

The New Times

August 2020

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



***It's not all child's play in Llanvapley
as Covid-19 safety guidelines are introduced***



but the arrival of Millie Sian is being celebrated in Llanvetherine

From the Vicarage

Dear Friends,

What wonderful news about the birth of little Millie, as you will read later in TNT, and the subsequent “birth” of parents and grand-parents. Our congratulations and good wishes go to Alice and Richard, and, of course, to Sally and Andrew, as they welcome Millie into their lives. August, for me, marks the first year since the death of my beloved husband Simon.

You may think that birth and death are opposite ends of life’s spectrum. However, I think they have much more in common than you might at first think.

In fact, I was struck by the similarities between the maternity ward, and the hospice.

In both places there is the preparation for new life; for the ending of one world, and the entrance into another.

The unborn child must leave the world it has known, with all the warmth and security of the mother’s womb, in order to be born; the umbilical cord – the life-line, on which the baby has relied for survival, must be cut, and the child must learn to breathe for itself.

So too, as we make our final journey, we must leave the world we have known in order to travel to the Heavenly Country. The “umbilical cord” of our ties to this world, must also be severed if we are to be free to roam in the New Jerusalem.

This may make some sense of a text I sent to a dear friend on the day of Simon’s death:

“There has been a new birth in the maternity ward this morning,” I wrote.

Or, as Kahlil Gibran put it, “For life and death are one, even as the river and sea are one.”

With every blessing to you all,

Heidi



15th August 2020 Commemorating VJ Day 75 and the end of World War II

On several Remembrance Sundays I have been privileged to be asked to place a wreath on the Llantilio Crossenny War Memorial on behalf of the parishioners. This welcome duty includes reciting the Kohima Epitaph which is inscribed on the Commonwealth War Graves memorial at Kohima, North East India. The Battles around Kohima and Imphal (April to June 1944) were some of the bitterest of the War. 30,000 British, Indian, African and other Commonwealth troops were killed. The battle, sometimes described as 'the Stalingrad of the East', turned the tide against the invading Japanese and by June 1945 India and Burma (Myanmar) were liberated by



the 14th Army ('The Forgotten Army') under the inspired leadership of Field Marshall William Slim. Known as 'Uncle Bill' to his soldiers he commanded affection as well as profound respect. Total victory was won after a campaign in which the great bravery and self sacrifice of the soldiers was matched by terrible weather and ground conditions.

The armies of Japan were in retreat on all fronts when World War II ended abruptly, following the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with the unconditional surrender of Japan on 15 August 1945. The surrender ended a war in which, world wide, it is estimated 50 million, military and civilians died. It heralded the new age in which all out nuclear conflict could have no winners. Political and military strategy were transformed. Ideological differences between former allies emerged which foreshadowed the later 'Cold War' and local conflicts.

In the Asia-Pacific theatre of war the 14th Army was Britain's principal fighting force. It was a truly multi-cultural army. Some 40 languages were spoken and many religions practised. All were united in common purpose against militarism. Many British and Commonwealth troops gave their lives. Their legacy gave impetus to the emergence of many independent Commonwealth nations and ensured the freedoms we all enjoy now. The message of the Kohima Epitaph resounds still: for our tomorrow they gave their today.

The price of liberty is, indeed, eternal vigilance. We remember with thanks all, military and civilian, who served and sacrificed in past conflicts and value those who defend and support us today.

Resources for our congregations

During the period when our churches are closed and services are cancelled you will be able to follow the events of the Christian calendar 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.

Llantilio Crossenny News

Although we are still unable to open our churches for regular worship there are still things to be done to ensure that when the time comes to reopen we are ready. I'm sure i'm not alone when I say we have all missed the companionship of meeting our fellow worshippers and the wider community in various events in our lovely churches.



On Monday 13th July the **funeral of John Barnes** was held in the Churchyard, his family, close friends and his dog Jock, gathered around his grave while Revd. Heidi Prince conducted a very fitting service. John had lived a very full life in Llantilio Crossenny and was a much loved and respected member of our community. He had been in poor health for sometime and I am sure his death was a happy release for him, he would have approved of his final sendoff ~ even the rain ~ as he was a great gardener and had always been most generous in supplying a lot of plants to our annual plant sale.

Our quinquennial **inspection**, which takes place every five years, has just been completed and we await the architect's report, we really hope that no major work is required in the near future as with the Church closed for so long we have had very little income.

Community Green Energy Advisory Group, which distributes £70,000 a year to local communities, is now accepting applications. Our treasurer, Margaret Parry, has made an application to the group for assistance towards our disabled toilet and disabled access to the Church. We sincerely hope they will look on us favourably.

Church Cleaning Although it may still be a little way off before we can reopen the Church I think we should be thinking of a good clean as it hasn't been done since the beginning of March, with that in mind if anyone could spare an hour or two at a conveniently mutual time we would love to hear from you, please phone Elsie Latham on 01600780225 Thank you

Llantilio Bell Ringers have recently received further guidance from the Bell Ringers' Association about how to return to ringing. The measures that need to be followed are listed below. Unfortunately, we have galled at the second hurdle!

- Limited ringing only (15 mins for service)
- All ringers to be at least 2m apart at all times.
- Only enough experienced ringers to ring the identified bells; no extras or visitors.
- Excellent hand hygiene
- Hand-sanitisers to be available at the bottom of the stairs and on the ringing room table.
- PPE – face masks to be worn.
- No other person to enter the tower during the 72 hours prior to ringing.
- No other person to enter the tower during the 72 hours after to ringing without consulting the Tower Captain.
- Record of attendance to be kept.
- Notice of restricted access and tower contact details to be affixed to the lower tower door.



On Saturday 25th July a grave side funeral service was held at St. Teilo's Church, Llantilio Pertholey for **Damaris Gurney**. Damaris was very well know to Llantilio ringers and was a regular visitor to Llantilio on Tuesday evenings. Damaris was described by one of our ringers as 'such a lovely lady and she loved her bell ringing and was always happy to help anyone'. Several members of the Llantilio team attended the funeral and they were delighted to give their support and best wishes to the family. The bell ringers are looking forward to be able to remember Damaris the next time they assemble in Llantilio tower and are allowed to ring. Thank you to Revd. Julian Gray who took the service

The Llandaff & Monmouth Diocesan Association of Church Bell Ringers' 2020 Annual General Meeting is being held online (via Zoom) on Saturday 12th September 2020 at 16:00hrs

Magnus John Ingledeu was born at home in good order on 11th July. He is one quarter Norwegian.

Thank you to **Jill Lewis** from Llantilio for sending this picture of a plant from her garden. Jill is a regular at Llantilio's annual plant sale and is clearly an expert at finding the right plant for the right position. Please let TNT know if you have any favourites in your garden which you would like to share with our readers. For those of you who haven't already recognised the plant or would like to get one for yourself, the plant is a **Platycodon**. Maybe we will see some at the plant sale in May 2021!



Last month a couple of old school pictures from **Bryn Deri School** were featured in TNT. Thanks to Lynne Shuker for contacting TNT after she spotted herself in the picture below. Lynne (Jones as she was then) has fond memories of her time at the school when she was living at Crossways Farm Llanvapley. Lynne recalled that *'Brynderi used to be a school that children stayed at from nursery until they left at 14/15. My brother was one of those but he left early and went to a tech school. He's much older than me. I know most of the kids in that photo. My cousin Phillip from chapel farm is in the back row too. My Mum made that dress and my grandmother knitted the cardigan.'* Please contact TNT if you have any stories or memories of your time at Bryn Deri school which you would like to share with our readers.



Thank you to Jane Melia (formerly Morgan) for sending in the names of the people in the pictures we featured last month.



Norman Leese, Headmaster. Phillip Jones, Unknown, Colin Hoggins, Roger Hoggins, Richard Llewellyn, Gareth Morgan, Jonathan Williams, Andrew Emery? Judith Leader, Glenys Fortey, Jane Edmunds, Unknown, Jane Morgan, Audrey Pugh, Rita Cornish, Jane Griffiths, Mrs Jones



Mr Leese, Jonathan Williams, Andrew Emery, Glenys Fortey, Lynne Jones, Roger Hoggins, Phillip Jones, Gareth Morgan, Mrs Jones, Infants. Janice Hockey, Rita Cornish, Sally Williams, Jane Griffiths, Jane Morgan, Jane Edmunds. Picture taken in 1960

Llanvapley News

Thanks to the financial support of the Community Green Energy Advisory Group, Llanvapley Church was able to purchase a set of new chairs last year. The chairs have replaced some **older wooden ones** which have served the church well over the years. The wooden ones have been used at many services and events at which extra seating was needed. The Parochial Church Council has decided that there is no longer a need for

these chairs and would like to offer them for sale to raise money for church funds.

The chairs are made of beech with elm seats. They are of solid construction and are in good condition. The chairs have recently been refurbished and waxed and polished. They would be suitable for many kinds of use and are available to be seen by appointment (outside the church with social distancing). Please contact TNT if you are interested. The Church hopes to sell them for around £25 each. There are eight chairs for sale. They are all the same design but have slight differences in appearance so the sooner you see them, the more choice you will have!



In June, Llanvapley Church received its **Quinquennial report** on the state of the building. In the report it highlighted the work completed over the last five years (shown on the right). Well done to everyone who has helped us to achieve so much.

The PCC hope to meet soon to discuss what needs to be done next!

- Repointing of ridge tiles.
- Redecoration of rainwater goods.
- Clearing out of gullies.
- Land drain installed to the north of the church.
- Surface trough flagstones have been repointed.
- Re-limewashing of external walls.
- Repointing stonework externally.
- Windows have been refurbished.
- The leaded window on the north side of the Nave has been reinstalled.
- Timber doors have been redecorated.
- Infill panels to the wagon vaulted roof have been repaired.
- Internal redecoration.
- Floorboard in the Sanctuary has been refixed.
- Eased door into the base of the Tower.
- Trees have been cut back so that they do not overlap the church.
- New ladder staircase in base of Tower.

On Monday 20th July, the **Llanvapley Sports and Social Association** committee met to discuss reopening its facilities following the changes made to Covid-19 restrictions. Six members of the committee and two trustees attended the meeting outside of the building on a fairly warm evening. The new base for the shed proved to be a perfect place for a socially distanced event!

Communities centres in Wales are officially able to re-open. However, as the Llanvapley Hall is not used for essential services, i.e. childcare, food distribution, etc., as such it will not be opening yet. Reopening the pavilion is of course much more complicated than shutting it. The committee is aware that the cricket club and other community groups would like to use the facilities. The LSSA has contacted these groups to ask them to ensure that they have completed all the necessary steps to ensure their activities are Covid-19 safe. The LSSA has appointed a committee member (Lynda Caster) to be our Covid-19 Safety Officer and has begun work on developing plans and risk assessments to ensure that the hall is ready to be reopened for community use when we are allowed to do so. The committee would like the existing play facilities to be available to use and has completed a risk assessment which has led to a number of measures to ensure the play area and the field are Covid-19 safe. The committee asks everyone in the village (and visitors) to read the safety information on the village noticeboard. For your convenience they are summarised below.



- Wash hands before and after a visit
- Use the sanitiser available at the entrance on arrival and departure
- Use your own sanitiser regularly when using the equipment
- Avoid touching your face
- Observe current social distancing rules particularly in relation to the use of the play equipment
- Maximum of one adult per child in the play equipment area
- Don't bring food and drink into the play area
- Please take your litter home.

The committee would like to thank Terry Leader for obtaining and installing a hand sanitiser unit from Screwfix which is next to the notice board.

In June, the LSSA applied for a **Covid-19 Business Support grant**. The LSSA is delighted to announce that it has been successful and has received a grant of £10,000. This will be used to cover on-going costs such as electricity, water, rates, insurance, maintenance etc., and also to enable the facility will be able to re-open safely when appropriate. The committee would like to thank Monmouthshire County Council and the Welsh Government for their help and financial support.

The LSSA is unable to confirm a date for its **Annual General Meeting** which was due to be held in March. The **2020 100 Club** was due to be held throughout the year, with monthly winners being drawn at the coffee morning. The committee has decided to cancel this fund raising event due to difficulties caused by the coronavirus crisis. Thank you to everyone who has already bought tickets. Refunds will be made shortly and any cheques returned. You could of course keep your ticket and put it into next year's draw which must surely happen as normal. Surely!

Anyone who was walked around the playing field in Llanvapley will probably have noticed the strange appearance of a number of doors at the foot of a some of the trees. These doors, know locally as '**fairy doors**', are of very high quality and have been clearly made by a very talented local craftsperson! TNT is pleased to announce that the people responsible for fitting these doors have been caught and told that as the land belongs to the council, they will need to apply for planning permission!



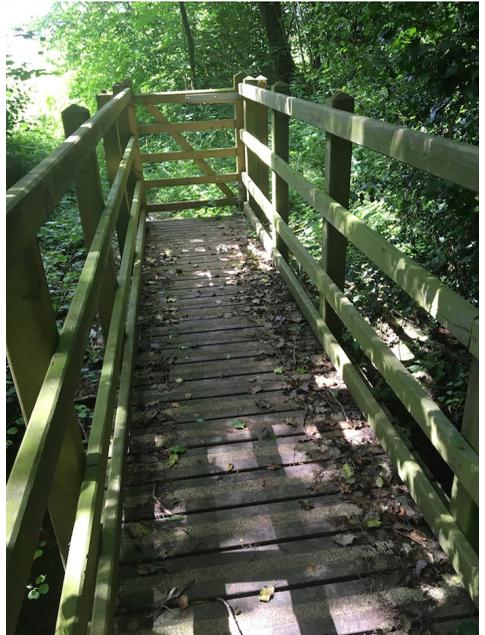
Residents of Llanvapley were delighted recently to welcome **Boris** (the horse not the Prime Minister!) as he took a tour of the village. Boris has been staying at Leah Tod's stable and Sue Hockey offered to show Boris around the village to meet the locals (socially distancing of course). Sue has not ridden for fifteen years so it was quite brave of her but clearly Boris and Sue enjoyed the experience. Well done Sue!

Llanvapley Walking Group

It seems like ages since we all met up for a walk in the lovely countryside. It was, in fact, March and we were looking forward to spring after that long, wet winter. Sadly the much anticipated walks

were not to be as Coronavirus curtailed our activities. Now it's late summer and we're still not able to get back to a normal situation and who knows how long it will be? I am looking into the possibility of social distanced walks and what sorts of things we'd need to do to ensure everyone's safety and compliance with the Covid-19 regulations and will update everyone when I have found out more.

In the meantime, there's lots of lovely walks to discover in our local area and with the talk of a 'new normal' in which walking and cycling are prioritised, it seems an area like ours would be ideal for more investment in walking infrastructure. I have put together a walk that I have done a few times recently as an A4 sheet with a map and full walking instructions - let me know and I'll be happy to email it you. Feedback as to how you get on if you try it would be very helpful too. It's that time of year when crops sometimes mean a short diversion or two and brambles and briars need cutting back every few days so you may need to grab the secateurs. Happy walking and let's hope we can meet up again soon.



Phil Allsopp
llanvapleywalkinggroup@gmail.com

Llanvetherine News

Andrew and Sally Dawson are delighted to announce the arrival of their first grandchild, Millie, to Alice and Richard at Nevill Hall Hospital on 7 July 2020. Alice and Richard and ourselves were particularly grateful and comforted that Heidi was able to visit Millie on the Special Care Baby Unit and bless her at a time when hospital visiting was otherwise either very limited or prohibited.

Mum and Dad and baby Millie are now doing very well and we are thankful for all the prayers and good wishes we and they have received.

Other News

The following report was sent in by Christine Everitt who works at Nevill Hall Hospital and has taken many services in the four parishes in the past few years. Christine asks us to continue to pray for Sulit's recovery, who is one of the nurses in the hospital. Christine writes

This is the testimony of Sulit who is recovering from the worst results of Covid. Someone who was very ill and probably didn't think would survive. It is a reminder to us of the need to thank God every day for the blessings we receive, to live the life he has given us and to always try to be the best people we can be!

'I never really understood what birthday is. I thought it's about parties and gifts. Not until this year that I realised it's a celebration of life. To dig deep, dig strong. Adversity is an understatement. The battle I survived hasn't been won yet. I still walk through a road of thorns, I bleed... I stumble ...I break. The walk isn't getting me far, that's the most demoralising part. On days when everything seemed too much, I tell myself that instead of seeing how far I have to go, I look back and see how far I had come from. My journey will continue for the Lord our God will guide me through. I am so humbled how many people became united in my healing. To all my prayer warriors who shook all of the heavens and continue to roar their prayers through, I am in deep gratitude. So thank you. And all glory and praise to God Almighty.'

Travel Writing Competition

August is the month when many of us are able to go away on holiday. For many this will mean a staycation, others may perhaps be more adventurous while some of you will of course be staying at home. This competition is aimed at those of you who enjoy writing about your holiday / travel experiences. If you are staying at home this year you can still join in by writing about your favourite local walk or bicycle ride.

It would be great if some of our young people would like to get involved. There are three age categories – primary school age – secondary school age and adult. There will be prizes of £10 in each category.

Every competition has rules so here are some!

- No more than 500 words
- Pictures and drawings can be used to illustrate the report
- English or Welsh can be used
- If you would prefer to write a poem that is ok
- The winner of the adult category to nominate a church to donate their prize!
- Entries to be sent to the editor of TNT by 20th August (email address on the back page)
- The judges decision is final – good luck.

Winning entries will be published in the September edition of TNT.

Cross Ash School News

It was with great enthusiasm and delight that we welcomed the pupils of Cross Ash back to school on June 29th. All year groups were encouraged to return and we were delighted at the large number of children who were able to take up this opportunity to have 3 full day “check in” sessions with their class teachers. The re-opening of the school took a great deal of planning and preparation but the team at Cross Ash all pulled together to ensure this was done in time to welcome the pupils. Each teacher sent their classes videos and photographs of the new layout in the school so that the children felt they had a good idea of how things would look. Staff worked hard to make sure that the classrooms and playground areas were still welcoming and enjoyable spaces to be in, despite the restrictions in place. Below you can see Mrs Stirling and Miss Phillips painting flowers on the pathway (pictured) to show parents where to stand; we felt this was more welcoming than hazard tape everywhere! On the first day there were nerves for all, but these soon disappeared as staff and pupils embarked on lots of wellbeing activities to nurture and support our young learners at this strange time.



For Year 6 it was a very difficult time. For them there had been no residential trip, no summer show, no after show party and no leavers assembly. However, the Year 6 team ensured that there would be plenty to celebrate and enjoy. It was decided that we would prepare a virtual assembly, in the form of a video. This ended up being an hour long! But the pupils had a wonderful time performing and preparing items for it. This will also be a permanent keepsake for them – something no other Year 6 group will ever have had. We had a wonderfully generous donation from the family of one of our Year 6 pupils in the form of an individual cream tea. This was prepared

for the pupils by Red Castle Tea Rooms and was absolutely delicious! The extra scones provided for the Year 6 staff went down a treat too! On their final day, each group of pupils was escorted to the entrance of the school where the old school bell was rung and they were clapped by all staff and parents as they left for the final time. Tears were shed but it was a lovely, positive ending to a very special few days.



September sees us all returning to school, for which we are so very grateful. This will take more planning and organisation, but we have done it once and we can do it again! We shall report back in September with all our news regarding this exciting time.

In the meantime it might be good to consider the words of Winnie the Pooh who reflected on that feeling of sadness at saying goodbye, and we reminded our wonderfully resilient Year 6's of this: "How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard."

With very best wishes,

All the staff and pupils at Cross Ash Primary

WI News

There has been sad news about the WI college, Denman closing. Some of us have been there in the past and appreciated what it had to offer. I am not sure what will happen to Denman, as it was left in a bequest, for education for WI women, from Lady Denman. However, I heard assurance from one of the Denman lecturers, that the online service will continue. These are really worth watching. Many are only £5 per session. I have enjoyed the many of the historical tours; making of scrap books, cards and photo albums and Qigong tai chi. If you have time do have a look. You will also be supporting Denman in the process. Whether you are at home alone or want to watch with your partner, there are no restrictions. Have a go!

Our passed president and treasurer Janet O'Connor is recovering slowly from a bad fall. She has really appreciated the many cards, flowers and cake from you all. She sends her thanks and it certainly shows what an amazing group of women you are !

Hopefully, all our other members are keeping well and as content as possible at this extraordinary time. If you know of anyone struggling do let us know please. We have had offers of help and I know some of you have been very supportive of others less able to shop etc.

The news on the pavilion is, as we must expect, at the moment limited for use. I imagine there are few members who would want to be attending meetings inside at the moment anyway. The Welsh Government restrictions seem to be continuing but we will keep a careful eye on things and monitor the situation. We will need to wait and see if the threat of a second peak, actually happens ; or maybe life will return to normal soon ! Let us pray at least that we all remain safe and well.

The Garden in August

It has been the strangest of years and yet life in the garden still keeps one busy. We had a glorious May with hot sunny days and then a most disappointing June and July. Now the 'August Gap' is upon us. Roses have had their first flush, though continue dead heading, summer flowering shrubs need cutting back and colour may seem absent unless you have been clever and sowed annuals and planted some of the later flowering perennials. This Spring I sowed a number of annuals from Chiltern Seeds which are providing a bit of colour in the borders filling up the gaps. Iceland Poppies, and Opium poppies in various shades, *Cosmos bipinnatus* 'Purity,' 'Psyche' and 'Sea Shells Pied Piper Red' are tall summer annuals that are easy to grow and fill gaps well into October (pictured above). *Centaurea cyanus*, Cornflowers, (pictured right) in various colours ranging from the common blue to pink and dark purple and have been brilliant even though the rabbits had a go at them earlier on in the year. *Salvia viridis* sometimes called Clary is another favourite with coloured bracts ranging from pink, purple, red and white. Chiltern Seeds also sell mixtures specially for bees and butterflies and they are easy as you can just sow the seed in prepared ground and then leave them to get on with it particularly if you do not have rabbits. I know I have left out the obvious Sweet Peas! Next year I have resolved to set out a place for them.



On the fruit and vegetable front our best success has been the loganberries. They are easy to look after, don't get decimated by the birds and freeze very well. They also make brilliant jam which sets a treat and is every bit as good as raspberry Jam. Our summer raspberries are now over but the Autumn Bliss is already producing big fat juicy berries which the birds seem to leave, perhaps because the fruit is often hidden under the leaves. I have netted the red currants and am trying to leave them as long as possible before freezing or making jelly to get the full flavour. We are about to have a bumper crop of mulberries which also freeze well. The greengages look promising our apple trees have very little fruit on them. On the vegetable front, courgettes, purple mange tout, harlequin carrots, though too many yellow ones, spinach, beetroot and purple French beans have been a success. The broad beans have been really disappointing and I am at a loss to know why. Harvesting all this produce is time consuming in itself so no time to sit back and relax.

Services in August

As some of you may know, I was hoping to hold some open-air services, with people being invited to bring a picnic (and a brolly!). Alas! Even this is forbidden until we have been granted formal permission.

Although it is very frustrating, I can see why the church authorities are being very cautious and careful.

This virus has not gone away, and we need to do the best we can to keep people safe.

Once we have satisfied all the requirements, we shall let you know.

In the meantime, don't forget that God has not gone into lock-down, He is available 24/7, He loves you more than you can possibly imagine, and He longs for your company wherever you are.

All good wishes, Heidi.



If you have an apple tree in your garden you may be expecting a bumper crop this year despite the fact that many of the apples will drop off before they can be harvested. The above photo was taken in the Bulmer's apple orchard in Penrhos in the early autumn.

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 September issue of TNT by 20th August 2020
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