



## Llongyfarchiadau!

The Griffiths family from Abergele had double cause to celebrate this spring. Just before Easter, the Revd Shirley Griffiths, Vicar of Abergele and St George, announced that she had been appointed by Bishop Gregory as the next Archdeacon of Wrexham. Bishop Gregory said, "Shirley is an experienced and wise parish priest, who has all the skills for which I look in an Archdeacon, and I am in no doubt whatsoever that she will be an excellent successor to the eminent ministry that Malcolm Squires has exercised as Archdeacon of Wrexham over the last nine years."

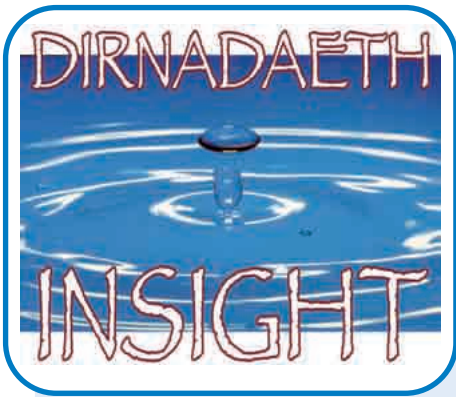
Just after Easter, Mrs Griffiths officiated at the marriage of her daughter, Anna, to Meyrick Johnson. The happy couple are pictured here with the new Archdeacon and her husband, Robin. "I'm looking forward to the new challenge," she said of her appointment, "but will be very sad to leave Abergele and St George, where my husband and I have developed many friendships and have felt ourselves to be very much part of the community."

*The Venerable Shirley Griffiths assumed her new responsibility as Archdeacon of Wrexham on June 1st. She will be moving to Llandegla in the summer, where she will be Rector, and will be installed in the Cathedral in September.*

## Also Inside...

- ◆ Bishop Gregory considers the nagging of the Holy Spirit
- ◆ Looking forward to the Diocesan Conference – digest of reports included
- ◆ The Deanery of Rhos
- ◆ People prepared to serve – evidence inside!
- ◆ Reflections on worship – at Easter and in other seasons
- ◆ SANDS – the recipient of this year's Diocesan Offering
- ◆ News and notices from our parishes

*Dyrchefwch eich calonau*  
Lift up your hearts



'Roedd y disgyblion yn cyfarfod y tu ôl i ddrwsau cauedig, a daeth yr Ysbryd Glân i lawr arnynt, a dweud "Codwch, ewch allan, a cyhoeddwch y newyddion da". Ac fe godasant, aethant allan, dechreusant bregethu a daeth y Pentecost 'yn ben blwydd yr Eglwys'.

Fe ysgrifennodd Nikos Kazantzakis, awdur 'Zorba the Greek', unwaith ddarn ac yndo'n disgrifio y greadigaeth gyfan fel ymateb i swnian yr Ysbryd Glân, a oedd yn galw sêr allan o lwch rhyngblanedol, planedau allan o sêr, bywyd allan o'r blaned, deallusrwydd a'r gallu i wneud ymateb ysbrydol allan o fywyd. Ac mae'r Ysbryd Glân yn parhau i swnian wrthym ni heddiw.

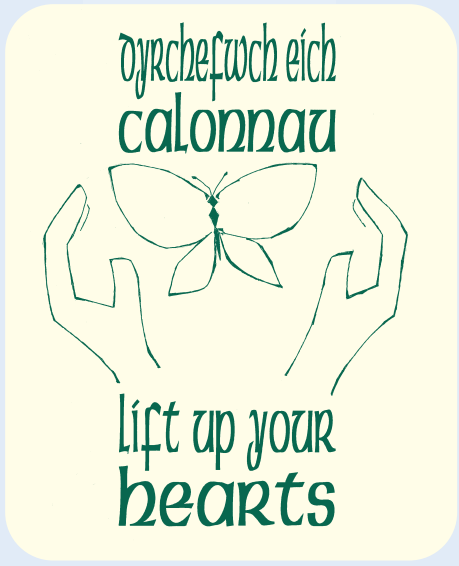
Y mis diwethaf gwelwyd 'Sul Gweinidogaeth a Galwad', pryd y gofynnwyd i bob un ohonoch ystyried a oedd yr Ysbryd Glân yn eich galw chi i weinidogaeth, neu i gael y gwroldeb i ddweud wrth rhywun arall eich bod yn meddwl fod Duw efallai yn eu galw hwynt. (Mae yna nifer rhyfeddol o storïau am alwedigaeth yn cychwyn fel hyn). Yn ôl y peth lleiaf fe'n gwahoddir ni i weddio dros alwedigaethau.

Y mis yma gwelir y Gynhadledd Esgobaethol, yn annerch thema ein blaenoriaeth gyntaf 'Galluogi a Chalonogi holl bobl Dduw'. Ac mae'r Ysbryd Glân yn dweud wrthym, "Codwch, ewch allan, a cyhoeddwch y newyddion da." Gelwir

ar bob un ohonom i fod yn asiant o newid er gwell yn ein cymdeithas, a pwynt bod yn Gristion ydyw i fyw i'r fath o fywyd mae Duw eisïau i ni, sef darganfod y boddhad o wneud ei ewyllys, a cynorthwyo'r Ysbryd i sefydlu Teyrnasiad Duw ar y Ddaear. Fe ddowch o hyd i gasgliad o adroddiadau'r swyddogion i'r Gynhadledd yn y rhifyn yma o Teulu Asaph, ond pwynt y Gynhadledd eleni fydd troi canolbwynt yr esgobaeth o gwmpas. Tydi o ddim yn "Beth mae nhw yn ei wneud y fan acw?." Mae o'n "Beth mae Duw yn ein gwahodd ni i wneud yma?." Gwelaf y Gynhadledd fel y prif gyfle pryd mae'r cynulleidfaoedd, trwy eu cynrychiolwyr, yn cael y siawns i ffurfio bywyd yr esgobaeth, pryd 'rydan ni'n gwrandao ar sut mae Duw yn siarad wrth yr eglwysi am beth sydd angen ei wneud nesaf. Gweddiwch dros y Gynhadledd, gweddiwch dros ein bywyd cyffredin.

Dyrchefwch eich calonau.

*+ gregoryflannery:*





**Bishop Gregory** with the Revd Bryn Parry Jones, on the occasion of his ordination as priest on Sunday 11 April at St Mark's Connah's Quay.

(a surprising number of stories of vocation begin in this way). At the very least, we are invited to pray for vocations.

This month sees the Diocesan Conference, addressing the theme of our first priority, 'Enabling and Encouraging the Whole People of God'. And the Holy Spirit says to us, "Get up, go out, and proclaim the good news." Each of us is called to be the agent of change for good in our society and the point of being a Christian is to live into

The disciples were meeting behind closed doors, and the Holy Spirit came down upon them, and said: "Get up, go out, and proclaim the good news". So they got up, went out, started preaching and Pentecost became 'the birthday of the Church'.

Nikos Kazantzakis, the author of 'Zorba the Greek', once wrote a piece in which he described the whole of creation as a response to the nagging of the Holy Spirit, who called stars out of interplanetary dust, planets out of stars, life out of the planet, intelligence and the capacity to make a spiritual response out of life. And the Holy Spirit continues to nag at us today.

Last month saw 'Ministry and Calling Sunday', when you were each asked to consider whether the Holy Spirit might be calling you to ministry, or to have the courage to say to someone else that you think that God might be calling them

the sort of life that God wants for us, which is finding the deep satisfaction and peace of doing his will, and assisting the Spirit to establish God's Reign on Earth. You'll find a digest of the officers' reports to the Conference in this edition of Teulu Asaph, but the point of the Conference this year will be to turn the focus of the diocese around. It is not "What are they doing over there?"; it is "What is God inviting us to do here?". I see the Conference as the main opportunity when the congregations get the chance to shape the life of the diocese through their representatives, when we listen to how God is speaking to the Churches about what needs to be done next. Pray for the Conference, pray about our common life.

Lift up your hearts.

+gregoryjonesmwy:



# O Amgylch yr Esgobaeth Around the Diocese

**Organ Recital** by Martin Brown  
in St Asaph Cathedral  
– **Wednesday 2 June** at 7.30 p.m.  
*£4 Admission including programme.*

**St Paul's Arts Festival Lunchtime Concert** by John Horton (Organ)  
at St Paul's, Colwyn Bay  
– **Wednesday 2 June** from 1 - 1.45 p.m.

**Annual Readers' Service** and Admission  
of new Readers, in St Asaph Cathedral.  
All are welcome to attend the service.  
– **Saturday 5 June** at 4.30 p.m.

**RSCM Choral Festival** in St Asaph  
Cathedral directed by Gordon Appleton  
and accompanied by John Hosking,  
Cathedral Assistant Organist. Rehearsal  
2 p.m. to 4 p.m., Service at 5 p.m.  
– **Sunday 6 June**

**St Paul's Arts Festival Lunchtime Concert** – Students from Erias High  
School with Dennis Cartwright (Organ)  
at St Paul's, Colwyn Bay  
– **Wednesday 9 June** from 1 - 1.45 p.m.

**Celebrating John Parry:** to honour the  
tercentenary of John Parry (Parri Ddall,  
1710-1782), Gregynog Festival visits St  
Mary's Ruabon, where he is buried, for  
a day school with illustrated  
presentations and an evening concert  
– **Thursday 10 June**  
*Day programme, from 10 a.m., £10;  
Concert at 7.30 p.m. Tickets £10,  
children £5.*

**Open Gardens** at the home of Breda  
Baxter, Cross Roads, Gwespyr, Holywell  
CH8 9LU; in aid of Llanasa church funds  
– **Sunday 6 June, Thursday 10 June,  
Friday 18 June, Wednesday 23 June**  
from 2.30 p.m. - 7.30 p.m.  
*Admission £2.50; children free.  
Contact 01745 857355*

**Diocesan Conference** in St Asaph  
Cathedral  
– **Sunday 13 June** at 2.30 p.m.

**Art Gallery** at St Paul's, Colwyn Bay.  
– **Monday 14 – Saturday 26 June**  
daily from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
*A display of work by local artists to  
enjoy and purchase.*

**St Paul's Arts Festival Lunchtime Concert** – Jonathan Richards (Guitar)  
and Andrew Wilshire (Organ) at  
St Paul's, Colwyn Bay  
– **Wednesday 16 June** from 1 - 1.45 p.m.

**Youth Prayer Event** in St Asaph  
Cathedral for those involved in Christian  
groups in schools  
– **Wednesday 16 June** at 7.30 p.m.

**Diocesan Quiet Day** at St Melangell's  
Church and Centre  
– **Thursday 17 June** from 10.30 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
*Bring packed lunch; hot drinks provided.  
All welcome. £10: bookings 01691 860 40*

**CMS annual Welsh conference** at  
Pantasaph with bible studies led by  
Revd Roger Bowen (formerly secretary  
of Crosslinks)  
– **Friday 18 – Saturday 19 June**  
*Contact Val Major*  
[v.major1@ntlworld.com](mailto:v.major1@ntlworld.com)

**Education Service** for all involved in  
education in the Diocese. Please see  
posters or Cathedral website for more  
details  
– **Tuesday 22 June**

**St Paul's Arts Festival Lunchtime Concert** – Students from Erias High  
School with Fay Adamson (Organ) at  
St Paul's, Colwyn Bay  
– **Wednesday 23 June** from 1 - 1.45 p.m.

**Ordination** in St Asaph Cathedral  
- **Saturday 26 June** at 10 a.m.

**Colwyn Bay Choral Society** at St Paul's,  
Colwyn Bay  
- **Sunday 27 June** at 7 p.m.

**St Paul's Arts Festival  
Lunchtime Concert** - Students  
from Erias High School with  
Charles Jones (Organ) at  
St Paul's, Colwyn Bay  
- **Wednesday 30 June**  
from 1 - 1.45 p.m.

**Exhibition of Talents** at St  
Martin's Church, Eglwysbach  
- **Saturday 3 July**  
from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Village Songs of Praise** at St  
Martin's Church, Eglwysbach  
- **Sunday 4 July** at 3 p.m.  
*followed by Afternoon Tea on  
the Village Green.*

**Organ Recital** by John Hosking in St  
Asaph Cathedral  
- **Wednesday 7 July** at 7.30 p.m.  
*Admission £4 including programme*

**Organ Recital** by Gareth Price and  
Graham Howell, 'Pipe Dreams Organ  
Duo' in St Asaph Cathedral  
- **Wednesday 4 August** at 7.30 p.m.  
*Admission £4 including programme*

**Fun for all Family Day** with the  
Mothers' Union, Wrexham Archdeaconry,  
at Cilcain Church and Village Hall  
- **Monday 9 August (Mary Sumner Day)**  
from 11 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.

*Bring your own picnic and enjoy a day  
of fellowship and fun. Lots to do,  
including crafts, games, tombola, cake  
stall and children's activities.*



**Family Fun to 'Lift up your hearts'** with  
the Mothers' Union, Archdeaconry of  
Montgomery, at Berriew Community  
Centre  
- **Monday 9 August** from 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.  
*Sideshows, competitions, games and fun  
for all the family. Entry Free.*

**Cymanfa Ganu** at St Martin's Church,  
Eglwysbach (following the Eglwysbach  
Show on the previous day)  
- **Sunday 15 August** at 5 p.m.

**Organ Recital** by Meirion Wynn Jones  
in St Asaph Cathedral  
- **Wednesday 1 September** at 7.30 p.m.  
*Admission £4 including programme*

## Order your FREE Church Harvest pack now!

This year, celebrate Harvest with Self Help Africa,  
a charity that is bringing hope to Africa's rural poor.  
Featuring stories of hope from the charity's projects in Malawi, along with sermon  
suggestions and readings, the Harvest Pack provides a powerful focus for churches  
wanting a fresh approach to harvest services.

To order your free pack please call 01743 277170 or email [harvest@selfhelpafrica.net](mailto:harvest@selfhelpafrica.net)  
or visit [www.selfhelpafrica.net](http://www.selfhelpafrica.net) and click the link on the home page.



# Deanery Focus

## Canolbwyntio ar Ddeoniaeth



**The Deanery of Rhos** is introduced by the Area Dean, the Revd Phil Attack. "This deanery is in the Archdeaconry of St Asaph and covers an area along the coast from Pensarn via Llanddulas, Old Colwyn and Colwyn Bay to Rhos-on-Sea and St Trillo's Chapel at Rhos Point. Inland we have St George, Abergele, Llanfair TH, Llansannan, Llangernyw, Betws-yn-Rhos, Llysfaen, Llanelian-yn-Rhos, and Bryn-y-Maen – a total of 19 active churches served by 7 clergy and many more willing hands who help out regularly. We have some very beautiful scenery, so if you're not too familiar with this part of the Diocese and want to take advantage of local knowledge to discover walks, good places to eat, and so on, why not come and visit us? Most of the parishes here you will find are able/willing to welcome coach parties from 'down south' and provide refreshments. We look forward to seeing you!"

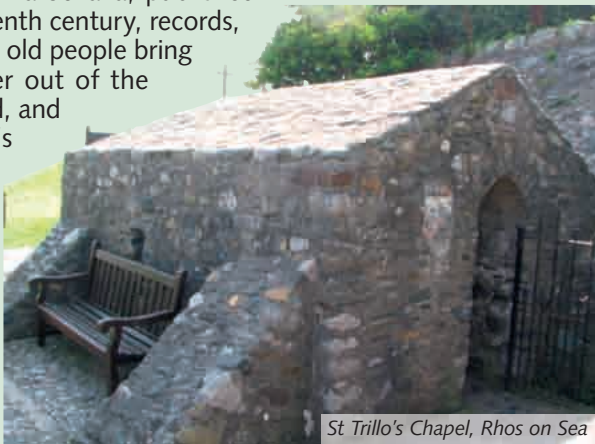
**St John's, Old Colwyn** has once again hosted an international choir concert. "Over the years, we have been very fortunate to host not only our local Welsh male voice choir, Côr Meibion Colwyn, but also the boys' & girls' youth choir from Munich, as well as Olga Koslova's 'Blagovest' group from St Petersburg. This May we have had the privilege of hosting a concert given jointly by Christelijk Mannenkoor Vriezenveen (the Vriezenveen Christian Male Voice Choir) from the Netherlands and the Kelsborrow Choir, a 60 strong mixed voice group from Cheshire. The Dutch choir was founded in 1920, has over 60 members and has performed in many parts of Europe, with tours of The Czech Republic, Russia, Hungary, Germany, England - and now North Wales, where they also performed in Bangor Cathedral. The Choir has been looking forward to visiting North Wales for quite some time, to see its scenery and its beautiful mountains (of which there are very few in Holland!) Vriezenveen is part of the Municipality of Twenterand in Eastern Holland, only about 10 miles from the German Border. Kelsborrow Choir takes its name from Kelsborrow Hill, a feature of the village of Kelsall, near Chester, where the choir was formed in 1956. Our grateful thanks to Alan Wilkinson for helping to make this visit possible."

Few Teulu Asaph readers may be aware of existence of Ffynnon Elian (St Elian's Well) at **Llanelian-yn-Rhos**. Yet for generations it was a regular place of pilgrimage, along with many other sacred wells in North Wales. Jane Beckerman, who worships at St

Elia's Church in Llanellian, has recently completed her M.A. in Welsh History, and the subject of her dissertation was 'Ffynnon Elia: Reputation and Reality, 1700-1850.' Jane is an active member of Llanellian & Betws Historical Society and her fascination with the Well's reputation and history stem partly from the fact that she lives at Cefn y Ffynnon Farm, in the grounds of which the site of the well is to be found.

Amongst numerous historical accounts of the well, Jane records that "...another indication of the longevity and importance of Ffynnon Elia is its role in establishing the County boundary between Denbighshire and Caernarfonshire in 1535... the use of permanent and remarkable natural features making perfect sense... (since its location was well-known and undisputable)".

Ffynnon Elia had a guardian who took money from pilgrims in exchange for healings - or cursings. Edward Lhwyt's Parochialia, published towards the end of the seventeenth century, records, of Ffynnon Elia, "Catholics and old people bring groats... you must throw water out of the well three times for my sick child, and then offer ye groat." Jane's conclusion is that, although there is some evidence that the well was occasionally used by people with bad intent, its reputation as a cursing well is wide of the mark, since its primary function was good. People came to the well to seek removal of the 'curses' of everyday life; poverty, illness, injustice, despair - whatever your problem, you could pay the well-guardian to 'take you out' of the well, pass you and your problems through the eternal, life-giving medium of water - and in doing so help you to have a better life." If you want to know more of this intriguing story, you are welcome to contact Jane on [janebeckerman@googlemail.com](mailto:janebeckerman@googlemail.com)



St Trillo's Chapel, Rhos on Sea

**Colwyn Bay's** Faith & Light group celebrated its first birthday at Candlemas. Our small but close community is made up of people of all ages with learning disabilities, their families, carers and friends, and meets on the first Sunday every other month in Eglwys Dewi Sant. As a parish, we are committed to enabling all members of our Church community to take a full and active part in parish life, regardless of ability or disability. So, as well as encouraging specialist groups such as Faith & Light to flourish within the parish community, we try to ensure that all our services and activities are accessible to everyone. Members of our Faith & Light group serve as crucifer and acolytes and are involved in our lively Sunday schools and youth clubs too.

Our worship within the parish has also been enriched and enlivened by the arrival, last November, of our new Director of Music, Mr Bryn Heywood. Soon after that, we also welcomed Mr Dennis Cartwright to our team, as organist at St Andrew's.

Under Bryn's direction, the choir at St Paul's is extending its repertoire, with new settings for the Sunday morning Parish Eucharist and the further development of traditional Choral Evensong on the first Sunday in the month at St Andrew's. For those who prefer a more lively, informal style of worship, our worship group is co-ordinating a new Sunday evening service at St Paul's.

Music continues to play a very important part in the life of our parish and this year our regular series of lunchtime organ concerts during June, which also showcases local musical talent and young musicians from Eirias High School, is expanding into the first Colwyn Bay Arts Festival (see pages 4 & 5). During the summer holidays, 'Jonah!', a week-long children's holiday experience, will enable local youngsters to learn and perform Michael Hurd's 'Jonah Man Jazz'. As well as singing, dancing and making scenery for the production, there will be story-telling and art & craft activities for children aged 7-11 – do get in touch if you are interested in joining us!



*Ray Williams, crucifer at Colwyn Bay*

As well as the Church engaging with the young people of our community, the doors of Eglwys Dewi Sant opened on 15th February to homeless and vulnerable people in Colwyn Bay. The Dewi Sant Project has been developing over the past year and a half, in conjunction with statutory and voluntary agencies in the town, leading to the formation of 'Arc Communities'. The church building is being re-ordered to incorporate a kitchen, a wet-room shower and accessible toilet, together with upstairs office and meeting room, whilst retaining the Godly Play resource area and sacred space, which will continue to be used for worship.



The aim of the project is to reach out to homeless and vulnerable people in Colwyn Bay, enabling them to access support and services from various agencies when they come into Dewi Sant for food, which is already being provided on three days a week by churches of various denominations, working together. The project currently employs two co-ordinators, who each manage a team of volunteers. It is envisaged that more people will be employed as the project develops into a wider vision, engaging with some of the

most vulnerable people in our community and endeavouring to proclaim the Christian Gospel in action in Colwyn Bay.

There are many changes happening in the parishes of **Abergele and St George** – and not only as a result of the appointment of the Vicar, The Revd Shirley Griffiths, to the post of Archdeacon of Wrexham and Rector of Llandegla!

St Michael's Parish Church has recently been replastered and redecorated and many of the memorials are having a facelift. The church is now warm and welcoming not only to worshippers, both regular and occasional, but also to the many visitors, including school and community groups. Others who appreciate the hospitality include the children who attend the term-time After School Club and also those who attend the 'T Group' – a group which gives support to parishioners who have suffered a bereavement.



St David's Church, in the Pensarn area of the parish, was erected in 1880 as a temporary building to serve the needs of summer visitors and English speaking residents. In the 1950s a small, second-hand prefabricated church hall was put up. After several years of hard work sufficient funding has been obtained to replace these two buildings with a multi-purpose community centre which will include a worship area. Work on clearing the site started on 19 April and on Sunday 6 May Bishop Gregory visited the site to dig the first sod ready for the building of the new centre.

Parishioners at St George look forward to the completion of a major project in the churchyard which will involve levelling and re-laying the paths and installing new external lighting. This will improve disabled access to the church and crypt.

**Llansannan, Llangernyw, Llanfair Talhaiarn and Betws-yn-Rhos** face changes, as at the end of January they lost their much-loved and respected priest, the Revd Rex Matthias, who has gone to Monmouth Diocese to be priest-in-charge of the parish of Ss Julius & Aaron, Newport. "We wish them every blessing for the future and hope that one day we may be able to welcome them back to St Asaph Diocese. Please keep the parish communities of in your prayers as we seek to appoint a successor to Fr Rex."



*Fr Rex and Alison Matthias at the farewell buffet on Sunday 25 January*



# Galluogi a Chalonogi holl I bobl Dduw

*Vernon Jones writes about two encouraging journeys – one that took him to the United States and one that he continues back at home.*

With the upraised hands of Christian fellowship, I invite you to join me, along with Jo, my wife, and baby daughter Harriett as I journey through the city streets and subways of New York exploring my calling to ordained ministry in the Church in Wales.

In just under forty days we travelled over 8,000 miles, visited many churches and met some truly amazing Christians – lay and ordained. My journey started at Trinity Church, Wall Street, the richest Church in the worldwide Anglican Communion; it ended in the leafy North of New York State and in between I managed to squeeze in Harlem and the Bronx. I experienced the joy of communal worship in both High and Low churches, and was witness to the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ being openly shared in the subways and sidewalks of a City that never sleeps. I shed tears for the despair I saw in the eyes and souls of the homeless, sat and ate with HIV and Aids sufferers and knelt next to drug addicts and gang members as we together received the body and blood of our Lord.

I was extremely privileged to have led the prayers for peace and reconciliation at St Paul's Chapel next to Ground Zero and prayed at the bedside of those I knew would soon be with our Heavenly Father. I listened to amazing testimony from the Archbishop of Burundi, the Revd Jessie Jackson and the unforgettable Archbishop Desmond Tutu - whose closing message I will never forget – "Without forgiveness there is no future".

So as I reflect, I question what I have learnt; greater humility and self-awareness



immediately springs to mind. I have learnt the need to thank God through prayer and worship for my beautiful family who never gave up on me. The need to acknowledge and understand my own personal prejudices and to then strive to let them go; to know that through my own brokenness I can help others with theirs. To never be self-conscious about showing my weaknesses, crying with those that cry, laughing with those that laugh, and I know that I must avoid at all cost judging those who I have no right to judge. But above all else He has taught me that no matter how different, we are all his children, and if I can love those it is easier to hate, share when it's easier to take, give when it's easier to receive and forgive those who need my forgiveness then I too will receive the love of God in abundance and it is that abundant love I can then share with one and all.

*The work of the Mothers' Union continues across the Diocese, strongly led by lay people and seeking to encourage and enable others.*

Extra chairs had to be brought into the Cathedral on Tuesday 16 March when more than 400 members attended the **Mothers' Union Diocesan Festival.**

# Enabling and Encouraging the whole people of God

Bishop Gregory commissioned Carol Chamberlain as the new Diocesan President, and Beryl Griffiths, Marlene Griffiths and Meryl Thelwell as St Asaph,



*Bishop Gregory congratulates Carol Chamberlain on being commissioned Mothers' Union Diocesan President*

Wrexham and Montgomery Archidiaconal Presidents respectively. The Revd Mary Brotherston was commissioned as Faith and Policy Co-ordinator and Margaret Hards as Action and Outreach Co-ordinator. The special guest was the Provincial President for Wales, Mrs Tyann Leonard of Llandaff Diocese, and the address was given by the Revd Theresa Scott from Oxford who encouraged members to be enthusiastic about their work. Bishop Gregory said he wanted to see Mothers' Union at the cutting edge of church life.



**Berriew** Mothers' Union has a new banner, dedicated on Mothering Sunday by Archdeacon John Thelwell. The banner was made by Christine Cookson, Vicar's Warden, and designed by her along with Iris Tombs, Branch Leader, Joyce Harrison, Branch Treasurer and Meryl Thelwell. We were pleased that Carol Chamberlain, the Diocesan MU President was able to attend the service to witness the unveiling of the banner.

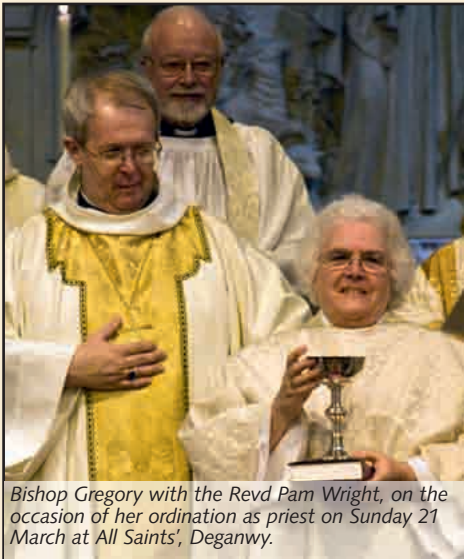
Mrs Eileen Crabtree handed over the position of Enrolling Officer of **Bistre** Mother's Union to Mrs Kath Jones. Eileen held the post for six years; members presented her with a clock and thanked her for her work and commitment.





The ladies of **Cynwyd** Church, near Corwen, arranged a 'Pancake Evening' to which they issued an open invitation. For a modest price, one could buy two generously sized pancakes, with a choice of filling, plus a cup of tea. A raffle was also held. A convivial evening resulted, with young and old turning up for the seasonal delicacies. A total of £230 was raised towards the church of St John the Evangelist.

"A beautiful day in a beautiful church on a beautiful occasion!" so said Bishop Gregory to a full church at All Saints' Church, **Deganwy**, on the occasion of the



*Bishop Gregory with the Revd Pam Wright, on the occasion of her ordination as priest on Sunday 21 March at All Saints', Deganwy.*

ordination to the priesthood of the Revd Pam Wright. The Bishop was joined by clergy from the Rectorial Benefice of Rhos-Cystennin, where Pam serves, and other clergy, family and friends. At the organ was Pam's husband, Jeff, the organist at All Saints'.

The Bishop spoke of the responsibility of all Christians to share in ministry, to tell the 'Good News' and that they should not leave the work to 'the vicar'. He commented that the church asked a great deal of its priests and, in turn, they relied on the help and support of everyone in the congregations. Pam had been called to serve God in a particular way but all of us are called to serve in many and various ways. Those ordained priest are to lead the people of God closer to him and the Bishop reminded the congregation that there were two great commandments given to all Christians - 'Come' (come close to God) and 'Go' (go out to share God's love with others). As the service ended the bells of the church rang out in celebration.

Following his fall on ice in January the Revd Michael Balkwill has appreciated the 'get well' messages and cards he has received as he waits for his broken ankle to heal, along with all the kind offers of help.

Cards from the children of **Llangedwyn** Church in Wales Primary School

## Review of 2009 - 10

Edited highlights of the reports of the Bishop and Diocesan Officers to the Standing Committee of the Diocesan Conference, May 2010

*Full copies of the report can be obtained from the Diocesan Office, High Street, St. Asaph LL17 ORD 01745 582245 or downloaded from*

[www.dioceseofstasaph.org.uk](http://www.dioceseofstasaph.org.uk)

### The Bishop

**Rt Revd Dr Gregory Cameron**

- A warm thank you for your welcome
- Priority this year - getting to know the clergy of the diocese
- Developed with the Standing Committee and Area Deans the 3 specific diocesan priorities
  - **Enabling and encouraging the whole people of God**
  - **Enlivening and enriching our worship**
  - **Engaging the world**
- Undertaking the threefold ministry of a bishop, to teach, to sanctify and to govern; have baptised 7 people, confirmed 369, ordained 2 priests, consecrated 1 altar, rededicated 3 churches, consecrated 1 burial ground, conducted 4 inductions & 12 licensings of clergy, commissioned 4 Honorary Assistant Bishops and 8 Area Deans, issued 108 permissions to officiate, licensed 4 new Readers, closed 1 church building, licensed 1 for marriages and created 1 Rectorial Benefice
- In this 2nd year, Episcopal Visitation to get to know the deaneries
- Facing challenges ahead; we are called to be growing and financing our present mission; but the Gospel is our confidence for the future; and we have 212 'branches' and 51 schools, serving many communities

### Church and Society

**Very Revd Chris Potter, Chair**

**Revd David Lewis, Lead Officer**

**Revd Peter Mackriell,**

*Chaplain with Deaf People*

**Revd Aidan Coleman, T.C.C. Organiser**

**Revd James Aylward,**

*Asylum Seekers and Refugees*

**Canon Philip Williams,**

*World Development Officer*

**Revd Adrian Copping, Ecology Group**

- Diocesan Offering in aid of Hafal and Samaritans; £6,465 raised and the board granted an additional £1,635
- Save the Family, Northop, granted £5,000; hope to develop a closer relationship with the charity
- NSPCC in North Wales was granted £4000 to train ChildLine volunteers
- Review of the Board's work facilitated by Chris Pilsbury (T.C.C.)
- Proposed Atlas of Disadvantage to look at need within the Diocese
- T.C.C. developing participatory budgeting strategy; working with St Mary's R.C. church to maintain Catholic/Christian school provision in Rhyl; lobbied M.P.s before Copenhagen Climate Change Summit; work with Wrexham Muslim Association in support of new community mosque
- Emergency night shelter, opened December 2008, proved its value in 2009; 12 male beds and 4 female beds had almost 100% occupancy
- Deaf Church North Wales meets weekly; residential weekend in August; Bishop Gregory visited in October; 3 signed services every month; support to be offered for sign language training
- 2 disability awareness events in '09
- Chaplain works with SignHealth to counsel Deaf people in community
- Christian Aid Committee fosters use of Fairtrade products across the Diocese;

member of 4 County Fairtrade Coalitions; to launch Harvest project, to support Deccan Development Society in drought-prone Andhra Pradesh, India

- Wrexham Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group supports vulnerable people in crisis; facing reduction in council funding; needs additional £15k p.a. for lead officer

## **Communications**

**Revd Peter Mackriell,**

*Communications Officer*

- 5 issues of Teulu Asaph produced; editorial group recently established
- Diocesan Directory published, with improvements; review before 2011
- Diocesan website developing as source of information; Calendar regularly updated
- Continuing support for parishes wanting to get on-line
- Media coverage focussed on first year of Bishop Gregory's ministry here; Episcopal visitations will provide new opportunities
- Bishops' Visitation News 2010 produced in co-operation with Ecclesiastical Insurance
- New weekly e-mail bulletin, St Asaph Round-up, available to all (see website)
- Training proposed for magazine editors and webmasters in parishes

## **Education and Lifelong Learning**

**Carole Burgess,**

*Director of Lifelong Learning*

**Tim Feak, Under 25s Officer**

**Anne Suter, Schools Officer**

**Roz Williams, Schools Officer**

**Revd Christine Owen,**

*Child Protection Officer*

- Seeking to bring a Christian and pastoral dimension to communities impacted by Primary school reorganisations
- Responding creatively to Welsh Assembly agenda for schools; offering training and information to Heads and Governors; collective worship and

curriculum support for schools, and help with inspections

- Improved communication with local authorities
- Aims and objectives adopted for Schools' Team
- Developing work with R.C. Diocese of Wrexham in St Joseph's High
- Youth work cluster groups developed in the north and south of the Diocese; roadshows held to share good practice, ideas and resources with people working with children in parishes
- University links enable us to offer accredited training in youth work
- Developing a logo and strategy for branding Diocesan youth work
- Diocesan Training Group shares information across Boards and assesses and plans for training
- Following Provincial Education Review, Schools' Officers to ensure schools respond creatively to those with Additional Learning Needs, and review environmental impact of buildings and activities
- Encourage deaneries to engage with secondary schools and HE/FE institutions; review Bishop's Visitors to ensure effective use of expertise
- Child Protection Officer now known as 'Safeguarding Officer', following launch of Independent Safeguarding Authority; attending training on changes; clerics to be advised about implications; Diocesan Safeguarding Committee to be established
- Child Protection (Safeguarding) Officer advises parishes and PCCs; helps draw up 'voluntary contracts' for sex offenders in church; leads training at different levels

## **Finance & Administration**

**Diane McCarthy, Diocesan Secretary**  
*(from September 2009)*

- 2009: £2.919m raised from Parish Share; £1.033m received as grant from the Representative Body; £3.389m expended on clergy costs

- Stipendiary clergy numbers reducing in line with deanery plans; net reduction of 5 budgeted for in 2010
- 'Fair Share' formula has now run for 2 years; 96.6% of parish share paid in full in 2009
- Increase in parish share: 4.5% in 2009; 1.4% in 2010, equivalent to raise in clergy stipends
- In addition to support for boards, £56k to Cathedral; £5k for widows and orphans of clergy; £5250 to T.C.C.; £7k to Diocesan Council for Social Responsibility; £25858 for Renewal and Parish Development grants
- New Diocesan Office completed June '09, improving communication and efficiency; now a financial asset
- The Diocesan Administration Team has 6 full-time and 8 part-time staff, including posts funded by the Cathedral, Parsonage Board, R.B. and education trusts

## **Funding & Parish Support**

**Tracey White,**

*Funding & Parish Support Officer*

- Supporting parishes to use stewardship programmes
- Co-ordinates meetings of the Provincial Stewardship Executive
- Provide support to parishes undertaking major development projects to establish vision and access funding; funding support to numerous small parish projects, for building work and people projects; give guidance on reclaiming VAT
- Plans include development of web content; co-ordination of new stewardship resources; developing specific funding packs; developing relationships with voluntary agencies; Grantfinder training and training for parish treasurers & gift aid secretaries; supporting parishes required to register with Charity Commission; organising conference on flexible use of church buildings

## **Ministry**

**Canon Mary Stallard, Chair**  
*& Coordinator of Ministerial Formation*

**Revd John Harvey, Vocations Advisor**

**Canon Tudor Hughes, I.C.M.E. (Initial Continuing Ministerial Education)**

**Revd Alan Tiltman, C.M.E.**  
*(Continuing Ministerial Education)*

**Revd Steven Green, Warden of Readers**

- Following major themes of vocation and training; modelling collaborative ministry – sharing tasks at meetings
- C.M.E. days: well attended and appreciated, with additional training sessions open to all in ministry; training for Area Deans and those who have changed posts; review of R.C./Anglican Study Days; clergy allocation grants help to access training, conferences and retreats
- Curriculum for C.M.E. to be developed in line with Diocesan priorities; a residential clergy school planned for 2011
- 3 participants in I.C.M.E. complete course in June; new course this year to focus on pastoral issues; new portfolio work to demonstrate reflective practice
- New Warden of Readers welcomed; 3 new Readers licensed in 2009; 5 more in 2010; 3 deaths; total of 96 Readers (March 2010), including 4 Readers Emeriti
- Thanks to Jennie Castle, Reader Secretary and Barry Smith, Reader C.M.E. Officer
- First full year of the non-residential course under leadership of the Revd Dr Paul Roberts; portfolio assessment introduced; positive inspection report for St Michael's College
- Creating networks of people exploring a call to ministry, according to particular needs; diocesan selectors work hard to discern vocations; new vocations strategy being developed for province, led by Bishop Gregory

## Renewal and Parish Development

**Archdeacon Bernard Thomas**, *Chair*

**Jane Ayee**, *Lead Officer*

**Revd Vittoria Hancock**, *Evangelism*

**Revd Huw Butler**, *Spirituality & Healing*

**Revd Pam Powell** (*until March*)/

**Revd Martin Snellgrove**, *Ecumenism*

**Canon Bill Rowell**, *World Mission*

**Sue Kelly**, *Tourism*

**Revd Kate Johnson**,

*Liturgical Development Officer*

- Over £40,000 of Investing in Mission grants to enable new ventures
- Support for the unique ecumenical ministry in Rhostyllen (Nightingale House chaplain responsible for both Anglican and Presbyterian churches)
- Provincial Ecumenism Officers meet quarterly; looking at shared ministry in Wales; have discussed a number of reports
- Ecumenism Officer looking at projects in Urban Priority Areas; has attended a number of meetings looking at function and development of NE Wales CYTUN
- Evangelism Officer has supported parishes in undertaking reviews and mission action plans; work with schools and community groups; Back to Church Sunday planning
- Leaflets produced by Evangelism and Liturgy officers for sharing feasts and festival with family, friends and community; assembly resources also to be made available for download
- Rocky Bateman now functioning as Lay Evangelist in Hawarden deanery; also meeting with another potential evangelist
- Open Church Day in September had more churches participating
- Churches Tourism Network Wales [www.ctnw/co.uk](http://www.ctnw/co.uk) has directory of open churches and list of resources
- Church Tourism conference in Cardiff, March 2010
- 'Sacred Space' in Wrexham area, involving locals and tourists in heritage, ecology and biodiversity in churchyards, funded until March '11
- 'Living Stones Heritage Trail' developed by Llanfyllin Deanery; trail being developed in Conwy area; funding sought for similar project in Cadwyn Clwyd area
- Diocesan Quiet Days held; one led by Revd Linda Mary Edwards and one by Revd Lynette Norman
- Annual Plygain in the Cathedral in January, in the snow; over 150 people attended; Bendigedig yn wir!
- All clergy given a copy of Order for Ministry to the Sick and Housebound and questionnaire about Healing Ministry in parishes
- College of Spiritual Direction provides ministry of spiritual direction to individuals; 4 new directors commissioned in October; now 28 directors (16 clergy, 12 lay); directing around 46 people; 11 directors attended a short retreat at Mirfield; future partnership with Chester Diocese being discussed
- Bishop John Simalenga, from companion link diocese of SW Tanganyika, spoke at the World Focus Service; appeal focused on a development project in Kenya and a project in SW Tanganyika; initial visit to SW Tanganyika likely this year
- Liturgical Development Officer joined Standing Liturgical Advisory Commission (SLAC) of the Church in Wales for a three-year term
- New marriage service authorised by Governing body for 5 years
- Work continuing on the Triduum Observance project – resources to celebrate 'The Three Days' - Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil
- Publication of Morning and Evening Prayer delayed; for legal reasons, title will be changed to 'Daily Prayer'
- Investing in Mission programme has had a total of 35 grant applications, of which 26 have been approved; some more are pending

## Enabling and Encouraging the Whole People of God



particularly brought a smile to his face, based on school hymns - such as Mary's, 'Morning has broken and so has my ankle'; Josh's 'The ink is black and the page in white...make my ankle right!'; and Adam's, 'Pears and apples, wheat and grapes - broken ankle, painful shapes'!

*Nathaniel Clarke, one of the teenagers helping with the Caerwys Easter Club, reports,*

The annual Easter Club at **Caerwys**, organised by St Michael's Church and taking place in the local primary school, Ysgol yr Esgob, has long been a popular and well-supported event with our young people of primary school age and younger. This year it had a new twist in that the highly successful and equally popular Churchyardigans joined in as well, swelling the numbers even more. Churchyardigans meets monthly on a Sunday afternoon in church and is best described as messy

church for the young ones with games, activities, drama, sound Christian teaching, fun, food, noise and success, attracting up to forty children and parents.

Of course Easter Club was appealing! Plenty of action – craft activities galore (do a self-portrait, illustrate your own t-shirt, make banners and scarves, etc., etc.) singing loud enough to raise the school roof, games, activities, drama. A film was made of the children and some of the action and was shown the same afternoon. And food in abundance!

And then the Bishop dropped in and was presented with his own hand-drawn t-shirt which he promptly put on and obviously enjoyed.



Plenty of volunteers turned up to help, including quite a number of young people. Great to have them involved and helping.

The theme was 'Welcome', based on the welcome Jesus received when entering Jerusalem on a donkey, and the Easter story continued on Good Friday when many of the children (and others) turned up in church in the afternoon to present a series of displays recounting the whole story with more drama - and yet more refreshments!

Bishop Gregory was formally welcome to the area by **T.C.C.**, Trefnu Cymunedol Cymru, *Together Creating Communities*, at a reception in Gresford on Tuesday 13

## Enabling and Encouraging the Whole People of God

April – postponed from a snowy day in January. He and Bishop Edwin Regan, Roman Catholic Bishop of Wrexham, spoke warmly of the work undertaken by T.C.C. in local communities; other church leaders from various denominations were present and were able to have conversations with members of the T.C.C. core group about the future shape of their work.

The Revd Stuart Evans was inducted as Warden of **Ruthin** and **Llanrhydd** and Rector of **Llanfwrog** on Thursday 6 May. "It is exciting to follow a long line of incumbents which stretches back through over seven centuries of ministry within the Ruthin town parishes," said Stuart, "May we all become renewed in our attention to the voice of Christ, the Good Shepherd, as we seek to serve Him and the people of this most beautiful part of the Vale of Clwyd."

Bishop Gregory has begun his First Episcopal Visitation to the Diocese, which he has chosen to undertake by visiting each of the eighteen deaneries in turn. **Meifod** was the setting for the Visitation to the Deanery of Caereinion on



Sunday 9 May. During the Eucharist service, celebrated by the Bishop, the Young Adventurers (Conor, Ceri and Carley Ronnie; and Amber and India Wilkinson) performed a colourful pageant of mediaeval Local Saints of the Early Church.



# Bywiogi a Chyfoethogi ein Haddoliad

St Mary's, **Welshpool**, was the venue for an Easter Labyrinth from Passion Sunday until the Sunday after Easter. A mini-



pilgrimage, it had twelve stations, each providing an opportunity - through reading, activity, reflection and prayer - to focus on some aspect of the passion of our Lord and our own journey of faith. Subjects addressed included celebrity, guilt, forgiveness, the seeds we sow, and the things that burden us. The labyrinth was open each day; it ran the whole length of the south aisle of St Mary's and was visited by a good number of people, including visitors to the town, members of the other local churches, and three classes of children from local schools. 'Pilgrims' were given a card to take away with a specially written poem and prayer.

The idea for the labyrinth came from Barbara Morgan, for whom it was the final project of her placement in the parish as an ordinand; it was based on one staged last year at St Michael's College, Llandaff. The cross at the centre was specially made by St Mary's verger, Gordon Williams.

*Adroddiad gan Emrys Hughes o Eglwys St Ffraid, **Glan Conwy**.*

Fel y gwyddom yn yr oes brysur yma sydd ohonni heddiw anodd iawn yw cael rhieni a phlant i fynychu gwasanaeth ar y Sul yn ein Heglwysi. Fel canlyniad i hyn mae ein plant wedi colli'r arferiad o fynychu lle o addoliad yn rheolaidd ar y Sul. Mewn ymateb i hyn mae ein Rheithor, y Parch. Christine Owen ac ychydig o aelodau brwdfrydig o'r eglwys wedi dechrau 'Clwb y Llan' ar brynhawn dydd Mawrth ar ôl ysgol. Mae hyn wedi bod yn digwydd ers tua dwy flynedd bellach. Cymaint fu'r llwyddiant mae yna'n awr 'Clwb y Llan Plus' i blant ychydig yn hŷn ar brynhawn dydd Mercher ar ôl ysgol.

Bore Sul y Blodau eleni plaser a braint oedd cael bod yn bresennol yn y gwasanaeth ddwy ieithog lle 'roedd dros 30 o blant yn cymryd rhan a llawer o rieni yno hefyd. 'Roedd hyn yn dod ac atgofion yn ôl o'r adeg pryd 'roeddwn i yn rhiant i blant bach llawer blwyddyn yn ôl bellach.

Oni fyddai'n braf petae hyn yn ymledu i bob Llan a Phentref yng Nghymru. Mawr yw ein diolch i'r ychydig gweithgar a brwdfrydig yn ein Heglwys.

On Palm Sunday this year the children from 'Clwb y Llan', the Tuesday after-school club at St Ffraid Glan Conwy, and 'Clwb Llan Plus', the Wednesday group, took part in a bilingual service. Over 30 children and many parents were present. "It was an honour and a pleasure to be in the congregation," said Emrys Hughes, "Indeed it brought back happy memories of how things were when I was a young parent so many years ago."

Good Friday in **St Asaph** is an ecumenical event. It is marked by the three hours at the cross and a walk of witness up St Asaph High Street, from the parish church to the Cathedral. The first hour took place at the

# Enlivening and Enriching our Worship

parish church and was a series of prayer stations based on a journey through the Holy Land; Bethlehem, looking at God's provision for us; Cana, looking at joy and celebration; Sea of Galilee, looking at our calling; Bethphage, expecting the unexpected; Capernaum, healing; Jacob's Well, Jesus the living water; and Bethany, love and devotion.



The second hour took place in the Cathedral, and was led by Canon John Glover, who invited us further on our journey to walk the Via Dolorosa. The third hour at the Cathedral – with chants and readings – was led by the Cathedral choir.

*Revd Pam Powell, Vicar of Llansantffraid ym Mechain, reports on their Easter celebrations.*

"The Crib and the Cross are made of the same wood. Both symbolize God's uncondi-

tional love for us. During Lent this year we used a Lent cross as part of our worship. Our cross, as is traditional, is made from our



Christmas tree to make the link between Jesus the baby born at Christmas to Jesus, the man who died on the cross. During Lent, symbols connected to the passion story are placed around the cross. On Easter Day the symbols were removed and the cross decorated with flowers as a celebration of hope and new life. After receiving Communion, members of the congregation placed a flower into the cross."



On Easter Day about 30 people gathered in the hills above **Aberhafesp**, in the deanery of Cedewain, at 6.30 a.m. to celebrate the

resurrection. As the sun rose, the resurrection was marked with the reading of the gospel from Luke, the lighting of the paschal candle and a trumpet voluntary, followed by hymn singing and the sharing of the peace.

Lanterns were then lit to take the light from the Paschal Candle to each church in the deanery, showing our shared commitment to the 'good news of Jesus Christ'.



On Tuesday 27 April, the Boys' Choir from Crompton House School in Manchester came to sing Choral Evensong at the Cathedral. This visit is always one of the highlights of the choir's year, and the Cathedral team were delighted to welcome them back.

### A Word about Liturgical Tradition

*by the Revd  
Kate Johnson,  
Liturgical  
Development  
Officer.*



We belong to a church which has a liturgical tradition. There are numerous interpretations of liturgical tradition. Here

is another attempt - liturgical tradition is about worship, the Church's public act of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ with an ever evolving use of action, music, symbol and words; yet, we still have an ancient structure of worship - GATHERING, WORD, MEAL and SENDING - which has been in place since the early centuries of the Church and is still in place today.

The shape of liturgy, with its basic texts and actions, is like grammar. It is a vehicle for conveying the content of worship by its own particular order. The 'vocabulary' of specific music, ceremonies and styles can be vastly different from place to place and time to time. The 'grammar', the historic pattern of worship, is the framework which holds all the variety together and can help bridge the communication gap from church to church, language to language, and culture to culture.

The repetition of common texts and actions is an important element of liturgical worship. It is through constant retelling that the stories of our faith become engrained in us and that we become a part of the stories. This is especially true for children who can, from the youngest age, heartily join in the 'Amen', 'And also with you', or 'Thanks be to God!' Repetition of corporate texts and actions allows all of God's people to participate actively in worship. Newcomers to the church can readily be caught up in the rhythm of it all without knowing every word, as long as the leaders and congregation do their part unashamedly. The spirit of the congregation who join together in the liturgy enthusiastically will be so infectious to a visitor that they will want to return and learn to do their part.



During the first two years of its life, The **Archbishop Rice Jones Charitable Trust** has made grants totalling almost £2,000 to schools in the Diocese, including to schools for pupils with additional needs. Pictured are some of the resources that St John the Baptist School, Penymynydd, has been able to buy thanks to the Trust, which is keen that parishes suggest to schools that they consider applying to it in order to buy stimulating resources for Religious Education and Collective Worship, especially in these days of ever-tightening budgets.



The Trust does not usually fund the total cost of such a project, preferring to see that there will be contributions from the parish itself or other sources, and the maximum amount of each grant is about £250.

Information about the Trust and the

application papers are on the Diocesan website; applications have to be submitted by the end of the half-term holiday in the Autumn Term, and



decisions are made in November. And, to enable the Trust to develop its role, we would like to suggest that parishes consider an annual donation to the Trust – we are registered as a Charity so we can benefit from Gift Aid; this would be a really useful and practical way of supporting Religious Education and Collective Worship in Schools. For further information on how to donate to the Trust, please visit the Diocesan website, contact the Education department at the Diocesan Office, or email John Harris, Chair of the Trustees, at [johngharris@btopenworld.com](mailto:johngharris@btopenworld.com)

Many thanks from us all!

On Friday 19 March, after many years of planning, pupils, staff and parents at **Nercwys V.C. Primary School** celebrated the opening of their new garden. The



garden of the school house, which now includes climbing and play equipment, seating and reflective areas, a living willow tunnel and raised vegetable and flower beds, was overgrown for many years after the last resident of the schoolhouse, and church verger, Mr Selwyn Smith, left to live in sheltered accommodation. Mr Smith, now in his 80s was delighted to be able to attend the opening and to see the transformation. As part of the opening ceremony, reception children planted carrot seeds in one of the vegetable beds.

The school raised around £16,000 for the garden – much of which came as a grant from St Modwyn's Trust. Head Janet Williams and Revd John Jones, of St Mary's, Nercwys, believe that the garden will offer pupils fun and creative learning opportunities. The Governing Body, under the Chairmanship of Ian Roberts, is currently considering the process of changing status to become a Voluntary Aided school.



The Church Primary School in **Trelawnyd** combined with the churches of Trelawnyd and Dyserth, the Inner Wheel Club of Rhyl, and assorted friends, to fill backpacks for children in third world countries. The packs contain stationery items, some clothing and footwear, a towel and toiletries and a ball. This is part of a project sponsored by Mary's Meals, a charity based in Scotland which operates in over 14 countries and whose initial activity is to provide a main meal each day for children made from locally sourced produce and cooked by volunteers (usually the children's mothers). This not only provides much needed nutrition but also ensures regular attendance at school. Over 60 backpacks are now ready to be dispatched to Scotland at the start of their journey abroad.



The recently formed **Henllan** Conservation Group has got off to a 'flying start', focussing for this year on the plight of the honeybee, whose

numbers are in sharp decline worldwide. The Group is receiving enthusiastic support from the Rector of Henllan, Canon Phillip Williams, and the Parochial Church Council, who are keen to see the churchyard at St Sadwrn's involved in the project.

A sunny Saturday afternoon saw thirty volunteers, aged from around four to considerably older, planting 180 cowslip plants in the churchyard. These will, it is hoped, provide a source of nectar for our local bees over the coming years. Hard work was followed by tea, soft drinks and cakes in the Institute, and a supply of insect-friendly bugle plants were eagerly snapped up.



The Group's programme of spring events is now available. If you would like to be added to the Group's mailing list, please contact John Barratt on 01745 814240.

The benefice of **St Asaph's** Lent Appeal this year was to raise money for our link diocese of South-West Tanganyika. When he visited us in February, Bishop John Simalenga spoke of the need to

install a water pipe running directly to the diocesan hospital at Milo. Both



parish and Cathedral have been involved in saving jars of money to raise money for this cause. Ken and Hazel

Sergison opened their garden to the public over the weekend of the 24th and 25th of April, raising around £400 to add to the money raised elsewhere. The final total is yet to be announced.

The things you find in churches! The Mums of the ABC group in All Saints', Newtown (helped by the ladies of the church and the ladies of Aberhafesp) raised over £100 and collected over 4 large bags of bras for Maldwyn Harriers Athletics club based in Newtown. Why? The



Harriers hoped to have enough bras to go 4 times round the running track (a mile) at Maldwyn Leisure Centre in Newtown. The bras will then be recycled. And? All the proceeds went to Breast Cancer Relief.

**The Diocesan Offering** for 2010, organised by the Board of Church & Society, will be collected to support **Sands** – the stillbirth and neonatal death charity – and, specifically, to purchase a 'cold cot'. This is an introduction to their work.

Not every pregnancy ends happily; in the UK, 17 babies a day are stillborn or die within the first 4 weeks; that's over 6,500 babies every year. **Sands** is an organisation which offers families support when their baby dies during pregnancy or after birth. The death of a baby is a devastating experience, which often leaves parents feeling isolated and exhausted. **Sands**, both nationally and through its networks of local groups, helps parents in this difficult time by offering support and information to those affected and supporting research into this tragic loss.

Wrexham and Clwyd **Sands** is a local voluntary group in St Asaph Diocese made up of parents who have experienced the death of a baby. We share the common experience of grieving for our children and trying to find a way of living with this loss. We are not a professional health team, but parents who know how devastating the death of a baby can be. Our aim is to offer support, understanding, comfort and, most important of all, a listening ear. We are able to offer telephone support and home visits from trained be-frienders alongside our monthly support meetings in Wrexham. The meetings are very informal and parents can talk, share experiences or just listen.

Wrexham and Clwyd **Sands** is there for parents, families, friends - and anyone else affected by the death of a baby, no matter how long ago or recent the loss.



This is how one family has spoken of their appreciation for the work of **Sands**,

"Just after our little girl Emma was born, she began to struggle. She wasn't interested in feeding and was visibly distressed. It became clear that she was suffering from a serious heart condition. She was transferred to Paediatric Intensive Care at Alder Hey Children's Hospital and put on to a respirator. The severity of her illness was not immediately obvious, but less than 48 hours after she was born we were told something that no parent ever wants to hear. We were told that she was going to die. Before Emma was two days old, she was taken off the respirator and passed to us. She didn't even have the strength to breathe on her own, and within a few minutes had slipped away. In just a couple of days we had gone from excited parents-to-be, to, well, to whatever you call parents of a child that dies.

"Over the past couple of months, one of the most difficult things we've had to contend with is that people just don't get how awful this truly is. I mean, sure, people know that this is a terrible, terrible thing. But the closest thing most people can equate this to is a bereavement of a close relative or friend. But it's not the same. When you lose a relative or friend, no matter how close, you grieve, you

remember the good times, you begin to move on and with time you get better. Not back to how you were, but certainly much better. We will never be who we were; we can't move on, there will always be an Emma-shaped hole in our lives. All we can do is learn to live with what has happened.

"**Sands** has made us realise that we are not alone, not the only ones who have experienced this loss. We don't have to pretend we are the people we were because all the people there understand how we are feeling. We can say how we really feel and there are no awkward silences. Like every proud parent, we want to show off pictures of our little girl. Just because she is gone doesn't mean we're not proud of her, or that she didn't look perfect. At a **Sands** meeting we can pass around a picture of Emma and get the reaction that every parent wants. And as time has gone on we have met people for whom the pain is much more recent - and even though it is still pretty fresh for us, we can offer others the benefit of our experience. Through SANDS we have found some wonderful new friends that we can truly be ourselves around.

Losing Emma was the most terrible thing that has happened, or could conceivably happen, to us. But through **Sands** a little bit of good has come from it, and that even a little good could come from something as terrible as the death of our little girl, is, well, it's actually pretty miraculous."

Families who have sadly lost a baby from stillbirth or shortly after birth realise that the time they have to spend with their baby is very precious. To enable parents to spend a longer time with their baby on the Labour Ward or in the Special Care Baby Unit, a special cold cot was developed for Central

Manchester Children's Hospital by Demeva Limited.

During 2010 Wrexham and Clywd **Sands** together with NHS staff are raising money to purchase two of these cots for use at Wrexham Maelor Hospital and at Glan Clwyd Hospital. They will be supported in this by the St Asaph Diocesan Offering.

The cold cot would not look out of place on a hospital postnatal ward or in the Special Care Baby Unit. The base of the cot contains a motor which cools the base of the cot to between 0-1°C. This base can then be covered by a cotton sheet onto which the baby is placed while in the room with the parents. These cots are made to order by Demeva Limited, a company that specialises in temperature controlled environments and refrigeration units. For more details on the cot, please visit Demeva's website, [www.demeva.co.uk](http://www.demeva.co.uk)

Samantha & Andrew Baker are supporting this appeal; they write,

"Our beautiful baby girl Ffion was born asleep on 24 February 2010 and we are totally devastated, our whole world has been turned upside down and our dream of having our family unit has been shattered.

"**Sands** has provided some of the equipment which we utilised in Room 7 of Wrexham Maelor Hospital, where Ffion was delivered. Unbeknown to us at the time, SANDS has been there silently behind the scenes to help couples like us, to try and make a horrible situation that little bit more bearable.

"**Sands** has allowed us to benefit from equipment, vocalise our thoughts and experiences, and has given us the opportunity to meet new friends with

whom we have been able to share our experiences, support and grief.

"The cold cot appeal has given us both something to focus on and channel our energy into; it is so close to our hearts as we would have benefited hugely from the use of a cold cot soon after Ffion was delivered. Presently there is only one in Wales.



Ogwen the dragon with Darren, Wrexham and Clwyd Sands Chairman, preparing to take a petition to the Welsh Assembly.

"Without **Sands** we would not have met friends who genuinely understand our pain and grief and unfortunately it is the common factor of losing our babies which unites us. Sands provides equipment, a sounding board, information and friendship, for which we are both eternally grateful. It has been a glimmer of light through these, our darkest days."

If you would like further information about the work of SANDS in the Diocese or if you would like support following the loss of a baby please contact us:

**Wrexham & Clwyd SANDS**  
07940 553193 or email  
[contact@wrexham-clwyd-sands.org.uk](mailto:contact@wrexham-clwyd-sands.org.uk)

Prayers and liturgical resources to support the Cold Cot Appeal, the work of SANDS and for bereavement following the death of a baby will soon be available on the Diocesan web site.

*For further information please contact the Revd Kathy Collins*  
[kathy.collins@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:kathy.collins@wales.nhs.uk)  
or 01978 725590

### STOP PRESS:

#### Ascension Day Activity in St Asaph

PRESIDING OFFICER of the National Assembly for Wales, the Rt Hon the Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas, was guest of honour at the official opening of the new diocesan offices and the extension to Esgobty in St Asaph on Thursday 13 May, Ascension Day.

Lord Elis-Thomas planted a tree in the grounds of the Cathedral, near the entrance to the new offices, to mark the occasion. He cut a ribbon at the door of the offices before being shown into the new building on the High Street of the city of St Asaph, where he talked to the artist Angie Hogg and photographer the Revd Terry Mart, both of whom have work on display in the offices, as well as staff and guests.

Diocesan Secretary Mrs Diane McCarthy, said, "I think a modern building helps to send a strong and confident message about the Church being ready for the present and the future; we are not just about the past. There are many benefits to having all the Administration team together in one place;



communication is much easier and costs can be controlled more effectively. It is also encouraging to see the meeting rooms being used regularly by many different groups from across the diocese."

Bishop Gregory said, "On this occasion I want to thank those who had the vision of a renewed Diocesan Office and those who implemented the vision and brought it to completion. I also want to thank those who have enabled us today to celebrate the vision. In all this, however, we remember that these fine buildings exist, not to allow us to do our work in comfort, which they

do, but to assist us to carry forward the mission of bringing the Gospel, the good news, to the people of North East and Central Wales."

Flintshire-based artist Angie Hogg, pictured with Lord Elis-Thomas and Bishop Gregory, was commissioned to produce a painting to hang in the reception area of the new offices. The painting is set in the stunning landscape of the diocese and depicts the journey that we share as we seek to grow in faith and in our understanding of and relationship with God.

## 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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