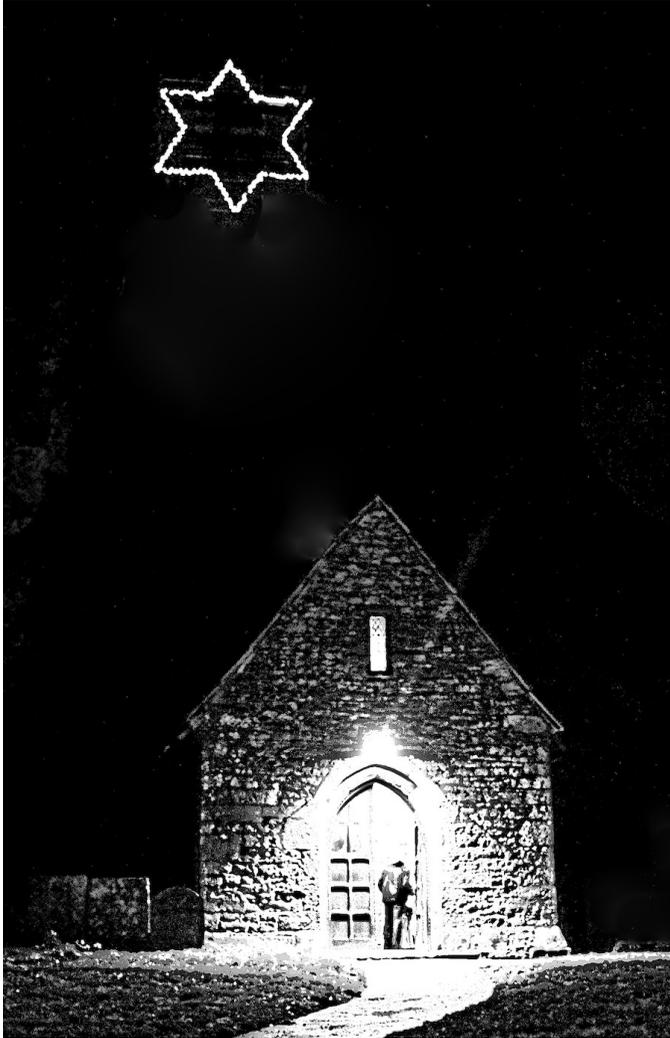




# The New Times



December 2019 & January 2020  
The Parish Magazine of Llantilio Crossenny,  
Llanvetherine, Llanvapley and Penrhos



**Happy Christmas**

## From the Vicarage

This edition of TNT is always an interesting one, marking changes as it does – from autumn to winter, the old year to the new; and in our church year, from Advent through Christmas to Epiphany. Despite the short daylight hours and often gloomy weather, there's an awful lot going on!

The co-incidence of seasonal weather with winter festivals is probably not a coincidence, but I sometimes wonder if we do not rush the church seasons through rather quickly (and I'm a declared summer person). I'm not just referring to Advent having become the new Christmas, but rather, are we missing out on the richness which all the church seasons provide? Of course it's difficult not to like the beneficial effect of December with bright lights and all our expectations, which help to lift the gloom. In the church, Advent is a time for self-reflection – an active self appraisal in preparation for the coming of the Lord. Traditionally it was a time of penitential fasting. Like periods of fast in many religions, the end of abstinence can enhance the festival which follows.

At one time Christmas celebrations began on Christmas Eve and lasted for twelve days. The Joy of Christmas speaks for itself, but we sometimes now see the festival ending even after Boxing Day, with lights and trees coming down, and New Year takes over. It's also worth thinking about Epiphany, the time of God's revelation of the Christ child, the Word made flesh. Epiphany figures appear in Christmas cards and cribs and yet Epiphany doesn't begin until 6 January when all the seasonal decorations have gone. But, just think, can't we allow our spiritual celebration to stay with us a little longer?

All blessings

Andrew



*Christmas Day in Llanvapley 10 years ago*

## Llantilio Crossenny News

The annual **Christingle service** will take place at 4pm at St Teilo's Church on Christmas Eve. Rehearsals have begun for the children to showcase their talents. Anyone who would like to sing in the choir, recite a poem or play a musical instrument please come along to the Church at 4pm on Sunday evenings where you will receive a very warm welcome from Ruth Hoggins and Lauren Cooke.

In brilliant sunshine the bells rang out for the **Annual Service of Remembrance** at St Teilos Church. The service was led by The Revd. Peter Cobb and was very well attended by each of our united parishes. Wreaths were laid by Nick Hoyle on behalf of the parishioners and Ruth Edwards on behalf of the County Council. Revd. Cobb gave a sincere and thought provoking address reminding us of the many sacrifices that were made during two world wars and conflicts since, that we may live our lives in relative peace. Thank you to Revd. Cobb for the lovely service, to Nick Hoyle and Ruth Edwards for laying the wreaths, to the bell ringers (pictured) and to the ladies who had decorated the Church so beautifully.



## Llanvapley News

**Llanvapley Walking Group** Fourteen of us made our way from Llanvapley through some fairly muddy fields up to the Solar Farm and back. It was a very enjoyable social walk on a rare dry morning! There was a great turnout and it was good



to see some new faces, as well as many walking group regulars. In some ways, now the crops have been harvested, the hedges have been cut back and the bracken has died down, the walking is easier - just so long as you've got some decent walking boots or wellies, of course. The next walk is on Saturday December 14<sup>th</sup> at 10.30. We'll meet at Llanvapley Pavilion where parking is available. If you want more information and to be kept up to date about plans, please email [llanvapleywalkinggroup@gmail.com](mailto:llanvapleywalkinggroup@gmail.com) and I'll add you the mailing list.

On Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, **County Councillor Sara Jones** will visit Llanvapley Pavilion. Sara will be on hand from 4pm to 6.30pm to answer any questions or concerns in relation to the services provided by Monmouthshire County Council. These include areas such as highways, education, social services, footpaths, planning, transport and travel, housing and waste and recycling.

### **St Mabli's Christmas Drinks Party At The Old Rectory 6.30-9pm On Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December**

The Lowes family would be delighted to welcome you to a pre Christmas fundraising drinks party in aid of St Mabli's Church at the Old Rectory, Llanvapley. Tom writes: "There will be fizzy, mulled and still wines and nibbles - no ticket costs but donations to St Mabli's will be gratefully received". Numbers are limited by space so if you would like to join us please RSVP as soon as possible to [thomaslowes@gmail.com](mailto:thomaslowes@gmail.com)

The next **LSSA coffee morning** will be on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December. The coffee morning will include the final 100 Club draw of the year. There will be two winning tickets in December. The November 100 Club winner was Joan Kelly who was delighted to receive a cheque for £50 and aims to put it towards her new kitchen. Thanks to everyone who have supported the 100 Club in 2019 which has raised a very valuable £500 for the LSSA. There will also be the Christmas raffle which includes a Christmas hamper as one of its prizes. Thank you everyone who has provided prizes for the raffle. Please note that there will not be coffee morning in January.



Llanvapley Church will be holding an **Advent Taize service** on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December. The service is an ecumenical service and everyone is welcome. The singing of chants, prayers and periods of silence are important elements of Taize services. Why not make a date and come along and find out more.

**Llanvapley Church** was delighted to receive a Christmas present in November! For some time now the church has relied on the generosity of the Llanvapley Sports and Social Association when it has needed extra seating. This made organising special events that bit more difficult as the chairs had to be carried from the hall and then returned. Now, thanks to the support of the Community Green Energy Advisory Group we have twenty comfortable seats which will provide greater flexibility when community and church events are held. The seats will be used for the first time at the Taize service on 2<sup>nd</sup> December.



## Llanvetherine News

The **Llanvetherine Christmas dinner** is at Llandewi Skirrid Hall on the evening of 18<sup>th</sup> December.

The **Carol Service at Llanvetherine** will be on Tuesday December 17<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. A warm welcome awaits everyone. This will be enhanced by the radiant heat from the “new” heaters, the glow of Christmas and mulled-wine with mince pies after the service!



*Llanvetherine Church - Christmas 2018*

The **Llanvetherine Church Annual Draw** will take place at The Hog's Head at 8pm on Friday January 17<sup>th</sup> 2020. We are very grateful for the help of all those who contribute prizes, sell and buy the tickets but if anyone else can offer any help we would be ever so grateful as the income from this event goes a long way towards the annual upkeep of our much-loved church. Thank you and a very Happy Christmas and a Happy 2020 from all at Llanvetherine Church.

### **Join us for a festive weekend!**

**at The Cellar Door of White Castle Vineyard  
Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2019 10-5pm**

We plan to release vintage 2015, our renowned "1581" Welsh fortified wine along with a fine array of quality award winning Welsh wines for your wish list. Local artisan chocolate truffles, the perfect cheese for your festive cheeseboard. Perfect gift ideas for wine lovers include Adopt a Vine, bespoke gift vouchers or simply spoil yourselves this Christmas



## Penrhos News

We were blessed with beautiful weather for our **Remembrance Service**. The sun was shining and when we walked to the lychgate a Peacock butterfly joined us. It landed next to Richard Cleeve and stayed whilst we had prayers and read out the names of the men who lost their lives during the First and Second World War. The butterfly then took off, landed on Peter Cobbs shoulder and then flew away. It was a very surreal moment.



*Penrhos Church Christmas 2018*

## WI News

November saw the last in our special events for our centenary year. A group of members enjoyed Swan Lake performed by part of the Russian Ballet Company from Belarus. The Brecon Theatre proved a lovely venue, with perfect view from the circle seats, booked by Jan Currie. The WI meeting in November was a chance to taste a selection of the produce of Wiltshire Farm Foods. This firm deliver ready meals for the freezer. The meals tasted very good and are useful for people not wanting or unable to cook their own meals. Anyone interested in knowing more can get a booklet from Lin at the WI. Our December meeting, the last in our centenary year, will be 'Christmas Around the World'. There will be food, drinks and a mini auction and a mini Tenovus choir, to entertain us. The annual dinner will be at the Kings Arms, Abergavenny 7pm 8<sup>th</sup> January. The menus will be available at the December meeting, for members to choose their preferences.

We wish everyone a lovely and peaceful Christmas time.

Contact: Lin Morris President 01873 850939

## The Garden in December

When you hang a bunch of mistletoe over your front door you will be following in a tradition that goes back thousands of years. There are numerous references to Mistletoe, from Ancient Greece, where it was put under the beds of newly married couples, to Rome where it was used in the Saturnalia Festivals. It was meant to signify fertility and was an aphrodisiac. The Druids hung it in houses to ward off evil spirits. Used as a diving rod it was supposed to reveal buried treasure. In Norse legend, the Goddess Frigg wept



tears when her son Loki killed his twin brother Balder the Good with an arrow made of mistletoe taken from an oak tree. She blessed the plant and promised that all who passed beneath it would receive a kiss. Christians later adopted it to ward off witches but it was frowned upon to bring it inside. Mistletoe, *Viscum album*, is our native species and is similar to the North American, *Phoradendron leucarpum* (meaning Thief of the Trees) which has shorter, broader leaves and larger clusters of white berries. Both are parasites, dependant on the host for water and nutrients and attach themselves by a structure called a Haustorium. They do not damage the tree. I have tried to get a plant going by sticking a berry into a crack in the bark of an apple tree. Some say that it should be eaten by a bird first and this may give rise to its name, Mistel, Anglo Saxon for dung and tan, meaning a twig or branch. Many birds love eating the berries not least the mistlethrush and the blackcap but pigeons like them too. According to Geoffrey Grigson's 'Englishman's Flora, mistletoe was abundant in the counties of the Severn and it was particularly prevalent in the Herefordshire Apple orchards. Tenbury Wells has a Mistletoe fair on the 7th December this year with a Mistletoe Queen and a Holly King. In Dorset it was called Kiss and Go.

All these special properties may possible go back to the toxic nature of the leaves and berries. Apparently they were used to cure epilepsy and given to women to make them fertile. The berries can cause blurred vision, drowsiness and vomiting and in some cases seizures. However, it is used as a complimentary treatment for cancer as it is supposed to boost the immune system and prevent high blood pressure. There are even recipes for Mistletoe tea but it sounds very bitter and I would not recommend it. I should stick to kissing under it. Happy Christmas!

PS. There was a misprint in last month's article. *Salvia involucrata* - not involucrate. It used to be called *Salvia* 'Bethelli



# Services in December / January



## Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December

Advent Sunday  
Llanvetherine 9.30am  
Llantilio Crossenny 11am

## Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December

Llanvapley Taize Service 7.30pm

## Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December

Penrhos 9.30am  
Llanvapley 11am

## Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December

Llanvetherine 9.30am  
Llantilio Carol Service 4pm

## Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December

Llanvetherine Carol Service 7pm

## Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December

Penrhos Carol Service 6.30pm

## Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December

No service in Penrhos  
Cwmerra Chapel Carol Service 3pm  
Llanvapley Carol Service 4pm

## Christmas Eve

Llantilio Chringle 4pm  
Llanvetherine Midnight Mass  
11.30pm

## Christmas Day

Penrhos 9.30  
Llantilio 11am

## Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December

No services

## Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Llanvetherine 9.30am  
Llantilio 11am

## Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January

Penrhos 9.30am  
Llanvapley 11am

## Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January

Llanvetherine 9.30am  
Llantilio 11am

## Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January

Penrhos 9.30am  
Llanvapley 11am

## Dates for your Diary

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December** Llanddewi Rydderch Coffee Morning 10.30am with raffle money going to a Food Bank

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December** Llanvapley Coffee Morning 10.30am

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December** Llanvetherine Christmas Dinner

**Friday January 17<sup>th</sup>** Llanvetherine Church Annual Draw @ The Hog's Head at 8pm

*Contributions for the February issue of TNT by 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020*

*Please send your emails to [lestaylor.taylor@gmail.com](mailto:lestaylor.taylor@gmail.com)*

**Don't forget our website [llantiliogroup.info](http://llantiliogroup.info) for the latest information**  
*as well as information about all our churches. We are also on Twitter @LlantilioG*