



From the cradle to the cross



The short journey from Christmas to Easter is reflected in this edition of Teulu Asaph, in a year when Easter is as early as it can ever be; the next time the resurrection will be celebrated on March 23rd will be in the year 2160. Donkeys are something of a theme in this edition; in these photographs you can see the stubborn donkey who helped Meifod celebrate Christmas and last year's Palm Sunday procession in Wrexham. Please consider photographing your Holy Week and Easter services, and share your news with us and with your local press. With Easter at the end of March, there may even be snow in your photographs this year!

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Dear Friends,

2008 is a leap year in all sorts of ways; as well as being an Olympic year it's a time of big and potentially turbulent change.

In our calendar, with a very early Easter, we have moved with great rapidity from Christmas and Epiphany towards Lent. Our news is full of big changes that are predicted in many areas and aspects of our world and our lives; from fuel prices and the economy, to climate change and significant political leadership contests.

In the church too, we have already gained experience from feeling that we are sometimes under pressure to adapt and change. Within this there are also fears about losing precious insights or treasures from our past as well as anxieties that we are not changing or adapting readily enough to enable significant growth.

Our lectionary reflects something of this sense of living in a time of rapid change, as we follow St Matthew's account of the Jesus story which will accompany us throughout the year.

Matthew the evangelist moves from the story of Jesus' birth and the visit of the Magi with breathtaking speed to the ministries of John the Baptist and his grown-up cousin Jesus. With his fast-paced narrative Matthew shows us how God not only keeps up with creation's movement but also ventures with us, onward and into new territory.

Knowing that we are not alone and finding the resources to be calm in times of stress are important if we are to thrive in times of challenge.

Athletes, such as those who are presently in training for Beijing 2008 (and London 2012), know the strange contradiction that speed and power in physical prowess are rooted in stillness and a sense of focus at the centre of one's being. For this reason many sports people and competitive teams make use of meditative techniques and mental and emotional stilling exercises as well as their more obvious physical training. In this their training reminds Christians of how we too must continue to equip ourselves to serve God through serving others.

Christians have a creative opportunity every year during Lent to re-connect with the things that build us up as the people of God and which help us not only to weather the storms but to grow through challenges that we and our world face.

Lent means "spring" and so reminds us both of taking big leaps forward and of growth in depth and strength. I hope that these will be the marks of our ministry in this season.

+ John St Asaph



Faith and Light, Newtown meeting for the first time, in the Methodist Church, Back Lane

- [Sunday 10th February](#) from 4 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.

The Celtic Church and its relevance to today: Lenten series at St John's, Abbey Road, Llangollen

- [Wednesday 13th February](#) and every Wednesday in Lent at 7.30 p.m.

Contact Revd Andrew Sully 01978 860231

Celebration of Marriage

at St Ffraid's Church, Llansantffraid

- [Saturday 1st March](#) from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

The music of Margaret Rizza in a service at St John's, Abbey Road, Llangollen

- [Sunday 2nd March](#) at 5 p.m. - rehearsal at 4 p.m. Contact Revd Andrew Sully 01978 860231

St Asaph Theological Society

at St Deiniol's Library, Hawarden. The Revd Dr Graeme Smith of St Michael's College, Llandaff, will give a talk based on his new book, 'A Short History of Secularism'

- [Monday 3rd March](#) from 7.15 p.m. Contact Revd Martin Batchelor 01244 550947 or Revd Manon Parry 01492 533692

Growing Churches, Growing the Kingdom - Bishop Sandy Miller, previously of Holy Trinity, Brompton, Bishop in Mission in the Diocese of London, will speak to church leaders at St John's Church, Rhosnesni, Wrexham

- [Wednesday 5th March](#) from 9.30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Book a place - contact Revd Gary Owen 01978 350202 or info@stjohns-wrexham.org

Worship, teaching and ministry with Bishop Sandy at Capel-y-Groes, Wrexham (see above)

- [Wednesday 5th March](#) at 7.30 p.m.

All Welcome - No booking is required.

World Mission Service in St Asaph Cathedral; a celebration, with stalls, presentations and worship. Offerings can be made for the Diocesan World Mission Appeal

- [Saturday 8th March](#) at 2 p.m.

Holy Week Cathedral Services

Chrism Service

- [Wednesday 19th March](#) at 6.30 p.m.

Maundy Thursday Eucharist

- [Thursday 20th March](#) at 6 p.m. and Watch Hour from 9 p.m.

Three Hours at the Cross

- [Good Friday 21st March](#) from 12 noon, beginning at the Parish Church. Walk of Witness to the Cathedral, 12.50 p.m.

Easter Vigil and Confirmation

- [Saturday 22nd March](#) at 6.30 p.m.

Imaging the Bible in Wales - conference in Aberystwyth, with speakers from the worlds of Biblical Studies and Art History; an art exhibition; and visits to important local sites.

- [Monday 31st March](#) -
[Thursday 3rd April](#)

www.imagingthebible.org

Contact *Dr John Morgan-Guy* 01570 424961 or j.morganguy@lamp.ac.uk

Organ Recital Series 2008

St Asaph Cathedral. All recitals at 7.30 p.m. Admission £4

Alan McGuinness, Organist and Master of the Choristers

- [Wednesday 2nd April](#)

Paul Derrett, Hull

- [Wednesday 7th May](#)

John Hosking, Assistant Organist

- [Wednesday 4th June](#)

William Smallman, Organist, St. Mary's Shrewsbury

- [Wednesday 2nd July](#)

"Midas Touch Duo" - Roger Sayer, Director of Music, Rochester Cathedral, and Charles Andrews (Trumpet) Royal College of Music

- [Wednesday 6th August](#)

David Houlder, Sub Organist, Leeds Parish Church

- [Wednesday 3rd September](#)

Advance Notice

Retired Clergy Association Service in St Asaph Cathedral

- [Tuesday 15th April](#) at 11.30 a.m.

Cathedral Choir Association Sponsored Hymnathon in St Asaph Cathedral

- [Saturday 19th April](#)

Education Service in St Asaph Cathedral

- [Tuesday 29th April](#)

Garden Open (by appointment) - Gwespyr, Holywell - during May and June. Monday to Friday. Admission £2 (children free) includes Tea/Coffee, Home made scone and cake, for groups of eight or more. Proceeds to Llanasa Parish Church. Contact *Brenda Baxter* 01745 857355

Walking on Water - praying through art and colour. A retreat on Bardsey Island, led by Revd Jessica Aidley and fed by Liz Suter.

- [21st - 28th June](#)

Contact *Jessica Aidley* 01600 713075

j.aidley@googlemail.com

www.carregtrust.org.uk/index.html

or contact the Bookings Secretary, Revd Nick Hawkins 01758 770582

HYSBYSFWRDD NOTICEBOARD

Ysgol y Wern,

Rhosllanerchrugog, is appealing for memories and memorabilia from anyone with any connection to this Church in Wales School which is closing (and losing its V.C. status) in July. Plans are afoot for a big exhibition and service in May, celebrating the school's history.

More information from the Head, Mr. Mel Morris.
Tel/fax 01978 840603,



mailbox@ywern-pri.wrexham.sch.uk
or Anne Suter, Bishop's Visitor, at the
Diocesan Office 01745 582245

Investing in Mission

Christian Disciples Learning Together About Giving

*Funding & Parish Support Officer, Tracey White, asks, **Have you made a start?***

In October last year, clergy and lay people from all over the Diocese came together to hear Bishop John launch the Year of Stewardship 2008. The focus of the year is to be the **Investing in Mission** programme, which brings Christian disciples together to learn about giving. The first step in the programme is for the P.C.C. to discuss the programme and decide when it will run in their parish. To find out more about the

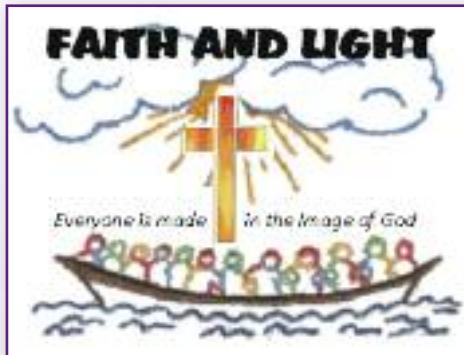
programme, visit the Diocesan website, www.dioceseofstasaph.org.uk and scroll down to the link at the bottom of the page.



FAITH AND LIGHT YMWYBYDDIAETH O ANABLEDD DISABILITY AWARENESS

Revd Richard Hainsworth, Curate in Newtown, Llanllwchaiarn and Aberhafesp, introduces 'Faith and Light', as a new group is launched in Newtown to facilitate worship and fellowship for people with learning difficulties and brain injuries, their families and carers.

Faith and Light is an international, ecumenical organisation that brings together local communities of people with intellectual disabilities, their families, carers and friends. There are 1500 communities in 74 countries worldwide and there are currently 7 communities in Wales. Beginning in February, a new community will be formed in Newtown, meeting once a month for a gathering of friendship and sharing, festivities, religious celebration and prayer, where everyone is included and can discover the contribution that they can make.



Faith and Light's vocation is to make sure that people with an intellectual disability feel that they are never alone and that they are never useless and have the chance to know God's love and have a relationship with him. This vocation springs from the belief that we are all made in the image of God and that we are called to share together the riches of our hearts – and particularly that those with an intellectual disability have a unique and sacred value in revealing the heart and love that can be so lacking in the world.

The communities also provide a meeting place for parents, carers and family members to share their experiences together and support each other and the chance for church members and friends to walk a path of companionship with them and those they care for.

In Newtown the new community will be organised by members of local churches – including members with disabilities, parents and carers – on behalf of Churches Together in Newtown. It will be hosted in the Methodist Church on Back Lane, which is an accessible building with appropriate facilities.

Our first meetings will be supported by the thriving 'Waterfall Community' of Faith and Light from Llanidloes. The first meeting will be on Sunday 10th February from 4 – 5.30 p.m. Following meetings will be on the first Sunday of the Month, same time and place.

All are welcome, from any area or denomination and whether you currently attend church or not. If you require personal care, please bring a carer or family member with you. For more information please contact Revd Richard Hainsworth on 01686 610718 or rich_hainsworth@yahoo.co.uk

Dysgu Gydol Oes Life-long learning

Kate Tiltman reports on the last meeting of the St Asaph Theological Society

On the evening of Monday November 12th, an assorted group of laity, readers and clergy (including one Archdeacon) met in the new lecture room at St Deiniol's library in Hawarden. The event was the second meeting of the St Asaph theological society. The speaker was Gareth Lloyd Jones from Bangor, and his topic was "Premillennialism. A millennial misconception: prophets as prognosticators".

The talk started by looking at the prophets of doom, those who have predicted the end of the world in our own time. Fortunately they were proved wrong, but the type of thinking they embodied is still very much with us. The New Religious Right in the USA may not be setting a date, but they are looking for signs of the second coming and for the end of the world. We may think that their interpretation of the Bible and of Hebrew prophecy is rather flawed, but we need to remember that the religious right in America has enormous political influence.

Gareth Lloyd Jones described how the repossession of Palestine by the Jews is seen as a sign of the second coming. What remains to be done is the rebuilding of the Temple, on a site at present occupied by the Dome of the

Rock. As this is a Muslim mosque, the fulfilment of this prophecy will not be an easy task. This is one reason why the religious right supports the state of Israel so strongly. The Jews can rebuild the Temple, even though they are also seen as the people who rejected Christ.

In conclusion, the role of the prophet is to speak out against the injustices in society. It was not to predict the future. Using the prophecies of the Old Testament, or of the book of Revelation, as predictors of the future leads to a belief in disaster and suffering for all except the premillennialists.

The Theological society aims to meet three times a year. It is an excellent opportunity for all, whether ordained or lay, to come together to discuss issues of theology and be a forum for debate, as well as an opportunity to come together and socialize (we break for coffee and there are several local places to go afterwards if we wish to further the discussion over a drink!)

In 2008 we have 3 excellent speakers who are worth putting in the diary to hear speak. We look forward to seeing you! The next meeting is on Monday 3rd March at 7.15 p.m. at St Deiniol's Library, when the Revd Dr Graeme Smith of St Michael's College, Llandaff, will give a talk based on his new book, 'A Short History of Secularism'.

✦ SPIRITUALITY

The Revd. John Harvey, Rector of Llangystennin, writes about the Cursillo movement in the Diocese of St. Asaph.



Best-kept secrets are something our church is rather too good at. A few years ago the then Archbishop of Canterbury used that description of the religious orders in the Anglican Communion: we have monks and nuns, but not many people know about them! In the Diocese of St. Asaph I've no doubt that the term 'best-kept secret' applies to Cursillo.

Cursillo has been active in our Diocese for nearly twenty years and in the Church in Wales and the wider U.K. for nearly thirty. It is still unknown to many, though. Pronounced 'ker-see-yo', the name comes from Spanish, meaning a short course.

Cursillo is perhaps best known for the short course it runs as a residential long weekend, usually Thursday evening to

Sunday afternoon. The theme is 'a short course in Christian living'. The emphasis is on living out the faith that we have been given. What do people who attend the weekend make of it? Here's a few comments from the most recent one, held last November;

"A wonderful spirit-filled experience of the joy of God's grace."

"The atmosphere was exactly what one would expect to find in a Christian community grounded in love for our Lord."

That reference to 'community' is important in Cursillo; we expect to grow in God's grace together. One weekend can be great in any area of life, but much more is needed to sustain the experience. The 'short course in Christian living' leads to group meetings; small gatherings and more occasionally larger numbers who offer mutual support, encouragement and accountability.





These regular small-group meetings have been at the heart of Cursillo since the origins of the movement in Spain sixty years ago. It all sprang from a desire among Christians to refocus themselves on the essentials of being a Christian, and becoming more effective witnesses for Christ in mission. From Spain its insights and methods spread to North America and then to Britain. Its influence now is seen all over the country. Recent popular nurture courses show traces of its work, helping the church in mission, and, close to home, the recent Diocesan Rule of Life material drew heavily upon its resources.

Cursillo's greatest impact, though, is in the lives of ordinary people. You'll not find two people the same who are involved with Cursillo, but you will usually discover a growing confidence in Christ and a sense of joy that just bubbles up from within!

I hope that sounds familiar, because it's what the life of each church in the Diocese is about. Cursillo is simply a movement within the Church to help the Church be more itself. That's the testimony I can offer, that Cursillo has refreshed and deepened my own ministry, and many others tell me of the greater engagement they've been led to.

If you want to know more, try having a chat to someone who's involved with Cursillo, or contact me on 01492 583579 or Marion Watts on 01352 741350.

The Revd Dr Peter Wykes asks, 'Why do I need spiritual direction?'

All Christians are on a journey – a spiritual journey through life, growing closer and closer to God. Sometimes the journey can seem easy, whilst at other times the going can be very hard. For many, going to Church regularly and trying to lead a good life can be sufficient to enable them to grow spiritually. For others, just going to church does not answer their questions, and they need further signposts on their journey towards salvation. The role of spiritual direction is to find the signposts.

Spiritual direction is easier to describe by stating what it is not; it is not about solving problems or dealing with crises, nor about pastoral care or confession. It is about help with spiritual growth. It may be done informally between 2 friends, or in a group. It may be done formally between a recognised spiritual director and someone seeking direction. It may be a short-term relationship, or a life-long mutual searching for God between two people. It is for everyone, ordained or lay, life-long Christians and those new to the faith.

For those who wish to go deeper into the mystery of God, the College of Spiritual Direction can provide you with a guide who will help you on your journey. Direction is utterly confidential, offered at no cost, at a time and place convenient to you.

Please speak to your parish priest, or phone Revd Dr Peter Wykes on 01745 730263

DATHLU CENHADAETH FYDEANG CELEBRATING WORLD MISSION

Come and enjoy a time of celebration at the World Mission Day at St Asaph Cathedral on Saturday 8th March, starting at 2 p.m. - including stalls and presentations, and a special act of worship in which offerings can be made for the Diocesan World Mission Appeal.

This year's appeal will be for church-based development work in Sierra Leone and training needs in South-West Tanganyika, and parishes are invited and challenged to do some fund-raising for this year's appeal or to make a donation of at least £10. Help us to make a difference!

There will be a Fairtrade stall - the event marks the close of FairTrade Fortnight - and Bishop Michael Westall, formerly of South West Tanganyika, and Anna Jane Evans of Christian Aid, who has recently visited Sierra Leone, will both be in attendance.

John White is The Leprosy Mission's new Area Coordinator for Wales. Here he writes to introduce himself and the work he represents.

Officially, someone in the world is diagnosed with leprosy at least every two minutes. The Leprosy Mission has been helping leprosy sufferers for over 130 years, and every year it improves the lives of around a million affected individuals. Today's multidrug therapy stops the otherwise inevitable decline into increasing loss of sensation, paralysis, muscle wastage, and deformity, while at the same time, surgical techniques, many pioneered by TLM, restore stiffened hands and unseeing eyes, and artificial limbs restore mobility (and dignity). And then there are the psychological, social, and economic issues surrounding leprosy that TLM is doing much to improve. Our aim is not just to treat disease but to transform lives.



Through its Area Coordinators for Wales, TLM has had a personal presence in the principality for many years, and established many close and lasting relationships with churches across the country. We see this as a partnership in God's work, as churches and TLM work together to bring His kingdom to individuals and situations that need His loving intervention. Of course, not least in all of this is the offer of spiritual healing through faith in Jesus Christ.

We deeply value and nurture the network of support across Wales that now exists, but we also want that network to be forward-looking and growing (like TLM itself), with as many churches as possible sharing in this life-changing work. If you or your church do not have an involvement with TLM at present, please do get in touch with me, **John White, The Leprosy Mission, 29 Cilonen Road, Three Crosses, Swansea, SA4 3PH. 01792 872438 or johnw@tlmew.org.uk**



At the end of the Family Harvest Service on Sunday 7th October, the congregation at Christ Church, **Bwlch-y-cibau**, created a line of pennies, stretching from the church door, down the path towards the lychgate for 125 feet. During the service the children gave a presentation on the meaning of harvest. Children of all ages



took part, some as young as two years old. The pennies, along with the harvest collections, were donated to the Farm Crisis Network. Pictured left to right, the Revd Michael Balkwill, Sarah Howells, Katie Howells and Catherine Howells.

At a service in Bangor Cathedral on 17th November, choristers from both **Rhyl** and **Ruthin** were presented with awards by the Archbishop of Wales, Dr Barry Morgan. Linda Maun and Michael McEvoy (pictured right) received Archbishop of Wales' Certificate of Merit in Church Music. Mike has sung in the choir at St Thomas', Rhyl, for 50 years, Linda for 30 years.

Certificates of Merit were also presented to mother & daughter Molly Jones (82 years' service) and Louvaine Lloyd Jones (56 years), David Jones (71 years), K. Hawkins (43 years), Carolyn Baines (28 years) & Gretta Davies (25 years), all from



St Peter's, Ruthin. The highest award, the Archbishop of Wales' Award for Church Music, given for outstanding musical ability, was presented to Margaret Parr, recognising her voluntary work conducting the choir and deputising for the organist.

During the service, Dr Morgan said, "These awards recognise the dedication, talent and hard work put in week after week by those people; from the



In the photograph, from left to right, David Jones, Gretta Davies, Louvaine Lloyd Jones, Molly Jones and Margaret Parr.

professionally trained musicians to the skilled volunteers of our churches and chapels". The awards are open to musicians from all denominations of Christian worship.

St Mary's Church, **Llanfair Talhaiarn** held a coffee morning on 23rd November to raise money to send sixty Ugandan orphanage children and their volunteer teachers to a hotel for their Christmas dinner. The coffee morning aimed to raise £250, the cost of the lunch; the final total, however, was £700. "An excellent achievement - thank you to everyone!"



Talhaiarn coffee morning

says the Rector, the Revd Rex Matthias. Four children from Ysgol Emmanuel, Rhyl, the school that has set up the link with the Ugandan School, attended the event to

inform the people about Uganda, the Kidron Valley Orphanage School and John, the pastor and founder of the school, who visited Wales during October this year. St Mary's Church and Ysgol Emmanuel are now looking at ways to joint fund digging a well closer to the school, because at present the children have to walk 3km to fetch water. The venture will cost in the region of £1,500. If you wish to make a donation please contact a member of the church on 01745 720273 or the school on 01745 353447.

Just over four years ago the Parish of **Bala** took some major and brave decisions; three churches were closed and the parishes amalgamated to become one. Although this brought much pain and heartache, the Parish entered into a new chapter in their lives with faith and confidence - a major re-ordering project



was embarked upon whereby Christ Church was completely transformed and repaired. On November 26th the church was reopened after the congregation had been 'homeless' for 9 months, during which time they worshipped and held their meetings at Ysgol Beuno Sant (Church in Wales School) and at The White Lion Hotel. The opening service was a great occasion of celebration and thanksgiving as Bishop John, the Revd Nia

Wyn Morris, Rector, and Roy Olsen, Architect, addressed the congregation of three hundred gathered there.

Christ Church and its project has attracted some media and other interest. Why? The Rector says, "You need to visit the church to answer this question for yourself. A number of churches today have, or are, planning to undergo re-ordering projects and all are to be commended for this as it is a mammoth task as far as planning and fundraising is concerned. Bala's project has cost over £600,000 and some have criticised such expenditure on a church 'building'.



However, all who have visited the re-ordered Christ Church agree that there is something quite special about what they encounter upon entering the church. It's been modernised, there is a toilet and kitchen facilities, a meeting room, comfortable chairs, and an efficient heating system - and there is 'space'. The worshipping area of the church has been beautified - the old architecture having been enhanced and the modern touches having been introduced with sensitivity and care. Words cannot convey; those who are keen to see for themselves need to visit!" The good news is that Christ Church is open every day from 9 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. For a more informed and guided visit please contact the Rector, the Revd Nia Wyn Morris, 01678 521047.

The Advent season got off to a busy start at **St Asaph Cathedral** with donkey droppings, candles and carols! An interactive advent calendar, twenty-four boxes of things to make, do or eat, took place at the same time as St Asaph City Council's Party in the Street for Christmas, and the turning on of the Christmas lights. As well as seeing Santa in the street, children were invited to come along and investigate the twenty-four boxes. Things such as tidying up after Sam the donkey by scooping up the donkey droppings (chocolate covered raisins), helping to build a fire for the shepherds, making angels and reporting to the Roman soldier provided entertainment for over a hundred children and their parents. The Chaplain, Revd Vittoria Hancock, said



Jacob, and Sam the donkey, with friends John Foxlee and Carole Derry, at the Cathedral.

"The event was designed to explain the background to Christmas, and was an opportunity for people to explore the Cathedral and enjoy themselves."

The Advent season continued on Sunday with the increasingly popular Candle-lit Advent Carol Service, attended by over two hundred people. The Cathedral choirs led the worship, processing slowly

round the building as the Cathedral gradually emerged from darkness into light. This service is becoming, for many, the beginning of the Christmas celebrations, allowing time and space to reflect and draw breath before the mad rush of preparations for Christmas.

Monday saw a 'fast-forward' to Christmas carols, as the Cathedral again welcomed the BBC Radio Wales team to record the Christmas morning service from St Asaph Cathedral. A congregation drawn from the town and further afield came to join in the worship. The Bishop of St Asaph spoke and the Cathedral choirs sang.



A professional theatre props maker made these realistic figures for the nativity scene in **Bryneglwys** church a few years' ago and they have made a regular appearance at Christmas ever since. The Revd Heather Fenton is wondering whether another church would like to offer them hospitality next Christmas, in return for a financial contribution to Bryneglwys. Contact her on 01490 412169 or revheather@btconnect.com if you are interested.



The nativity play at Christ Church, **Bwlch-y-cibau**, was performed during the Christingle service on Sunday 16th December, conducted by the Revd Michael Balkwill. The church was full as people came to see children of all ages take part, some as young as two years old. There was a lovely atmosphere when the lights were switched off and the Christingle candles lit. In the picture, Mary is played by Catherine Howells, Joseph by Rhys Price; the narrator was Catrin Jones.



The Revd Warren Williams and his congregation were called outside the parish church of **Meifod** to witness the

Young Adventurers' nativity play. The reason for this al fresco performance was entirely due to Harry the donkey's puzzling refusal to step inside the church; he has pattered his way down the aisle quite happily in the past. He atoned for this sudden burst of stubbornness (he is a donkey, after all) by joining the children as they went carol singing around the village. Later, as Glen and Mike handed out mince pies and mulled wine in front of their own stable in the village, he gave every child a donkey ride in celebration of the day. Harry and friends are pictured on the front cover of Teulu Asaph.

A visit to St Paul's Church, **Colwyn Bay**, concluded with an unexpected surprise for Joe Bellamy (81) when the Vicar, Father Nigel Williams called him forward to receive a medal in recognition of his War Service as a Bevin Boy, working down Black Park Colliery, Chirk. It is not widely known that some forty-eight thousand men were forcibly conscripted from 1943 onwards to work down the coalmines of England, Scotland and Wales. Taking their name from the then Minister of Labour and National Service, Ernest Bevin, their contribution to World War Two was to vitally fuel the war effort from the coalface.

At the outbreak of War with Germany in September 1939, the British Government had allowed experienced coal miners to be called up into the armed services. Men were also allowed to transfer from pit work to higher paid jobs in other reserved occupations - at the time it was hoped that gaps in the coal mining industries would be taken up by the unemployed. But by mid-1943, over thirty-six thousand coal miners had left the industry for better paid jobs, leaving the coalmines in dire

need of miners. Despite asking service men and conscripts to opt for this now reserved occupation, little impact was made on the numbers needed. Coal production slumped to dangerously low levels and by the end of 1943 it was estimated that Britain had only 3 weeks supply of coal in reserve. In response, Ernest Bevin masterminded a scheme to put a proportion of conscripted men into the mines instead of the armed services.



Half of the forty-eight thousand Bevin Boys were selected by ballot and the remainder opted for the mines as an alternative to serving in the forces. The ballot consisted of a number being drawn from a hat every month for twenty months. All men whose National Service Registration Number ended with that digit were directed into coal mining. Any refusal to comply with the direction resulted in a heavy fine or imprisonment under the wartime Emergency Powers Act.

The programme was demobilised in 1948. Bevin Boys returning from service received no medals, nor did they have the right to

return to the jobs they had at the beginning of the war, unlike other servicemen. The Bevin Boys were not fully recognised for their service until 1995, 50 years after VE Day, in a speech by Queen Elizabeth II.

On Wednesday 20 June 2007 Tony Blair informed the House of Commons that the thousands of conscripts who worked down coal mines in World War II would

receive a special honour; the "Bevin Boys" would now be rewarded with a commemorative badge. The application form for the badge is now available and can be obtained by calling the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency helpline on 0800 169 2277 or by visiting www.veterans-uk.info. The first badge will be awarded in March 2008, the 60th anniversary of the last Bevin Boy being demobbed.

Do you look after someone?

Are you looking after a relative or friend who, because of a disability, sensory impairment and/or the effects of age could not manage without your help? North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS) may be able to help you.

NEWCIS

- organises informal events & friendly drop-ins for Carers
- can give information on the statutory and voluntary support available in your area
- publishes an informative newsletter every quarter
- provides free training, e.g. First Aid, Moving & Handling, Stress Management, Long Term Illnesses Awareness, Healthy Eating & more
- can inform your GP that you are a Carer and they will flag your medical notes accordingly.

For more information Call the NEWCIS Team: 01352 751436

Teulu Asaph, Sharing Good News with the Family of the Diocese

Editor: Revd. Peter Mackriell, Diocesan Communications Officer.

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petermackriell@churchinwales.org.uk

What is your good news? Let us know what is happening in your parish or deanery. Interesting photographs and short articles particularly welcome. Croesewir unrhyw erthyglau ynglyn a digwyddiadau eglwysig yn Gymraeg. Gellir cynnwys crynodeb byr o'r erthygl, na ddylai fod yn fwy na 250 o eiriau, yn Saesneg. Diolch yn fawr.

Deadlines: April/May edition: **21st February**

June/July edition: **16th April**