THE NEW TIMES

APRIL 2007

PENRHOS
LLANTILIO CROSSENNY
LLANVETHERINE
LLANVAPLEY

SERVICES IN APRIL

Sunday 1st April **11.00am Llantilio Crossenny**
Palm Sunday

A Service for all four churches – with procession

Friday 6th April **2.00 pm Llantilio Crossenny**
Good Friday

Sunday 8th April **09.30am Penrhos**
Easter Sunday **09.30am Llanvetherine**
11.00am Llantilio Crossenny
11.00am Llanvapley

Sunday 15th April **11.00am Llantilio Crossenny**

Sunday 22nd April **09.30am Penrhos**

Sunday 29th April **11.00am Penrhos**

A Service for all four churches as it is the 5th Sunday. Please come along to Penrhos and support this Service

Vicar's Letter

What is Easter all about?

'Today is the first day of the rest of your life' an expression so often used that it has become a cliché. But for Christians it is a statement that sums up the most extraordinary *truth* ever -

The *truth* the first disciples discovered as, huddled behind locked doors, Jesus appeared among them, a *truth* broken hearted women discovered, as they found Jesus' tomb empty and the stone rolled away; a *truth* countless generations have discovered since, as the risen Lord has transformed their lives. For each one suddenly life began again, a clean sheet, a fresh page.

So at Easter, we let go of the past, not forgotten but no longer having the power to cause pain in our lives. Of course, for most of us, made cynical by those who would exploit us and hurt by past grief and disappointments, the Easter message is one that we need to look at carefully. As the years go by, it is harder to bounce back from life's knocks - looking forward with undiminished enthusiasm is surely just for children!

Have you read Richard Dawkin's book 'The God Delusion'? It is one of those books that a lot of people buy but never get beyond chapter 2. It is supposed to be the last word in atheism, getting rid of, once for all, the delusion that God exists. In reality it's a book of good knock-about stuff that you might hear in a local pub, full of half truths and ideas that Christians have long since rejected. In the bookshops in Abergavenny is a much better book by Alister McGrath called 'The Dawkins Delusion'. It is very readable and quite short!

Of course, Christians don't always get it right and the Church is by no means a perfect organisation. The point of Easter though is that people in churches and more often outside the Church are seekers after truth. It's like having a jigsaw with some pieces missing: we know the picture by faith, but putting it together is not easy.

We have much to celebrate this Easter - there is a church service in your village on Easter Sunday morning. I invite to come and celebrate with your community, the new life that God gives us.

A Happy Easter to you!

David

The next issue of **THE NEW TIMES** will be May

Please pass any contributions on to myself
Or alternatively email directly to

llan.news@yahoo.co.uk
(DEADLINE 20th April)

Other News

In April, we shall be reading the banns of Ali Waters (Daphne Watkins daughter) who is marrying Christopher (Biff) Wilkins on June 9 in Llantilio Crossenny. We look forward to their wedding day and wish them every happiness.

We have four weddings in our group of parishes this year, including one at Llanvapley, of Luke Rutter and Laura Burgess - this will be the first wedding in Llanvapley since 1993.

On Easter Sunday, there is a baptism in Penrhos of Evan Bastow. His parents, Andrew and Tracey Bastow have recently moved in to Penrhos and are delighted with the welcome they have received from Penrhos people.

If you are not on the Electoral Roll of your village church, there is still time for you to do this. Pick up a form from the Church and return there or to the Vicarage. Being on the roll gives you a greater say in the affairs of your church and entitles you to have what are called 'occasional offices' (baptisms, marriages and funerals) there by right.

Thank you to Roy Cooke, for assisting our ever enthusiastic 'Churchyard Safety Officer' Roy Nicholas, in straightening up the lower line of the bank in Llantilio Crossenny churchyard. When the grass is re-seeded it will look much neater and make the churchyard look so much better.

Thank you to the ladies of Llantilio Crossenny and Llanvetherine for making the little posies for the Children on Mothering Sunday to give to their Mums and Grandmothers.

On 7th May there is a Church Fete in Llanvapley, which is Bank Holiday Monday.

Congratulations to Llanvapley for their St David's Evening. Despite what was probably the wettest night of the year we had a good celebration, excellent soup and raised over £300 for St Mabli's Church. Thank you to all those who are heavily involved in the grant seeking operation. We hope to have some very good news next month about recent applications.

On May 13th, there will be the Blessing of the Plough at Penrhos at 9.30am.

That same afternoon, Luke and Georgina Herrmann will be opening their garden, - do go along and support them in this venture for National Gardens. The Old Vicarage is open on May 13th from 2.00-5.30pm with homemade teas and home grown plants. Entrance is £2.50 and children free

The season of Annual Meetings is upon us! Llantilio Crossenny have theirs on Monday 16th April at 7.30pm in The Killough Chapel and Llanvetherine have theirs on Monday 23rd April at 7.30pm.

The inspection of each church by the Diocese will be on Monday 30th April from 5.00pm onwards.

The Easter Story

Easter is the most important festival in the Christian calendar. It is the commemoration of Jesus' death and his rising from the dead, also known as the resurrection. It comes at the end of Lent. The week leading up to it is called Holy Week.

Palm Sunday is the first day of Holy Week and celebrates Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem riding on a donkey. Crowds of people came out of the city to greet him, throwing down palm branches on the road. Many churches give out small crosses made from palm leaves, as a reminder of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem and his death on the cross.

On Maundy Thursday Christians remember when Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples, breaking bread and drinking wine, which is now known as the Last Supper. Since then, this meal has been symbolically re-enacted by many Christians as a way of drawing closer to God. This is called the Eucharist, which means 'thanksgiving'. It is a reminder that Jesus sacrificed his life for mankind.

The Bible tells us that, later that night, Jesus was betrayed by Judas Iscariot. After his arrest, Jesus was brought before the Jewish high priests who found him guilty of blasphemy because he called himself the Son of God. They handed him over to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate.

As was the custom at the time of the Feast of Passover, Pilate gave the crowds the choice as to which of the two prisoners should be freed: Jesus, or Barrabas, a notorious criminal. Ironically, the same crowd who had welcomed Jesus with palm branches a few days earlier now chose Barrabas to be released, and Pilate condemned Jesus to death by crucifixion.

On Good Friday, many churches hold 3 hour services meditating on the events leading up to Christ's death: his interrogation, flogging, the mocking by the Roman soldiers, and his journey with the cross to Golgotha, the place of his death. Finally he was stripped naked and nailed to the cross, where he hung in agony for three hours, jeered at by the crowds, before he died. This is the day when people traditionally eat hot cross buns, because the cross on the bun is a reminder of the cross Jesus died on, and a reminder of the Christian belief that Jesus died to save us all.

Easter Sunday marks Jesus' resurrection. The Bible tells us that Mary Magdalene went to the tomb, followed later by some of Jesus' disciples. They discovered Jesus' body had gone and that the tomb was empty. Jesus then appeared to Mary and many of his disciples, speaking with them on separate occasions during the following forty days. As he left them for the last time, Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit so the disciples would know God would never leave them. He then ascended into heaven. The Church celebrates this on Ascension Day.

Easter Services

Palm Sunday 1 April	11.00am	Palm Sunday Procession : Llantilio Crossenny
Good Friday 6 April	2.00pm	An hour at the Cross : Llantilio Crossenny

Easter Day Family Communion Services

9.30am	Llanvetherine
9.30am	Penrhos
11.00am	Llantilio Crossenny
11.00am	Llanvapley

Did You Know?

The date of Easter Sunday varies from year to year because it is based on the lunar calendar. It is celebrated on the first Sunday after the full moon, on or after March 21st.

The account of the Easter story can be read in Mark, Chapters 14 to 16, or Luke, Chapters 22 to 24, and elements of it can be found in the other gospels too. Many of the events in the Easter story are foretold in the Old Testament in Isaiah chapter 53.

The festival of Easter stretches back to pre-Christian times, too. It gets its name and some symbols, including the Easter Bunny, from the Pagan Spring Equinox festival, which is a celebration of Spring and also of new life.

For Christians, Easter eggs symbolise new life. They believe that, through his resurrection, Jesus defeated death and sin and offers people the promise of eternal life if they follow his teachings. This is why there is a tradition for Christians to be baptised at Easter, which celebrates new life in God.

Wordsworth published his poem, 'I wandered lonely as a Cloud', in 1807. He later altered it, and his second version, published in 1815, is the one widely known today.

St Mabli's Church, Llanfapley

The historic church of St Mabli's, is located on a site which for over 14 centuries has been set apart for Christian worship. In a time of increasingly rapid change affecting every aspect of rural life, regular worship continues here.

St Mabli's has a unique Celtic dedication. It was first mentioned in the Book of Llandaff, which records that in c860 a local ruler, Brithgon Hael gave St Mabli's to Gracielus, the Bishop of Llandaff. The current building, including its fine tower, was built from local old red sandstone in the Early English style c1250, but much of the fabric dates from the 15th century.

The church has a wealth of interesting features such as the font, Norman in origin c1150, which has a crude shark tooth design etched in to the rim. The trefoil headed plastered piscine with double bowl dates between 1272 and 1307.

St Mabli's was closed in October 2004 for emergency repairs to the roof. It reopened in April 2006 to a resurgence in the church's fortunes. Unfortunately we continue to experience problems with the roof and building and are currently raising funds for restoration, to preserve this unique and special church for future generations.

Grant applications have been submitted to both CADW and the Heritage Lottery Fund, but we still require additional funds to achieve our aim. If you would like to contribute to this exciting challenge, please make any donations to 'Llanfapley Parish Church'.

St Mabli's wakes with a blanket of snow

WEATHER WATCH

Although the first week of February was often dry with light winds and overnight frosts the rest of the month was often cloudy, windy and mild with spells of rain.

Significant snowfall occurred on the 8th and 9th of February.

February Weather Statistics (Wales)

Wales Mean Temperature Series (series began in 1914)	The provisional mean value for the month is 5.3 °C	2.9 °C above the 1961-1990 average, which is in the exceptionally above average category.
Wales Rainfall Series (series began in 1914)	The provisional total for the month is 155.4 mm	130 % of the 1961-1990 average, which is in the above average category.
Wales Sunshine Series (series began in 1929)	The provisional total for the month is 71.1 hours	101% of the 1961-1990 average, which is in the close to average category.

"If April Blows its Horn,
It'll bring forth Hay and Corn"

Obituary

Today, we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as knowing when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm, life isn't always fair and maybe it was my fault. Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (Don't spend more than you earn) and reliable parenting strategies (Adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate when well intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job they themselves failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer Panadol, sun lotion or a Band Aid to a student – but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband, churches became businesses, and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home but the burglar could sue you for assault. Common Sense finally gave up the will to live after a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffee was hot! She spilled a little in her lap and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter Responsibility; and his son, Reason. He is survived by three stepbrothers; I Know My Rights, Someone Else is To Blame and I'm A Victim. Not many attended his funeral because so few realised he was gone. If you remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.

Magic Mushrooms

Due to the success of the initial mushroom *(February THE NEW TIMES)* a further mushroom is being nurtured, and will be appearing at St Mabli's Church Fete.

Llanvapley Sports and Social Association (LSSA)

The LSSA AGM was held on 22nd March 2007 with 17 members in attendance. Thanks to last year's committee for all their input and hard work. New committee as follows: -

Chairman	Owen Marsh
Secretary	Karen Noblet
Treasurer	Brenda Allen
Committee Member	Les Taylor
Committee Member	Jason Stoker

Llanvapley Cricket Pavilion

The Ideal Venue for your Meeting or Party

Secure Private Car Park
Wonderful Setting
Tea/Coffee Making Facilities
Full Kitchen/Dining Facilities
New, Comfortable Furniture
Barbeque and Gazebo
Children's Play Area
Wheelchair Access

Negotiable rates based on £15 for 1st hour
£5 for additional hours (all + VAT).

Contact Owen Marsh on 01600 780147

Llanvapley News

It has been a busy year for the Llanvapley Sports and Social Association and there have been a number of improvements made to the village facilities during the year. The pavilion now has a new set of tables and chairs to supplement the existing stock and an additional tree seat has been installed to ensure that anyone using the play area or watching the cricket can have somewhere comfortable and shady to sit.

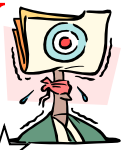
The main use of the pavilion is of course for cricket and last year the pitch was used by both Llanvapley and Abergavenny cricket clubs. At the moment, it is not certain whether the pitch will be used by Abergavenny in 2007 but a number of other teams are showing interest in organising matches in the summer. Amongst these is a group from the village itself which is looking to arrange informal matches aimed at getting more people involved in village activities.

The maintenance of the pitch is an important job, which has to be done to ensure that it is available for community use. The mowing of the ground and the cricket square goes on throughout the season thanks to the hard work of a number of people in the village. However, during the spring the grass is kept down by a flock of sheep who manage to keep the grass down at a time when it is not possible to get the normal machinery onto the wet ground.

It was pleasing to see so many people attend the Annual General Meeting on the evening of 22nd March. The committee were commended on their efforts and achievements over the past 12 months.

St Mabli's Church Fete

Llanvapley



Bank Holiday Monday

May 7th 2007

'A Traditional Church Fete'

At 2pm at the Village Hall/Cricket Field

All Proceeds to St Mabli's Restoration

Further Information 780306

NOTICE BOARD

Llantilio Crossenny News

The eleventh annual **PLANT SALE** will be held at Church on May 28th, Spring Bank Holiday, between 2 and 4 p. m. Any plants or cuttings you may have to spare will be very welcome. *Maureen and Shirley*

St Mabli's Church Fete at Llanvapley

The Fete will be held on Monday 7th May 2007, with all proceeds going to the Church restoration. This is a great opportunity to become involved, so this is an early plea for **HELP!** in organising a stall or attraction. Telephone 01600780306

Skirrid Fawr (Holy Mountain) Good Friday Walk

It has been suggested to reintroduce the Skirrid Fawr walk on Good Friday. This was always an enjoyable experience in the past. Meet at the car park at Skirrid Fawr at 9a.m.

DIARY DATES

1st April Palm Sunday Service in Llantilio Crossenny

6th April Good Friday walk Skirrid Fawr - 9am

6th April Good Friday Service in Llantilio Crossenny -2pm

8th April Easter Day Services

09:30 Llanvetherine

09:30 Penrhos

11:00 Llantilio Crossenny (+Easter Egg Hunt)

11:00 Llanvapley

16th April Annual Meeting of Llantilio Crossenny Killough Chapel at 07:30pm

30th April Visitation by the Area Dean to all four Parishes

7th May St Mabli's Church Fete at Llanvapley

13th May Old Vicarage Penrhos, Garden Open Day

16th May Llantilio Crossenny Music Festival

28th May Plant Sale at Llantilio Crossenny

7th June St Mabli's XI Cricket Evening

St David's Day Celebration at Llanvapley

The inclement weather did not deter members of the community from gathering at Llanvapley to celebrate St David's Day. A welcoming glass of wine cheered people as they took their seats. Alex Gibbon provided a fascinating insight in to the stories of Jack of Kent. The talk of *wizards* and *magic*, made the audience consider why the projector should stick part way through the presentation?! Big thanks goes out to Alex, and the contribution he made to the evening, in raising **£300** in much needed funds for St Mabli's.

As the presentation progressed, so the aroma emanating from the kitchen grew stronger. People were served a delicious selection of home made soups accompanied by bread. The queue for seconds and the scribbled notes of secret recipes passing around the hall bears testament to the quality of the fare on offer. An excellent cheese board followed the main course and no sooner were our tables cleared; when people were offered Welsh Cakes, Bara Brith, tea and coffee.

The theme of magic and wizards arose again as a distant clinking sound was now emanating from the kitchen. (We later discovered this was in fact the sound of washing up!) The final part of the evening got underway when an organ suddenly appeared and a choir quickly formed in the corner. A hearty rendition of the Welsh National Anthem, Men of Harlech and All Through the Night was sung by all. The night drew to a conclusion with curious rendition of 'Pack Up Your Troubles / It's a Long Way to Tipperary'

Many thanks to everyone who attended and especially to all who helped organise this hugely successful and pleasant evening.

Walk the Walk

On Saturday/Sunday 19/20 May I will be joining 15,000 women, and some brave men, (as we all wear decorated bras!) in the Playtex MoonWalk in London. Playtex sponsor the event that last year raised in excess of £4 million. The event is organised by health charity Walk the Walk Worldwide for breast cancer research and cancer care.

It all takes place, hence its name, at midnight and the half marathon route (approx. 13 miles) starts at Hyde Park and includes passing The London Eye, Tower Bridge, Horse Guards Parade and Houses of Parliament.

I would be grateful of sponsorship for this worthwhile cause and if you would like to do so then please contact me on Tel. 01600 780240 – I do have some sponsor forms and the monies can be gift aided.

Helen Osborn

St. Mabli's Family Cricket XI

As advised in the March edition of The New Times, we are currently forming a St. Mabli's XI, to play 'fun' cricket throughout the summer. Our first match is scheduled for the evening of June 7th at Llanvapley Cricket Ground. The accent will be very much on fun.

Many thanks to everyone who has shown an interest in playing for the St Mabli's XI thus far. Although we are assembling a powerful squad we still need more players, especially ladies, to complete our squad profile. For further in formation please telephone 780306.

No Smoking

The Welsh Assembly has confirmed that churches have to display no-smoking posters near their entrances. Churches and other places of worship are not exempt from the ban and have been provided the same literature to all affected enclosed public places.

Spot the Difference

Helpers at 'Soup and Song Evening' enjoying a game of 'Spot the Difference.

WHO'S WHO?

The Vicar

	Rev. David Osborn	01600 780240
		07803 618464

The Churchwardens

Penrhos	Richard Price	01600 780246
	Jean Flynn	01600 780405
Llanvetherine	David Hughes Jones	01873 821497
	Andrew Dawson	
Llanvapley	Les Taylor	01600 780376
	Barbara Spells	
Llantilio Crossenny	Dennis Ball	01873 821236
	Richard Barnfield	01600 780365

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