

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

Two services are held every Sunday, at 10.30 am with Junior Church and at 6.00pm. Communion takes place on the first Sunday morning and third Sunday evening of each month. A family service is held on the second Sunday morning of each month.

The following are some of the regular weekday activities which take place at Noah's Place (the Church Centre in the cottage fronting on to Westgate).

- Open for refreshments three mornings a week - Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.
- Tuesday evening meeting for prayer, Bible study and discussion.
- Thursday evening - 'Drop-in Centre' for young people (14+). (Winter only).
- Friday Club for 7-11 year olds.
- The 11+ Group for young people meets on Sunday evenings.

Not taking place at present



ALL VISITORS AND NEW ATTENDEES ARE MOST CORDIALLY WELCOME IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

NL/February 1996

United Free Church Westgate, Cowbridge

A Brief History



From the end of the 19th century there were three Non-Conformist churches in the town. The Baptist church (Ramoth) was founded in 1820; the Calvinistic Methodist Church (The Limes) in 1825 and the Wesleyan Methodists built a chapel on the south side of Eastgate in 1895. They continued as separate churches until 1960 when the Wesleyan Methodist Church closed and the congregation joined The Limes, which by then had become part of the Presbyterian Church of Wales.

The population of Cowbridge then increased noticeably and growth itself became a challenge to the churches. The ministers of Ramoth and The Limes began to encourage their churches to work more closely together and to develop a united strategy. Gradually, joint services of worship were introduced, as well as other combined activities, until in 1966 the churches decided that they should no longer do anything separately. On the first Sunday of 1967 they merged their Sunday Schools and all services of worship; from that day all morning services were held in one church building and evening services in the other. A fire in one of the buildings forced the members to face the lack of logic in sharing two buildings and eventually they decided to make Ramoth their home.

On 1st August 1971 the two churches took this forward step of faith and thus the United Free Church was born. By this time many newcomers to the town had joined the Church, from many different denominational backgrounds. One of the things that attracted them was the fact that they did not have to be denominationally aligned, but could share fully in a fellowship where all traditions were recognised and valued.

There were difficulties to be overcome, for there were no formal national structures into which the United Free Church could slot. The denominational bodies, whilst encouraging the local venture of faith, could not help to solve the difficulties imposed by the ancient Trust Deeds. The United Free Church thus developed its own constitution, which is the day-to-day guide in respect of membership, ministry and government.

In 1987 it was decided to press for the recognition of the Union between Baptists and Presbyterians. This was achieved in 1992, when a formal Sharing Agreement was signed.

Whilst retaining affiliations to the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Presbyterian Church of Wales, the Church has remained autonomous. It appoints its own minister and is totally self financing. The first priority of the fellowship is to fund the Minister's stipend, expenses and housing. Income is obtained through the free will offering of the congregation. Church finances are managed on stewardship principles and the Church Treasurer submits annually a budget for approval by the membership.

The day to day management of the Church is the responsibility of the Church Council which is elected from among the membership. The Church Members Meeting (held every third month) is the decision making body.

The Church is a member of the Cowbridge Council of Churches and works with the Roman Catholic Church and the Church in Wales.

