

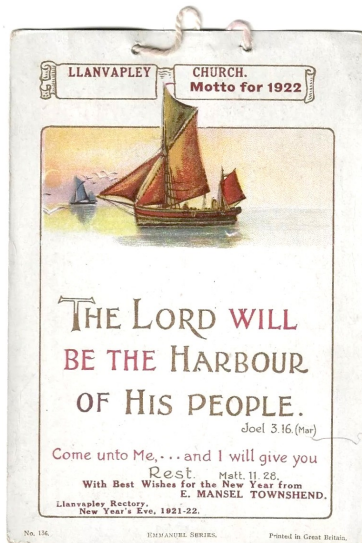
The New Times

May 2021

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



As Llantilio bellringers say farewell to the Duke, find out who in our parishes was once introduced to HRH, Prince Philip



A search on eBay turns up an historic card from Llanvapley Church

From the Vicarage

It seems like only yesterday that Simon and I brought our newborn baby daughter back home to the Vicarage as we embarked on the adventure of parenthood together.

Believe it or not, this month she turns 18, and I really don't know where the time has gone.

Recently I have been thinking a lot about the "breath of life".

"And God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life..."

The relief felt when a baby takes their first breath is almost palpable; the breath of life has indeed entered into them.

Those of us who, through illness, sometimes struggle to breathe, know just how good it is to be able to literally take a deep breath.

This month sees the Feast of Pentecost, or, as it is sometimes called, Whitsunday.

It's a reminder that, just as our physical bodies need air to function, so too, our souls need to be nourished with the spirit of God.

For we are far more than flesh and blood - we are children of a Heavenly Father who longs for us to get to know Him; who longs for our company and friendship, for our love and our laughter.

Why not take Him home with you? It could be the start of a great adventure...

With every blessing,

Heidi



Ministry Area Changes On 15th April the Diocese of Monmouth hosted an online meeting to answer questions about how our four churches will join with fourteen other churches to work together as a ministry area. We have been part of this ministry area for some time but only now is the diocese bringing in changes to the governance and financial arrangements for our parish churches. Churchwardens and treasurers met after this meeting on Monday 26th April to discuss their reactions to the information provided by the diocese and to discuss our group's response. Here are some of the comments from this meeting.

“I wrote to the Bishop and said the meeting was dreadful – it (ministry areas) is just adding another layer of committees”

“The meeting was polished but bureaucratic and dreary and people were getting irritated. There are consequences if we withdraw from the plan. On balance we can trust Julian (Father Julian, the ministry area leader). We have to go along with it”

“The meeting was well scripted but I was dismayed that there were no further answers beyond the toolkit”

“There is a lack of awareness of country ministry”

“The meeting was slick with one purpose which was to enforce a view. The Harris report (on which the plan for ministry areas is based) is out of date. Since the report the countryside has changed and there has been a return to the country. Country parishes are not dead. We need to have 'soft' conversations with the diocese to discuss how we can thrive. We have to be brave.”

“It is just another tier. It is not going to help us. It is going to make it more difficult for us to survive. They are not bothering about us.”

“We need to wriggle as long as we can. We are not cogs in a large machine. We need to sell this (our response) in the right way”

In the meeting on 15th April the diocese promised they would produce a pamphlet to explain the benefits of being part of a ministry area but this has not yet appeared. However the diocese did say in the meeting there could be savings if churches could get together and buy candles in bulk. Hopefully the pamphlet will give further concrete examples.

If you want to find more about the proposals from the diocese you can visit the [diocesan website](#). On this page you can also listen to an accountant's view of ministry areas.

Churchwardens and treasurers have asked one of the group to write a letter to the Bishop for a second time to explain our thoughts. Details of this letter will appear in the June edition of TNT.

Llantilio Crossenny News

St Teilo's Church – The bellringers were delighted to ring the bells on **Easter Day** and to send a joyful message across the fields and over the village. The sound was not quite as joyful as usual as only three bells are allowed to be rung in order to maintain social distancing in the bell tower chamber.

The ringers had the honour of being asked to ring on 17th April to mark the funeral of **HRH Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh**. The Duke may not have visited our parishes but he may have been told about them when he was introduced to Martin Leader who was brought up in Llanvapley. (see the front page picture) The request was to ring a half-muffled bell or chiming of a single bell 99 times. The bells were certainly heard in the village and the following comments were received - 'So lovely to hear the half muffled single bell rung this morning to mark the funeral of Prince Phillip' and 'Yes I heard them too. Great!'. The bells are not normally muffled



and therefore the tower captain, Richard Booth, had to climb the ladder to the bell chamber and to select a bell to muffle (pictured above). The tower has a collection of six muffles which can be used to half-muffle all six bells when this is requested at funerals. Half muffling a bell results in a sound which alternates between strong and dull. The ringers are aware that the tradition is to ring fully muffled bells on certain occasions such as the death of the sovereign. The ringers are hoping to be able do this and are looking to raise funds to buy some more muffles.

On Wednesday 28th April the **Llantilio Crossenny Easter Vestry** meeting was held in St Teilo's chaired by our vicar Heidi with nine members present.

The wardens and officers were re-elected and all agreed to serve for the coming year. As we've been in lockdown for most of the past year due to the pandemic there weren't too many topics to discuss. However we were able to witness at first hand the repair work to the roof and ceiling carried out by George Edwards Builders, and the new fully automated heating system recently installed by Martin George our electrician which will ensure a more comfortable experience for our worshippers particularly next winter (pictured are the new heaters before installation). As we are still being very cautious due to the coronavirus it was decided to have just the one service in May which will be Holy Communion on the 2nd May at 11am. *Elsie*



The Llantilio Crossenny Festival

is very grateful for the ongoing support of those within the neighbourhood and further afield, despite the Festival sadly being forced to take a prolonged break! It seems that the people who have been among the most affected by the Pandemic are the disabled children for whom the Festival organises its annual



Children's Opera Project. Sadly, the services generally available to these children and their families have had to be suspended. However, responding to parents' requests, we have been able to continue one-to-one workshops with these children online and very much hope to hold a mini-festival online in May and hopefully a Friends' Concert in September. The above archive photo is from the Children's Opera Project "The Barber of Seville" by Rossini. *Eleanor Farncombe*

Llanvapley News

On Friday 23rd April the **Annual General Meeting** of the **Llanvapley Sports and Social Association** was held on Zoom. The meeting was very well attended and the formalities of the annual general meeting were successfully concluded.

There have been important changes to the village committee. Thanks go to Carole Brown, Brenda Allen and Sue Hinds who have stepped down this year. Brenda has been the treasurer for many years and has always done a very professional job of keeping track of all the money. Another significant change is that Elaine Leader has also stepped down from the role of chair after eight years. Elaine has done an excellent job as chair and has worked very hard to ensure the association continues to fulfil its role. She will best be remembered for establishing the very successful monthly coffee mornings which hopefully will return soon. There was a very sad postscript to the evening when it was announced the next day that Richard Sidwell had passed away. Richard was for many years a trustee of the LSSA and was a very well respected member of the village. The LSSA sends its sincere condolences to Penny and all the family.

One of the responsibilities of the LSSA is to maintain the field for the benefit of the village and the cricket club. This work is done tirelessly by **Terry Leader** and the condition of the field is a credit to him and the village. However, things are changing and Terry has given the committee notice



that he will only be able to carry on doing this job for another year. Therefore there is an opportunity for someone to step into Terry's shoes and continue this great tradition. The role involves cutting the grass during the season using the tractor and gang mower. Terry is very happy to pass on his skills and experience to whoever wishes to step forward! It could be one person or it could be more than one. Interested? If you are interested why not have a word with Terry or contact the LSSA committee for more information. The new village committee is as follows - Lynda Caster, Bethan Foster, Rob Davies, Phil Allsopp, Nicola Evans and Les Taylor. The new committee will be meeting on May 3rd. In the meantime, the pavilion will be used for the first time in over a year when it opens as a polling station for the election on May 6th.

April was a busy time as a number of important pieces of work were completed on the playing field. **Firstly**, the grass was mown thanks to Terry and the tractor. **Secondly** the tree which had fallen over the stream was removed on Saturday 24th by Delwyn Moseley, his two helpers and a very large JCB. Thanks to a very dry April the ground was in good condition which allowed the heavy equipment to get onto site. The job of removing the tree was very complex and required a great deal of skill. The team did a superb job and the stream is now completely clear. The tree was a rather old ash tree. The LSSA was not able to afford to have the timber cut up or taken away. The remnants of the tree are now next to the stream and will be removed in due course. The committee is looking at a number of options. There is the potential to cut the tree up for firewood if someone would like to make an offer for the wood.

Thirdly, a regular user of the playing field spotted a problem with the cover of the septic tank. Users of the field may have spotted a manhole cover close to the play equipment and wondered what it was doing. This is of course the tank into which all the unmentionables from the pavilion end up. Thanks go to Dai and Gary Lewis who were very swiftly on hand to install a new cover. This will ensure no one ends up in the unmentionables any time in the near future!

Events The new committee would like to remind TNT readers of two events listed below. Whether these events take place will be dependent upon Government Guidelines. Ideas for other possible events will also be



discussed, such as playing a game of rounders and running a wreath making workshop. Any more ideas? LSSA events are open to everyone not just village residents.

End of Summer BBQ – Friday 27 August Quiz – Friday 22 October

On Thursday 22nd of April **Llanvapley Church Parochial Church Council** met on Zoom. This was the first time the PCC has met since 2019 and this was of course its first ever virtual meeting in its very long history. The **Easter Vestry meeting** (AGM) approved the accounts for 2019 and 2020 and all the current churchwardens and members of the PCC were delighted to continue in their roles.

The Easter Vestry was followed by a **PCC (church committee) meeting**. The PCC agreed to go back to its usual schedule of two services a month if this is possible. The idea of having outdoor services is also being explored. It was decided not to have a strawberry tea in July.

The PCC decided it would be possible to have a socially distanced **churchyard clear up / spring clean** on Saturday 15th May from 10am to 12 noon. The churchyard is an important public space in the village and it would be great if as many people as possible were able to come along to help. It is always a very sociable occasion and there will be a chance to have a socially distanced chat over a coffee. Volunteers are asked to bring their own tools and will be given guidance on how to stay safe. It is possible to choose whatever you would like to do – weeding, pruning, sweeping up etc.

The **church maintenance group** asked for approval of its plan for spending the funding obtained from the Community Green Energy Advisory Group. The plans include repairing a wall, upgrade of paths, installation of lights and placing of two benches. The seats would be positioned at the north western side of the church and on the eastern side next to the car park. If anyone has any concerns about the position of the benches (or would like further information about the other parts of the plan) they should contact a PCC member.

It is amazing what you can find on eBay! In last month's TNT there was a report about the family of the Revd. Mansel Townshend, the vicar of Llanvapley in the first half of the 20th century. Revd. Townshend was a busy vicar and used lots of ways to communicate with his congregation. Since last month's TNT, a card has come to light which was produced by Revd. Townshend in 1921 – a hundred years ago (see the front cover). This was discovered by Mia Jones who was looking for things local to Llanvapley or Abergavenny and she was delighted when she came across this card. The seller seemed to be a collector of old postcards, collectors' cards, photos and stamps. Mia paid £4.00 for the card and she has no idea where it has been for the last 100 years. She has very kindly offered

to give the card to the church. The card contains a motto for the year 1922 which included two biblical quotations. Suggestions were invited for a motto which would be appropriate for the year 2022. These included - *“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing”* (1 Thessalonians 5:1) and *“Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.”* (Psalm 60 v 3). Any further suggestions are most welcome!

Llanvapley Walking Group Easing of lockdown rules means from Monday 26th April up to 30 people can meet together for socially distanced outdoor activities. It seems therefore an ideal time to restart the walking group. Let's meet on Saturday 1st May, 10.30 outside Llanvapley Pavilion for a leisurely walk of between 4 and 5 miles - and obviously we need to be mindful of the pandemic and the need to maintain rules for everyone's health and safety. It would be great to see you there. Stay safe and best wishes. *Phil Allsopp*

Llanvetherine News

White Castle Vineyard in Llanvetherine appeared in a national newspaper on Saturday April 17th. Readers of the Times were given a choice of 20 vineyards to visit in Britain from Cornwall to Surrey. However, the most eye-catching photograph was of our local vineyard in Monmouthshire. The report for White Castle Vineyard said *'All the tours are led by one of the owners – a married couple who tend the vines themselves and live in an old converted dairy parlour on site – and ends with a tasting on a terrace with views over the vineyard. Close to the market towns of Abergavenny and Monmouth, the estate is surrounded by lush green countryside and covers 12 acres of gently sloping ground, where the pinot noir, rondo and sayval blanc varieties of grape are grown, among others. Platters of local cheese, charcuterie and seafood can be ordered alongside the wine tasting. Tours are planned to begin again in May and will cost £15'*. It is good to see our local vineyard is gaining national recognition. Well done to Robb and Nicola.



The **Llanvetherine Church** draw, scheduled originally for January 15th, will take place at the Hog's Head on Friday May 7th at 8pm. This event is the church's major fund raising event of the year. The pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns has meant it has been more difficult to organise and sell raffle tickets for this event. Raffle tickets are still available and will be sold on the evening prior to the draw. Why not come along in good time for the draw and enjoy a socially distanced drink in the beer garden.

May in the Garden 2021

I dug up a Nandina the other day as it did not look very happy and had been sulking for rather a long time. The cause was very soon apparent. A cluster of fat white grubs with a brownish head were wriggling in the soil underneath – the dreaded Vine Weevil. I squashed as many as I could and then reluctantly used a bit of insecticide, which may or may not work. According to Dr Stephan Buczacki virtually all vine weevils are female and reproduce parthenogenetically. Each female lays up to 1000 eggs in the soil over 3 – 4 months so one beetle can start a serious infestation. They are more often found in houseplants or the greenhouse, but they also feast on camelias and rhododendrons in a woodland garden. You sometimes see nibbled leaves on the shrubs which is the damage caused by the adults, but the larvae are more serious as they attack roots.

Now a little word about the Snakeshead Fritillary. Legend says that it grew from the blood of people massacred in France on St Bartholomew's day in 1572. Apparently a young apothecary passed the field of the massacre and was impressed by the wild 'lilies' he saw there. He had some bulbs shipped by a French Merchant to England and grew them in his garden. However if he had been paying attention, he might have discovered that they were already growing wild in this country as Gerard 25 years earlier tried to describe them saying they were finer and more curious than the best of paintings. Fritillaria means dicebox in Latin and meliagraris is the Latin for Guinea fowl which helps. If they are happy with you and seed themselves you are indeed blessed.

The Crown Imperial Fritillary is another thing altogether. Tall and statuesque it is a most striking plant much depicted in paintings and carvings. There is nothing else quite like it. The flowers hang down in a cluster under a top-knot of pointed leaves, and come in various shades of yellow, orange and red. If you turn a flower up and look inside you will see a set of six white spots with a dark surround. These are the nectaries and have given rise to a host of legends. One of these is that the Crown Imperial refused to bow its head at the Crucifixion and on Christ's resurrection, it blushed, turning its colour from white to orange and hanging its head in shame, with six tears for repentance. On trying to identify another fritillary, I discovered that there are at least 200 different varieties. They are worth seeking out and many are easy to grow.



Cross Ash News



The summer term has started with glorious sunshine, outdoor learning galore and a feeling that a sense of “normality” has returned to the school.

All pupils are now back in with us and we have spent the first few weeks of the new term thinking about our new topics and enjoying our wonderful new outdoor learning spaces. During the lockdown these have been fully revamped, rebuilt and reorganised. This has been achievable due to the sheer hard work of the PTFA, parents and staff. The PTFA have worked tirelessly to apply for grant funding to support the development of our

grounds and this has been very successful – and we will be forever grateful for this.

We are blessed with wonderful grounds at Cross Ash, but along with this comes the responsibility of making the most of them and making them safe, accessible places for pupils and staff to work in. The children are now enjoying the new spaces which have been provided. This is a culmination of a lot of hard work and good will from all involved and it is an ongoing process.

As part of our celebration of the outdoors the Cross Ash school community are about to embark on our “Run to Tokyo” challenge. We are asking all family members of Cross Ash pupils to get involved with this effort as we collectively record our miles walked or run between now and the end of term. We are hoping to hit 6000 miles – which would be enough to see us arriving in Tokyo – even if the Olympics doesn’t go ahead in quite the same way this year!

Please do follow us on Twitter: [@CrossAshPrimary](https://twitter.com/CrossAshPrimary) to see how our outdoor learning journey continues to progress.

With best wishes from all at Cross Ash Primary School.



The Community Green Energy Advisory Group will shortly be announcing that applications are being accepted for funding for community projects from the 2021 Llanvapley Solar Farm fund. Details will be available on the website www.communitygreenenergy.co.uk

In **2020** the following grants were awarded.

Bettws Newydd Village Hall – improve fire exits, toilets & security - £11,000.00

Cross Ash School PTFA – outdoor classroom & play equipment - £15,000.00

Llanarth Sports Assn. – ride on mower, picnic benches, tables, bins & goal posts - £7,000.00

Llantilio Crossenny Church – toilet facility in the church grounds - £11,000.00

St Mabli's Church P.C.C. – improve access to church including external lighting & benches - £9,800.00

Monmouthshire Hunt – improve countryside access for riders, walkers and disabled - £5,000.00

Llanarth Cricket Club – improvements to the bar area - £5,000.00

Bettws Newydd Village Hall – overhead infrared heating system - £2,428.33

Cross Ash School PTFA – outdoor classroom & play equipment - £6,000.00

Llanvetherine PCC – public meeting place for Llanvetherine - £5,500.00

Llanvapley Solar Farm is run by two community interest companies which give £70,000 a year to local communities to support local projects. The Community Green Energy Advisory Group has been administering the fund for four years. During this time the group has supported the following communities – Llanarth (19%), Bettws Newydd (14%), Llanvetherine (12%), Grosmont (12%), Monmouthshire (10%), Llanvapley (10%), Cross Ash (8%), Penrhos (5%), Llantilio (5%), Llanddewi Skirrid (2%), Llangattock Lingoed (1%). The figures in brackets are unofficial estimates which represent the amount each community has received from the whole fund over the past four years.



Church Services

Sunday 2nd May:

Llantilio Crossenny 11.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 9th May

Penrhos 9.30am

Llanvapley 11am

Sunday 16th May

9.30am Llanvetherine

Sunday 23rd May

Penrhos 9.30am

Llanvapley 11am

If you wish to attend a service please contact us in advance.

For Penrhos please contact Mr Richard Price

whitehousefarmuk@gmail.com 780246

For Llanvetherine Please contact David Hughes Jones

davidwhjones@btinternet.com

01873 821 497

For Llanvapley please contact Les Taylor

lestaylor.taylor@gmail.com 780376

For Llantilio please contact Elsie Latham

elsie.latham@gmail.com 780225



As restrictions are eased it is nice to be able to go out and meet some old friends :)

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 as well as information about all our churches.

We are also on Twitter **@LlantilioG**

*Contributions for the May issue of TNT by 20th May 2021
Please send your emails to lestaylor.taylor@gmail.com*