings. Therein lies the question - just how warm? Age Concern recommend 21°C in the living room and 18°C in the bedroom as optimum settings. Realistic data from energy companies show that most homes are heated well above these settings, commonly up to 25°C. If our room settings are higher than the above recommended figures, by turning the thermostat down by just 1°C would, according to the energy companies, save upwards of £100 a year at the original rates. Well worth thinking about at home. And in the Church Hall, may I ask all users to resist the temptation to turn up the thermostat; it is set at a level to keep us comfortable at all our meetings.

We all know the saying 'Time is money,' and there lies another major point. If we are cooking, for example, how often do we NOT turn the heat off until the very end? Ovens retain heat for a considerable time, as does a liquid that has boiled. Turning off, only a few minutes earlier, will save a considerable amount over a year. Electric kettles are normally 2 litre capacity and 3 kilowatts power. Prior to the price rises, the cost to boil a full kettle was approximately 6p in 4 minutes; half full, 3p in 2 minutes; quarter full 1½p in 1 minute. Many of us fill up a kettle rather than only boil what is required – but 'Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves'. At home, or in church, turn off the heat or switch down some time prior to leaving the relevant room, not when you leave. The earlier you do, the greater the saving.

These observations apply equally to homes and businesses. A little more thought as to what is required can make a considerable difference. As is said in my all-time favourite comedy series, 'This time next year we'll be millionaires!'

Keith Fordham

CHURCH DIARY for OCTOBER

SUNDAY SERVICES AND PREACHERS

11.00 am: In the Church building and later on YouTube;
followed by Tea and Coffee in the Hall.

6th	Pastor Richard (Communion)
13th	Pastor Richard: SERVICE OF BELIEVER'S BAPTISM
20th	Pastor Richard: Shoebox Service
27th	Dale Norman

SUNDAY AFTERNOONS @ 4 O'CLOCK

Meeting together in the Hall, with tea and coffee.

6th	Fellowship and Facebook Live with Pastor Richard
13th	Informal Communion led by Pastor Richard
20th	Fellowship and Facebook Live with Annmarie

SUNDAY 27TH OCTOBER, 4 pm in Church PASTOR RICHARD AND ANNMARIE'S FAREWELL SERVICE

Everyone is warmly invited; followed by refreshments in the Hall.

MONDAY

7th, 21st and 28th – WARM SPACE 2.00–4.00 pm in the Hall.

Everyone is warmly invited to drop in for a friendly chat over tea/coffee and biscuits.

14th – OPEN HOUSE 2.00 – 4.00 pm in the Hall – We play games or share crafts, or just meet for a cup of tea and a chat.

SERVICES IN RESIDENTIAL HOMES:

7th – 11.00 am @ REGENCY; 21st – 2.00 pm @ TY CEIRIOS

If you would like to join the team in visiting these homes and sharing the joy of Jesus with the residents, please speak to Lorraine. Our visits are always greatly appreciated; and so is our singing!

TUESDAY - SISTERHOOD

All ladies are welcome to join us every week for fellowship over tea, coffee and biscuits, and to hear God's word and sing and pray together.

1st	Jill
8th	Celia
15th	Annmarie
22nd	Sisterhood lunch out (1.15pm Harvester PP)
29th	Clare

- MEN'S FELLOWSHIP – t.b.c.

WEDNESDAY – PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY

2nd	6.50 for 7.00 pm	Phil
9th	1.50 for 2.00 pm	Annmarie
16th	6.50 for 7.00 pm	CHURCH MEMBERS' MEETING This is a very important meeting when we will be discussing the way forward, and meeting our new Moderator, the Rev. Huw Stephens.
23rd	1.50 for 2.00 pm	Pastor Richard
30th	1.50 for 2.00 pm	Prayer meeting led by Jill

THURSDAY – CUP PRAYER AND PRAISE MEETING

31st at 7.00 pm at Pontnewynydd Methodist Church.

SATURDAY – 26th: SOUP ON SATURDAY 1.30 pm in the Hall.

Please sign up on the list in the Hall.

HELPING IN CHURCH – ROTA for October

	Reading	Door	Teas AM	Flowers	Teas PM
6 th	Jill	Anthea	Sian	Sian	Lorraine
13 th	Anthea	Jill	Clare	Celia	Clare
20 th	Clare	Anthea	Janet J	Pam	Jane & Janet
27 th	Dale	Barbara	Jill	Sandra	Clare
Communion: 6 th : Lorraine 13 th (pm): Clare					

PRAYER PAGE: Praying Continually

In his letter to the church at Thessaloniki, Paul advised the Christians there to 'rejoice always, pray continually, and give thanks in all circumstances.' (1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18). Surely, he didn't mean that we are not allowed to shed a tear in times of mourning, or to neglect our jobs, families, or sleep, in order to pray! No, but he did mean that as Christians, God should be always in our thoughts, and no part of our life is too unimportant – or too difficult – that we cannot lift it up in prayer.



While on holiday in Yorkshire, Pastor Richard and Annmarie went to lay some flowers from the church, and on behalf of Richard Harrison, on Doreen's grave in the beautiful churchyard at Dacre. They took these photographs to share with us all:



Doreen set us a wonderful example of what praying continually looks like. When she promised to pray for someone, she really meant it, and she would keep them, or their particular need, on her prayer list until the prayer was answered. No situation was too difficult for her to pray about it; rather, she would promise to pray *because* it was difficult. And when the Lord heard her prayers she never, ever failed to give thanks. At prayer meetings she would pray specifically, lifting people up by name, and thanking God for each blessing she had received. Doreen also set a wonderful example as someone who 'rejoices always'; to her, rejoicing and praying went hand in hand, and the more she prayed, the more joyful she felt.

As Upper Trosnant moves into a period of transition, we will be waiting on the Lord for guidance on what the future holds. It is natural to feel sad and uncertain at such a time. But as a fellowship, and as individuals, we are far from powerless – we can Pray Continually; we can count our blessings and give thanks – and we can rejoice in the Lord.

Please Pray For...

- Thank the Lord for the spirit of love and unity that prevails in our Church. Ask him to sustain every member of our church fellowship as we adjust to the coming changes in the life of Upper Trostant.
- Pray for Pastor Richard and Annmarie as they prepare for their move to Llanwenarth, that the Lord will be with them every step of the way. Pray for the members of Llanwenarth, asking the Lord's blessing upon them.
- Remember all the services, events and meetings happening at Upper Trostant during October. Lift up Jane as she prepares for her baptism, and pray that the Lord will bless her richly in the coming weeks.
- Pray that many will accept invitations to all the events this month, and that all will grow in faith and love.
- Pray for the Upper Trostant leadership team as they continue working to run our church and make plans for the future. Thank the Lord for Huw Stephens who has offered his help to our church as Moderator. May the Church meeting be fruitful and encouraging to all who attend.
- Pray for Dale Norman, and for Naomi and Felicity, as they wait on the Lord as to Dale's future ministry.
- Pray for David and Lorraine Breese and their family, that the Lord will be with them all at this difficult time.
- Remember our missionary friends Margaret and Roy Collins-Reese in Toulouse, and Sue and David Verwey in Japan.
- Lift up Tom Wildy as he settles in Ty Ceirios and remember all those we know and love in care homes, including Ann Stephens. Ask the Lord to bless the monthly ministry to Ty Ceirios and to the Regency home.
- Please pray for all those who are ill or frail, or recovering from illness or accidents, or in need of a special touch from the Lord: Val Attwell, Emma Attwell, Val's daughter Janie, Barbara's sister Brenda, Beryl from Blaenavon, Julie Blake, Julie's nephew Jacob, Dave Breese, Pam Charles, Doreen Dixon, Lindsey Firth, Keith Fordham, Mike Garwood, Liz Harris, Richard Harrison's daughter Rachel, Audrey and Eric Jones, Jean Miles, Helen Norman, Jeff Parry, Judith Parry, Janet Pollard, Alwyn Stephens, Linda Swires-Hennessy, Greta Wagg.



Join us for our October events

Sunday 13th of October, 11am Baptism Service

Sunday 20th October, 11am Shoebox Service

Saturday 26th October, 1.30pm Soup on Saturday

**Sunday 27th October, 4pm
Farewell Service for Pastor Richard and Annmarie**

**Please let us know if you are coming
via the contact details below.**

**UPPER TROSNANT
BAPTIST CHURCH**

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