The New Times

April 2020

The Parish Magazine of Llantilio Crossenny, Llanvetherine, Llanvapley and Penrhos

Spring is here! Daffodils in Llantilio Churchyard

Looking for something to do with the kids?
Find out about our exciting new photo competition

From the Vicarage

'It's so unreal', I've heard people say. 'Even surreal', I've replied.

And you may be forgiven for wondering how we've managed to drift into the pages of a real-life dystopian novel, the sort of novel where the world has gone badly wrong.

Like many other people my mind has tended to dwell on the worst news. Indeed, it's been difficult to read or listen to anything else, other news now relegated to small print or just not reported at all. If we're honest, most of us are worried about all sorts of possibilities. But, with common sense and real effort by everyone, catastrophe can be avoided and we can mend our collective lives, and perhaps mend the world a bit too.

I'm cheered by how quickly some communities have got their act together — sometimes even before government and WHO advice had arrived, and produced truly Good Samaritan acts of care and concern for other people. Maybe they had no time to realise that they have answered the question in that parable, 'and who is our neighbour?'

And I'm sometimes furious at reports of civic thoughtlessness — surely everyone must realise the only way to stop this disease is for people not to be together? But we are social animals — it's how the world has always functioned (I'm still cross). Or, is it mass denial, with vox pop interviews showing people who clearly haven't grasped the enormity of the problem?

It may seem odd to consider it now — but this crisis will end, and we need to start thinking now about how we use our lives 'after coronavirus'. And what we are going to learn from the crisis? Will it change how we live forever? (We can aim to change our lives for the better.) How will the many hundreds of thousands of people whose livelihoods have been damaged, or lost, find a new way of life, including people very close to these communities? How will others support them? Can we move away from the comfort orientated ways of thinking we have all become used to? Some of the happiest people I've ever seen were poor families in Nepal. Not happy because they were hungry, wearing threads, and had nothing, but radiating true happiness for reasons known only to them. I reset my own values then — but I admit, just for a while.

At times like this, though, people do begin to reset their values and rediscover lost spirituality. In the past people returned to their places of worship realising how badly we misuse God's world. But remember that God is with us through all this in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ, who died that we might live. From the Prodigal Son (Luke 15: 11-32): '...this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'

There is still so much that is good in our world. We must hold on to our aspirations. And let's now think about making daily prayer a central part of our lives – prayer for others, and prayer for ourselves.

All Blessings
Andrew

The following meditation has been sent in by Christine Everitt

A Meditation

Whichever way we turn, O God, there is Your face
in the light of the moon and patterns of stars,
in sacred mountain rifts and ancient groves,
in mighty seas and creatures of the deep.

Whichever way we turn, O God, there is Your face
in the light of eyes we love,
in the salt of tears we have tasted,
in weathered countenances east and west,
in the soft skin glow of the child everywhere.
Whichever way we turn, O God, there is Your face,
there is Your face among us.

I am reminded that even in the darkest of times, God is always near. He comes to us in the faces of friends, loved ones, and all who lift, support and help us along the way.
He is quite simply Amazing.

Thought for April

Never underestimate the importance of encouragement and love.

Resources for our congregations

During the period when our churches are closed and services are cancelled you will be able to follow what is happening during Holy Week, Easter and beyond by using online resources which have been produced by the diocese and locally.

The Bishop of Monmouth will be holding a Sunday Eucharist which will be live streamed. The service will be available on Youtube at https://youtu.be/o9DB74PPX9U

Revd. Andrew Dawson has created videos in which he gives a message for each Sunday. These videos are available by following the links on the home page of our website **www.llantiliogroup.info**

Revd. Lorraine Cavanagh is preparing a series of podcasts for Holy Week and Easter Sunday. These podcasts are available by following the links on the 'Notices' page of our website. Lorraine is a regular blogger and a link to her blog is available on the same page.

Spring Photographic Competition
"New Life / Our Village Church"
£25 prize, John Lewis voucher

At a time of unavoidable social distancing the four churches are holding a photographic competition. The competition is for fun and a single prize of a £25 John Lewis voucher has been donated to go to the winner from one of the two subjects.

Entries:

- Digital photos small enough to email
- Send as .jpg files to AndrewJDawson51@gmail.com
- Taken from within one of the four parishes since 1 January 2020
- Entrants must have a local connection please — the idea is to encourage local activity and communication as well as fun, and avoid unnecessary travel (please say what your connection is)
- But a connection with your church is not required — it's for everyone
- Can be colour or black and white
- Photoshopping allowed for minor corrections only, please
- Can be of either subject or both
- Entries limited to four photos per individual entrant
- Entrants retain copyright as always but give permission for publication via Four Parishes Llantilio Group website
- The judge's decision is final

Subjects:

Either,

"New Life" — We are looking for spring themes with a message of hope and renewal. New born live stock or pets, or new plant growth in the garden or countryside. The picture of the kid goat taking its mother's milk on a farm in Llanvetherine is an example. Or anything in that spirit we haven't thought of!

Or,

"Our Village Church" - But we are looking for photos taken outside from an unusual angle or perspective rather than traditional church shots. It's an opportunity for people to get to know their church a little better while doing your daily exercise.

Please make sure that you always pay attention to your safety, and please don't trespass or damage church or other property. Churchyards are uneven with large gravestones, and have numerous unavoidable hazards. Please observe all current guidance, rules, or law to do with the pandemic — so make sure you keep your distance from other people to protect both them and you. Clarissa Fonseca of Llanvetherine has kindly agreed to judge the entries

On Saturday 14th March **Bishop Cherry Vann** led a communion service in Grosmont and representatives of our parishes attended. The service was an opportunity to meet the Bishop and to introduce our parishes. The service was well attended and the service was followed by a buffet lunch. Thanks to everyone who provided food. Social distancing was yet to be introduced but strict hygiene rules were certainly in place. A sign of things to come! Talking about signs, it was interesting to see that Grosmont Church had made special bunting to welcome Bishop Cherry. The bunting said 'Grosmont Church Welcomes Bishop Cherry'!

Cross Ash School News Since returning to school after the February half term we have been very busy at Cross Ash School. First up was our annual **Eisteddfod**. This year we have been using materials for the recitation from the National Eisteddfod which meant we all had to recite our poems in the medium of Welsh. This has really helped us to focus on our Welsh speaking. Some children were also invited to enter into the National Eisteddfod and many of those pupils have been successful in going through to the next stages of the Eisteddfod, which is very exciting! Our Cross Ash Eisteddfod allows pupils the opportunity to make, design, draw, paint, perform and write and all of these items have a Welsh theme. The day of the Eisteddfod was just for the performance element and we heard songs, poems and musical items from across the school. The overall winners of our Cross Ash Eisteddfod were Whitecastle, but Grosmont and Skenfrith competed very well. Pictured are The Captain and Vice Captain of Whitecastle with Mrs Presdee after receiving the Eisteddfod Shield

After the Eisteddfod we celebrated **British Science Week** and members of the school were treated to various workshops relating to science. Then we launched into Sport Week. This was a wonderful week of sporting activities organised by members of staff and outside agencies. The whole school were fully engaged in running, climbing, den building, circuits, Zumba, netball and cricket to name but a few!! This was all to support both the NSPCC and Sport Relief.
We have also celebrated **World Book Day**. This was a wonderful day where we all dressed up as our favourite book characters and embraced all things connected to reading. Parents came to visit and listen to their children reading and it was a delightful day.
Year 6 have also been heavily involved with the **Dragons Rugby** team this term creating animations for each squad member to be used on their social media sites. This is a very exciting project to be involved in and we are looking forward to hosting an interview with some of the players next month, all of which will be conducted in Welsh!

Some lovely news in these strange times, is that Simon's brother and his wife welcomed a little baby boy into the world yesterday, **Isaac Timothy Simon Prince** weighing in at a hearty 9lb 6oz. *Revd. Heidi*

Four Parishes Garden Competition

To maintain your spirits over the next few months why not enter our four parishes garden competition!

The competition has four categories - large garden, cottage garden, very small garden and vegetable garden.
Entry is free and you are invited to enter by sending an email to Tom Lowes (at the email address below) stating your name, address and the category you would like to be considered for. Entries should be received by the end April, and will be published in the May edition of TNT.
There will be a bottle of champagne for the winner in each category, bottle of wine for runner up.
Judging to be done by arrangement at end of lockdown period whenever that may be or we may have to rely on photographic evidence.
Hopefully there will be an awards ceremony at The Old Rectory in Llanvapley when we can celebrate our achievements!
Please email your entry to thomasnlowes@gmail.com

Llantilio Crossenny News

Llantilio Bellringers were delighted to ring the bells on Sunday 1st March which coincided with St David's Day. The group practised on 10th March but was forced to cancel the practice on 17th following government advice. The bells have fallen silent for the time being.

Services at **St Teilo's** have been cancelled for the foreseeable future. The Church has remained open but following advice from the Diocese of Monmouth it was closed on 25th March until further notice. The churchyard and grounds are a riot of colour with daffodils primroses and blossoms at the moment. A number of people have offered to collect shopping, prescriptions etc for people in the parish. Please call Elsie Latham on 01600 780225 who will help to arrange things. Elsie has suggested that with a number of people now losing their incomes a small contribution to their petrol bill would be much appreciated.

Silent Auction in Aid of The British Heart Foundation

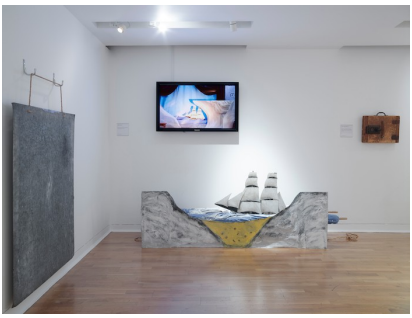
How it works Send me a message/call on 07971607157 with the number/lot you would like to bid on. I will write this down and whoever has the highest bid at the end of the 14 days (finishes 5pm, Sunday 5th April) wins the lot. I won't be telling **anyone** who has bid what amount! Its as easy as that!
If you have any questions on the lots contact me and I will try to help. If I can't I will pass you on to the person who donated. I know we are in trying times at the moment but I hope we can have a bit of fun and make a nice amount of money for **The British Heart Foundation**.
Many thanks to all the people who have donated lots and thank you in advance to you all for your continued support. Enjoy! *Lauren Cooke*

1. Raglan Farm Park - Family Day pass (2 adults 2 children)
2. Nantyffin Cider Mill Inn - 3 course Sunday Lunch for 2 people to the value of £50
3. Raglan Farm Park - Family Day pass (2 adults 2 children)
4. Pink Wellies Nails - Gel Manicure
5. Lauren Cooke - 2 Hour Driving Lesson
6. Lanes Garage - MOT
7. Michaela Rawsthorne - Your moment in time - Family Photography Session with 5 digital images
8. Wye Valley Country Store - £50 voucher

9. Nick and Jane Perkins - Weekend in London flat - Sleeps 4 people - Location South Side of the river between Battersea and Albert Bridge - parking for 1 car
10. Ceri Hall- Hairdressing Voucher
11. Michelle Walker- Safe Haven Therapeutic Services Mental Health nurse Practitioner and therapist - 1 hour mental health session - Could include assessment / CBT/ Mindfulness to be discussed on booking (strictly confidential, insured and registered)
12. Ben Jones- Hillside Beef and Lamb - Ffynnonau Farm (near Raglan) - Lucky Dip Beef Box
13. Sarah Probert- 2 nights B & B for 2 people - Ysgubor Lan B & B Penrhos
14. Gerard and Valerie Ann Barrell - Long Weekend in Old Hendre Farm holiday cottage for 2 people
15. Martyn Heywood and Owen Staphnill - 1 day Labour - Plastering
16. Marion Meek- Shiraz Voucher (a fashion shop in Monmouth)
17. Francesca Teague Landscape Design - 2 hours gardening services
18. James Price-Fox made from horseshoes
19. Peter Robert Gardner - Game and wild meat hamper including wildboar, venison, pheasant and partridge
20. Stan Evans - 30 Acres Spraying
21. Nicola Merchant - Whitecastle Vineyard - Tour and Tasting for 4 people
22. Red Castle Nursery - Summer wicker hanging basket to be choose/ picked up in June.

A message from Lauren Cooke I am available to pick up any shopping/medicines for anyone who is unable to get out and about. Please don't take the risk if you are vulnerable. I am available any time. Please just call and ask. You may also like to know that fruit and veg boxes for collection or delivery are available to the vulnerable in the area. Please contact if I can help. 07971607157

Llantilio Crossenny Festival Along with many other Festivals in the UK, we are cancelling the Llantilio Festival at the beginning of May and monitoring the situation. Those who have already bought tickets will be reimbursed and we hope either to postpone to later in the year or we will look forward to the May 2021 Festival from 1st -16th May 2021. We can only say thank you for your ongoing support!



On a high note however, The Foundling Museum in London asked for the 18th

century style corkscrew rolling waves (which the children constructed as part of the Children's Opera Project 2019 at Treadam Barn under the supervision of London Opera Productions) to be displayed in an exhibition there from September 2019 to January 2020! The children were so excited to see that their corkscrew waves were also mentioned in the review in the Times! *Eleanor Farncombe*

Please Help Our Doctors and Nurses After each aerosol generated procedure to help with coronavirus each nurse in ITU has to shower. Please help by donating anything you can (that's brand new unopened) to Nevill Hall Hospital:

There are boxes dotted around the area including Cross Ash Hall, 8 Trothy Way Llantillio Crossenny, Lanes Garage Llanvetherine, The Red Hart Llanvapley and Woodland Farm Penrhos.

Items which would be useful include lip balms sticks, face moisturiser, shower gel, shampoo, conditioner, hand cream hair bobbles, hair nets, drinks and snacks.

During the current crisis many people in Llantilio and in the other parishes have been using Facebook and Whatsapp to keep in touch with people in their area to make sure everyone is looked after. **Lucy Emery** from Llantilio contacted TNT and said *'There are so many different people and businesses coming forward to support in different ways it's really inspiring. We already get our milk delivered by Raglan dairy shop deliver twice a week I wondered if a list of local businesses with contact numbers who will be delivering might be useful in the newsletter.'* Thank you Lucy! On the right is a list of some of local businesses who are supporting their communities at the moment.

Beavans Family Butchers - free delivery on orders over £15

Chesters Wine Merchants - delivery service as well as 'knock and run'

O'Donnells Bakehouse (Crickhowell) delivery of baked goods etc including Abergavenny, Gilwern etc

Gardeners Kitchen - takeaway service and free delivery

Luigi's - takeaway and home delivery

Codfather - can telephone or use just eat app

Little Green refills for eco good such as toilet roll, cleaning products, toiletries etc

Angel Bakery and Chapel starting delivery at the weekend

Raglan dairy for milk etc

Llanvapley News

Llanvapley Walking Group The coronavirus crisis has obviously led to suspension of all our group walks until further notice. Just before the crisis hit us, though, we managed to go for a walk along the lanes to Coed Morgan and back – around 5 miles. It was, as always, a lovely walk taking in the flora and fauna emerging after the long winter - and we ended it in the Red Hart. Sadly, the walk you can see being discussed and planned in the photo won't now take place until it is safe and advisable to do so. Best wishes, stay safe and let's do everything we can to support the wonderful NHS staff who are working so hard in these difficult times.

On Sunday March 8th a special service of Morning Prayer was held in **Llanvapley Church**. The service was lead by Christine Everitt and focused on the problems facing the people of Zimbabwe. Tom Lowes explained the work of the charity, Zane (Zimbabwe a National Emergency) and a collection was taken on behalf of the charity. Llanvapley Church was delighted to be able to send a cheque for £142.46 to Zane. A letter for thanks was received from the charity. In the letter the director of the charity, Tom Benyon, explained that the situation in the country is worse than ever. Rampant inflation, relentless power cuts, lack of basic healthcare and mass hunger dominates the life of the people of Zimbabwe.

During the service we were able to make use of a sound system which had been very kindly donated by Alex Gibbon. Christine decided to use the new system to play an African song called Siyahamba which was greatly appreciated by everyone.

Llanvapley Sports and Social Association has been forced to cancel all bookings for the pavilion as a result of the coronavirus crisis. The AGM of the association, which was due to be held on 22nd April, will now have to be rescheduled. There will be no coffee morning for a while and the 100 Club draw has been put on hold until it is possible to sell all the tickets. It is hoped to hold a draw and allocate prizes as soon as possible. The play equipment is still available for use but we recommend families should stay at home if possible. There is some good news. Maintenance work on the pavilion has been completed. The guttering at the front and

back has been replaced and a concrete base has been built which will enable a shed to be erected adjacent to the pavilion. The shed will enable the pavilion to be de cluttered and ensure equipment is kept safe. Thanks go to the contractors who completed the work.

Llanvapley Churchyard has had its grass mown for the first time in 2020 ahead of the service on Sunday 8th March. Thanks to Dai the Mower!

Llanvetherine News

The new organ in Llanvetherine has been given the seal of approval after being played after the service on St David's Day. Revd. Heidi expressed her delight in the new organ. The playing was better than the singing!

WI News

We are so sorry to have had to cancel our meetings, for the foreseeable future. But members are not forgotten! We have some super younger members who are willing to help others. Their contacts , telephone numbers and emails are in the new membership list, that you have received either by email or snail mail. Thank you Jan Currie for compiling that for us. It is so useful, especially at this time.

So many thanks to Ros Jefferies, Lizzie Jones, Lynda Castor and Jenny Goodwin. Your offers of help are really appreciated. This is the spirit of the WI in a crisis. But lets look to the future and cheer ourselves up.
Brenda Allen, our most mature member has celebrated her 90th Birthday on the 27th March. Sadly her party had to be cancelled but she will have received lots of good wishes from our kind members.
I believe she would have experienced the war in Bristol, where she hails from, and so her fortitude then will have seen her through; and may it again, with this war against the dreaded virus! What a party we will give her, God willing, after this is all over !
So what are you doing when you can't go and do what you would normally do? Many of you will have taken advantage of the sunny Spring weather to garden; plant new life and possibly grow more vegetables instead of buying from the supermarkets! In view of this and our rural setting we will be sending out a gardening quiz, designed by Jan O'Connor. So thanks to Jan for doing that for us. We are also putting together a local quiz. Thanks to Les Taylor, Jan Currie and Ann Couldwell for help with that one.
Another project that may you may wish to be involved in requires some but not massive craft skills. Blackmarsden Special School in Hereford need some knitted or sewn fairy tale and nursery rhyme characters. These will be put into story sacks for the children to understand in 3D the meaning of the stories and rhymes. The young children, with additional learning needs, really appreciate these supports to learning. The school has very little money to buy such items, as they are over £100 per sack.
So if you think you can help please contact Lin on 01873 850939/ 07840641856 or email Lin.tedit@btinternet .com You do not have to be a WI member to help with this project.
Looking to the forward, maybe there will be a time in the not too distant future, we can have an 'at a distance' picnic at White Castle. Where we can wave, shout, sing and eat together. At the moment self isolation stops us doing even that, but the time will come when we are free again to have such fun!
Please everyone do not take risks and keep yourselves safe from harm . Love and Peace Lin

The Garden in April

We live in troubled times and it is rather difficult to look forward without wondering where we all will be, come the summer. We are so lucky here in the country, we can get out for walks and no doubt for many of us, the garden will be a refuge and a place to unwind and forget about everything else that is happening in the rest of the world.
I have spent today cleaning the greenhouse and getting ready to sow some seeds. Unfortunately, 6 panes of glass got broken in the gales last month, but I am hoping that they will soon be replaced and I can get started.

Sowing seed can be very rewarding. It is a way of getting a large number of plants for a small outlay. Usually, you have too many and can give some away to friends.

Everything in the garden is showing promise. Magnolia buds are fattening up, wild daffodils are in abundance, fritillaries are about to come into flower, there are fresh shoots on philadephus and the camelias have been better than ever. I have even seen a few tulips buds appearing. It is almost as if nature is trying to cheer us up. With all this new growth has come the annual menace – celandine! I have filled about 6 large bags of the stuff and taken them to the dump. Perhaps that is one thing to be grateful for, usually I don't have enough time to dig them all up. Every little potato like tuber becomes a fresh plant, but if you mulched really well in the autumn, they seem to come up more easily. Creeping buttercup is another weed to catch now along with goosegrass. A watchful eye out for them now, will pay dividends.

A patch of scilla sibirica (pictured) is at last making an impact. I think I put them in about five years ago. They are a brilliant gentian blue, their little nodding heads dancing in the wind. They seem fairly unfussy and will tolerate some shade. A friend gave me a small pot of Iris unguicularis Mary Barnard. She is a very deep blue. I left it in the pot to settle for a bit before planting, and it disappeared. I found it yesterday – buried in our large compost heap. A little black four legged friend was definitely responsible!

Gardeners may like to know that **Raglan Garden Centre** is now offering a delivery service with free delivery for over 70s
Call 01291 690751 or email info@raglangardencentre.co.uk

Services in April

All of our services have been cancelled and all of our churches are closed.
All Easter Vestries are postponed for a year but electoral roll forms can still be completed for processing after lock down.

You can keep in touch with what is happening in our church communities via our website **www.llantiliogroup.info**
Our website has the latest news, links to online resources for worship as well as information about all our churches.
We are also on Twitter **@LlantilioG**

Contributions for the May issue of TNT by 20th April 2020
Please send your emails to lestaylor.taylor@gmail.com