

The New Times

February 2022

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



Rosie was delighted by Llantilio's Christmas Crib...



**and Llanvetherine Church was delighted to see a rosy dawn to
welcome the new year**

From the Vicarage

I must admit that even though I'm not an avid gardener, I have really enjoyed pottering around outside whilst listening to the birds chatter away.

One thing that has made me smile is tackling the weeds that have grown up through the so-called "weed-free membrane." Well, it certainly hasn't worked here!



We can try as we might, but those little roots go down deep, and their shoots push through not only the membrane but even the toughest concrete; and rather than be a cause for exasperation, I think it is actually a cause for hope.

Sometimes life can throw things at us, and we feel worn down and wrung out. Whatever the cause of our sadness and fatigue, we feel that life will never be the same again.

But remember those little shoots – who would imagine that something so seemingly fragile, could find its way through an apparently impenetrable barrier? But they do!

And so with us, our God journeys beside us wherever we are and however we feel. In the beautiful words of Psalm 139:

“Lord, where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there also.
If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
If I settle on the far side of the sea,
Even there your hand will guide me,
Your right hand will hold me fast.”

As the promise of spring beckons us out of the depths of winter, may we trust in the One who holds us all in the hollow of his hand.

With every blessing,

Heidi

Vicar is on the search for a well-behaved donkey!

This year Palm Sunday is on 10th April, and we will be holding a service in Llantilio Crossenny to mark the beginning of what promises to be a very special Holy Week. Many of you will remember Milky who was our Palm Sunday donkey in 2009 in Llantilio or more recently, Della. If anyone knows of a friendly donkey who would be able to join us on Palm Sunday, please do let me know. No auditions necessary! With many thanks, Heidi. (780240)



Della was the star attraction at the service in Llanvetherine in 2016 and she was also happy to help in Penrhos in 2019.



Llantilio Crossenny News

Despite all the uncertainty with covid restrictions in the run up to Christmas St Teilo's were able to hold two services. On December 19th a service of "Carols by Candlelight" attracted a large congregation, carols were enthusiastically sung with readings by members of the congregation, it was a lovely evening enjoyed by all who came.

Christmas morning saw a good number of worshippers including several children come along for Christmas communion. Revd. Heidi began the service by engaging the children in lighting all the advent candles which was carried out with great enthusiasm. Thank you to Revd. Heidi for both the lovely services.

Thank you to all the ladies who had cleaned and decorated the Church so beautifully, to Elsie Phillips for the lovely crib scene and to Dennis and Scott Walker for supplying the beautiful Christmas tree.

Elsie Latham



Llantilio Bellringers practice every Tuesday evening and ring before the service on the first Sunday of the month as well as for special services. New ringers, beginners or experienced, are always welcome. The bellringers enjoyed a lovely Christmas meal on Wednesday 15th December at the Foxhunter Inn, Nantyderi. As you would expect from a bunch of bell ringers it was a noisy affair! Recent covid restrictions have curtailed ringing but they hope to be back in the tower on Tuesday 9th February.

Llanvapley News

Llanvapley Church The week before Christmas was difficult for everyone with the rapidly changing covid situation. Arrangements for the carol service on 19th December were in place but the parochial church council had to quickly decide how to react to the latest covid restrictions. In the end, the decision was made to cancel the carol service and the Christmas Day service in order to keep everyone safe. Thanks to everyone who supported this decision and thanks to Llantilio Church for putting on alternative covid safe services in its much bigger church. Services resumed in January and services in February will continue to follow appropriate covid guidelines.

Llanvapley had hoped to support **Abergavenny Town of Sanctuary** through its carol concert collection. Following the cancellation of the carol service it was decided to give a donation of £50 to the group which was given to Sarah Foster who is a member of the group.

Thanks go to **James Lowes** who very kindly donated his time and services to help the church just before Christmas. James offers a professional gutter cleaning service which enables the church members to avoid climbing ladders to clear out the leaves and debris by hand. James is very keen we don't fall off ladders and end up in hospital!

Church maintenance Visitors to Llanvapley will no doubt notice the two piles of material in the church car park. Work on upgrading the churchyard paths has begun and will be completed in February. This work will take place at weekends but will not affect the service on 13th February. Existing footpaths on the north, east and west are being dug out and a new sub base laid. On top of this there will be a layer of small gravel which will then be compressed to give a firm surface for all users of the churchyard. This work is being funded by the Community Green Energy Advisory Group.



February promises to be a busy month as work to replace cracked ceiling panels is also due to take place. It is hoped to complete this in time for the first service of the month.

Llanvapley Walking Group The early January deluge left the fields very muddy, so this meant that when we went for our walk on Saturday 15th January we kept to the lanes and we had a delightful walk. We took the 'lollipop' route from Llanvapley along Ty Tac Lane, a quick right and left and back along the back lanes to Llanddewi Rhydderch, returning along Ty Tac Lane again. Quiet lanes, good company, great views and a lovely walk. The next walk will be on Saturday 5th February, meeting at 10.30 at Llanvapley Pavilion where parking is available. We hope you can join us. Please contact the walking group at llanvapleywalkinggroup@gmail.com for further information.

Phil Allsopp



LSSA News The LSSA hosted an **afternoon tea** in the pavilion on 13th December and on 10th January at 2pm. Thanks to everyone who supported these events by either attending, making cakes and sandwiches or by simply helping to wash up. The first two of the monthly 100 club draw took place and £50 prizes went to Ceri Evans and Terry Leader both from St Mabley's Close. The next afternoon tea is at 2pm on Monday 14th February when it is hoped to have a Valentine's Day theme to the event. Why not treat someone special to afternoon tea! Everyone welcome from Llanvapley and beyond.

The LSSA was delighted with the turn out for the **Village Christmas Tree Switch-on** on Thursday 9th December. The weather forecast for the evening was for rain and it was decided not to ask our local celebrity to brave the rain. Doris Evans had agreed to switch on the lights but Doris, who is 97, knows how to look after herself and stayed at home! In the event Natalia Bloomfield from Crossways nominated her daughter, Bonnie who is 95 years younger than Doris! Bonnie was able to push down the special plunger and the lights came on. This was followed by the singing of Christmas songs which made everyone smile. Mulled wine and hot ribena were then served in the pavilion. There are many people to thank for making this event such a success. Joe Hoon and Neal Smith (pictured) for planting the tree and setting up the lights, Pete and Gen Marchant for the mulled wine, Lin Morris for conducting the singing, Scott and Dennis Walker for providing the tree, Pat Bolwell for the support of the community council and Sarah Woodall for suggesting the idea. The most difficult task to complete was undoubtedly gaining permission from the council to use the power from the street light.



Initial enquires led to discussions with Mr Joy who was sadly renamed Mr Nojoy! An appeal to our county councillor, Sara Jones was answered with a very definite '*Leave it with me*'. Thankfully progress was then made and the day before the event an email was received from the council which said '*Just a quick note to let you know I've been advised that our electrical contractors SSE checked the MCB today to make sure it is all okay for tomorrow night, so hopefully all will go well without any hitches.*' What a relief! In the middle of January the tree was moved and transplanted inside the fence on the edge of the rough patch in readiness for Christmas 2022.

The next LSSA committee meeting will be on Tuesday 8th March and the **Annual General Meeting** will be on Thursday 31th March.

Llanvapley Cricket Club are looking forward to another successful season this year. The cricket club has agreed to host a curtain raiser to the season on Saturday 28th May when their opponents will be a Llanvapley Village XI. Full details of this event will be discussed at a meeting with the LSSA on 10th February.



Tom and Flossie Lowes from the Old Rectory, Llanvapley are delighted to announce the **engagement** of their daughter **Alicia to Alex** Simpson. Alex and Lissy were engaged on 10th January while on safari in Lewa, Kenya. Congratulations to both of them!

Orchard Acre Market Garden Updates

We've enjoyed finally feeling that it is winter this month, with frosty days and winter sun to bring joy and stillness. As always, there is some work to do outside, composting, clearing beds and digging out brambles but mostly we are in the office, finalising planning for the 2022 growing season. For our crop planning we will integrate our learning from last season to provide an abundance of fresh, seasonal veggies for our CSA members from June until November. We are looking to provide about 35 weekly veg boxes this season, an increase of 15 from last year. Details of how to join up as a CSA member to receive your weekly share of our harvest will be published in March so watch this space!

What is CSA? Why become a member?

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a model where the relationship between producers and consumers is central, with farmers selling directly to their customers. Customers join as a 'member' of the CSA farm for the season and commit to buying the produce upfront. Members are also invited to visit the farm for events and to see how the produce is grown. This means that, as farmers, we know that our crops are already sold so we can plan, plant, grow and harvest what we need to fill our weekly boxes. So, if you would like to secure your supply of seasonal vegetables from June - November 2022 please get in touch. We would love to feed as many families as we can from within the local parishes. There will be a chance for prospective members to visit the farm and meet us, so let us know if this is of interest to you.



The Orchard Acre Team, Jonny, Alice, Penny and Lyra.

Llanvetherine News

With the covid restrictions lifted especially for the occasion, the Annual Draw for Llanvetherine Church was held on the scheduled date (having been postponed until May last year). The help offered by lots of people to support the draw over the last 35 years is always appreciated, and it is especially appreciated that the whole community supports the church to this extent every year. It is also most helpful that Dale and the team at the Hog's Head are always supportive and this is never taken for granted and we are always indebted to your generosity. Revd. Heidi was on hand to lend her support and is pictured reading out the number of one of the lucky winning tickets.



The many prizes were well distributed throughout the area and reflect where church supporters live. Whilst the winner of the top prize lives in Cross Ash other prizes went to Sheffield, Hereford, Cwmbran and as one may expect several prizes stayed in Llanvetherine! When the money is banked and the sums completed it is hoped that over £1200 will be raised to support the maintenance of Llanvetherine Church.

Once again may I thank everyone for their willingness to buy and sell the tickets, donate prizes and help in so many ways to keep Llanvetherine Church open.

David Hughes-Jones

Penrhos News

Unfortunately due to the risk of spreading covid we decided to cancel our Carol Service and Christmas Day Service. After watching Carols from King's on Christmas Eve I felt inspired to go to church on Christmas morning and sing a few carols. We all know the first few lines of each carol but after that I am no



use. However, the hymn books were close by so I found some of my favourite carols but still no use as I didn't have my glasses but I gave it my best shot! I always find a church is a good place to recharge one's batteries and just think things through. It's so peaceful and no distractions apart from Bryn my spaniel who was having a wonderful time sniffing out every nook and cranny. How lovely it was to really study the stained glass window with the Nativity scene. So often we see things but they don't always sink in. *Pip Rumsey*

WI News

Happy New Year to all WI members and their families. The WI choir enjoyed their chance to sing in the Carol Service at St. Telio's church, Llantilio Crossenny in December. It made all their hard work at practices worthwhile and Vicar Heidi was pleased to have us there too!

The members also enjoyed the traditional sing-song of the 12 days of Christmas at the King's Arms, Abergavenny on 19th January. Thank you to the pub which made us very welcome. Fun was high on the menu, with Captain Rob's drawn clues of different dishes, and bingo too.



Someone needs to school me in the regulation terms used for the numbers! No, no, no, no number one is *not* top of the house! Or on top of the house or anywhere else! But the rendition of the 12 days of Christmas this year was second to none, with such a variety of voices singing in a selection of keys, sharps and flats! However, the bar staff said they enjoyed it - or maybe they were being polite to get a tip!

Next month's meeting is Wednesday 9th February, when the theme will be 'All you can do with fruit and vegetables' and it's not cooking! Do come and

have a go with a knife and show off your talent! Accompanied by Italian music!

The WI membership booklets, with vouchers, were available at the dinner and will also be available in February, for those who wish.

Members have made some suggestions for the programme for 2022. This should be decided at the committee meeting, at Daphne's on the 28th January.

As I failed to get to Switzerland for New Year and am going in February, the members are expecting Swiss chocolate on my return !

Keep well and safe. *Lin*

Llanddewi Rhydderch Village Hall events

4th - Bar Night

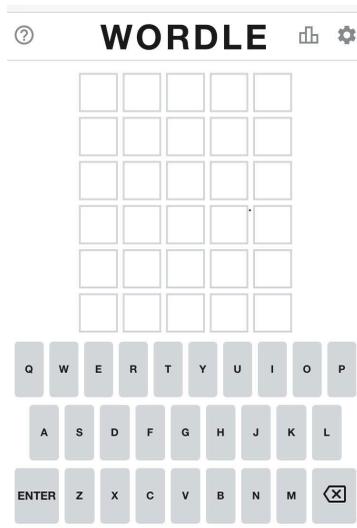
5th - 6 Nations - Ireland v Wales

12th 6 Nations - Wales v Scotland

17th Film Night - Dream Horse

26th 6 Nations - England v Wales

The words 'internet sensation' and 'Llanddewi Rhydderch' are not always associated in any way. However, this has recently changed. Last autumn, **Josh Wardle** from Llanddewi Rhydderch launched a new word game called **Wordle**. It has grown from 90 daily players in November to 300,000 at the beginning of January and is now over 2 million. Sadly, Josh has swapped the excitement of Llanddewi for the quiet life in Brooklyn, USA! Click on the picture above and try to guess today's five letter words in six goes.



A.S.P.
Oct 6th 1861
Aged 1 month

Snowdrops arrive in Llanvapley churchyard close to a headstone marking an infant grave.

The Garden in Winter

Christopher Lloyd used to count how many flowers he could find in his garden on Boxing Day. Elizabeth Murray of Llanover has taken on this tradition and her tally of 95 flowers is impressive.

I don't think many people would disagree that our winters are getting wetter and milder and as a result plants are still growing and giving pleasure. We have coronilla emerus in full bloom with yellow fragrant pealike flowers and delicate glaucous leaves, Iris stylosa has continued to push up new buds but something is eating them and I am not sure if it is birds or slugs. Camelia Sasanqua is still covered in fragrant white blooms, Mahonia charity has great yellow clusters of lily of the valley scented flowers. Rosa Bonica is still covered in buds, and there is a beautiful pink rose called Brother Cadfael. There are a few hellebore orientalis poking their buds out. Helleborus foetidus and H corsicus (argutifolius) are right out. Also appearing are little yellow winter aconites – Eranthus byemalis - each with a collar of deeply cut leaves. They are underneath a large magnolia and beginning to spread. There are even a few spikes of snowdrops. From my kitchen window I can see Prunus Autumnalis subhirtella covered in pale pink flowers. This tree was only planted last year as another one planted up the drive is not looking very happy. On walking round the garden I spotted Salvia involucrata, Viburnum tinus and V bodnantese 'Dawn', even some fleabane (erigeron karvinskianus), aubretia, valerian and a couple of Kaffir lilies. Garrya elliptica (pictured) has long tassels drooping from its branches – Anna Pavord said it is the dullest shrub she knows and when I have to cut it back hard in the spring, I often wonder if she is right, but now it looks magnificent! I am a long way behind Elizabeth!

One important item to have in your garden in the winter is some structure in the shape of evergreen shrubs either as a hedge or just an individual specimen. A few tightly clipped box or sarcococca bushes hold their own, particularly if there has been a frost.



Grosmont & District Gardening Club

Tuesday 1st February 7.30 Grosmont Town Hall

Roger Umpelby professional entomologist and horticulturist

(Advisor for RHS)

X-rated vertebrates - savagery and sex in the garden

All welcome – visitors £4

In the Spotlight

In this month's edition of The New Times the spotlight has fallen on one of our esteemed members of the clergy. But how well do we really know **Peter Cobb** who is a familiar face in all our churches? TNT tried to find out more by putting him 'In the Spotlight'.



What is your earliest memory?

I was born with a squint, so was made to wear glasses, almost from the start. One day, out in our back garden, I fell over and broke them on a stone. I was some months short of three

Where were you educated?

At Bournemouth School and St John's College, Cambridge. The schoolmaster I most admired taught Art, but was a good amateur musician too. He also took class singing, even though there was no proper music department. When I became a schoolmaster in Cowbridge, I did pretty much the same thing, on the side, for Cowbridge had no music department either.

Do you have an interest in gardening?

My father had an allotment for most of his life, and I have always aspired to be a vegetable expert, like him. I have learnt to grow outdoor tomatoes in vast quantities; but no one seems able to tell me anything useful about stopping tomato blight.

What is your favourite food, and why?

Sian's flapjacks. If you ate one, you'd know why.

What drink would you order in a pub?

A Methodist childhood taught me that the pub was the Devil's Parlour. You never entirely get rid of a thing like that, but if asked, I'd go for a glass of Rioja. No point any longer in hoping for the Taylor's 1927 Port that Sian gave me for my 65th birthday

Where is your favourite place to eat?

Currently, the Angel in Abergavenny, if only it were safe to go out.

You play the organ. How did you learn?

I taught myself. Can't you tell?

You are in your 90's What is the secret of a long life?

Find yourself two parents who live to 99 and 100 respectively. (Peter pictured right on his 90th birthday)

What is your favourite holiday destination?

Vienna. Schubert and Mozart and all that music!



Do you have any pets?

We once had a cat called Ada. She was there for the mice really, but she could catch squirrels too. I wish we had her now.

Do you have any DIY skills?

There's a lot of pleasure to be had from setting up and repairing violins.

What is your most embarrassing moment?

I was in the University orchestra, at the back of the second violins. We were rehearsing the Beethoven Missa Solemnis, a piece with more than its fair share of dramatic silences. It was during one of these that I came in, solo, in front of 50 players and twice that number of singers, with a huge G minor chord, across all four strings. It was a moment so shaming that I crept out at the end, and never found the courage to return.

Have you met anyone famous?

Anthony Hopkins. I taught him Geography in the B form at Cowbridge. He passed at O level, but not in much else; hated Cowbridge. A nice lad though, unspoilt by Hollywood. Fifty years later, out of the blue, he rang and invited us for a holiday in L.A.

What is your favourite hymn?

I love 18th century verse set to Victorian tunes in three-four time. 'When all thy mercies', 'O Thou who camest from above' etc. But the best of them all. 'Just as I am' has Victorian words too.

What is the secret of a good sermon?

I'm sorry, but preaching is a form of acting - choosing words and delivering them in such a way as to make people listen. The big difference from acting is that you really have to believe in everything you say. Re-hashing other people's theological ideas rarely impresses.

If you were Archbishop, what changes would you make?

I'd sack all the committees, and most of the administrative staff, and appoint three or four understanding bishops in each diocese - people like Heidi - who would be proper shepherds of the flock, meeting the people face to face, not chairmen condemned to spend their lives writing letters. Any clergy thrown out of a job by this reform would be re-directed into parish work.

What is the best piece of advice you've ever had?

Advice is a commodity far more often given than heeded; but I have never forgotten something that Archbishop Glyn Simon told me as I was about to take over my first parish: If anyone - anyone at all - offers to resign, accept immediately.

What advice would you now give to your younger self?

Stop wasting time, fussing about the impression you're making on other people. They're probably too busy wondering just the same thing about themselves to be bothered with your sensitivities.

Find out what is happening in your Community Council Area

Llantilio and Penrhos are in the Llantilio Crossenny Community Council area

**Llantilio Crossenny
Community Council**



Llanvapley is in the Llanarth Fawr Community Council area



Llanvetherine is in the Grosmont Fawr Community Council area

Grosmont, Wales

A website for Grosmont in Monmouthshire, Wales.



Grosmont Community Council

Clicking on any of the images will take you to the community council website where you can find out more.

Church Services in February

Sunday 6th February

Fourth Sunday before Lent

9.30am Llanvetherine

11am Llantilio Crossenny

Sunday 13th February

Third Sunday before Lent

9.30am Penrhos

11am Llanvapley

Sunday 20th February

Second Sunday before Lent

9.30am Llanvetherine

11am Llantilio Crossenny

Sunday 27st February

The Sunday before Lent

9.30am Penrhos

11am Llanvapley

Wednesday 2nd March

Ash Wednesday

7pm Llantilio Crossenny



Penrhos Churchyard is covered in crocuses in February

Overheard in The Hog's Head

How's your lad getting on?

Great. He has his first job and is really happy.

That's good news. What is he doing?

Working in a supermarket.

What exactly is he doing?

Shelf stacking. They said he is lucky as it's a great job with great career prospects. He was told he could start at the bottom and work his way up!



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 March issue of The New Times by 20th February 2022
Please send your emails to tntparishmag@gmail.com or lestaylor.taylor@gmail.com*