

The New Times February 2025



Services and Events in February 2025

All are welcome to join the services across the Parish where you are sure to receive a warm welcome.

Sunday 2nd February

9.30am **St. James the Elder, Llanvetherine.** (Morning Prayer)

11.00am **St. Teilo's, Llantilio Crossenny.** (Holy Communion)

This service is followed by tea/coffee and a chat; everyone is very welcome even if you do not join the service. Refreshments served from 11.45am-12.30pm.

Sunday 9th February

9.30am **St. Cadoc's, Penrhos.**

Refreshments will be served after the service. Open to all.

11.00am **St. Mabli's, Llanvapley.** (Holy Communion)

This service is followed by tea/coffee and a chat; everyone is very welcome even if you do not join the service. The bell will be rung when the service finishes.

Sunday 16th February

9.30am **St. James the Elder, Llanvetherine.** (Holy Communion)

11.00am **St. Teilo's, Llantilio Crossenny.** (Morning Prayer)

Sunday 23rd February

9.30am **St. Cadoc's, Penrhos.**

Refreshments are served after the service from approximately 10.20am onwards and everyone from the community is very welcome.

11.00am **St. Mabli's, Llanvapley.** (Morning Prayer)

This service is followed by tea/coffee and a chat; everyone is very welcome even if you do not join the service. The bell will be rung when the service finishes.

Revd. Peter Cobb

It is with great sadness that I write of the death of our much loved and highly respected Revd. Peter Cobb.

There are no words which could ever do justice to Peter's life and ministry.

Peter was simply wonderful.

After seventeen years as a much-loved schoolmaster in Cowbridge Grammar School, Peter responded to his vocation to ministry and was ordained in 1968.

After a curacy in Barry, he spent ten further years in the Llandaff diocese as Vicar of Penmark with Porthkerry, and thirteen years in the Monmouth diocese as Vicar of Magor and Redwick with Undy.

His ministry continued throughout his retirement; indeed, he ministered until the very last day of his earthly life.

Those of us who were blessed to be on the receiving end of his ministry can only thank God that Peter responded to his call.

How fortunate we are that he and Sian, chose to reside in this part of Monmouthshire.

He was a brilliant preacher, a fine musician, a dedicated priest and a devoted husband, father, grand-father and great-grandfather.

Peter was wise, kind, engaging, self-effacing, generous and never afraid to stand-up for what was right.

We shall miss him beyond words.

How blessed are we that he passed this way.

Go Forth O Christian soul, out of this world,

In the Name of God the Almighty Father, who created thee;

In the Name of Jesus Christ who redeemed thee;

In the Name of the Holy Spirit who sanctifies thee;

May the holy angels help and defend thee;

May the communion of saints support thee;

May thy redeemer look upon thee in pardon, mercy and love;

May thy rest be in peace, and thy dwelling place in the paradise of God.

Please hold Sian and all of Peter's family in your hearts and prayers whose grief is as deep as their love is strong.

Revd. Heidi Prince.



News from the Four Churches.

St. James the Elder, Llanvetherine

Llanvetherine Carol Service

St James Church held a well attended and joyful carol service on 22 December led by Rev Heidi followed by refreshments, and it was a delight that so many people stayed to talk after the service. Thanks to all those who decorated the church for the occasion and provided the refreshments including mulled wine. The Christmas Day communion service led by Rev Andrew was also well attended with excellent singing of the Christmas morning hymns. Not to be 'out-cancelled' by Llanvapley, the first service of January had to be cancelled owing to snowfall enough to make access to the church quite hazardous.

Parishioners in Llanvetherine would like to thank David and Shirley, and Richard Shaw for their magnificent work on the successful and fun draw and competition held at the Hogs Head on 17 January, reported fully by David below

Llanvetherine Church Annual Draw

The annual draw for Llanvetherine church took place last Friday. I think that the draw has been going for over 30 years so it will soon become an annual event.

This year we added the Family Fortunes game based on the television show.

Both parts of the evening went well with over 1600 tickets having been sold and prizes were won by many locals as well as one ending up in Sheffield. As for Family Fortunes, this proved taxing for some and although there are no wrong answers getting the top 5 answers lead to much discussion and possibly arguments. There was a buzz in the room with a lot of laughter and cheering (and groans, when the top answers were read out) with many people expressing enjoyment and asking when is the next one?

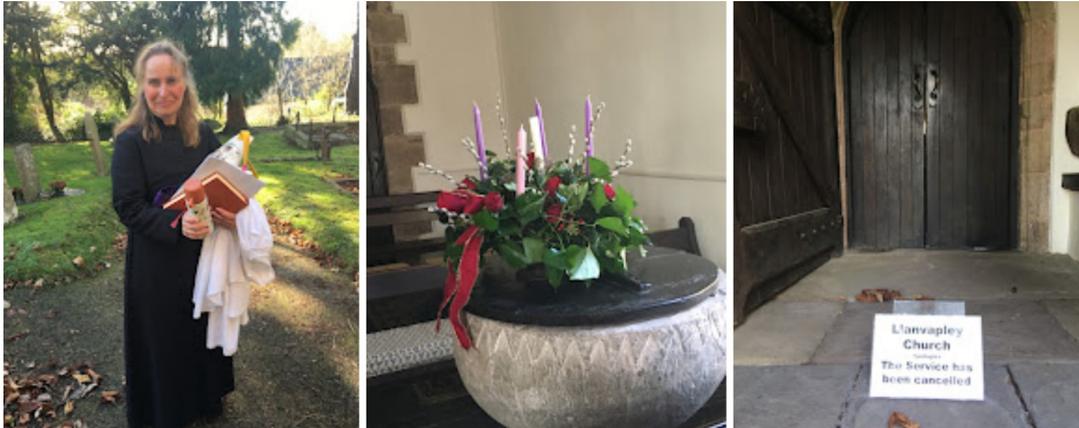
As usual thank you to everyone who sold and bought tickets, donated prizes and came along on the night.

The church has benefited from everyone's kindness and generosity.

St. Mabli's, Llanvapley

Llanvapley Church was scheduled to hold a service of Holy Communion on Sunday, 8th December, but unfortunately, Storm Darragh struck the village the day before, knocking out the power. While residents are accustomed to occasional outages, this one lasted for an astonishing 30 hours. By Sunday morning, the power remained off, and with both the phone and internet down, there was no way to communicate with anyone. Although the service could have gone ahead by candlelight at the altar, it was ultimately deemed safer to cancel it and ensure everyone stayed warm and secure. Despite the conditions, one or two of the faithful still turned up, only to report that there had been no issues in Llantilio and Llanvetherine. How fortunate they were! As you can see from the picture, the vicar was there and the advent candles were ready to be lit but the service was cancelled. Later in the day, the

source of the problem was identified: a large oak branch had fallen across the road, with a smaller branch landing on two power lines, causing a short circuit. Many thanks go to the boys from Chapel Farm for clearing the road, and to John Judd for assisting the engineers from the National Grid by pinpointing the problem and its location. True heroes!



Llanvapley Carol Service

St Mabli's Church held its Carol Service on Sunday, 22nd December, at 11am. The church was full for the occasion, and a warm atmosphere prevailed as everyone enjoyed the readings and carols. A huge thank you goes to all those who read the lessons and to those who prepared the excellent refreshments. The collection taken during the service was donated to charity and was shared between the Institute of Cancer Vaccines and Immunotherapy, Abergavenny Foodbank, and St David's Hospice in Newport. The collection raised a total of £180, which was then generously topped up by the church, enabling each of the three nominated charities to receive a cheque for £150.

Funeral Service

On 20th January, Llanvapley Church was filled with mourners for the funeral service of Doris Evans. Doris was a remarkable woman who celebrated her 100th birthday last September. She had been a resident of the village for over 50 years and was loved and respected by her many friends in the community. The service was led by Revd. Heidi, with Jeanette Massocchi playing the organ. Doris was fondly remembered by her family through a series of reflections, readings, poems, and a eulogy. The church was beautifully adorned with flowers for the occasion, and the service was followed by interment in the churchyard. A special thank you is extended to the Red Hart for providing refreshments after the service.

St. Teilo's, Llantilio Crossenny:

Carol Service

Everyone enjoyed the annual Carol Service and thanks to Revd. Heidi for such a lovely service and to the 9 readers.

This was a delightful event filled with festive cheer and beautiful music. The St Teilo Bell Ringers in the tower rang out their peals, calling the community

to come and join together in worship. The service began with a warm welcome from Revd. Heidi, followed by nine readers who shared the Christmas story. The Selby Sounds Handbell Ringers enchanted the congregation with an enchanting performance, whose melodious rings added a magical touch to the atmosphere. The Llantilio Crossenny WI Choir also graced the event with their harmonious voices, singing Silent Night in 5 different languages, which brought joy to the congregation. The combination of all created a memorable and heart-warming experience for everyone present. Coffee, tea and home-made cakes followed and was enjoyed by all.

Christingle

The Christingle Service on Christmas Eve was an absolute delight, it found the church full of children, their families and worshippers. A huge thank you to Val Cooke and Lauren Hughes for making nearly 50 Christingles of oranges and sweets, which were given out to the children.



The children delighted the congregation in singing Away in a Manger by candlelight. A big thank you to Revd. Heidi for the lovely service, the young readers – Alex, Ronnie, Charlie and Freya – and not forgetting Manon for the delightful beautifully decorated home-made gingerbread house.



The event raised £221.50 which was sent to Tŷ Hafan Children's Hospice, fantastic.

Eco Church

From the majestic kite soaring through our skies to the gentle inquisitive hare darting across our fields, the intricate web of life is seen as a testament to the Creator's wisdom and love. This understanding places a profound responsibility upon humanity to cherish and protect all forms of life, especially in the face of the growing threat of climate change.

Climate change poses a great threat to the balance of ecosystems, endangering the lives of countless species, birds, animals, insects and not forgetting humans, and the health of Mother Earth. Action is needed to mitigate the impact of climate change and support the resilience of nature. We can all contribute to the conservation efforts and the importance of living in harmony with nature and being mindful of our impact for future generations.

We can make environmentally conscious choices in our daily lives, if we are not already trying to do so. Therefore, practice what you preach, the church is looking into ways that it can collectively make significant impacts on the local and global community.

St Teilo's is taking part in a national Eco Church Survey, which will help our church to "go green" in the following five areas of church life:

- Worship and teaching
- Management of church buildings
- Management of church land
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle

Eco Church is a learning community; it provides a framework to support us to take practical action on caring for God's earth. The work we do will count towards accreditation from Bronze, Silver to Gold status. It is designed to equip us to express care for God's world in our worship and teaching; in how we engage with our community, in how we look after the church and churchyard, and our personal lifestyles.

By taking part in this initiative, we, as a congregation and community, can play a pivotal role in promoting environmental and sustainable practices, and through our efforts we can help to safeguard the beauty and diversity of our environment.

I will endeavour to keep you posted of our progress of our progress in 'going for gold', and if you would like to help in anyway then I would love some willing Green Volunteers. For further information the following link explains it in greater detail: ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk

Eco Church Events:

RSPB Big Garden Watch - Sunday 26th January at St Teilo's Church, Llantilio Crossenny between 9.30-10.30am.

This is a new initiative for the church but hopefully the launch of a new annual bird survey for the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch. We will record, mainly from birdsong (and therefore not eligible for this year's survey as we do not have any feeders yet and the recordings must be of birds that land in the churchyard at a feeding station) and make a list of what we have heard for future reference. We aim to add a sheet in the church for visitors to record birds, insects, wildflowers, and lichen etc.

I shall let you know how we get on in March's edition. Everyone is welcome to come and join us, wear warm clothes and bring a flask a must.

Caring for God's Acre Churches' Count on Nature Week – from Saturday 7th June to Sunday 15th June.

A Beautiful Burial Grounds Project – Protecting wildlife, Preserving Heritage – Involving People. There are 2 very helpful apps to assist with identification of our local flora & fauna:

- Merlin

- iNaturalist

This is part of Eco Church initiative and more information to follow in next month's magazine.

New Church Carpet Fundraising Update

St Teilo Llantilio Crossenny are planning a Quiz and Supper evening as a fund raiser towards the new carpet fund. The date is Thursday 27th March at 7pm at the Pavilion, Llanvapley. The tickets will be £10 which will include a supper of home-made quiche, new potatoes, salad and homemade desserts. The Pavilion bar will be open which includes soft drinks. Any offers of help would be gratefully received. We will also have a raffle. I will get posters done and will spread the word via social media. Tickets which will be available in a few weeks.

Community News

St Teilo Bell Ringers

The Llantilio Church bell ringers celebrated their Christmas meal at the Foxhunter Inn in Nant-y-Deri on Wednesday, 11th December. The team was joined by friends from neighbouring towers, making for a truly memorable occasion. The bell ringers were delighted to mark another successful year, with no complaints about the usual Tuesday night clanging! Over the past year, the team has rung for several special occasions, and their efforts have been widely appreciated. In 2024, the team was pleased to welcome several new members, all of whom have made impressive progress thanks to the excellent training provided by the tower captain. If you're curious about bell ringing or would like to give it a go, why not pop along on a Tuesday night? You'll be sure of a warm welcome.



Llanvapley Gardening Club

We are looking forward to our first meet of the year on **Wednesday February 5th February with a presentation from Gareth Davies on The Small Greenhouse**. Gareth is a qualified botanist and a retired biology teacher with a wealth of gardening knowledge. After retiring he has appeared on TV and radio and is the Welsh representative for The Rose Society UK.

Tea, coffee, and cake/biscuits will be available after the talk (and is included in your membership/guest fee). We will hold our usual raffle for plants, books etc. at £1 per ticket with proceeds going towards the club's events. Change is always very welcome.

Membership of the L&D Gardening Club for this year is now due if you have not already paid. The fees have stayed the same and are £20 single

and £35 joint membership. If you have any friends, family or neighbours who would just like to come to a particular talk, they are most welcome, and the guest fee is £5.

We look forward to seeing you at our meeting on Wed 5th February. Meetings are held at Llanvapley Village Hall.

Selby Sound Bell Ringers

Following a short break, Selby Sound will meet on Friday 31st January at 4.00pm in The Pavilion at Llanvapley to start rehearsing for their next concert. Our very happy and enthusiastic team are keen to learn new pieces and if anyone would like to come and join them, you will be made very welcome. No musical knowledge is required but be aware there is a lot of chatting, tea breaks and most importantly, cake!!

If you need any information, please contact Margaret 01873 855207

Llanvapley Sports Pavilion & Village Hall

Christmas Lights

The switch-on of Llanvapley's Christmas lights was originally planned for the weekend of Storm Darragh, which led to a delay until Friday, 13th December. Despite the rather ominous date, the event proceeded as planned. A large crowd gathered around the Christmas tree, eagerly awaiting one of the children to press the plunger (twice!) to illuminate the tree, much to everyone's delight. This was followed by a cheerful rendition of The Twelve Days of Christmas, with mulled wine and mince pies served in the pavilion. A special thanks goes to Neal Smith for his assistance in setting up the lights, as well as to everyone who lent a hand in the pavilion.



Llanvapley Walking Group

Meet at Llanvapley Village Hall at 10.30am on the 1st Saturday of the month.

Llantilio Crossenny WI News and Events

December was the last meeting of the WI in 2024 and lots of fun was had, by all.!

Lin welcomed new members and the programmes for 2025 were given out. Thanks to Keiko and Sue for helping Lin, put it together. The committee have tried to produce a varied programme, so there is something to suit all tastes.

Anghard Underwood was the guest, who showed how infusions could be made, into oil and spirits. Namely Olive Oil and Vodka! There was an interesting choice, from hibiscus flowers, pepper corns, rosemary sprigs and other goodies! The little round bottles were filled, which made ideal Christmas gifts.

The amazing committee provided a wonderful array of Christmas foods and mulled wine.

Members were reminded of the annual dinner, which is being held at The Beaufort, Raglan on the 22nd of January 2025. Margaret has kindly taken over from Sue, to organise the evening, while Sue is on a long cruise, and ends up trekking in Chile!! She will have some great stories to tell, when she returns.

The choir members will resume at the end of January, to practice for a performance to Yvenny WI in March.

The WI is an inspirational group of women, and the Llantilio Crossenny WI is now in its 106th year - the first formed in Monmouthshire.

All are welcome to join in the meetings, on the second Wednesday of each month, at Llanvapley Sports Pavilion.

For more details contact; Lin Morris, President, can be contacted either: 07840641856 or 01873 850939 or Lin.tedit@btinternet.com

'Bore Coffi'

A local 'bore coffi' is the brainchild of Les Taylor. We met for the first time in Llanvapley Pavilion in early December. The hall looked very festive and welcoming with a tree, fairy lights, and cyclamen on every table. In addition to myself, Les and Nic Hoyal, we were delighted to be joined by fluent Welsh speaker Myfanwy Williamson. Myf grew up in west Wales and spoke no English until she was 9! She warned us that she speaks 'Cymraeg y gegin' - literally kitchen Welsh, but it was lovely to hear her speak her birth language. At our second meeting Eryl Sheers joined us. Another fluent Welsh speaker, Eryl comes from Penderyn of whisky fame.

The conversations over coffee and biscuits were wide ranging, covering our origins: 'O ble dych chi'n dod?', the different words for a live chicken, and the one we might have for Sunday lunch; all things horses, the reintroduction of pine martins that may counter the proliferation of grey squirrels, and New Year's resolutions. Popeth yn Cymraeg (everything in Welsh)!

As a rule, the bore coffi will usually be on the second Tuesday of the month, but in February it will take place on **Tuesday 25th February 10.30 Llanvapley Pavilion**. All levels of Welsh speaker are very welcome - I have been learning Welsh now for over 6 years and as the tutors are always reminding us, the only way to improve is 'ymarfer, ymarfer, ymarfer! (ymarfer = practise). So, take the plunge and join us! If you have any questions, please contact Les - 01600 780376.

Last Word from the Guest Editor...

A heartfelt thank you to all the volunteers who play a crucial role in benefitting the local community through their dedication and service to the churches. Their contributions help to create a warm, welcoming and supportive environment for everyone. The vital role of volunteers makes a positive impact in:

1. Keeping the churches open and welcoming:

Volunteers ensure that the churches remain open and accessible to all. Their efforts in maintaining the cleanliness and beauty of the buildings, including flower arranging, and organising cleaning teams, create a warm and inviting atmosphere for worshippers and visitors alike.

2. Supporting Services, Events and serving the community during life events:

Volunteers read lessons during church services, enhancing the spiritual experience for the congregation. They assist in organising and running various events, which bring the community together in celebration, remembrance and worship.

Volunteers help raise essential funds for various church activities, projects and maintenance. Such events not only generate financial support but also foster a sense of community and enjoyment among participants. Fundraising is crucial as it contributes to specific needs of the churches, in bringing people together and provides entertainment such as the Family Fortunes evening and the planned Quiz and Supper evening.

Volunteers play a vital role in supporting the community during significant life events such as christenings, marriages and funerals. Their presence and assistance to Revd. Heidi ensure that these important occasions are conducted smoothly.

3. Providing Refreshments:

After-service tea and coffee mornings are made special by volunteers who provide delicious cakes and biscuits. These gatherings offer an opportunity for fellowship and connection among community members, nurturing and fostering a sense of belonging.

4. Contributing to Community Initiatives:

Volunteers are involved in various community initiatives and activities, such as the Eco Church project, RSPB Big Garden Watch, TNT Magazine.

The churches would not function as effectively without the dedication and hard work of its volunteers. Their contributions are invaluable, and they help create a vibrant and caring community.

Not just the church but the entire local community benefits from a secret band of litter pickers who have been working tirelessly to keep our local lanes free from litter. These unsung heroes, who prefer to remain anonymous, venture out sometime between dawn and dusk armed with gloves, bags and a shared sense of responsibility for the environment. Their mission is simple yet profound: to restore the natural beauty of our surroundings and inspire others to take pride in our community. Despite their anonymity, their impact is visible to all, and they remind us all that small acts of kindness and care can make a significant difference. Their dedication and hard work serve as a beacon of

hope and a call to action for all of us to do our part in preserving the beauty of where we live.

Lastly as I stand in Sue Raynor's shoes for a short while, I extend my thanks and admiration to her and Les Taylor, who voluntarily keep this brilliant magazine ticking along. This, of course, would not be possible without the wonderful contributors and you, the dear audience, I humbly thank you all and in future promise to read it from cover to cover.