



Beating the Boundaries – a tradition revived

Parishioners in Abergele revived the centuries old custom of beating the parish boundary on Saturday 18 July, in order to mark the Year of St Elfod, the 1200th anniversary of the death of the saint who gave land for the building of a church in Abergele. Beginning at St Michael's Church, groups set off in a number of directions to cover various sections of the 25 mile route, waved off by the Mayor of Abergele, Councillor Delyth Macrae.



One group covered the section from Llanddulas to Belgrano; another walked the eastern boundary bordering on St George and Llanfair Talhaiarn parishes; while a group on horseback followed the western boundary which borders on Llanddulas and Betws yn Rhos parishes; these two groups met up at Moelfre.

Traditionally undertaken a few weeks after Easter, beating the bounds took place annually to ensure that the location of the parish boundary was known by a large number of people – something essential in the days before maps were commonplace.

More news from parishes on pages 15-20

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"Llefara, Arglwydd, canys y mae dy was yn gwrando"
"Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3.10)



There is a tiny but fascinating mystery sitting on my desk at the moment. A card has arrived wishing me a "holy and disciplined Ramadan" (The holy month of fasting and prayer in Islam). It is signed "+Rowan", and ends with the exhortation "Allah is Great!". Now, if nothing else, I know his signature well enough to know that this example is not the Archbishop of Canterbury's. Another Bishop Rowan perhaps, who is taking Ramadan rather seriously? I suspect it is more likely to be a spoof. But who would be so energised as to take the trouble to produce a large card on the theme of Ramadan, send it to me (and how many other bishops?), and what would be the point of it?

I think it is probably intended as some sort of riposte to the fact that a little while ago now, Archbishop Rowan advocated the adoption of some parts of sharia (Islamic) law into the law of the United Kingdom. This raised a lot of hackles at the time, and The Sun even called for Rowan's resignation. Now this present card has set me thinking.

First, I think we must be impressed with the growing confidence and commitment of many Muslims in this country. Ramadan will be celebrated with much more commitment than Lent. Of course,

I loathe and despise the expressions of violent extremism, unrepresentative of this great religion; but I am impressed by the passion with which many muslims are embracing their faith and the very serious commitments it evokes – in a peaceful and respectful manner. Just the respect accorded to the Koran – always handled reverentially, always given the top and foremost place in any muslim household's bookshelf – has a lot to challenge us about the way in which we Christians handle the Bible.

But there is also the challenge of hospitality. Is Great Britain a nation today in which we are hospitable to minorities, making them feel valued, cherished, respected? I think this was the point of Archbishop Rowan's lecture actually – are there areas of deeply held muslim practice which can be affirmed by our society in our welcome to them without contradicting the values upon which British society is built? I fear that the great British tradition of hospitality is under threat – even to express Christian faith is becoming something which people poke fun at in some media.

At its best, the card sent to me is a bit of fun; at its worst, it might represent an intolerance of people who are different, and a snide response to the Archbishop's seeking to understand and to be hospitable.

+gregoryfleming:



Diocesan Offering Service

in the Cathedral

– Monday 12 October at 7 p.m.

Retired Clergy Association Service

in the Cathedral

– Tuesday 13 October at 11.30 a.m.

The Resurrection Choir of St Petersburg

in St Collen's Church, Llangollen

– Thursday 22 October at 7.30 p.m.

Tickets £8: Contact Gethin and Eulanwy Davies 01978 860185

College of Spiritual Direction Service

in the Cathedral

– Saturday 24 October at 10 a.m.

The BIG Breakfast - served in Leeswood Community Centre

– Saturday 24 October

from 9.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.

Alternative Hallowe'en Event

in St Asaph Cathedral

– Saturday 31 October from 5 – 7 p.m.

Cathedral Choir Association 32nd

Anniversary Concert in the Cathedral

– Saturday 31 October 5 – 7 p.m.

Operation Christmas Child Service

in St Asaph Cathedral

– Sunday 15 November at 3.30 p.m.

Prisons Week with the theme of

"Hold Fast to Hope." (see page 5)

– Sunday 15 – Saturday 21 November

Festival of Christmas Trees in the Parish

Church, High Street, Prestatyn

– Monday 23 – Saturday 28 November

Weekdays, 1 p.m. – 6.30 p.m.;

Saturday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Daily musical interludes, by local schools

Further information at

www.parihofprestatyn.org.uk

Contact 01745 853780 / 859065

A Christmas Carol in St Asaph Cathedral.

The interactive calendar is back!

– Friday 27 November from 6 – 8 p.m.

Christmas Fun Day in Christ Church, Pontblyddyn

– Saturday 28 November 2 – 4 p.m.

Candlelit Advent Carol Service

in St Asaph Cathedral

– Sunday 29 November at 3.30 p.m.

Advent Confirmation in St Asaph Cathedral

– Tuesday 1 December at 3.30 p.m.

Light up a Life in St Asaph Cathedral

– Friday 4 December at 6 p.m.

Christmas Tree Festival at St Michael's Church, Llanfynydd

– Saturday 5 - Sunday 13 December

From 1- 4 p.m. Monday to Friday;

10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Saturdays;

12 noon – 4 p.m. on Sundays.

Contact Mary Restall 01352 771359

Trelawnyd Male Voice Choir Concert

in St Asaph Cathedral

– Sunday 6 December at 8 p.m.

Christmas Services at the Cathedral

Nine Lessons and Carols

– Christmas Eve at 7.30 p.m.

Midnight Eucharist

– Christmas Eve at 11.30 p.m.

Holy Eucharist

– Christmas Day at 8 a.m.

Choral Eucharist

– Christmas Day at 11 a.m.

Evening Prayer

– Christmas Day at 3.30 p.m.

HYSBYSFWRDD NOTICEBOARD

It was **St Matthew's Church Field Trust** that made a donation towards the refurbishment of Church House, Gresford; this is a charitable trust, independent of St Matthew's Church, Buckley. *This is a correction to the item on page 9 in the last edition of Teulu Asaph.*

Following the closure of The Shop @ St Giles in Wrexham, church supplies may now be ordered from **Manna Christian Bookshop** at 17 Charles Street, Wrexham LL13 8BT Tel: 01978 364405. They have agreed to stock, or order in, altar breads, baptism candles and certificates, and other church supplies from major sources such as Kevin Mayhew and Charles Farris. The only item that they cannot currently supply is communion wine.



Save the Family, the homeless families' charity, has launched its first ever 'Together for Tea' week. It will take place on the 26 October – 2 November. 'Save the Family' invites you to help raise funds to keep homeless families together by hosting a tea party for friends, family or members of the community. Why not

bake your own cakes or hold a jumble sale as well to raise a little extra cash? It's simple – contact 01244 409100 or angella.rawsthorne@savethefamily.uk.com for an information pack.

'Save the Family' aims to keep families together and prevent children being taken into care when they are made homeless through no fault of their own. Staff members help parents ensure their family does not become homeless again. They offer sessions in life coaching, literacy, budgeting, cookery and self esteem. They also work with the children to release potential and aspirations for the future. The charity says, "We can only help a fraction of the families that are in need; with your support we can help more."

Many people will know of **North Powys Decorative & Fine Arts Society** through the work of its Church Recorders, people who compile inventories of the possessions of churches to a nationally agreed format. Churches at Welshpool, Leighton, Bwlch-y-cibau and, currently, Llansilin, have been recorded in this way.

The Society is affiliated to the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies and is able to draw upon its list of accredited speakers to give lectures and

Organ Scholarship/Assistant Organist

position sought by an organist trained in all aspects of church music. Please contact Shari-Ann Bolton 07971 013287 / 01981 250535

talks to members. A variety of topics are covered, such as fine art, porcelain and pottery, music, architecture, furniture, garden history, and even a recent one about the mathematics of juggling! Visits are also arranged to places of outstanding interest and members receive a well-illustrated quarterly journal produced nationally.

The North Powys society meets at Welshpool during the winter months and at Gregynog during the summer. Further details may be obtained from the membership secretary, Mrs Mary Thomson on 01691 610412 mary@rednalmill.co.uk or from the national website www.nadfas-wm.org.uk There are other local societies, including those in Mold and Shrewsbury.



Prisons are never out of the public gaze, especially when there are problems. Sadly, the portrayal is usually negative and the response of the public is often caricatured by equally negative media comment. How does the Christian respond and how does this relate to the Gospel? This is at the heart of **Prisons Week**, which, this year, is 15 - 21 November.

Prisons Week was established on an ecumenical basis in 1975 to pray for, and raise awareness of, the needs of prisoners and their families, victims of offenders, prison staff and all who care. This year, the theme will be 'Hold Fast to Hope', based on Hebrews 10.23, from that Sunday's epistle. The prayer leaflet for this year says that we have "a hope that is rooted in our belief that the divine spark is in all people, that no-one and no

situation is hopeless or beyond redemption, and that change can and does take place."

This year, Prisons Week asks for prayer each day for victims, prisoners, families, prison staff, the community and the justice system - all who need hope to work through the challenges they face. The Prayer Leaflet can be downloaded from the Prisons Week Website at www.prisonsworld.org where you will also find resources for the week. For more information, contact Revd Prebendary Bob Payne bob.payne@ukgateway.net

Are you thinking about who might come for **Christmas** this year? Perhaps you would like to make it a bit different? Some of the adults from overseas who are currently studying at U.K. universities would love to spend a couple of days in a real home, rather than on a deserted campus. It is interesting to share Christmas with people for whom it is all quite new (many international students are from China, for example). HOST has been linking students with hospitable volunteers for 22 years, at Christmas and also one-off weekends throughout the year. HOST is a registered charity backed by the Foreign Office and many universities. It is not necessary for hosts to live near a university, as students are prepared to travel for this unique experience! See www.hostuk.org or call HOST's voluntary regional organiser for North Wales, Soili Barker, on 01948 830549.

The **Berse Dreilincourt Charity** closes applications for this year's grants on Friday 6 November. Grants are given to assist with educational expenses for girls (see the last edition of Teulu Asaph or the Diocesan website)



Tracey White, Funding & Parish Support Officer, reflects on being stewards - now and always.

I hope that by now you will have all heard the phrase **Investing in Mission** - whether it's the clergy talking about it, me writing about it, or trying to avoid Mrs Jones' invitation to the teaching sessions! When the idea was first mooted, we were keen that the outcome of the modest investment we made would be worthwhile and that this should be evaluated. So, what were we hoping to achieve and how could we measure the impact of Investing in Mission?



- We hoped to see a more realistic level of giving across the Diocese (we were giving the least per person of all the dioceses in Wales).
- We hoped that some of the study groups would continue beyond Investing in Mission.
- We hoped that we could move away from seeing our giving to church as being a book balancing exercise, and becoming more of an opportunity to express our faith.

So, how did it go?

Fifty one parishes saw an increase of 20% or more being given to the church, with eight parishes seeing their giving at least doubled. The Diocese of St Asaph is no longer at the bottom of the giving 'league table', although being fifth instead of sixth means we still have a long way to go.

Many of you have invested time and energy in preaching, teaching and attending sessions. We have had anecdotal feedback from several parishes where the study groups have continued, not necessarily as 'house groups', but maybe in the church hall or a local school. One church carried out the teaching sessions during the Sunday service, and the congregation have asked for this to become a regular feature during the church year.

It became obvious during last year that the programme challenged us in unexpected ways. We were combining the tricky subject of money with a way of learning that was not familiar to many of our churches. From the feedback I've had it was the small group discussions which generated the greatest concern. The first challenge was how

to get people to join the groups. The parishes that had good turnouts put it down to encouraging people in, personally inviting people to join, rather than asking them to put their name on a list. It's much harder to resist when someone says to you after church "please come and join my group". Some churches found that a neutral school room or village hall was a better place to host a group, rather than someone's home.



We also caused confusion by asking the clergy not to lead the small groups. We were concerned that they would be overwhelmed with having to attend them all if there were a number of groups running. There was also concern that people might be afraid to discuss issues openly in front of a theologically trained expert. Some interpreted this as needing to hand the programme over to the laity and this worked well in some places. In others, without the spiritual leadership of the clergy, the programme foundered. In some parishes, the clergy decided that it was better to risk running the small groups themselves rather than do nothing. And this seems to have worked well. One parish liked the programme, but not the name, so they changed the name and did it anyway. So those of you who were unable to have a go at it last year might want to have another look at it, and adapt it to suit your parish.

I think the Investing in Mission programme is a useful tool to do just that, but it's not the only tool. During the next twelve months, I will be offering other resources which might be of use to you in your teaching on stewardship. I hope you will feel able to use them creatively in a way which suits your parish. We have made a good start, and need to keep up the momentum.

Invitation to Clergy

We are holding a Stewardship Symposium on Tuesday 24 November from 10.30 a.m. – 2.30 p.m. at St Margaret's Church Hall in Wrexham. Several members of the clergy who have used Investing in Mission by adapting it to suit their parish will be giving feedback on what they did, highlighting what worked and what didn't. There will then be an open discussion to allow you to share ideas and information. If you have yet to run the programme, you may find it useful to come along and pick up some tips. If you've used the material in a creative way which might be useful to others, please join us and share your ideas. Refreshments and lunch will be provided. Please indicate your intention to attend by email traceywhite@churchinwales.org.uk so that I can make sure we have lunch for everyone.



The Revd David Lewis, Church & Society Officer, reminds us about this year's Diocesan Offering.

This year's Diocesan Offering Service is on Monday 12 October at 7 p.m. It would be lovely to see as many people as possible in the Cathedral. But if your parish is not able to be represented, please can you ensure cheques are sent to Mr Graham Walker at the Diocesan Office. Your donations are so important to the work of both our charities, Samaritans and Hafal.

Here, in his own words, is the story of Ryan Jones and how Hafal reached out to him.

"Before I became ill, I qualified as a graphic designer. I always had an aptitude for art and design. Since I was young, I've always really enjoyed working with visuals. Still do, in fact. So I studied graphic design and achieved a Higher National Diploma in the subject. But before I had a chance to develop my skills any further, I found myself getting very unwell. Various parts of my life were going wrong, everything was getting out of control and I lost the plot. For the next few years, I hardly went outside my house as my illness developed. They were the really bad times, but slowly I came to realise what was happening to me. And that's the first step for anyone, I think. To make yourself better, first you've got to accept that you have a problem. If you can do that, then you can start working out how to solve the problem. Then you can start taking all those small but vital steps that will slowly improve your condition.

"I was in touch with the charity Hafal; they've been very supportive of me in lots of ways and are very keen on helping people work out their own, individual routes to recovery. They understood what I wanted to do and they helped me to locate some great training opportunities that suited me."

Your money will help our charities reach out to people in need like Ryan. Please support us!



David and Fay Denerley, members of Deaf Church North Wales, were amongst those who enjoyed the **All One in Christ Gathering** on September 12. Disabled people, and those supporting them in the church, explored Revelation 3.20, "I stand at the door and knock... I will come in and eat with you...", and the themes of welcome and hospitality. This included cooking pizzas and dipping fruit in chocolate, as well as making a "welcome" hanger for the door – and worship together. The next Gathering is being planned, but the date is to be confirmed. Watch the diocesan website. All Welcome!

Deanery Focus

Canolbwyntio ar Ddeoniaeth



Denbigh Deanery

Mrs Meg Mullock draws together contributions from across the Deanery of Denbigh, nestling in the heart of the Vale of Clwyd. She begins in the market town that gives the deanery its name.

The parish churches of St Mary's and of St Marcella's support Denbigh's diverse population of over 9,000. Conversely, tiny All Saints Sinan (Cefn Parish) supports the smallest, but very dedicated, community. Many of our church buildings are ancient and of historical interest; they are proudly cared for by their communities and congregations. Denbighshire's 'Tourist Trail' leaflet draws visitors' attention to these churches, which are rarely locked. Sacred space is there for those without faith, as well as the faithful, and many linger for a moment of quiet spiritual reflection and prayer.

For the past eleven years, our Deanery has been led by Canon Philip Williams; he is supported by an active and caring Chapter who meet weekly for prayer, discussion and sharing of information. They work closely together and also enjoy occasional social days out accompanied by their families; they greatly value their fellowship, regarding it as the bedrock of the Deanery. With Canon Philip there are four other incumbents, including Archdeacon Bernard, plus two non-stipendiary ministers. They are now joined by a 'House-For-Duty' priest as we welcome Revd Philip Clarke to the parishes of Bodfari and Caerwys (see page 17).

The language and style of worship in our churches is according to the preference of their congregations and varies from purely traditional to

alternative choices encompassing family worship and young people. Services are in English, Welsh, or bi-lingual; attendance at a Sunday Welsh Service is always possible within the Deanery. Cytûn is active in Denbigh and our rural villages enjoy close ecumenical fellowship. As founder members of the Denbighshire Fairtrade coalition, our churches provide the largest range of fairly traded goods within the county. Apart from all their other activities, Mothers' Union members particularly enjoy their annual get-together when they are entertained by a light-hearted speaker.



Denbigh - www.maryandmarcella.org.uk

Radical structural changes have recently taken place at St. Mary's, Denbigh and this large Victorian church has metamorphosed into a welcoming light, airy and spacious building; pews have been replaced by chairs, there are meeting rooms, a large kitchen and toilets. The congregation looks forward to possibilities of fresh expressions of Christian worship such as 'café church', something for young families with small children, also more youth-orientated events. They want to extend a welcome to other community groups and encourage them to use the new space and facilities. There are exciting thoughts of sharing some parish activities with the Deanery. The Rector is assisted by a Lay Reader (another in training), 6 active Worship Leaders, 2 Pastoral Assistants and one retired Priest. "Cantiemus" now lead the singing in some parish and deanery services.



Denbigh's Worship On Wednesdays Group at Deanery Candlemas

As a last resting place for many Denbighites St. Marcella's is very special to the town, it has had a small 'facelift' and, with a coating of white lime wash, is now a proud landmark. The congregation is very welcoming and worship is usually of a more traditional nature.

Trefnant, Tremeichion, Cefn Meriadog

Holy Trinity at Trefnant is always open for prayer. It is a Victorian Church, built by Gilbert Scott and, using local materials, there are French style carvings of local vegetation. Plans are afoot for provision of modern facilities, meeting rooms etc.

St. Mary's, Cefn, is another Victorian church which has a small, faithful congregation meeting weekly for evening services. Isolated on a hill it is visible for miles.

In the hamlet of Marli is All Saints, Sinan (www.sinanchurch.org) It is a tiny church which has been sympathetically modernised for worship and/or meetings. On Maundy Thursday an Agape meal is held; it attracts people from further afield, as does the candlelit All Saints' Day Taizé Eucharist. The popular Sinan Singers meet regularly and also accompany some services. Large amounts of money have been raised by the congregation for various charities including Anajali School for deprived children in Nairobi.

Tremeirchion is the only medieval church in the U.K. dedicated to Corpus Christi; it is always open for prayer. Lively and active, the congregation enjoys close relationships with St Beuno's and Tremeirchion Chapel. For over forty years an overflowing audience has gathered on Good Friday to hear, and participate in, the performance of St Matthew's Passion.

Llanrhaeadr yng Nghimeirch www.stdyfnog.org.uk Nantglyn

St. Dyfnog's, Llanrhaeadr, is blessed with a nearby holy well; it is a place of pilgrimage and, for many, an extension of the sacred space that the church building provides. In the mid eighties the need to underpin the foundations provided the opportunity to

incorporate an area for varied uses - concerts, meetings, fund-raising sales/exhibitions, book sales and, of course, the welcome post-service coffee and chat. One person is licensed to administer the chalice and there are two parish visitors. Services are enhanced by a robed choir which, for special occasions, is augmented by visiting singers; notably Good Friday when Stainer's Crucifixion is sung. It is felt that all these activities are opportunities for outreach and mission.



St James's, Nantglyn, has a small, loyal congregation and, with its nearby Community Hall, is the hub of the village. In the churchyard an ancient yew tree has a 'built-in' pulpit, but vicar and congregation prefer their sermons to be in the church!

The Parish of Llandyrnog & Llangwyfan - www.llandyrnog-parish.co.uk

These two parishes were united as one benefice in 2005, with one PCC and shared finances. Evensong has been re-introduced and there is now a scheme of services designed to complement each other. Parishioners are encouraged to regard both churches as theirs; perhaps harder for lifelong residents but particularly easy for the many newcomers to Llandyrnog. Both these ancient churches are unlocked. With the ministry of retired priests for many years and, latterly, that of Archdeacon Bernard, a very committed and full lay involvement has developed; 3 people are licensed to administer the elements. The 'Deanery Plan' is that the Parish should eventually return to traditional parish ministry in a group with the parishes of Caerwys and Bodfari. It is considered to be of vital importance that the tradition of lay involvement should continue and grow under this arrangement. The Parish's relationship with the entire community is strengthened beyond measure by the regular publication of 'Village Voice', which fully encompasses church and community news & views.

St Stephen's, Bodfari & St Michael's Caerwys

Both these communities have evidence of Roman occupation. Victorian zeal largely rebuilt Bodfari Church, but it has received a white lime wash and stands tall for all in the northern part of the Vale to see. Caerwys church building dates back to the 13th century; today's congregation warmly welcomes visitors and has hosted our Deanery's Mission Service when we lit candles on a world map and prayed for individuals serving with organisations who care for the worldwide poor and deprived. Both parishes have been cared for by their locally born non-stipendiary minister during a lengthy interregnum and now look forward to welcoming their new priest.

Henllan, www.henllan.com/st_sadwrns_church Llanefydd & Bylchau

These three parishes are of ancient origin, although St Thomas's, Bylchau is a Victorian building. For the past 32 years they have thrived and developed under the ministry of our current Area Dean and work closely together as a community.

There is a full range of Sunday, weekday & Holy Day services at Henllan and always a Sunday service at St Nefydd & St Mary the Virgin, Llanefydd and St Thomas's, Bylchau;

enabling this coverage are 3 Worship Leaders and a Lay Reader. Many joint activities enable these churches to relate closely with their communities and other denominations. A recent development is a monthly 'soup, cake and tea' hour, held in church members' homes but open to all. Transport is offered to elderly or frail people including former villagers now in local residential care. An extension of the annual parish summer walk and pub meal is the 30 strong walking group. A History Group is now meeting in the vestry. All these 'church led' ventures reach out to the 'non religious'.

Deanery Progress

The year 2000 heralded a "sea-change" when we looked for new perspectives in our Deanery life. Quite scary, for we had to have wide-ranging frank discussions in small groups and then present our thoughts to everyone else. We survived relatively unscathed and what emerged was an enthusiastic consolidation of our Deanery pattern. Today, our meetings are well attended, relaxed, and have a much greater lay input. Aided by a guest speaker, we discuss many issues.



Our shared activities are many and various. We have two English and four Welsh Deanery Services a year; some we share with our neighbouring Deanery of Dyffryn Clwyd. We annually make pilgrimages to sacred places in or near our Deanery. Triennially the two Deaneries, accompanied by our Bishop, converge on St Saeren's, Llanynys for a family service and shared picnic. An alternative service for Ascension Day is also on our calendar, culminating in sending up a couple of symbolic fireworks from the churchyard! Tuesday of Holy Week has become our traditional day for Stations of the Cross at Pantasaph and we sing, pray and reflect our way up to the Cross. We renew our valued sense of fellowship whenever we meet and greet each other at special services held by individual parishes and we also hold popular social occasions such as Quiz Nights.

Society has changed drastically and we know we need to review and implement new and different approaches to our Mission & Outreach. Soon we will be discussing 'Acorn Christian Listeners'; Denbigh has two house groups, perhaps there is a need for Deanery House Groups and more ways of worshipping and sharing our Faith. Certainly there will be much to discuss and decisions to be made. As we continue 'Growing in Faith' our Area Dean, who has encouraged and guided us faithfully for eleven years, is now about to pass on the baton to another Deanery cleric to lead us forward in our Deanery life.





CCSW

A Counselling Service for Wales

In 1994 the Church in Wales originally considered the possibility of setting up a Counselling Service for Clergy and their families. From these initial discussions, plans were made for a counselling service. In September that year an inaugural weekend was held at St David's College, Lampeter, with potential trustees, counsellors, students and the Steering Committee. The plans of

the Service were outlined and in 1995 the Churches Counselling Service in Wales, a registered charity, was formed.

Today, the Service is open to anyone. It is a free confidential counselling service available throughout Wales to people in trouble. It provides support to help individuals to

- Deal with a crisis or problem from their own viewpoint
- Help them to understand themselves and discover the means to change their own situation
- Discover and develop their capacity for their own happiness and contribution to those around them

The service is provided by a network of both qualified and trainee counsellors, managed by a Board of Trustees and an administrator.

As the Churches' Counselling Service, the agency takes a holistic view of the individual as body, mind and spirit. It does not provide spiritual advisers but expects counsellors to recognise the spiritual dimension to life and, where appropriate, to refer on to others who provide spiritual advice.

Anyone with a personal or family problem may seek help. Clients must self refer to the service, although other voluntary organisations, public sector agencies, clergy or other church contacts, as well as doctors' surgeries, may approach the service for information on behalf of a client.

The service is free to individuals seeking help. Its volunteer counsellors freely give their own time and receive no payment for their work. In order to develop and maintain high standards the service funds extensive training, professional support and supervision of its counsellors. It is supported by grants from the Welsh Assembly Government, the Church in Wales, the Presbyterian Church in Wales and the Yapp Trust, as well as donations from Churches, individuals and other organisations.

All volunteer counsellors are supervised by qualified Supervisors in 7 regional supervision groups, including 2 serving North Wales. As an organisation, CCSW is a member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy and operates in line with their guidelines and ethics.

Contact CCSW on 0800 783 3540
or P.O. Box 712, Newport NP20 9AH



Bishop Gregory met recently with top politicians, and leaders from the world of energy, at a special conference held at the Optic Glyndŵr Centre, located on St Asaph Business Park.

Bishop Gregory was able to present a copy of the newly launched Church in Wales 'Parish Green Guide' to the Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP (pictured), Secretary of State at the Department of Energy and Climate Change, who was in attendance along with Welsh Assembly Government First Minister, with Rhodri Morgan AM, senior representatives of energy suppliers, academics from both Glyndŵr and Bangor Universities, and local councillors.



The Conference focussed on North Wales, and on its great potential to be a leading area for renewable energy, and delegates heard about the possibilities of wind farms, tidal barrages, and even a potential hydro-electric facility using sea water pumped up to the north Wales coastal mountains. Our own diocese is currently host to the SHARP factory at Llay, one of Europe's major producers of photo-voltaic cells, and also the port of Mostyn which has widely acknowledged expertise in wind farm construction. The potential for local job creation was a significant part of discussions.

But the conference was about more than technology. Energy chiefs agreed that there was a challenge to win 'hearts and minds' over to the need to both produce and use energy sustainably, and Diocesan Eco-group member Adrian Copping was impressed with the quality of discussion at the afternoon seminars. "Yes, of course there are big commercial interests", he said, "but the role that both schools and churches can play in adding an ethical dimension was recognised."

The presence of representatives from both Glyndwr and Bangor Universities emphasised the value of encouraging strong links between academic research and entrepreneurial skills, and this was something which was stressed strongly by many of the politicians present.

The conference provided fascinating insights into the need to understand local contexts of energy development and use. For example, did you know that Wales has the highest proportion of non-cavity walls in the UK? (It's because our biggest housing boom was earlier than the rest of the UK.)

Altogether, a fascinating day – and great to know that the Church is acknowledged as having a part to play in discussions about the future as well as in practical action.

Send any thoughts, on this or any other related subject, to Revd Adrian Copping, on behalf of the Diocesan Ecology Group – adriancopping@hotmail.com

New address:

**The Rectory, 9 Pen y Coed,
Nannerch, Mold CH7 5RS**

☎ 01352 741376



Year 5 in Southdown School in Buckley, in the parish of **Bistre**, have been exploring the theme of Creation in R.E. The main focus has been the Christian Creation story and this has led to discussion about how we as humans are the 'caretakers' of the planet.



To develop this further, Revd Martin Batchelor went in to school to work with classes using Isaiah 11.6-8 as inspiration for further work. The quality of the work impressed the class teachers and Martin himself. The work showed maturity and just how seriously young people think about the effect humans have on the environment.

St Paul's **Isycoed** is in Gresford Deanery, the subject of the last Deanery Focus. The first church in Isycoed was built in 1611; the present building dates from 1829.

The community there has become involved with the 'Sacred Space Project' and volunteers are recording the inscriptions on the headstones.

The oldest is 1752 and is written on the opposite side to all the others - facing west. [Any ideas why? answers please...!]

The children from St Paul's VA School are also actively involved in church projects.

The **Welshpool** group of parishes has the rare distinction of a narrow gauge railway (the Welshpool & Llanfair) calling at several stations within the group and on Sunday 17 May members of the congregations of St John's Pool Quay and St Mary's Welshpool, with friends from Welshpool Baptist Church, travelled in a specially reserved carriage from



Welshpool Raven Square Station to Castle Caereinion for a Rogation Sunday service.

It poured down almost throughout, but no-one seemed to care. Members of the congregation of St Garmon's Castle Caereinion were there at the station to provide lifts to the church, but most people walked up the lane, with Revd Mike Powell, curate, taking up the rear to ensure their safety.

The intention had been a service in the churchyard, but instead the congregation gathered in church, emerging to stand in the rain only for the closing prayers and to say the Grace together. Then everyone went to the Red Lion, where Joan and Richard had put on a tea, before heading back for the train to Welshpool. Everyone arrived in a rather soggy state, but having enjoyed a lovely afternoon out together in the delightful countryside of this part of Montgomeryshire.

In early May, St Catherine's Church Hall in **Flint** was broken into, and several thousands pounds worth of damage was done to the stained glass window and the interior of the hall. The cost of the damage largely fell on the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group; nevertheless, the parish was left to clean up the mess and to pay the excess. Some of the groups who use the hall decided to raise money for this



purpose. £75 from the Sunday School, £50 from the Brownies and Rainbows, and £127 from the Minnows group. They raised this money by a sponsored toddle around the tennis courts at the Leisure Centre in Flint. Their average age is 18 months old. Does this make them the youngest fund raisers in the Diocese of St Asaph?

St Margaret's Church, **Bodelwyddan**, held a special service on June 14 to remembers babies and children who have died or miscarried, both in Ysbyty Glan Clwyd and in the community. The service was led by the Chaplain and Vicar, the Revd G Berw Hughes, who said, "It is a very moving service and it brought comfort to those who packed into the church." There were readings by a senior doctor and senior nurse. Over 150 children were named by nurses from the maternity and gynaecology units, and a candle was given to all those present to remember their children, together with a white carnation. During the lighting of the candles, the church choir sang 'Make me a channel of your peace.' Families had the opportunity to meet representatives of the charities Sands and Chrysalis, who support the bereaved, and to visit children's graves. This service has been held every year on the second Sunday in June; having outgrown the hospital chapel it has been held in the church for about the last 10 years. If you would like a child remembered, please contact the Chaplain or the hospital gynaecology unit.

Nercwys school leavers are seen here preparing for the Church Service at St Mary's, Nercwys, in July, when they



enjoyed presentations and good wishes from the school, the Community Council, the County Council and the Church.

Susan Hellen, Churchwarden at St Mary, **Treuddyn**, had a magnificent send-off for her 36 mile sponsored bike ride around Mold Deanery (see Teulu Asaph, June/July 2009). She offers a big thank you for the welcome she received at the churches, and to all who helped her raise a magnificent £630 towards Church funds.

Set in the beautiful Glyn Ceiriog Valley, St John the Baptist Church, **Pontfadog**, celebrated its Patronal Festival at the beginning of July. As part of their celebrations there was an exhibition of wedding dresses and baptism gowns dating from 1860 to the present day.



A marquee was set up at the side of the church where local outreach groups welcomed visitors throughout the day. Volunteers provided a delicious lunch and cream teas were served continuously. It brought people together from all walks of life and denominations – and, the church wardens said, “Spread warmth and a good spirit throughout.”

On Saturday evening the parish welcomed the Pen-y-bont Fawr Male Voice Choir. Afterwards, refreshments were served at the Swan Inn, Pontfadog, where Cathy and Ian McNeill warmly welcomed everyone.

The valley united for the Patronal service on Sunday morning, led by the Revd Philip Clarke and visiting preacher, Bishop John Dudley Davies. Church wardens Helen Durnell and Kirsty Williams said, “It was encouraging to see so many there to help us celebrate the festival of St John the Baptist. Thank you to all who attended or participated. We wish Philip Clarke and his family well for the future and a happy and blessed retirement.”

The Revd Philip Clarke has moved to **Caerwys and Bodfari** where he will serve as priest-in-charge on a ‘house for duty’ basis. He is pictured here at his licensing in September, greeted by Bishop Gregory.





At Buckley's Jubilee this summer it was noticed that there has been some growth in the life of the Parish of **Bistre**. The photo shows several of the new mothers and babies who have become members of the church in the last 2 years. Choir processions on a Sunday have had to be re-organised due to the number of prams in the aisle! Because of the increase in new families coming to the 3 churches in the parish, Bistre recently started a new group for pre-school children, which includes an appropriate short service.



Team Vicar Revd Paulette Gower led her pirate crew on many adventures at **Hawarden** Benefice Holiday Club. The theme for the week was based on

'Landlubbers', a holiday club resource published by Scripture Union, focussing on Philippians 3.8, "Nothing is as wonderful as knowing Christ Jesus my Lord".

A wide range of activities was enjoyed by all and included drama, craft, sport, team games, edible craft, science, a visit to Treasure Island and It's a Knockout.

A large team of helpers ensured the success of the week. These included the team leaders, who worked with the children each day, providers of the various craft activities, ladies from St Deiniol's church who prepared the 'rations' for morning and afternoon break and the very many people who kindly supplied a delicious range of cakes and biscuits.

The week ended with the pirate crew – fortified by a hearty meal of sausage and chips – giving dramatic presentations of some of the events in St. Paul's life to a gathering of parents, grandparents, friends and parishioners.

The Church of St. Thomas, **Flint** Mountain joined forces with Bethel Methodist Church, Flint Mountain to raise funds for the League of Friends of Flint Community Hospital. A ribbon of coins was laid joining the two places of



worship. The first coin was laid by the local MP, Mr David Hanson. The event raised £290. Both congregations were anxious to work together for the benefit of the community. This is the second joint effort. Two years ago £390 was raised by the same method for Flint Lifeboat.



Rhosllanerchrugog parish celebrated 12 months of Messy Church with a fun filled 'Thank You' themed worship activity followed by a birthday party with a traditional cake and bouncy castle! Pictured here are some of the worshippers with their handmade party hats and 'Thank You God' banners.

Messy Church has been warmly received by families in the parish and God's word is being shared through a range of bible based fun activities including singing, dancing, games, crafts and much, much more.

Messy Church is held on the fourth Sunday of every month at 4 p.m. in St Mary's Church, Johnstown, near Wrexham. All welcome!

2009 is the 150th anniversary of the birth of Winifred, Countess of Dundonald. She was the only surviving

daughter of Robert Bamford-Hesketh, whose family built Gwrych Castle in Abergele, St Cynbryd's Church in **Llanddulas**, the Llanddulas Lifeboat Station, and donated the land for St Cynbryd's Church House, now Llanddulas Village Hall. Winifred was a Welsh speaker and was inducted as a bard at the 1910 National Eisteddfod.

She was a leading light in the disestablishment of The Church in Wales.

During the weekend of August 7 - 9 the parish marked Winifred's anniversary, with a concert in St Cynbryd's Church by Llanddulas Male Voice Choir, exhibitions in the Village Hall and the Church, including a display of the work to



transform the Churchyard into a village amenity with paths and gardens, and a display of Church activities. There were several 'stations' in the Church where people were invited to spend a few minutes in contemplation and prayer, the

peaceful atmosphere being enhanced by 'live' organ music.

On Sunday, there was a united service with Llanddulas Methodist Church in the morning and a Songs of Praise in the evening. Young musicians sang and played the harp, a favourite instrument of the Countess, who founded a North Wales harp competition.



"Make us proud", the Bishop of St Asaph said to members of 1st Battalion, The

The people of Christ Church, **Pontblyddyn**, were pleased to see so many friends from the local community braving the rain, at their Family Fun Day.

The indoor crèche facilities were used to the full, but the penalty shoot-out, ladybird hunt and 'Wet a Warden' also attracted attention. In fact a few of their young (and not so young) were markedly changed by the experience.



Royal Welsh, when they gathered for a service of dedication at the parish church of St Giles, **Wrexham**, on Saturday 5 September, in preparation for their departure for Afghanistan.

After exercising its right to march through the town, the battalion came to the church, which houses the Chapel of the Royal Welch Fusiliers.

Bishop Gregory said that the biblical call "to do justice and to love mercy" has particular relevance as the British army supports the work to build community in Afghanistan and as soldiers are faced with the challenge of using minimal force in difficult situations. "Do not be afraid to seek for God's help as you face danger," he said. A candle will remain lit in the Regimental Chapel in St Giles whilst the 1st Battalion is in Afghanistan.

Teulu Asaph Sharing Good News with the Family of the Diocese

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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.

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