Programme

Welsh Historic Places of Worship Digital Forum

**Faith in the Future? Historic Places of Worship in the Aftermath of COVID-19**

**9.15 - 12.15pm, 22 October 2020**

**PROGRAMME**

* **9.15-9.25am:** Arrivals, meet & greet.
* **9.25-9.35am:** ‘Explanation of Digital Event’ – Christopher Catling, Chairperson of the Historic Places of Worship Forum
* **9.35-9.50am**: ‘Welcome’ – Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas MS, Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism, Welsh Government

*First session: We will explore our three themes – digital, community and physical places of worship – by reflecting on responses to the pandemic.*

* **9.50-10.05am**: ‘Observations on the “digital church” from the Catholic Parish of All Saints’ - Fr. Michael Doyle, All Saints Parish, Newport, Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff.
* **10.05-10.20am**: ‘A lockdown story from a rural chapel’ - Maesyronnen Congregation, United Reform Church
* **10.20-10.35am**: ‘The Glamorgan Heritage Coast Benefice during COVID-19’ - Revd Canon Edwin Counsell, Glamorgan Heritage Coast Benefice, Diocese of Llandaff, Church in Wales
* **10.35-10.50am**: Q&A and digital polls – Revd Aled Edwards, Cytûn

Ten-minute break

*Second session: We will explore our themes looking forward to how places of worship might respond to the post-pandemic landscape.*

* **11.00-11.15am**: ‘Opening Places of Worship’ - Chris Catling, Chairperson of the Historic Places of Worship Forum

**11.15-11.30am**: ‘Use it or Lose it: Why Church Tourism Matters’ – Caroline Welch, National Churches Trust

* **11.30-11.45am**: ‘Re-thinking Ministry’ – Revd Canon Nia Morris of the Mission Area of Cedewain, Diocese of St Asaph, Church in Wales
* **11.45-12.00 noon**: Q&A and digital polls - Revd Aled Edwards, Cytûn
* **12.00-12.15pm** Closing remarks and next steps

**About the Forum**

The Welsh Places of Worship Forum was established in 2015 to support the future of historic religious buildings across Wales. Its membership includes representatives from a range of organisations and statutory agencies concerned with faith and heritage that are either based in Wales or operating in Wales. The Forum aims to share information and best practice, and review ongoing needs across the sector. It is actively exploring ways in which to provide effective support to those involved in caring for historic places of worship.

It currently has around 25 members, and meets approximately three times a year. Meetings are held across Wales, at chapels and churches which have been restored, renovated or converted, so members can see examples of best practice.

The Forum has been bringing people together for five years, to listen and learn from each other. It shares information and contributes to the development of initiatives that encourage access and engagement with faith buildings, whether through tourism or other supporting uses.