

From the Vicarage

On Monday March 1 the Bishop of Monmouth will license 12 people to assist in various ways in church services. From our group of parishes, Fiona Lowes, Clarinda Collin, Tricia Luxmoore-Ball and Sally Adams are now authorised to assist with the chalice at Holy Communion, do house communions, to do more in the church services and even take a non-eucharistic service in the absence of a priest.

Whilst other parishes having been doing this for a while and others around us intending to do more, our intention at present is to enable people to lead our prayers and assisting with the chalice. This is an important step forward for the people involved and it has been warmly welcomed by many people.

Someone wrote to a national newspaper the other day saying that when they read of the 'goings-on' in the national and international church, they could hardly believe we all belong to the same family. 'Our local church has lots of people going to it, it's involved in the community and plays a significant part in what is going on. Not everybody always gets on, but compared to what I read, our church and village is a model of love and caring and we are very proud of it'

I would like to feel that the same could be said about us: as we begin the season of Lent, perhaps it is a good moment to give ourselves a spiritual health check and look to ourselves as an important and significant member of our community. The basics of Christian belief are very simple really - they are that we should love God and love our neighbours as ourselves. In our villages there are so many examples of genuine kindness and care, - we can be very grateful that we live here. Of course, there is that biblical commendation of Jesus that we 'go the extra mile' and there are opportunities to do that quite often. As St Paul says *'Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.'*

Your friend and Vicar

David

Spotlight on Adrian and Val Cooke

It was in 1989 that Adrian and Val came to Nantyderi Farm: they had first met, of course, through Young Farmers and both can be said to have farming in their veins. Nantyderi is a beef and sheep farm and there are three generations living on the farm. They used to dairy farm but like so many found that it was uneconomic: indeed Adrian and Val feel squeezed by the big supermarkets – there seem no fair deals - and as they look to the future, stability of prices and market conditions are the things they hope for.

They enjoy farming though, as you can see from Val's picture. The night before this picture was taken, Val had been up lambing half the night and here she is with one of triplets. Just out of picture is an ewe that will hopefully be her 100th successful birth. Although, they just love being with animals, it is the inevitable paperwork that bogs them down – they simply don't do holidays, regarding the big shows as 'time off', and even then they take their animals with them! The highlight of their year is the Royal Welsh Show and they were very successful this past year.

Everybody in Llantilio Crossenny knows their son Rhys of course as he trundles his barrow, assisted sometimes by Jane, with eggs and in the summer, vegetables. There is a bit more to Rhys though, he recently bought a steer for £800 out of his egg money and 12 months later sold it for £1920, and against a champion at the auction. Hugh Bevan, the butcher was a delighted customer as well.



The Cooke family as a whole are a team, and they are involved in the Raglan Farmers' Association and something called 'Farm Connect' in which Nantyderi is a demonstration farm not only for Monmouthshire but also for the whole of Wales. Val is also secretary of the Llantilio Crossenny Social Club and the community owes her a debt of thanks for all that she does.

I came away from Nantyderi aware of a hard-working and family team at work who also enjoy all that they do.

TNT

A number of people who value The New Times have asked if they can contribute to its cost. Many people regard the publication as being well worth it and value its continuing contribution to our village life. For 2010 we invite you to give £5 for the whole year's subscription and this can be given to the person who distributes the magazine in your area.

The Women's Institute

The December meeting was held in Abergavenny, when members enjoyed an interesting tour of St Mary's Church followed by a meal in the Tithe Barn restaurant. Due to the bad weather, the January meeting was cancelled, so the meeting this month was the first time this year that members have been able to catch up on the local news. After the normal business meeting we were entertained by Lyndon Trumper, a local auctioneer. He gave a most interesting talk about the fluctuation in values of antique articles. Just being old does not mean that it is valuable. Old brown furniture for example, although very popular a few years ago and commanding good prices, can be bought at give away prices in today's market, apart from top quality small pieces or plainer oak used in say a Welsh dresser. He gave many more examples and described how auction sales have now greatly reduced, making it more difficult to get those wonderful bargains. Shows like Antiques Road Show and Flog It have educated people in knowing much more about the antiques trade. Lyndon rounded off his talk by testing members out on their antique knowledge. We were given photos of recent antiques sold at auction and had to guess the prices they made. Some members did extremely well and received a bottle of wine as a prize. We were also shown various items and had to guess the value and age.

Altogether members agreed it had been a very enjoyable and informative evening. The next meeting will be on the 10th March, where we will meet at Waitrose, Abergavenny, 7.15 for 7.30pm start, for a tour behind the scenes.

Llanvetherine Church invite you to a Bingo Night at the Hogs Head on Saturday 27 March starting at 7.30pm

LLANTILIO CROSSENNY CHURCH

MOTHERING SUNDAY

Thank You Mother...



for helping me grow

A SERVICE FOR ALL THE FAMILY

SUNDAY 14 MARCH 2010

11.00am

News from the Villages

Every 6 years the church electoral roll is revised and started again. An application form for the ER needs to be returned to either a warden or the Vicarage. Being on the ER entitles you to be on the PCC and have rights to do with marriages or burials.

The kitchen in Llantilio Crossenny will hopefully be installed early this month. Our thanks to Paul Byrne, (the son in law of Helen & David) for installing it. It is another step towards creating within a beautiful ancient building, the resources of a 21st C building. This last year, the sound system has been upgraded and new heating put in, and we awaiting clearance to install a new organ. All that remains in this phase is the redecoration. The quotes so far vary between £16k and £24k, so we need to raise another £15k to make it happen. Last month, we were pleased to acknowledge an anonymous donation of £2000, with gift aiding, and we are most grateful to generous people who are committed to maintaining our heritage.

In March, there are different kinds of services for people to share in. On March 12, there will be a **Mothering Sunday Family Service** in Llantilio Crossenny at 11am and on Sunday 26 March, there will be just one service in the group and this will take the form of a **Palm Sunday procession** with 'Milky' the donkey in Llantilio Crossenny at 11am.

*Easter this year is the first weekend in April and there is a Good Friday Service at 11am in Llantilio Crossenny. This Easter Sunday, for the first time, there will be Easter Services in **ALL** four churches of the group at their usual times. This is made possible by the much valued help of Peter Cobb and Lorraine Cavanagh: it is unlikely we can do this often at a major festival but our thanks to Lorraine and Peter and for making it possible.*

The picture on the front cover is the carved eagle that is outside the home and farm of Steve and Sonja Watkins. It is worth going to see and we are grateful to them for allowing us to use it as our cover photo.

'Warwicks' tells TNT they are doing a Mothering Sunday lunch at both 12 noon and 2pm, and on St Patrick's Day, March 17 there is a music evening. The Hog's Head will publish their specials later on, but we do wish Graham well as he recovers from his knee operation.

You can keep up with current events in our villages by going to the parish website which is **www.llantiliogroup.info**

We began new series in February when we highlight each month a personality who contributes much to our communities. Last month we began with Ceinwen Davies who mentioned that she would like to start a bridge club for people who had never played before. Well, it has begun and Ceinwen welcomes anyone who would like to learn on Monday 8 March at 7pm

St Mabli's acquired some much needed improvements last month. Some beautiful and practical curtains have gone up in the arch between the gallery and the tower to cut down on draughts. Janet Andrews is to thank for giving her time and energy to sew them. She has also provided the material and done the upholstery work to produce a pair of kneelers for the altar. Fewer creaking joints from now on!

Terry Leader has very generously donated his old kitchen cupboards, which are in remarkably good condition, to bring the vestry/kitchen into the 20th century. We hope to get into the 21st when we get water and drainage laid on!

Love and congratulations to Harry McCoy as he studies towards his confirmation in March from Mum, Dad Johnnie and Bert xxx

The Llantilio Music Festival have decided on the operas to be performed in May at Llantilio Crossenny Church. They are "*Bastien and Bastienne*" by Mozart and "*Rita*" by Donizetti. *Rita* was composed and orchestrated within the space of a week in 1841 and performed in Paris. *Rita* is the proprietess of a Swiss inn who is married to both Beppe and to Gasparo! The comedy revolves around the rivalry between the two men and there are many delights in this preposterous and bubbly score. It was last performed at the Festival in 1983

*Running the London Marathon is the dream of many people but Donna Harris from Llanvapley will be running her first ever marathon on April 25th. Donna has always wanted to run the marathon and is delighted to be able to combine running the marathon with raising funds for her favourite charity, the **Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation**. JDRF is dedicated to funding research to find a cure for type 1 (juvenile) diabetes, which strikes children suddenly makes them insulin-dependent for life, and carries the constant threat of devastating complications. You can support Donna online by going to www.justgiving.com/DONNA-HARRIS.*