

# Teulu Asaph



Sharing Good News with the Family of the Diocese

February/March 2011



Hannah Henderson (St Mary's Ruabon) with Mark Tami MP and Welsh Assembly candidate Ken Skates at Westminster.

## Engaging at the edge of our communities

The Revd Mike Harrison reports on the work of T.C.C.

A young mother cradles her 2½ year old child, a child facing the twin challenges of cerebral palsy and epilepsy. "If these cuts to hospital services go through", the mother tells me, "There will be more children like Jill." Fortunately the cuts, which threatened emergency maternity services and children's wards in Glan Clwyd and Wrexham Maelor Hospitals haven't gone through - yet - thanks to an alliance of T.C.C., local A.M.s and two groups of young mothers, but they still might. There is more work to be done.

Christian churches and their members contribute disproportionately to the "service" part of what the government is now calling the Big Society, but there is a cutting edge to 'Engaging the World', a place where we are called to stand alongside the powerless and the marginalised.

This is the territory of Together Creating Communities / Trefnau Cymunedol Cymru.

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R.E. week, Chaplaincy and a book review

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### Developing Lay Ministry -

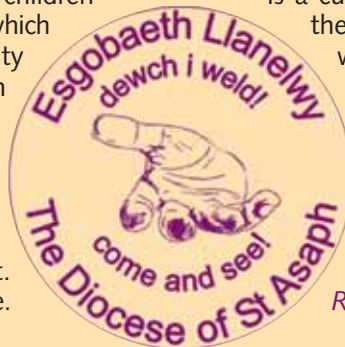
New Worship Leaders and a New Director

### Messy Church News

### Bikes for South West Tanganyika

And

### Farewell from your Editor



# DIRNADAETH INSIGHT



Yr arwyddair esgobaethol ar gyfer 2011 - rhag ofn nad ydych wedi clywed - yw "Dewch i Weld!" Eleni gwelwn ddatliad o ddau gan mlwyddiant y Gymdeithas Genedlaethol - cymdeithas a sefydlwyd

er mwyn annog adeiladu ysgolion a hybu Addysg Grefyddol Anglicanaidd, ond gelwir yn syml "Y Gymdeithas Genedlaethol" oherwydd mai dyma'r gymdeithas "genedlaethol" a sefydlwyd gyntaf erioed i wneud unrhyw beth. Yn ystod y mis Chwefror hwn, cynhelir "Wythnos Addysg Grefyddol", felly mae'r thema addysg o'n cwmpas ym mhobman ar hyn o bryd.

Mewn gwirionedd, mae ein harwyddair a'r pwyslais ar addysg yn cyd-fynd yn bur dda. Mae addysg wir yn wahoddiad: "Dewch i weld drosoch eich hun", "Dewch i archwilio", "Dewch i ddysgu." Nid yw'r addysg orau yn drymio gwybodaeth i bobl, ond yn eu tynnu ar daith o ddarganfyddiad cyffrous, lle bydd disgyblion yn dysgu mwy am y bydysawd, a mwy am eu hunain, eu doniau a'u cyfyngiadau, ar yr un pryd. Dyna pam fod yr Eglwys bob amser wedi ymrwymo i addysg, gan sefydlu'r ysgolion cyntaf erioed yn y wlad hon, ac yn ceisio darparu addysg gyffredinol hyd yn oed cyn i'r wladwriaeth gamu i mewn gyda'r adnoddau helaeth sydd ar gael iddi.

Fel Cristnogion, fe'n gelwir dyfu i fyny i mewn i'r "mesur yw'r aeddfedrwydd sy'n

perthyn i gyflawnder Crist" (Effesiaid 4.13), i ddatblygu i ddynoliaeth lawn. Felly, mae gwybodaeth a datblygiad y meddwl, enaid a chorff yn bwysig yn eu hunain. Mae'r Eglwys yn cynnwys ei hunan i ddarparu ysgolion, nid oherwydd am ei fod am droi pawb yn Anglicaniaid bach, ond oherwydd y credwn drwy helpu plant i ddod yn fodau dynol llawnach, rydym yn eu cynorthwyo i gyflawni eu potensial a'u tynged.

Mae addysg i bawb, ymgysylltiad â'n bydysawd, a myfyrdod ar ein rhan ynddo. O fewn hyn - neu'n hytrach efallai y tu hwnt i hyn - mae gwahoddiad pellach i "Dewch i weld", i edrych i mewn i galon y bydysawd, a deall cyfrinachau am y greadigaeth. Pan welodd Sant Ioan y Dwyfol, awdur llyfr olaf y Beibl, symbolaidd ehangder cyfan y bydysawd, gwelodd wrth ei gwraidd "oen fel un wedi ei ladd" (Datguddiad 5.6). Mewn geiriau eraill, i Gristnogion, mae'r Iesu wrth wraidd y greadigaeth, presenoldeb personol a chariadus, gan aberthu popeth i'n hennill ar gyfer yr achos o gariad. Yn sicr, mae hon yn weledigaeth gyffrous, gweledigaeth y gelwir ni i'w harchwilio, gweledigaeth i rannu ag eraill. Dewch i weld!

+gregoryfleming

The diocesan motto for 2011 – in case you haven't heard – is "Come and See!" This year sees a celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the National Society – a society established to encourage the building of schools and advance Anglican Religious Education, but called simply "The National Society" because it was the first "national" society ever established to do anything. This February includes "Religious Education Week", so the theme of education is everywhere around us at the moment.

Actually, our motto and this emphasis on education hang together quite nicely. Education is properly an invitation: "Come and find out for yourself", "Come and explore", "Come and learn". The best education does not drum information into people, but draws them into an exciting journey of discovery, in which pupils learn more about the universe, and more about themselves, their talents and their limitations, at the same time. That is why the Church has always been committed to education, founding the first ever schools in this country, and seeking to provide universal education even before the state stepped in with the vast resources at its disposal.

As Christians, we are called to grow up into "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4.13), to develop into full humanity. Therefore knowledge and the development of mind, soul and body are important in their own right. The Church involves itself in providing schools not because it wants to turn everyone into little Anglicans, but because by helping children to become fuller human beings, we believe that we are helping them to fulfil their potential and their destiny.

Education is for all, an engagement with our universe, and reflection upon our place within it. Within this – or rather maybe



At the Advent Confirmation service, Bishop Gregory thanked Lynn Fearnhead for 22 years of youth work in the Halkyn Mountain group.

beyond this – there is the further invitation to "Come and see", to look into the heart of the universe, and understand the secrets of creation. When Saint John the Divine, the author of the last book of the Bible, saw symbolically the entire expanse of the universe, he saw at its heart "a lamb as it had been slain" (Revelation 5.6). In other words, for Christians, Jesus is at the heart of creation, a personal and loving presence, sacrificing everything to win us for the cause of love. Surely, this is an exciting vision, a vision which we are called to explore, a vision to share with others. Come and see!

+gregoryflanczyk:

*Continued from the front page...*

## **Together Creating Communities/Trefnu Cymunedol Cymru**

has been active in North East Wales for over 15 years bringing together churches, schools and community groups to learn how to use their God given, but often dormant, power to change their communities and their world for the better. T.C.C. does this by training people to challenge those who hold too much power politically, economically and even, sometimes, religiously and misuse it.

The church groups in our membership see this as a response to Jesus' call for justice in Luke 4.16-21, when he declared a Year of Jubilee in response to the blindness and oppression of the political, economic and religious powers of his own day and the consequent grinding and 'imprisoning' poverty of the people he walked amongst.

Everyone is familiar with the dictum 'charity begins at home'. For T.C.C. members, action to transform the communities in which we live begins there as well, by becoming more aware of the concerns of our neighbours and the communities in which we live.

This is why the range of issues with which T.C.C. is involved is so diverse. It reflects the concerns raised by the communities in which member churches and groups live. The issues range through environmental issues; solving the political blockage that prevented a night shelter for the roofless being built in Wrexham for so many years;



*Members of T.C.C. with local M.P.s at Westminster*

the campaign for a dignified living wage for the lowest paid; challenging the Regional Health Board when the public is only consulted at the fag end of decision making; to relieving the stress on a community, who had campaigned to no avail for 40 years for a pavement alongside the road used by heavy traffic through their village.

T.C.C. is not another advocate. It never does for people what they can do for themselves. It gives people the skills and the knowledge to be confident talking to decision makers. It helps its members seek innovative peaceful ways of challenging power holders rather than expending energy on petitions, protest marches and banner waving.

We recognise that there are many complementary parts to the jigsaw of faith, as Paul described in his analogy of the body, but without the cutting edge of 'engaging the world', T.C.C. thinks the jigsaw has a piece missing.

But T.C.C. is more than words. It has to be experienced. Why not 'come and see' or invite the Organiser, Revd Mike Harrison, and/or a small group of T.C.C. members, to visit your church for conversation or to lead a service, or both.

*Forthcoming T.C.C. meetings:*

**Wednesday 2 February at 7.30 p.m.** at St Andrew's Methodist Church, Connahs Quay CH5 4DD

**Wednesday 2 March at 7.30 p.m.** at St Mark's Church, Caia Park, Wrexham LL13 9LA

Contact: Revd Mike Harrison on **01978 823375** or e-mail **T.C.C.wales@gmail.com**



## Spring & Summer Programme 2011

**Training Together** is a programme of training open to anyone who attends church in the Diocese of St Asaph, whether they are lay or clergy, a member of the PCC or not.

It is not necessary for you to hold any particular office, so long as you have an interest in the subject.

Course	Date & Time	Venue
<b>So You're The Parish Treasurer</b>	Tuesday <b>15th February</b> (6.45pm – 9pm)	St Margaret's Church Hall, Wrexham.
<b>So You're On The PCC – Exploring Roles and Responsibilities</b>	Tuesday <b>15th March</b> (6.45pm – 9pm)	St Margaret's Church Hall, Wrexham.
<b>You Are The Resource – How To Resource Youth Work Effectively</b>	Tuesday <b>15th March</b> (7pm – 9pm)	St Joseph's School, Wrexham.
<b>Using Grantfinder to find funding for your project</b>	Tuesday <b>29th March</b> (4.30 – 6pm or 6pm -7.30pm)	St Joseph's School, Wrexham.
<b>Fun With A Faculty? – Explaining The Process</b>	Tuesday <b>5th April</b> (6.45pm – 9pm)	St Margaret's Church Hall, Wrexham.
<b>How Safe Is Your Church?</b>	Tuesday <b>10th May</b> (6.45pm – 9pm)	St Margaret's Church Hall, Wrexham.
<b>Faith In The Home – Faith and Discipleship For Families</b>	Saturday <b>14th May</b> (11am – 3pm)	St Joseph's School, Wrexham.
<b>Funding Your Project</b>	Tuesday <b>17th May</b> (6.45pm – 9pm)	St Margaret's Church Hall, Wrexham.
<b>So You're A Churchwarden – Exploring Roles and Responsibilities</b>	Tuesday <b>14th June</b> (6.45pm – 9pm)	St Margaret's Church Hall, Wrexham.
<b>Safeguarding – Child Protection &amp; Vulnerable Adults</b>	Tuesday <b>28th June</b> (6.45pm – 9pm)	St Margaret's Church Hall, Wrexham.

**To Book Your Place:** give your name, address, phone number, parish name and email address to [sianconnelly@churcheinwales.org.uk](mailto:sianconnelly@churcheinwales.org.uk) or phone on **01745 532582**. Full details and directions will then be sent to you at least one week before the session takes place.

# Galluogi a Chalonogi holl L bobl Dduw

## Lay Ministry is nothing new!

writes Director of Lay Ministries, the Revd Pam Powell

Perhaps what is new is the emphasis that the Anglican Church is placing on it at the moment. Not because of a reduction in clergy numbers, but because lay ministry is vital to our future - not only in times of falling numbers but as an opportunity for all who are baptised into Christ to exercise his or her ministry according to individual gifts. Every church member should have the opportunity to use their gifts and talents to the glory of God. "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone."

*1 Corinthians 12:4-6*

There are many ways that people in our parishes are doing just that - and have been doing for years.

## New Worship Leaders

Advent Sunday saw 11 people commissioned as Worship Leaders in the Bro Famau Group of Parishes, as well as one each from Northop and Treuddyn. Mold Area Dean, the Revd Ian Day, carried out the commissioning at Holy Trinity, Gwernaffield after the Bro Famau group had hosted a six session course following the Diocesan training pack, and led by the Bro Famau Group Rector, the Revd Adrian Copping.

Several of those commissioned were already Worship Leaders but the majority were new to this ministry, which Mr Day referred to as "not replacing the Vicar but about other people also developing their ministerial abilities".

Worship leader training includes sessions entitled 'What is worship?', 'How to read the Bible in public', 'Planning and leading a Service of the Word', 'Leading, writing and finding material for public prayers', 'Different services for different people', and 'Worship, Mission, and Welcome'.

New worship leader Marion Watts, from the parish of Rhydymwyn, says, "I was leading worship in Mothers' Union and Cursillo and wanted to see if I could develop my skills and use them in the service of the local church. I enjoyed the whole course and found 'Different services for different people' the most challenging as it took me out of my comfort zone. But that was good as it is an opportunity to move forward. It is good that laity are now being given a chance to develop their own ministry in the service of God. Some people may object but we can only break down barriers by praying and by being humble before the Lord".



Rob Armstrong wraps up warmly at Llanferres to lead prayers at Midnight



# Enabling and Encouraging the whole people of God

Lay ministry encompasses the first two of the Diocesan Strategic Priorities, if not the third. Possibly as a response to this, I was asked to become Director of Lay Ministries. This is not a full time job; I am first and foremost parish priest of the grouped parishes of Llansantffraid and Llanfechain, as well as a Section 50 school Inspector. Parish life, however, keeps my feet on the ground and I value all those in my own parishes who take on a multitude of roles including six Worship Leaders and five Pastoral Assistants who work alongside our Reader, Wardens, administration team and all those on the intercession and reading rotas.

Last year I came up with a 5 Year Plan. Identifying a 'who's who' was more difficult than I imagined. I'm grateful to the diocesan office for helping with this through the annual parish returns. Worship Leaders and Pastoral Assistants change and it is healthy that they do as more feel called to these ministries. I'm very grateful to all those who turned out in Berriew, Wrexham and Holywell before Christmas, some new names who were not on the database, along with their respective Archdeacons, to discuss their ministries.

There isn't the room here to describe the diversity of lay ministries in the parishes but a report from these meetings and questionnaires from both clergy and laity will be completed later in the year. The figures of those actively involved as Worship Leaders and Pastoral Assistants is quite staggering:

Archdeaconry	WLS	PAs	Totals
Montgomery	60	31	91
St Asaph	54	39	93
Wrexham	89	53	142
Totals	203	123	326

Many of the individuals that make up these statistics are involved in other ministries and roles in their churches and deaneries.

This year, priority has been given to Worship Leaders, who have been invited to a residential course at the Gladstone Library in Hawarden. Workshops will include:

- Putting together a non Eucharistic Service
- Using puppets in worship
- Singing the offices/using music creatively in worship
- Incidental Welsh in worship/ use of spoken voice
- Leading prayer and meditation
- Worship for children /school worship
- Sharing resources

and will be supported by the Revd Kate Johnson (Liturgical Development Officer), the Ven Bernard Thomas and Mr Nick James.

We hope to provide a similar experience for Pastoral Assistants next year; this year, they will have a Quiet Day in July. This Diocesan input backs up the ongoing training in the parishes and deaneries.

Lay ministry has to be collaborative. We cannot work alone. Some parishes have had Worship Leaders and Pastoral Assistants for over twenty years and for them it is the way ministry naturally works. At its best, collaboration is moving towards ministry teams - a shared leadership between clergy and laity. Ministry in all its facets is a great privilege and I thank the clergy and P.C.C.s who gave me opportunities to serve as a Worship Leader and Pastoral Assistant

## Enabling and Encouraging the Whole People of God

many years ago. As baptised people of God, we share the responsibility to "make disciples" in the places that we find ourselves. Please support and pray for those 326 (perhaps even more) lay ministers in our diocese.

**Further information** from Revd Pam Powell [pampowell@micro-plus-web.net](mailto:pampowell@micro-plus-web.net). *Notices for lay ministers are often on the St Asaph Round-up (StAR - see Diocesan website). If you are a Worship Leader or Pastoral Assistant and unsure whether you are on the Diocesan database, please check with Pam, who is also willing to discuss lay ministry / ministry teams with parishes and deaneries. The initial training for WLs and PAs remains with the Deanery /Area Dean and training courses will appear on StAR.*



Are you aged between 18-25? Do you attend - or are you connected with - a church in the Diocese of St Asaph? Are you interested in joining a new group for 18-25 year olds to make new friends, discuss matters of faith and life and have fun together? If yes, please contact Tim Feak at the Diocesan Offices on 01745 532 595 or email [timfeak@churchinwales.org.uk](mailto:timfeak@churchinwales.org.uk) for further information. If you know anyone who may be interested in this group please pass this on to them.

**FOOD** has been a definite theme amongst the contributions to this edition of Teulu Asaph.

The churches of **Bettisfield, Bronington and Hanmer** have started a Fellowship Breakfast, to be enjoyed every three months and designed to encourage fellowship amongst the churches. The



first breakfast saw 22 parishioners enjoying a good start to the day at the Hanmer Arms, hosted by St John the Baptist Church, Bettisfield. Meanwhile, members of St David's, Penrhyn Bay, in the **Rectorial Benefice of Rhos-Cystennin**, enjoyed a 'Winter Warmer' lunch, following a family service in November. Baked potatoes with a choice of fillings were followed by apple pie and custard, thanks to a team led by Mandy Groom



and Sandra Williams. Proceeds were in aid of Church funds.

# Book Review

*Under 25s' Officer, Tim Feak, introduces 'A Good Childhood' by Richard Layard & Judy Dunn*



Working in the area of young people and children's work I find myself often looking for books, statistics and information that back up what I already think I know. It is hard to find current data and surveys; it often seems that as soon as you read one set of statistics they are disproven by another or are out of date!

I am also frequently looking for literature that will inform and challenge me in the work that I do. I often find great encouragement and direction from learning from the professionals and trying to apply their writing to the context in which I work. It is important to keep learning and up to date with current thinking about children and young people and the culture in which they live. Without this knowledge it would very hard to work creatively and relevantly with them. Of course, consulting the young people and children that you work with must also be a large part of the discerning process when deciding how to work with them, but I find that good literature, properly applied, can do wonders in underpinning the work that I do.

With both these things in mind, I would like to recommend 'A Good Childhood – Searching for Values in a Competitive Age'. It is published by the Children's Society and has been a very valuable source of both statistical evidence and current thinking regarding the lives of children and young people in our communities today. Obviously statistics do go out of date; nevertheless, it paints a good picture of the challenges that we face in our society today. The back page reads,

"Is childhood all it should be? Or has it been spoilt by broken homes, junk food, alcohol and exam stress? These issues are discussed, with increasing concern, by parents of children of all ages, by teachers, by the media and by everyone who is worried about the future of our society. But is life really more difficult for children than it was, and if so, why? And how can we make it better?"

The book was quoted from by Archbishop Barry in his presidential address at the Governing Body in 2009. He said,

"The problem with young people today is us – the adults, and the society we have created, and there are no quick fixes."

This book gives a sobering yet thorough insight into the society we have created and the impact that it is having on children and young people. It is not all doom and gloom though. This book gives some very well thought out recommendations and certainly left me with both an enhanced knowledge of the challenges and their possible remedies in our communities and the need for the church to go about meeting this head on.



know about church and to those who don't. Its mixture of activities, crafty, dramatic, musical and prayerful, with the added ingredient of worship and imagination, seems to engage children and adults of all ages. Sunday afternoon tea is greatly enjoyed too. Messy Church has evolved to work in our Deanery. It is now quite different from the things you read in Messy Church books, but it works for us and gives us hope for the future.

As a result of recent Lent study courses in the Deanery a group from our congregations now meets twice a month to reflect on short Biblical extracts. These are usually the Gospel reading for the coming Sunday. Discussions are lively and reflect a desire to interpret the passages studied with a fresh mind and willing heart. Literalism is discarded in favour of imagination and a desire to understand sub-text and possible contemporary relevance.

## **The Parish of Broughton and Berse Dreilincourt**

The parish consists of one of those many post-industrial areas that surround Wrexham. The steelworks and mines are now no more and those who live and work here commute mainly to Wrexham and Chester and often as far away as Liverpool or Manchester for their employment. Where once a church or chapel seemed available on each street corner there is now only the parish church of St Paul and a small mission church in Brynteg. But despite this, history leaves its mark and there remains active participation in Male Voice Choirs, in particular the Brymbo Male Voice, and in our worship a fondness for 'Hymns Ancient and Modern', together with some traditional Sankey and Moody compositions and well-known chapel hymns. 'Blessed Assurance' is still popular and the Vicar has only just finished typing out the words of 'Tell me the Old, Old Story' to be included in our service for Advent 2. This was a special request. In all this our organist, Glyn Hughes, and the church choir are happy collaborators. Glyn has recently received the O.B.E. for his services to music in North Wales and still, at the age of nearly eighty, is responsible for our traditional Good Friday performance of 'The Crucifixion' or 'Olivet to Calvary'. Not surprisingly we process in and out to begin and end our worship and unfailingly endeavour to chant the psalm of the day. From some at least there is the twin lament of why we no longer observe Sunday Evening Prayer (few come) and 'Can't we have Matins more often?' (the congregation drops).

Though we maintain a more than viable number for our Sunday morning services, there is concern over possible falling numbers. Traditional forms of evangelising are no longer popular but we have found that sending invitations to the families of those who have been recently baptised, married or bereaved has brought large numbers to particular Crib, Mothering Day and Memorial services. As a result, in just a few cases individuals or families have come to worship more regularly on less conspicuous Sundays. Similarly, invitations to schools and guiding and scout groups have brought vibrancy to Harvest Festivals, Remembrance and various anniversary services. In addition, we manage to deliver over seven hundred quarterly newsletters to homes in the area (our fine verger, Kevin Holmes, is the local postman).

Interestingly, I hope, a questionnaire has recently gone out to our congregations asking for ideas as to how we might appeal in our worship to the broader 'unchurched' community. Judging by the many who attend our frequent baptisms,

weddings and funerals there is clearly a desire to involve the church in people's lives at particularly significant moments and we hope to build on that community feeling. We await the return of these questionnaires with a little trepidation.

For the time being at least we feel our church manages to serve the needs of many in our community to whom it seeks to reach out while maintaining at its heart a devoted Sunday congregation. We enjoy our music, our prayer and the occasional sermon with that moment at the altar rail being central to all.

## St Mary's, Minera

St Mary's Church, Minera is the latest rural churchyard to become part of the Sacred Spaces project, which highlights the importance of churchyards as ecosystems, as well as their beauty and tranquillity. Minera churchyard is described as a real "gem" where much has already been done to ensure that, although the graveyard looks



well managed, the needs of wildlife are still well catered for. The old gravestones are rich in lichen. The meadow area of the churchyard has a healthy mix of species. We are lucky enough to have a section of – probably very old – yew woodland, as well as a woodland glade and broadleaf woodland. All of this means that the churchyard harbours plenty of insects and the birds that feed on them. The church is blessed with a bird hide which, although in the past it was sadly vandalised, is

due to be restored with funding obtained by Sacred Spaces. This will ensure that it becomes a resource enabling visitors to experience the rich diversity of birdlife in our churchyard which is at the same time so close to an urban centre yet so secluded too. A report compiled by the North Wales Wildlife Trust commended church volunteers who had judiciously sited bird feeders and bird boxes across the churchyard to support and encourage bird life there. Many of the bird boxes had been donated from a local fund set up in memory of Emily May Hughes, a four year old child killed in a domestic Christmas tragedy in Coedpoeth in 2008.

The report noted that the churchyard is an especially rich wildlife habitat because of its close links to other wildlife habitats such as Minera Quarry. It concluded that, "St Mary's is more than an oasis for wildlife – it is one integral part of a wider network and habitat around Minera that makes it so important for wildlife." How many other churchyards are there across our diocese that can be managed so as to maximise their potential for wildlife conservation?



## Thursdays make the difference!

Five years ago there was no mid-week service in the parish of Brymbo, Southsea and Tanyfron. An 11 a.m. service started at All Saints, Southsea, when four people and the Vicar gathered for a service and a soup lunch. The last seven words of the dying church – “We have always done it this way” – did not apply, in fact they were banned! Every week could be different if we wanted it to be.

Over time we developed a pattern, so that during the month our worship could be Eucharistic, or a healing service or something more reflective influenced by Iona or Taize. One week was based around a Bible Study or we might celebrate the appropriate saint's day. The only common factor was the homemade soup and bread that followed. A chance to get to know each other and continue discussions from the service has led to a congregation that cares for each other and is keen to learn more about the Christian faith.

Soon our numbers started to grow. Now there is a fellowship of people from other churches in the parish, elsewhere in the Deanery, plus members of the local Roman Catholic, Methodist, and Salvation Army. We even attract people who had given up on church in the past, but have now returned.

One unlooked for bonus has been the growth of a giving heart in this congregation. A bowl was left out to collect money to cover the cost of soup. The amount given has always exceeded the cost of the meal and it was resolved that it should be given away or used to further the mission and ministry of the local church. It started with

buying an Oxfam donkey and moved on to supporting an Orphanage in Uganda, where the daughter of one of the congregation was working. We provided a bicycle to enable water containers to be carried more easily from the well. We have built a strong link with a congregation in South India and have provided funds to purchase five sewing machines to enable them to set up a project to give widows a means of income.



We have provided a Braille bible for a lady in a residential home, who was frustrated by her inability to read the Bible for herself. She now takes every opportunity to read it to others too. Thursdays have become the spiritual heart of the parish and something not to be missed.

The future holds fresh challenges with the possibility of joining with Gresford Deanery firmly on the agenda. The church is changing, but signs of hope in Minera Deanery clearly show that we are up for the challenge.



## Looking Forward to Holy Week and Easter

Let's face it, for many people outside the church, Easter means chocolate and an extra couple of days off work. They may have some vague memory about Jesus dying on a cross, but it is unlikely they know the details. Often, people's memory of church is not that positive. They remember it as being dark and dreary and all rather incomprehensible. So how do we engage these people in our worship, how do we start communicating the message to our communities?

Here are some suggestions: some tried and tested, some not so well used:

### Taking Church into the Community

- Palm Sunday procession outside - not in the church building itself
- A Walk of Witness through the main streets. This could be combined with 'live' stations of the cross
- An Easter Sunrise service somewhere high and prominent – serve breakfast afterwards in the form of bacon sandwiches or croissants
- An Easter Egg hunt around the town or village – each clue should link in with part of the Easter story



### Bridging the gaps

- Advertise a 'Prayer Post' during Lent – place postboxes in prominent places (post office, newsagents, pub...) and ask people to place their prayer requests in and the church will pray for them. Advertise the times when the Lent 'Prayer Post' will be running and invite people to join you at those times. Add in lighting candles or some other activity.
- Lenten Lunches in aid of local and worldwide charities – vary the venue
- How about a community Easter garden – in the churchyard or another public green space?

### Bringing Community into Church

- A simple prayer trail that guides people through the Easter Story
- Try a simple Stations of the Cross for people to join in with. Either one led by a member of the church or on a leaflet so that people can wander around at their own speed
- Try a proper Easter Vigil service with bonfire and candles
- Lilies of Remembrance – ask people if they would like to donate an Easter lily in remembrance of someone they love

# Enlivening and Enriching our Worship

## 'Messy Church' update

Cerys Hughes, the Messy Church Coordinator for Wales, has recently left to take up the very first paid position within a Diocese in the U.K. to promote Messy Church. She is thrilled with her new appointment as Messy Church Advisor in the Salop Archdeaconry of the Diocese of Lichfield. She will use her experience from St Mary's, Johnstown to help motivate, guide and encourage churches who wish to set up Messy Churches. At St Mary's, Cerys was part of the leadership team for just over two years and took on full responsibility for running Messy Church when the vicar left. After a particularly memorable Messy Church on Palm Sunday in 2010, she said, "The attendance was very good, everyone was really engaged in their activities and there was lots of shouting and waving of palms. There was an amazing sense of joy which radiated out from everyone." Cerys' enthusiasm for Messy Church was infectious, "I'm really excited by the rapid growth of Messy Church across the country. I was heartened by the interest and enthusiasm for it within the Diocese of St Asaph. I pray that God will open your hearts and minds to Messy Church and the fantastic opportunity it offers to bring whole new generations into Christ's church and that he will bless all of the work you do in his name."

The new Messy Church Coordinator for Wales is Ali Dore. She started up Churchyardigans, Messy Church at St Michael's Caerwys, with her husband Tim and friend Janet, which has been running successfully for two years. "I was so heartened that the recent Messy Church Fiesta at



*Sharing in activities at the Messy Church Fiesta, November 2010*

Llangollen was oversubscribed! Messy Church is such an excellent way to reach out to families who normally wouldn't set foot in a church. I will be working closely with Tim Feak, Under 25s' Officer to promote and develop Messy Church in our Diocese."

Further good news is that the 500th Messy Church to be registered is in Wales! It is Dyffryn Ardudwyn in the Diocese of Bangor and it is already going great guns. The Rector, Revd Stephanie Beacon, reflects, "Messy Church has breathed new life and energy into our parish's ministry among young families"

Ali Dore will be available to offer support practical help and advice for any churches wishing to set up Messy Church. She can be contacted by email at [alison.dore@sky.com](mailto:alison.dore@sky.com)

An introduction to **Contemplative Fire** by the Revd Susan Blagden, Rector of the Grouped Parishes of Bangor Monachorum, Worthenbury and Marchwiell

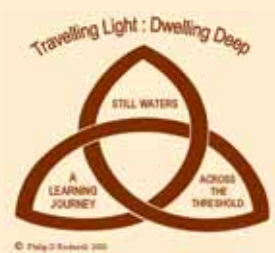
Contemplative Fire is a Fresh Expression of church that wrestles with the paradox of its metaphor - contemplation and fire! It is one of a minority of Fresh Expressions based in the Christian sacramental and mystical traditions. We are a dispersed community committed to each other through a shared rhythm of life modelled after the pattern of the Celtic trefoil: a threefold rhythm weaving together, around the central wordless space of unknowing, 'Still waters' (a place of prayer); 'A Learning Journey' (opportunities to explore sacred scripture and the Christian contemplative tradition); and 'Across the Threshold' (seeking opportunities to discover wisdom on the boundaries). The coracle symbolises the provisionality of our journey together. Imagine my delight in arriving in Bangor-is-y-coed - where coracles were once a flourishing industry! People join the journey often for one of two reasons; they do not feel nourished in their contemplative journey by mainstream church or have rejected Christianity because they are unaware that there is a rich Christian contemplative heritage.

Local clusters of Companions may choose to meet to nurture their common life by hosting 'Way beyond Religion' evenings - chance to share simple food and reflect on contemplative catalysts that honour the church's liturgical season. Or they may meet for a 'Still Waters' group - to share together in silent contemplation.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, and local bishops in dioceses where there are Companions, have supported Contemplative Fire in its re-engagement with the tradition, particularly in re-envisioning sacramental, improvisational, contemplative liturgy. The beautiful, atmospheric, creative engagement experienced in our Eucharistic Gatherings emerges from a lectio divina engagement with the day's lectionary readings.

And much more could be said! Please visit: [www.contemplativefire.org](http://www.contemplativefire.org) and/or contact me if you are interested in exploring a journey with Contemplative Fire. I would be delighted to see an emergence in North East Wales!

Call 01978 780608 or e-mail [susan@contemplativefire.org](mailto:susan@contemplativefire.org)



### Pilgrims Together

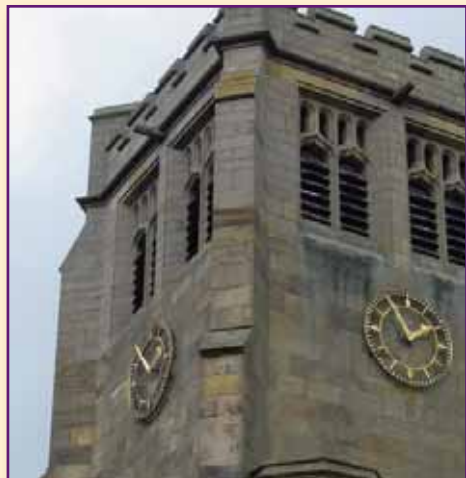
Tuesday 10 May 2011 at Gladstone Library, Hawarden

Speaker: **Andrew Jones**

This is a day to explore the idea and experience of pilgrimage in the Christian tradition. It will begin with an exploration of the ways in which Christians have practised pilgrimage down the ages and into the modern period. It will also pause at various traditional and popular pilgrimage places that attract contemporary Christians. The second part of the day will aim to do two things: first, to explore the many ways that the modern experience of pilgrimage challenges the contemporary church and, second, to examine the ways pilgrimage can impact our lives.

**The Ven Andrew Jones** is Rector of three rural parishes on the Llyn Peninsula and Archdeacon of Meirionnydd. He regularly leads pilgrimages and publishes books and articles in this area of ministry. His first book for BRF, Pilgrimage, is published in 2011.

Our buildings can support us in our worship – as well as in our engagement with the world. St Matthew's, **Buckley**, Church clock has recently undergone a face lift and at the same time the weather vane has been refurbished. The last time this work was done was 1975.



The clock was built in 1902 by Smiths of Derby, who are in fact the contractors carrying out the present refurbishment. There are three clock faces, each 5 feet (1525 mm) diameter with skeleton dials set off the wall by several inches, designed by a Lord Grimthorpe to give the dials a unique distinctiveness.

The church is a grade 2 listed building so there are strict controls as to the specification for any work on the church. The completed work therefore sees the clock numerals and hands faced in 22 carat gold leaf, as are also the gold parts of the weather vane. It is a costly process; fortunately, the whole cost of over £8000 has been met with a grant from the Flintshire Community Trust Ltd and A & D Waste Ltd. The Trust gets its funds from the local landfill charges and is available for

community projects within a certain distance of landfill sites. The church is very grateful to the Trust for this generous offer.

This sad and elegant lady has been in **Gresford** Church for around 160 years, as a memorial to John Williams, of Gwersyllt Park. She was sculpted by William Theed



the Younger, who was a favourite sculptor of Queen Victoria.

During a heavy rainstorm this summer, water came through the church roof bringing with it deposits of either rust or tannin, which have caused considerable staining to the statue. After careful research the church has acquired the services of Jane Foley Conservation to clean the statue and restore her to pristine condition. This will involve applying a poultice to the statue to draw out the staining. Jane spent many years working in the British Museum.

The Welsh Church Acts Fund has granted £500 to assist towards the cost of the work. For those interested in seeing the statue, All Saints Church is open daily and the distressed damsel can be found mourning in the back of the church.



## On your bike!

40 motor bikes and 40 bicycles – that's the target for the Diocese's Lent Appeal for the new Link with South West Tanganyika.



This will transform the lives of the priests, nuns and catechists who have to walk hours to remote outstations and health clinics in this needy part of Tanzania. Bishop John Simalenga said, "This is the first priority for us. Our clergy and lay ministers spend hours walking to outstations – often a 30km round trip – in baking heat. This would at a stroke transform their lives."

Each motorbike costs around £800; £100 for a bicycle; and Bishop Stephen Lowe, Chair of the newly formed South West Tanganyika Association said, "We hope parishes might decide to raise enough money for a motorbike as a sign of their commitment to the new link and our Anglican brothers and sisters in Tanzania."

The Diocese is also buying supplies of communion wafers made by the sisters of the Community of St Mary. They will be available for ordering via the Diocesan website and sold at a very competitive price. All profits will be going to support of the order in South West Tanganyika where they are active particularly in healthcare

supporting a population with a high incidence of HIV and malaria and pre-school work with children.

The Diocese has also received details of 12 potential link parishes and Bishop Stephen is looking forward to receiving any expressions of interest from parishes interested in having a link partner. "Many will be stunned by the size of these parishes with church attendances of over 2000. Most of them are also active in sponsoring economic development projects which gives an interesting dimension to the Church's mission."

Youth Officer Tim Feak is also trying to find pen pals for young people in South West Tanganyika who are looking for friendships in the Diocese. "We are also looking forward to planning youth exchanges over the next 2 years which should provide life-changing experiences for young people from this Diocese and Tanzania."

Materials are being designed for parishes to enable the appeal to begin the link at the beginning of Lent. A DVD, information pack, bookmarks, posters and gift aid envelopes are being prepared for circulation and it is hoped that a new page on the Diocesan website devoted to South West Tanganyika will be ready by the beginning of March.

Bishop Gregory Cameron said, "I am really excited about the progress that has been made following the Standing Committee's decision to support this new link. I am confident that we shall benefit enormously from the vibrancy, energy and joy that is so much part of the Church in South West Tanganyika. My hope is that we shall reciprocate with a generosity in our giving as partners in World Mission."



## Chaplaincy in secular institutions

by the Revd Janice Jones, University and College Chaplain

Both Yale College and Glyndŵr University in Wrexham would designate themselves as secular institutions. What this means, in general, is that they have no particular basis of faith which determines how they choose students, staff or methods of procedure. Many secular educational institutions were established to offer a fair and just system which opened up opportunities for all and did not limit places to people of a particular denomination or faith group. While debate continues around the value of schools set up to meet the needs of particular groups - Muslim, Sikh, Christian [Evangelical, Anglican, Methodist, Roman Catholic] - many secular institutions are recognising the need to make clear that their secular status isn't prejudicial to those of faith. *"Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Aeropagus, where they said to him, 'may we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?' "* Acts 17:19

An educational establishment that is open



to all has to meet the needs of a variety of groups, and chaplaincy in such spaces is challenged to consider how best to serve all of the constituents in the care of the institution. This is a ministry to the world at large and not to those who have made a commitment to Christianity or to those who have begun exploring Christianity. These groups are present in the communities but they are a minority of those attending, even if many would ascribe to being from a Christian culture and background.



I am often asked if I have a parish as well as my chaplaincy - as if ministering to approximately 10,000 full time and 10,000 part time students as well as staff wasn't commitment enough. I am also asked in various ways about how I minister in this situation. The usual questions are, "Do you hold regular assemblies?" and "Do you get a lot of students coming with pastoral issues?"

There seems to be a lack of awareness, in these questions, of the nature of an F.E. college or an H.E. institution with no faith basis. The numbers are too large, the timetables too full, to establish assemblies on a regular basis, but the same numbers mean that a lot of students do

indeed require emotional and spiritual support. I offer opportunities for prayer and events with a faith emphasis, which are advertised throughout the institutions and depend on the enthusiasm (and timetable space) of students and staff for their success or failure. I respond to requests from students and staff for groups exploring faith or faith related issues; sometimes I flag up a suggestion and see if there is a response. *"Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."* Luke 5:4b

This year I might have 10 students who want to meet regularly to discuss their Christian faith and one student who needs me to find a space for prayer in the Muslim tradition. Next year I might have one Christian who wants support and a small group of students who want to explore Buddhism or meditation in any tradition. I have worked with students who are uncertain of their identity, because of issues around sexuality, faith, culture, tradition or family. I work with staff to support them through their own life crises or because of concerns for a student, or just to input information into a study programme.

The students come from a variety of backgrounds and age groups, so my work is varied and interesting, though it can be demanding. Sometimes I am the only contact a person has had or will have directly with the Christian faith and that is an enormous privilege and responsibility. I therefore need the support of other Christians on campus and in local churches to maintain my own faith and to signpost students and staff towards when appropriate. I also need to maintain good relationships with friends and colleagues from the other faith communities for the same reasons. I am fortunate in my colleagues in the local churches in Wrexham and we are able to hold events in town to which students and staff can be invited. This is true of events organised by

other faiths too and it gives the chaplain a certain credibility that we work with people of all faiths and those who ascribe to no particular faith. I believe I am involved in the church's mission to the world to be a witness to the good news of God's love for humanity. God's graciousness toward me is the basis of my witness and I aim to be gracious to those I meet in my daily work.

### Celebrating R.E. 2011

The religious Education Council for England & Wales is holding a month long Celebration of R.E. in schools, colleges, universities, faith and belief communities and local communities throughout England and Wales in March. It aims to celebrate the contribution that high quality R.E. can make to the education of every child and young person; raise public awareness and understanding of R.E. as a subject which is relevant, challenging, interesting and of educational value to all, whatever their religious or philosophical background.

Celebrating R.E. in Wales will be launched by The Archbishop of Wales at Stanwell School, Vale of Glamorgan. In our diocese, Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire SACRE have arranged a school day and a celebratory school service at the cathedral on 24 March, when Bishop Gregory will be the preacher. The R.E. Centre at Wrexham has planned a G.C.S.E. Religious Studies day in partnership with Liverpool Hope University, together with the Easter Reflective Experience at St Giles with a number of 'stations', each with a range of stimulus material – for different ages and personalities – which will allow visitors to think about and reflect on the story and message of Easter, and their own spiritual journey.

Go to <http://www.celebratingre.org> and investigate the website.

### Church Schools and local churches

Children and staff from Ysgol Bryn Clwyd in **Llandyrnog** were welcomed to Llandyrnog Church by the Rector, Archdeacon Bernard, and then, in groups, embarked on a trail of discovery around the Church, learning about the different parts of the church and what various items are



used for. They started at the font and then, after doing some 'brass rubbing' of some pennies, dropped them into the poor box. They looked at the stained glass window, with its picture of St Tyrnog and discovered that he lived in the 6th century and gave his name to the village. The children all had a turn at 'preaching' from the pulpit and reading from the lectern and then looked into the ancient wooden chest, which used to be the Church treasury. We gathered round the organ to sing some songs together and then, after a break for refreshments, the infants listened to the story of Jonah and the Whale and the juniors learned more about the floor tiles near the altar. The children were extremely responsive and seemed to enjoy all the activities, but there's no doubt that the highlights of the morning were ringing the Church bell with Peter and listening to Edith playing the organ using just her feet! We all thoroughly enjoyed the visit and hope that there will be many more in the future.

A link between Syria and Wales was celebrated when the village of **Llandegla** received a gift from Ma'alula, a town in Syria where St Tecla is buried. The gift, an icon of Tecla, the saint to whom Llandegla is dedicated, was delivered by Bishop Gregory, and received by the children of Ysgol Dyffryn Iâl and the church members at St Tecla's church. Rector of Llandegla,



the Ven Shirley Griffiths, said, "This is a very special day for the church, school and community in Llandegla. By bringing this gift to us directly from the shrine of St Tecla, Bishop Gregory has rekindled our 1600 year old connection with the saint. We are delighted by this gift which is the result of Bishop Gregory's recent visit to the convent at Ma'aloula."

The Bishop presented the icon at a service, during which the pupils of Ysgol Dyffryn Iâl performed a drama of the life of St Tecla. An exhibition of their art work relating to the story of St Tecla is on display in the church.

Bishop Gregory visited Damascus for the meeting of the Joint Working Group of the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches. He visited Ma'alula, the town built up around the Convent of St Mary and St Tecla, where Tecla lived and died and is buried.

He said, "It is a surprising thing to discover

that an ancient Welsh Church in Iâl should bear the name of a Syrian saint. It is even stranger to find oneself in Syria standing in front of the tomb of that saint! The nuns at St Tecla's tomb were thrilled that the news of Tecla's life had spread so far, and sent an icon painted by a member of their community as a gift to celebrate the ties of friendship and Christian discipleship. I found it moving to bring back such a beautiful and powerful image of our unity in Christ, and it was a delight to share this moment with the children of the local Church school."



Chaplain with Deaf People, the Revd Peter Mackriell, had been visiting the children at Ysgol Dyffryn Iâl to lead assemblies, during which he taught the children a little about the needs of Deaf people and how to communicate in Sign Language. At the service with Bishop Gregory, the children signed the Lord's Prayer.



Lowri Morgan a year 10 pupil from St Joseph's Catholic & Anglican High School in **Wrexham**, entered a competition run by the school to design a joint Christmas card for Bishop Gregory and Bishop Edwin. Her design showing The Virgin Mary holding Christ

was the winning entry and at an award ceremony at St Joseph's school she was presented to both Bishops and was rewarded with £50 in book tokens and a certificate signed by both Bishops. Lowri's Christmas card was sent by both Bishops across the world.

Christmas is a time when the world and the church can come closer together. This was reflected in many parishes this year. In **St Asaph**, the Advent season got off to a



busy start, despite the snow, with an interactive advent calendar at the Cathedral - 24 boxes of things to make, do or eat. The event took place alongside St Asaph City Council's Party in the Street for Christmas, and the

turning on of the Christmas lights. Over 100 children and their families attended the event. Activities such as decorating the camel's saddle, clearing up after Sam the Donkey, decorating crown biscuits and making angels to take home provided fun entertainment for all ages. The Chaplain, Victoria Hancock, explained that the event was designed to explain the background to Christmas, and was an opportunity for people to explore the Cathedral and enjoy themselves.

In **Newtown**, last minute Christmas shoppers were surprised to see a Christmas Carol Service taking place in the foyer of the town's newest supermarket on the last Sunday before Christmas. The Revd Andy Grimwood, Vicar, said, "I was amazed at the number of people who joined us: over 60 church members of all ages braved the snow and ice to sing carols and we were joined by members of the public. We had a couple of children sing solos and one played a cornet. Clergy and church



members had conversations with shoppers about Christmas and its meaning and nearly 400 Christmas leaflets were distributed. Tesco made us feel very welcome, keeping us supplied with coffee and mince pies, and they've already booked



the crib. Following the restoration of the church's organ prior to Christmas, there is a place for a permanent organist and choirmaster. Details from the Revd Martin Batchelor on 01244 550947



The Church of the Holy Spirit, Ewloe, in the Rectorial Benefice of **Hawarden**, went carol singing on Christmas Eve at St David's Park Hotel. It was a lovely occasion, with many families at the hotel. Some of the children joined in with the songs and carols they knew. We sang lots of carols and a few of the traditional Christmas

songs. Pam Smith organised the event and also played for the group. The singers were rewarded with mulled wine and mince pies, which went down a treat on such a cold icy evening.

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In **Bistre**, about 30 children, together with their parents and many grandparents, attended the Crib service on Christmas Eve. The children, including several who had been baptised during the year, enjoyed assembling the crib and singing some well known carols. During the service children are asked go around the church looking for the crib characters, which are hidden among the foliage on the window ledges, and bring them back to be placed in the



# Silence and Selection, Image and Imagination

*Final words from the Revd Peter Mackriell, Editor of Teulu Asaph*



It was God's sense of humour to send someone who likes preaching to work with people who can't hear him. Or so I told my congregation in Birmingham when I left them for Wales ten years' ago to work with Deaf people, through the

medium of sign language. In Deaf Church North Wales, my voice has been largely silent.

I think I've been fairly silent in the pages of Teulu Asaph, too, as I have sought to adopt a quiet journalistic style. I haven't written an editorial for any of the 28 editions that I have overseen. We've looked to our Bishop for material for the Insight column. Inspiration has also come from the many parishes that have been engaging with the task of sharing the gospel in this diocese. It hasn't been my role to offer commentary but I have sometimes commissioned or written pieces to reflect more fully the life of the Anglican Church locally and to stimulate the imagination. I'm grateful to all the contributors to Teulu Asaph, whether voluntary or conscripted, who have made my job so interesting.

My work with Deaf people has enriched my understanding of the visual medium and I have enjoyed working on that aspect of this magazine, along with Tony Doe, our designer. I am an amateur photographer,

sometimes very frustrated by my own limitations, but have enjoyed using my own and others' photographs in Teulu Asaph. It's amazing how an image can be improved with modern 'photoshop' techniques and, above all, careful cropping. I remember my father teaching me to take photographs and saying 'fill the frame', 'cut down the background'. Wise words.

Editing is the work of selecting what is most appropriate, cutting and shaping the words of others to help them communicate most effectively. My silence enables others to speak. I think that that is a spiritual task, although, like many mundane duties, it doesn't always feel that way. It's a task all Christians can engage in and one I hope to pursue in my new parish in Cheshire, prayerfully encouraging others so that they can speak more clearly about the truth they find within them. It's a task that also needs imagination, to hear and understand what people are really saying to us. As a counsellor, as a priest working with both Deaf and hearing people, and as Communications Officer, I often long for the church to have greater imagination, to share in God's vision that things might be so much more than they are, as well as greater compassion, to accept the limitations of who we find ourselves to be. As I sign off as editor, I pray that your silence may enable others to speak and that your creativity may inspire others to hope in Jesus Christ.

## 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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