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MONMOUTH DIOCESAN NEWSLETTER

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Number/Rhif 195

Advent 2011

Caring for God's Acre in Bedwellty and New Tredegar



Perhaps it's fitting that as parishes aiming to be 'Church without Walls', we spend rather a lot of time outside in the garden! This year we've had a Harvest Festival to remember, with no end of delicious produce from our new parish allotment.

Bedwellty has a gardening club. Now St Dingat's, New Tredegar, has created a community garden, and St Peter's, Aberbargoed, won the prize for best first-time entry in Caerphilly in Bloom.

St Dingat's has hosted a popular 'Tuesday Club' with activities ranging from lending a hand with a lawnmower to learning about beekeeping or having a look at sunspots through a telescope. Each morning has ended with lunch – prepared using fresh produce from the allotment of course! On St Francis' day we were joined by students from Phillipstown School, who learned the story of the patron saint of animals and the environment, planted spring bulbs, and even helped with the construction of our new rotary composter.

Jesus so often used gardening images in his parables, and our garden projects have held a deeper meaning for us too. We have been reminded that God is already at work amongst us, bringing to birth the precious green shoots of new life in Christ. When some of the other challenges facing our churches loom large, the presence of these lovely gardens is a reminder to us, and to the wider community, of this vital truth. We can't claim to be experts, but if you would like to exchange ideas, then please do get in touch!

Revd Rosie Dymond, 01443 829555

Harvest for Ty Hafan



On Friday 21st October, Cwmcavaran Church celebrated with a Harvest supper, and raised over £750 for Ty Hafan, the local children's hospice, and for its own funds.

Cwmcavaran is one of the smallest parishes in the Monmouth area, but sixty parishioners and guests sat down to dinner in the church to celebrate and to enjoy themselves. Guest of honour was Liz Waters from Ty Hafan who gave a presentation on the work of the hospice.

It was also a chance to celebrate Revd Simon Guest's birthday. Simon looks after nine parishes around Monmouth. Claire Wall, who organised the event, said afterwards "It was a wonderful evening, made all the better for the generosity of everyone for such a worthwhile cause. In such a small parish it is so important that we can put on a big event, and reach out to others."

Congratulations on 1st prizes in the Gwent Best Kept Villages and Schools Competition 2011

School with more than 201 Pupils:
Archbishop Rowan Williams, Portskewett

School with under 100 pupils: Llanfair Kilgeddin V.A. Primary School

Best Kept Churchyard [51 - 350 Category]: Grosmont

Best Kept Churchyard [351 - 1000 Category]: Penhow

Revd Dr Jean Prosser of Grosmont says: "This fantastic result for Grosmont is due to the churchwardens and the many volunteers who keep Grosmont churchyard looking good. It is a large area with many graves and wildlife, such as yellow ants which make tumps among the graves, flowers and grasses. We benefited from advice and a grant in 2010 from the Welsh Assembly Government which enabled us to make improvements, survey the avenues of lime trees and draw up a management plan. Thanks to all the volunteers and to Richard and Nora Brierly of Grosmont Post Office for their support."



The Treasures of Darkness A retreat for the bereaved

Tymawr Convent (nr Monmouth)
26th to 29th January 2012.

The convent's retreat house, Michaelgarth, is set in its own garden, but the grounds of the convent are also available for walking, as are the beautiful country areas around it. The services in the convent are open to all, and provide a quiet space for simply receiving from God.

We hope that this retreat will give you who have suffered loss the time, and a safe space, to share your experiences and be really heard. A time to explore where you are on the grief journey. A time to share the resources for the work of grieving which we have discovered with one another. A time away from the demands of home, to be cherished and cared for, and to find some of the Peace of God in the present chaos.

For more details please contact:
Helen Dacey on 01873 831037
helendacey1@talktalk.net

The suggested donation is £180.



A birthday balloon, a cup of coffee and a friend to talk to - part of the Diocesan birthday celebration. More pictures on p7.

The Bishop writes. . . .

At the 90th Birthday Celebration following the Diocesan Conference I said that we need to give thanks for the past but also look ahead to the future. I want next year, 2012, to be a year of pilgrimage.

In his recently published book called *Pilgrimage*, Andrew Jones, the Archdeacon of Meirionnydd writes: "Christians can justifiably regard themselves as the pilgrim people of God. Indeed, in the Bible, the idea of the spiritual life as a journey is expressed often. Through the centuries pilgrims have journeyed to sacred places to seek healing, inspiration and redirection or to mark a significant moment in their lives. Pilgrimage is actually as old as the church itself and, as a Christian practice, it has probably always challenged the religious establishment in some ways."



Bishop Dominic with Roly Bain and some of the children at the Diocesan Celebration

Another writer, when writing about pilgrimage, comments that many Christians find it easier to walk their faith than to talk it, and that they find encouragement in visiting places where other Christians have also journeyed. As we journey forward together as a diocese, each of us is called and invited to journey with God. Whilst the spiritual journey is an inward journey, we are aware that we are a sacramental people, and that the outward expression of that journey is also important in nurturing that inner reality.



In 2012, I shall be leading the diocesan pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Our young people may be going on a pilgrimage journey to the monastery at Taizé in France, and I also hope to lead the clergy on a pilgrimage to France. We have many pilgrimage sites in the diocese and I hope these will be opened up as places of pilgrimage. I hope that everyone in the diocese will make a pilgrimage journey to the Cathedral as our Mother Church at least once during next year and I also hope that parishes will look for opportunities to visit pilgrimage sites in the diocese or further afield.

Christians are often reminded that we have no abiding city. We need to travel light because we are a pilgrim people although our pilgrimage will not be completed in this life but in the next. A pilgrimage is more than just a church holiday or a sightseeing trip although that will be part of it. On pilgrimage, we can expect to have an encounter with God and to find our souls touched by the places we visit, the sights we see and the things that we touch. On pilgrimage, we often express penitence and experience overwhelming love and forgiveness. On pilgrimage, we often bring our hurts and pains to God and find reconciliation and healing. On pilgrimage, we often lay our somewhat stale religious lives before God and find fresh inspiration and strength to continue the journey.

Whilst a pilgrimage will touch each person in a different way, it is something that we do together, and by travelling together we learn to care for one another and listen to one another and hopefully to grow together in love because we know we are all loved by the same amazing God. During 2012, the Church in Wales will be undergoing a Provincial Review that may well lead to changes in the way we are structured and operate as a church. Pilgrimage reminds us that we must be followers of Jesus before all else and not just lovers of an institution. When Jesus said that the 'birds of the air have nests and the foxes have holes but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head' he was reminding us of the need for detachment from worldly values in order to be a pilgrim people in search of the spiritual treasure.

During the Pilgrimage Year we shall be using a pilgrimage logo based on the scallop shell which is still carried today by some Christians when on a pilgrimage journey. So I ask every church in the diocese to 'think pilgrimage' in 2012 and to plan to journey somewhere together as we all journey towards the centenary of the diocese and into the unknown, but nevertheless assured of God's presence with us on our journey and in sure and certain hope of our ultimate destination.

+ Dominic



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www.facebook.com/monmouthdiocese
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Llanfrechfa Sunday School 'grow' a Jesse Tree

In Sunday school for most of the past year we have been working through 'A Shoot from the Stem of Jesse', an Advent programme for children which traces the genealogy of Jesus.

The Jesse tree is a symbolic representation of the royal 'House of David' from which it was prophesied the saviour would come.

Each week the children made symbols to illustrate the story they had been told that day, starting with Creation and ending with the birth of Jesus. Once a month, at the family service, these were added to a 'tree' in the church. The congregation were thus kept up-to-date on the Sunday school project. The photo shows the completed tree with some of the children.

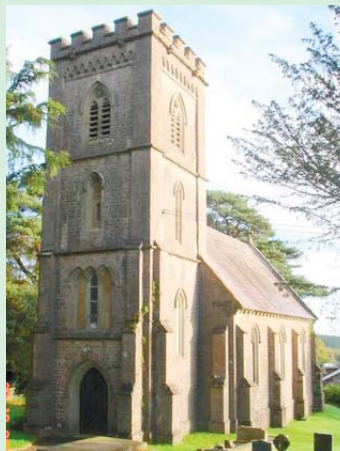


Sue Hopkins

One Hundred and Fifty Years of Worship at Christchurch Coed-y-Paen

In the September of 1861, through the generosity of local benefactors, a newly built church in the village of Coed-y-Paen was consecrated. To celebrate the 150 years of worship in the church, a special service was held in which the generosity and tenacity of those early parishioners was recognised, along with the work of others who refurbished and revived the church in more recent times. The service also incorporated some aspects of the two services held on that day of consecration in 1861 as described in a contemporary edition of the Usk Observer.

The service, a traditional Evensong conducted by the Reverend Andrew Morton, was preceded by a fascinating account of the history of the church, beginning with the reading of extracts from the original legal conveyance of the church to the parish. This was witnessed, we were amused to learn, by the 'Butler to the Bishop'. Our 1861 reporter from the Usk Observer recorded that 'The Rev, James having selected for his discourse Genesis, 28c., part of the 17v, - "This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven," - and it is scarcely necessary to mention that



he made a very eloquent and impressive sermon.' The Archdeacon of Monmouth, the Venerable R E Pain, similarly explored this text but with a simple sincerity and relevance to his congregation that brought us back to the present day and away from such Victorian formality.

Psalm 127 (Nisi Dominus) was the obvious choice of psalm along with hymns current in the mid 19th century as 1861 also saw the first publication of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. For the anthem, the benefice's own choir, The Flying Shepherds, gave a stunningly beautiful account of Palestrina's *Exultate Deo*.

The collection which, with Gift Aid, yielded nearly £490 is being donated to the Velindre Hospital Active Support Unit.

After the service, the congregation regrouped in the Carpenters Arms to enjoy some refreshment and the company of guests from our sister churches, past parishioners, those married in the church or with ancestors buried in the churchyard.

Chris Hughes.

Hosts needed for family members of 2012 Olympic Games competitors



More Than Gold, is the agency set up by all the main denominations to help churches engage with the 2012 Games.

They have launched an initiative to find volunteers who will provide free accommodation for the family members of 2012 Games competitors.

This is in response to the high cost of hotel accommodation this summer when prices are expected to at least double. Without this opportunity, many family members of athletes would otherwise be unable to attend and give their support.

Prospective volunteer hosts can find more details at:

www.morethangold.org.uk/hospitality

Thank you

...from the Children's Venture Holiday Fund

My Dear Friends,

It has been a privilege for me to raise the funds for the Diocesan Holiday for underprivileged children for the past twenty years. We have many wonderful memories of the experiences we have had with the children and hundreds of children in the Diocese have benefitted from these holidays.

I would like to thank all the Parishes, Sunday Schools, Church Lads' and Girls' Brigade, MUs, many other organisations, businesses, and individuals, who have contributed to the cost of the holidays over the years. My thanks also go to my wife Pat, Revd Susan Collingbourne, Revd David Collingbourne, all the Children's Committee and all the helpers who worked tirelessly to make the holidays such a wonderful success.

After consultation with Bishop Dominic I have decided that it is time to hand over the fund-raising to someone else. All the funds that remain in the account have been passed on to the Diocesan Board of Finance on the Bishop's instructions, with his assurance that the monies will be earmarked for children's work in the Diocese.

Once again, many thanks for all the wonderful support you have given me in raising just under £80,000 for the holidays over the past twenty years when it has been my pleasure to be in charge of the funds.

*Yours in Christ,
Colin J Wilcox*

...and from Contact the Elderly



I just want to say thank you for the support for new volunteers through the newsletter. We have been very successful because of it and will have three new volunteers to help us sustain the group all because they saw the newsletter.

I thought you may like to see a picture of our longest serving member and our newest recruit from Rougemont School.

*Many thanks again,
Marion*

Marion Lowther, South Wales Development Officer, Contact the Elderly
Telephone 01792 862702 marion.lowther@contact-the-elderly.org.uk

www.contact-the-elderly.org.uk

Art Exhibition



For three days at the end of October, St David's Church Hall, Fleur de Lis, hosted the 12th Annual Open Art Exhibition. This show involves local amateur artists who wish to show and sell their work. This year, a record 240 items were hung and 29 paintings were sold over the three day event which, considering today's economic climate, was excellent.

Our local MP, Mr Chris Evans, opened the show and we were delighted to welcome Bishop Dominic to the opening. There was massive interest in the exhibition and footfall was extremely pleasing on each day.

The annual event goes from strength to strength and visitors come from far and wide to view the great variety of art work. The church members work extremely hard to make it a continued success.

Sylvia Pitman

Thank You, Hannah



Abergavenny dentist Hannah Hutchison took part in the Cardiff Half Marathon in October and raised over £500 for the mobile dental clinic in Gaza which is funded by the Church in Wales Jubilee fund.

Hannah thought it was the ideal cause to support as she set herself a tough physical challenge. She said, "I first heard about the Gaza dental clinic during Christmas 2010, at a service at St Mary's Priory. My interest was roused by my profession, and the feeling that however stressful my days can be, working in such a situation as Gaza is infinitely more difficult."

Hannah completed the half-marathon in 2 hours 22 minutes.

The Gaza clinic has been funded solely by the Church in Wales for the past decade to provide vital medical care to 70,000 people in remote and deprived areas. This year it needs £26,000 to keep it on the road.

Farwel Canon Keith Denison

Revd Canon Dr Keith Denison, Canon Residentiary and Diocesan Director of Education, retired at the end of October after forty years ministry in this diocese, including twenty as Director of Education.

Paying tribute to Keith, the Bishop said:

"Canon Keith Denison spent all his ordained ministry – over 40 years – in the diocese working as a much-loved parish priest, Diocesan Director of Education and Residentiary Canon. He served as Acting Dean and also represented the Church in Wales in various capacities. He is an expert on educational law and regularly liaised with our various unitary authorities and the Welsh Assembly Government to ensure the best for our church schools. Simply looking at the number of engagements in Keith's diary gave an indication of his dedication, hard work and ability. He was tireless in assisting various parishes during vacancies and I know that many school governing bodies are grateful for his wise counsel and the time that he gave to serving them. We shall miss Keith and Sheila but thank God for their service to the diocese and wish them a long and happy retirement."

The Diocesan Schools Committee organised a farewell 'do' at which Church School Heads and Governors made a presentation and said some fond farewells.

Gareth Atwell, as the senior head, reminded everyone of the great contribution Keith has made to Christian Education and of the high respect that he is held in by local authority and Welsh Government. The name "Canon Denison" was something to be reckoned with and we had a good advocate.

Speaking on behalf of the Governing Bodies, Revd David Kellen of St Mellons said "All Governing Bodies in our Diocese knew that we would receive sound advice based on a deep sense of Christian vocation and sharing the Gospel with our children."

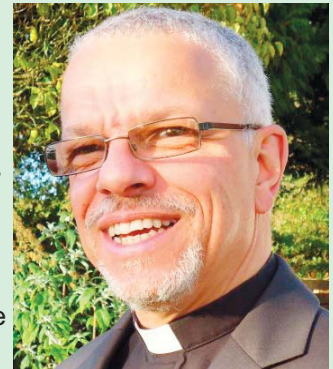
Keith himself spoke of the great joy of serving Our Lord through children and the great fulfilment he had found in this area of ministry.



The new Director of Education

is Revd Dr Stephen James MA, EdD, priest-in-charge of Goetre and Llanover.

The Director of Education is the official diocesan representative and advises the Bishop on all matters in relation to education. Duties include advising and supporting the governors, headteachers and staff in the church schools and liaising with officers from the local authorities and national government and with colleagues from other dioceses within the Church in Wales.



Stephen's wife, Sue, is our Schools Officer.



Let's get messy!

We had a great time in St Margaret's church, in Risca on November 1st as we welcomed several local families to a taster session of Messy Church. For those of you who are

still learning about Messy Church, it is intended to be a time for all ages, to engage in activities and worship, finishing off with a meal together around a table, as modelled by Jesus and his disciples.

The plans had been a while coming together as we waited on God for his guidance. Rev Linda Griffiths and I met and, after a few discussions and lots of prayers, we decided to go ahead with a taster session to see if families in the area would be interested in something of this kind.

We had a great time looking at how we are all part of God's family just like the Israelites. We made things, sang, prayed, ate and began some new friendships.

Many of the families that came were very excited about the next one! We had comments like: "Can we come to this every day?", "When's the next one then, is it tomorrow?"

Needless to say it is likely that we will go ahead with another one before Christmas! We are really encouraged at the way this has been received and are thankful to all of those who volunteered to help out, and to God for his blessing on this event.

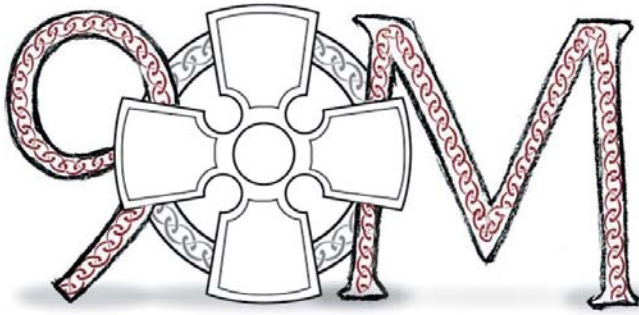
Rev Linda Griffiths & Vicki Brackpool

For more information on Messy Church please contact our Children's Adviser, Vicki Brackpool c/o The Diocesan Office or email: vickibrackpool@churchinwales.org.uk

Messy Church Training Day

with Lucy Moore, founder of Messy Church
Saturday 3rd Dec 10am-2pm
St Mary's Church Hall, Risca, NP11 6GS
£3 including lunch!

To book a place please contact Linda Colley on 01633 263510 **by Wednesday 30 November**



In the Kids Zone, children of all ages could make their own badge. Revd Rosy Dymond and Revd David McGladdery both had a go.



From the ridiculous to the sublime? After Roly's hilarious performance, Bedwelty Deanery Choir sang hymns and songs to inspire.



Revd Roly Bain set out to entertain a king in a cowstall and kept his audience laughing with his efforts. But there was a serious message behind his antics whether trying to balance a cup of water on a stick or to safely get across the slackrope where the secret of success is to keep your eyes on the cross and keep moving forward.



There was a birthday candle for every church to take away and light on Sunday. The Archdeacon of Monmouth collects his from Revd Mark Soady



The celebration was rounded off with worship led by the youth using words and music from 90 years ago to the present day.

Diocesan Birthday Celebration

'Want2Work' find a new home in Maindee

St Matthew's Church in Maindee, Newport, are pleased to announce that they are hosting **Want2Work** every Monday from 10.30am-12.30pm.

Want 2Work is a joint initiative between the Department of Works and Pensions and the Welsh Assembly Government. It is also supported by the European Social Fund and seeks to help people who are looking for the right job but don't know where to start their search.

Want2Work offers a comprehensive package to help overcome barriers into work including career guidance, training, jobsearch, and 'on the job' support.

Welcoming **Want2Work** to St Matthew's church, the vicar of Maindee, Reverend David Neale, said that, "It is very important that if a person wants to work, then they are supported in every way possible. If they can find the right job for themselves which gives pleasure as well as money to pay the bills then so much the better as it will contribute to their overall feeling of well-being and self-esteem. As a church community we are excited about supporting **Want2Work**."

If anyone reading this article would like further information, please call Want2Work on freefone 0800 328 6370 or come along to St Matthew's Church, Church Road, Maindee, Newport on a Monday between 10.30am and 12.30pm.

Revd Christine Hockey

Cwmbran Causeway Group

Causeway Prospects is a nationwide Christian organisation which values and supports people with learning disabilities.

At our meetings we learn about God's love and share a simple form of worship with musical instruments and flags, followed by a time of fellowship over tea and cake.

Our branch was started by members of local churches in 1993. We normally meet on the third Sunday of the month from 3pm to 4.30pm at Llanyrafon Methodist Church, Llanyrafon Way, opposite the Police Headquarters.

The group is always happy to grow and if you know of anyone who might benefit from this regular event please come along or contact me.

Ann Parish Tel: 01633 484800

www.prospects.org.uk



The Very Revd Frank Jenkins

It was with great sadness and fond memories that the diocese learned of the death of the Very Revd Frank Jenkins, former Dean of Newport Cathedral.

There will be a memorial service in the Cathedral at 2.30pm on Saturday 3rd December.

In May this year, Frank celebrated the 60th anniversary of his ordination, and preached in St Mary's Church, Radnage. Here is an edited extract of what he said:

"I can never remember a time when I did not hope or intend to be ordained - except for a brief period when in love with the sea, I wanted to be Captain of the 'Queen Mary'. But it was always the Church which drew me - buildings, services, seasons, gave me early stirrings of a calling, a vocation which has never left me.

All went smoothly; I had the good support of my parents, schools which gave me a good educational base, encouragement of good teachers and the example shown by parish priests and curates. Soon I was off to university studies at Lampeter.

BUT – the war was on and all young men of my age were conscripted. So, after two years study, I was 'called up' into the army to undergo all the usual processes of training, drill and tough sergeant majors, before I was eventually commissioned into the Welsh Regiment.

Quite soon I was posted to East Africa to serve with the Kings African Rifles. This part of my journey involved sailing from Liverpool to the Mediterranean – not by a direct route but via a diversion into the mid Atlantic to avoid mines and U boats.

I found Africa, its scenery, its wild life and its people, fascinating. The African conscripts were dutiful and good to work with and for me, as a church goer, it was valuable to encounter missionary priests. But Africa was only the first stage of my wartime journey. Soon the battalion was directed further East, first to Ceylon (in the area later to become the centre of

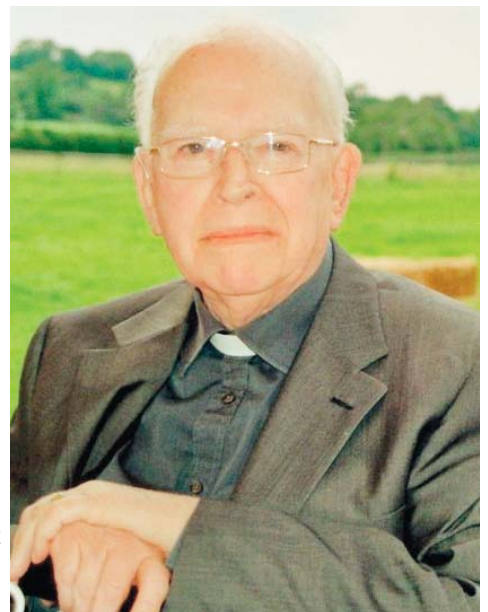
the 'Tamil Tigers' revolt), then stage by stage, northwards through India, and finally to a camp at Shillong in the foothills of the Himalayas, renowned as having the heaviest annual rainfall in the world – 460".

The role of the African troops was for the most part to protect lines of communication, specifically the Second Burma Road built by the Americans to replace the first road destroyed by the Japanese.

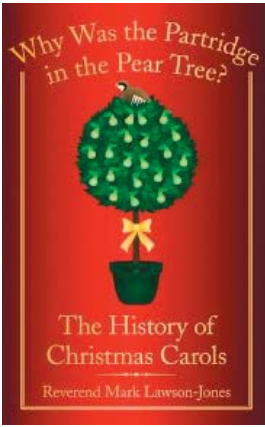
The war came to an end and the troops were prepared for their return to Africa. Our journey involved crossing India by train from Calcutta to Bombay where we boarded a ship for East Africa. My own travels continued – by air to Alexandria, ship across the Mediterranean to Marseilles, a long train journey to Calais and the Channel crossing, home.

Very soon I was able to return to my studies in preparation for ordination, my vocation strengthened by my experiences and encounters with many people. I now went in for a final year at Lampeter, two years at Oxford, a year at St Michael's College Llandaff and, at last, ordination.

A long journey but never tedious, nothing is ever wasted, all experiences can prove of value as one's life unfolds.



May he rest in peace and rise in glory.



Why was the Partridge in the Pear Tree?

The history of Christmas Carols by Revd Mark Lawson-Jones, Rector of Magor.

This timely book, that breathes the Christmas spirit on every page, is well researched, interesting and informative, and will have a wide appeal. In his study of Christmas Carols, Mark Lawson-Jones has managed in 128 pages to survey a wide range of historical detail. Welsh customs are not overlooked, and readers will enjoy the chapter on wassailing that also tells the story of Mari Lwyd and relates local customs that still prevail on the Chepstow border. Most importantly the book reflects fresh research, not only on the possible origin of 'the Partridge in a Pear Tree' and the twelve days of Christmas, but that also traces the history of the words and music of "O Come all ye faithful". The text is beautifully complemented by excellent illustrations and some significant wood-cuts.

The book would benefit from an index, and itemised references to the many important authorities used by the author, but the quality of this small book certainly deserves a future hard-back edition. As Bishop Dominic writes in his Foreword, "this beautiful book will bring pleasure to many and also provide an answer to that seasonal question of what to give friends and relatives for Christmas".

Canon Terry Palmer

Why was the Partridge in the Pear Tree? The history of Christmas Carols by Revd Mark Lawson-Jones. The History Press £7.99

Ieuan's stroll down Memory Lane

What started as a series of fascinating articles in the local church magazine has developed into an interesting book of folklore, customs, legends and superstitions published by an Abergavenny man.

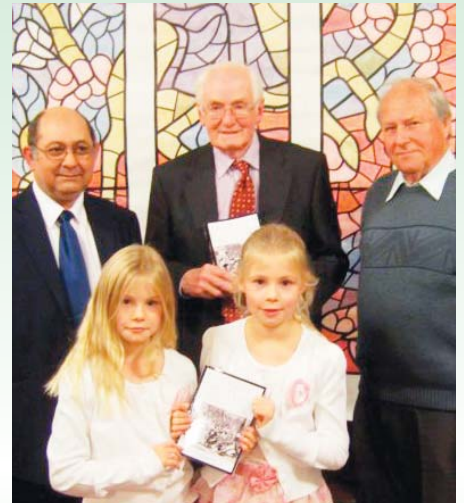
Ieuan Davies is the organist and choirmaster at St Teilo's Church, Llantilio Pertholey, and he describes his book as a walk down Memory Lane. But it is far more than that, for the book contains not only interesting details about celebrations such as Candlemas and Plough Sunday, but also facts most people did not know, like the wife sales which were held between the 16th and 20th centuries.

The book gives details about the Welsh equivalent of St Valentine - St Dwynwen's Day on January 25 - named after the patron saint of lovers who was one of the 24 daughters of Brychan Brycheiniog, as well as the history of Lady Day on March 25, and Royal Oak Day on May 29.

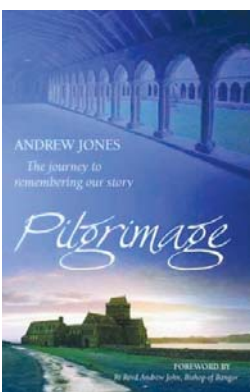
Ieuan, whose interest in history, customs and legends started at a very young age, explained, "I started writing articles for The Link, our church magazine, and when they came to an end I decided to see how much it would cost to print a book."

The book launch took place at St Teilo's Church and was organised by the church warden, Maurice Rolls, who gave one of the readings. The guests were welcomed by the vicar, the Revd Robbie Dennis and the various contributions were introduced by Mark Powell in his usual witty and forthright manner. The book was reviewed by John Saunders, and Philippa Herbert read an excerpt to whet the appetite. The readings and music made it a very interesting and successful event, and Ieuan sold his first 43 books.

Folklore Customs, Legends and Superstitions: a stroll down Memory Lane costs £5 and is available from Ieuan or from St Teilo's Church, Llantilio Pertholey



Ieuan Davies with the vicar, the Revd Robbie Dennis (left) and churchwarden Maurice Rolls. Also in the picture are Ieuan's grand-daughters Eloise and Cara.



Archbishop Barry's recommended reading for Advent

Dr Barry Morgan is recommending a new book by Andrew Jones, the Archdeacon of Meirionnydd, which explores the experiences of pilgrims to various religious sites in the UK, including Bardsey Island in North Wales.

Pilgrimage: The Journey to Remembering our Story includes eight different pilgrim encounters from the author's own experience as a retreat leader, linked to eight sites of pilgrimage. But the book's wider purpose is to consider the growing impact that pilgrimage is having – and could increasingly have – on the Church today. Andrew Jones argues that the experiences of renewal and refreshment of faith taking place at sites of Christian pilgrimage now often far outweigh what is happening in many churches.

Pilgrimage is published by BRF, £8.99, 208pp, ISBN 978 1 84101 834 8

The Church in Wales Review - have your say

Parishioners across Wales are being invited to share their ideas for the future of the Church in Wales with a team of advisers who are conducting an independent root and branch review. A series of open meetings is being held in all the six dioceses of Wales over the next few months to give people the chance to meet the review team and have their say on a wide range of issues – from funding church buildings to reorganising structures.

The review was commissioned by the Church earlier this year with the aim of addressing fundamental questions about its role and structures as it approaches its centenary in 2020. It is made up of three independent consultants who will report back next year: Lord Richard Harries, the former Bishop of Oxford, who chairs the group; Professor Charles Handy, former professor at the London Business School; and Professor Patricia Peattie, former Chair of the Episcopal Church in Scotland's Standing Committee.

Bishops and senior staff will meet the review group separately and will not be present at the open meetings.

The Review Group will be in Monmouth Diocese on Wednesday, 11th January, 2012 at the Priory Centre, Abergavenny at 2.30 p.m. Those who wish to attend an evening meeting will be welcome to attend the meeting in the Llandaff diocese to be held the previous evening at 7.30pm in Llandaff Cathedral School.

The questions that the Review Group wish to put to the meeting are:

1. What aspects of (a) your diocese and (b) the Church in Wales do you feel most positive about?
2. What major changes or initiatives would you like to see (a) in your diocese, and (b) in the Church in Wales, to make its ministry and witness more effective?
3. Given the predicted shortfall in the number of clergy, what steps do you think should be taken to ensure that there continues to be a ministry in every community?
4. Given the likely diminishment of the contribution of historic funds to the financing of the church (at present 30%) what steps do you think should be taken to ensure the financial viability of the church in the future?
5. Are there any other issues you would like to see the review team investigate in order to enhance the ministry and witness of the Church in Wales?

If you would like to make a written submission on the questions posed by the Review Group, or any other matters relevant to the Review, please send them directly to the Chair – The Rt Revd & Rt Hon the Lord Harries of Pentregarth, House of Lords, London, SW1A 0PW. The closing date for submissions is Thursday, 12th January, 2012.

A Bishop's Medal for Irene

When Irene and Iain Doull visited the Highveld in September, Bishop David Bannerman presented Irene with the Bishop's Medal at a service in St Dunstan's cathedral, Benoni to honour the work she has done in developing the link between our two dioceses

Iain and Irene say: "Our time with our Highveld friends was very special, visiting several of the linked parishes and being privileged to contribute to services and join celebrations. It was a joy to share the start process of a new church building by planting two palm trees, and to see one under construction. Once again we experienced open-handed hospitality and affection, and we marvelled at the joyful worship and committed work in the community. A particular joy was being with the children, in schools, crèches and church, as they came to greet us in their own way and give us gleaming smiles and hugs. Everywhere we were assured of how much the link means and asked to give our love to all, and to continue to remember our friends in prayer as they pray for us."



Goods to Africa

Due to the changed circumstances in sending and distributing goods in our link diocese, the Diocesan Link Group reluctantly took the decision to cease this activity.

The Goods to Africa scheme has benefitted both dioceses and involved many people, and heartfelt thanks must be expressed for all the hard work. Your efforts have been greatly appreciated.

Any items you may still have can be sent to an alternative charity or organisation.

One such charity is

The Romanian Aid Foundation South Wales.
www.roaf.org

Working with the Romanian people to bring help to the needy, hope through the Christian message and co-operating through joint ventures, this charity is willing to accept clothes (new or old), shoes, knitted and crocheted items, sewing and knitting materials and needles, bedding, toys, medical supplies and bicycles.

For more information, contact: Paul and Gloria Hare
Tel: 01792 893355 email harejam19@aol.com



Celebration at Bedwellty

Representatives of Bedwellty Church are pictured here with Archdeacon Glyndwr, Cllr Alan Higgs and representatives from Taliesin Conservation, at a reception to mark the completion of the limewashing of the church.

In days gone by, villagers would have turned out in the spring to repaint the church, and no doubt they too would have celebrated a job well done! In this era of complex administration and safety requirements, it wasn't possible for us simply to recruit volunteers with a paintbrush, so we were thrilled to find a local firm who are specialising in the conservation and restoration of ancient buildings.

Managing Director Mike Williams and his team have done a fantastic job and we were especially pleased that, in this difficult economic climate, here is one firm which is creating jobs for local people and offering training in traditional skills. The finished result is stunning.

St Sannan's Church is once again 'a beacon on a hill' – a visible reminder of God's love for miles around.

Revd Dr Rosie Dymond



Community Workshops open in St John's church, Wainfelin

An exciting partnership between church and community has given a new lease of life to a Victorian church building and provided flexible accommodation for a variety of community activities.

St John's, Wainfelin, is much larger than the present congregation needs. So a partnership with the Wainfelin Area Regeneration Project (WARP) has provided self-contained spaces suitable for IT training and other activities plus a large meeting hall within the main part of the building, leaving the east end as a space for worship.

Vicar, Canon Brian Pippen, says of the project: "This is an exciting opportunity for the church to share its resources with the community and to a great extent it has been driven by the community, with the former Torfaen councillor for the area, Mrs Yvonne Warren, making a great contribution.

"The funding has come from two sources. The Community Centre group was successful in its bid to the Community Facilities and Activities Programme, which funded the community side of the project, and St John's Church was awarded a substantial grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund which, along with match funding from the church, repaired the roof and bellcote."

The changes have been carefully designed to provide flexible use whilst retaining the character of the grade II listed building. Repairs to the roof and outside walls mean the building is now watertight. Internal work includes new heating, kitchen and toilet facilities. The car park has been upgraded so people can more easily access the new facilities.

Mr Paul Murphy MP performed the opening ceremony on Friday 21st October following a service of dedication led by the Bishop. Welcoming the initiative, the Bishop said: "It is always good to see churches reaching out to the local community to show God's love in action. I congratulate all who have been involved in this project and wish it every success."

If you are interested in a project for your church, contact Mrs Sharon Smith for help with fund-sourcing and Mrs Isabel Thompson for help with faculty procedures. Both Sharon and Isabel can be contacted at the Diocesan Office 64 Caerau Road, Newport NP20 4HJ Tel: 01633 267490



GAZETTE

Ordination

Revd Linda Griffiths, Assistant Curate, Risca; to be ordained priest (19 Nov)

Resignations

Revd Hermione Long, Assistant Curate in the Rectorial Benefice of Bassaleg; to be Rector of Llanfyllin, Bwlchycibau & Llanwddyn (St Asaph) (Oct)

Revd David Dunn, Vicar of Pontnewydd, and Revd Mary Dunn, Assistant Curate in the parish of Malpas; to be joint priests-in-charge of the parishes of Llanfair Caereinion, Llanllugan and Manafon (St Asaph) (3 Dec)

Revd John Derosaire, priest-in-charge of Llanddewi Rhydderch group of parishes; because of ill-health (8 Nov)

Revd Derek Young, Vicar of Llanfihangel Crucorney; on reaching retirement & to be House-for-duty priest-in-charge of Llanfihangel Crucorney (31 Dec)

Congratulations

Revd Alicia Baker on gaining her MA in Emerging Church

Graham Murphy, head teacher of Archbishop Rowan Williams School, elected as President of the National Association of Head Teachers, Cymru.

Confirmations

11 December	10.30am	St Mark's, Newport
18 December	10.30am	Chepstow
2012		
12 February	10.30am	St Woolos Cathedral
27 March	7.30pm	Monmouth Schools – St Mary's Priory
22 April	10.00am	St Paul's, Newbridge
3 June	10.30am	St Teilo's, Llantilio Pertholey
16 September	10.30am	Ebbw Vale

Holy Trinity Church at Christchurch Christmas Concert

15th December, 7pm-9pm
with The Newport Philharmonic Choir

Tickets £6 to include refreshments
Proceeds to our Organ fund

Contact: Marjory Gibbon 01633 662486

St Paul's Church, Newbridge Christmas Tree Festival

Fri 16 - Sun 18 December
Entry £2, under 16's free



Including a
Victorian Christmas Market on Saturday 17th December
11am-4pm

Santa's Grotto 17th & 18th 11am-4pm
entry £2 includes gift.

Ending 5pm Sunday 18th with a
Carol Service, followed by light
refreshments & a Grand Prize Draw.



Sister Bev (seen here with Canon Brian Phippen and his wife Paula) is a Franciscan nun who was brought up in Cwmbran and worshipped at St Mary's

Croesyceiliog. In July this year she was ordained at the community chapel at Hilfield in Dorchester by the Community Bishop.



Watched by the Archdeacon of Monmouth, the Bishop hands Revd David Osborn, priest-in-charge of the Llantilio Crossenny group of parishes, his licence as Area Dean of Abergavenny.

DIOCESAN NEWSLETTER - THE NEXT ISSUE

Copy Date 31 December Publication: 18 January

Editor: Revd Janet Bone janetbone@churchinwales.org.uk
Monmouth Diocesan Office, 64 Caerau Rd, Newport NP20 4QJ

Articles up to 300 words welcomed. **Pictures of children must** have parental consent for publication in print and on the web.



Cathedral Events Advent and Christmas

Sun 27 Nov	6.30pm	Advent Carol Service
Tues 29 Nov	7pm	Service to Celebrate the Diocesan Link with the Highveld
Thur 1 Dec	7pm	Tenovus "Lovelight" Carol Service
Sat 3 Dec	2.30pm	Memorial Service for the Late Dean Emeritus Frank Jenkins
Sun 11 Dec	3pm	Scouts Carol Service
Wed 14 Dec	7pm	Rougemont School Carol Service
Thur 15 Dec	7pm	Carol Concert by the Cathedral Choir at the Riverfront Theatre
Sun 18 Dec	4pm	Christingle Service
Sat 24 Dec	3pm	Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols
	11.30pm	Midnight Mass
Sun 25 Dec	8am	Holy Eucharist