



## The New Times

The parish magazine for the Llantilio Crossenny Group of Parishes

### Services and Events in March 2025

#### Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March

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.*

#### Ash Wednesday – 5<sup>th</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> Day of Lent

6.00pm **St Teilo's Llantilio Crossenny**

*Marks the beginning of fasting, repentance, and reflection leading to Easter.*

#### Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent

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 16<sup>th</sup> March – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent

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

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

#### Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent

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.*

## **Sunday 30th March – Joint Service of Evensong – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent and Mothering Sunday**

6.00pm **St Teilo's Llantilio Crossenny**

**Please note:** Clocks go forward one hour at 2.00am on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March.

## **News from the Churches.**

### **St. Mabli's, Llanvapley**

#### **Llanvapley Church Meeting**

It has been a considerable time since the last meeting of the Llanvapley Parochial Church Council on 12 January 2023. During this period, the church has sought and received clarification on the roles and responsibilities of the newly established church committees, which were introduced following the creation of the North Monmouthshire Ministry Area. There will be a meeting to discuss the development of a church committee on 7pm on Monday 24 March 7pm at The Old Rectory, Llanvapley. This is an open meeting for members of the parish.

### **St. Teilo's, Llantilio Crossenny.**

#### **Book of Remembrance – Revd Peter Cobb**

I am pleased to share that we have established a Book of Remembrance in St Teilo's Church in honour of Revd Peter Cobb. The book is a special place where you can write your thoughts and memories in recognition of Peter's remarkable work and contributions to our parishes.

Peter was not only a dedicated vicar but also a true scholar and a cherished friend to many. His command of the English language was exceptional, allowing him to communicate profound ideas with clarity and grace. Peter's sermons were always insightful, thought-provoking, and deeply moving, reflecting his extensive knowledge and passion for the English language.

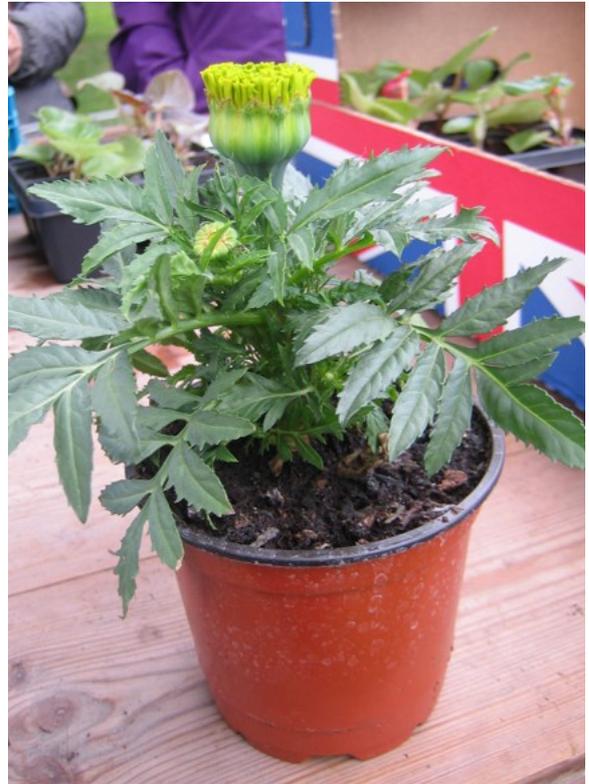
Beyond his scholarly achievements, Peter was friend to all. His warm and approachable nature made him a beloved figure in our parishes. He has a unique ability to connect with people from all walks of life, offering support, guidance, and a listening ear whenever it was needed. His kindness and compassion left a lasting impact on everyone who had the privilege of knowing him.

I encourage each of you to take a moment to visit St Teilo's and contribute to the Book of Remembrance. Share your memories, thoughts and reflections on Peter's work and positive influence he had on our lives. Together, we can create a lasting tribute to a remarkable individual who touched the hearts of so many. The book is on the piano.

## **Llantilio Crossenny Church Plant Sale will be held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May at 2.00.p.m.**

It is that time of year again!

Can you help by donating any spare plants you have? Perhaps you are dividing up a large clump and could 'pot up' a section, or has something seeded in the flower beds and you now have too many of a good thing? Plants, big and small are so welcome and in addition Elsie and Team Tea will be serving refreshments, Marion and Team Cake will be selling delicious cakes and there will be a raffle of course. If you can help with cakes, raffle prizes, or plants, your contribution will be appreciated. This is now our main fund raiser for the year and a very sociable afternoon.



**Please note that the Quiz/Supper Evening at Llanvapley on Thursday 27th March has been cancelled.**

An update to the Carpet Fundraiser in next issue.

### **A Parishioner's Reflection of "A Passion for Creation"**

#### **A Quiet Day at Llangasty Retreat House. Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2025. Organised by Father Julian**

Nestled in the embrace of Llangasty's beautiful landscape, the day retreat titled "A Passion for Creation" was an enriching experience for all who attended. The day promised a journey of reflection, silence, and communion with nature under the guidance of The Revd. Canon Professor John Rodwell. – a priest and an ecologist with over 40 years' experience.

The day began with a warm welcome and introductions, there was a varied selection of attendees from ministers, spiritual seekers and one relative newcomer to Christianity, but all fervent nature lovers, eagerly anticipating the wisdom and insights that the day had in store.

John's first address "The Gift of the Land" encouraged deep reflection on the generosity of creation. In the serene silence that followed, you could almost hear the whispers of nature itself, as the surrounding beauty of Llangasty Retreat, it's grounds, Llangorse Lake and the Black Mountains became an integral part of the spiritual journey.

The Eucharist was celebrated, interwoven with an address that explored the companionship of fellow creatures in God's creation. The atmosphere was one of reverence and contemplation, as we reflected on our connection to earth and its inhabitants.

Lunch provided a delightful interlude, offering us a breathtaking uninterrupted view of the lake. The sunny weather cast a beautiful reflection on the water, enhancing the serene atmosphere. We took a moment to say grace before our meal, which made us appreciate the effort and care that went into preparing the delicious offerings. We reflected on how the

food was grown, harvested, and brought to our table, making us truly thankful for the experience. Additionally, it gave us a wonderful opportunity to engage with our luncheon neighbours, bonding over our shared experience of the day and thus building stronger connections. It was a time for nourishment of both body and spirit.

The afternoon session, "Sharing the Harvest of Creation," invited us to delve deeper into the reflection of God's generosity and our own responsibilities as stewards of the earth. Silence and reflection once again played a crucial role in shaping personal insights and collective understanding.

As the day drew to a close, final thoughts were shared among the group with the added addition of tea and scrummy Welsh cakes. The day left me with a sense of fulfilment and a renewed commitment to nurturing and tending to the "home" that God has given us. The reflection of God's generosity in creation, I felt instilled a profound sense of purpose and contemplation for the future.

These organised Christian events are treats indeed, like little nuggets of gold, offering a much-needed pause and reflection in our troubled world. It provided me with a sense of hope that God and Mother Earth (if they aren't one of the same) will ultimately prevail. I left the retreat a better person with a feeling of peace and a renewed sense of purpose. John Rodwell's passion for both the natural world and spiritual guidance resonated with all, challenging us to reflect on the beauty and richness of our surroundings, and to carry forward a sense of gratitude and responsibility towards creation.

PS Who would have thought I could be so quiet for so long!

## **Update - St Teilo's Eco Church Survey**

As you know from last month's TNT, I am currently working on completing the Eco Church Survey for St Teilo's, and it's been a reflective and enlightening experience so far. The survey covers various aspects of our church life from worship and teaching to the management of our building and land, as well as our community and global engagement.

I've started gathering a small team of enthusiastic members who are passionate about environmental issues. Together, we are reviewing the different sections of the survey to understand the areas it covers. These sections include:

- **Worship and Teaching:** We are assessing how our church incorporates environmental themes into worship services, sermons, and educational programmes. We're considering how often these themes are addressed and the resources we use to support them.
- **Buildings:** We are evaluating the energy efficiency of our church, looking at heating, lighting etc, and the use of renewable energy suppliers. We are identifying areas where improvements can be made to reduce our energy consumption and carbon footprint.
- **Land:** We are examining how our church grounds are managed, looking at biodiversity, the use of pesticides and fertilisers, and the presence of wildlife habitats – identified through surveys. We are considering installing bird feeders and creating a wildlife garden to enhance the natural environment.
- **Community and Global Engagement:** We are reflecting on how our church engages with the wider community on environmental issues. This includes

participating in local clean-up events, supporting environmental charities, and advocating for policies that protect the environment.

- **Lifestyle:** We are encouraging our church members to adopt more sustainable lifestyles through providing resources and tips on topics such as recycling, reducing waste, and sustainable transportation.

As we gather all the necessary information, we are completing the survey with honesty and thoroughness. This will provide a clear picture of our church's current environmental impact and areas for improvement. Once we submit the survey, we will review the feedback and recommendations provided, using this information to create an action plan for making our church eco-friendlier.

Completing the Eco Church survey is not just about ticking boxes, it's about making a meaningful commitment to caring for God's creation. By taking part in this initiative, our church can play a vital role in promoting environmental sustainability and inspiring others to do the same.

### **Eco Tip**

**Buy One Get One Free** – plant offers, can you think of St Teilo's as we are trying to introduce as many varied wildlife friendly flowers and shrubs to the churchyard. I am looking forward to meeting with the wonderful Wynford Jones, who volunteers tirelessly on the beautiful bank in the churchyard, to assist in any way possible and hopefully be his apprentice. I have kick started this initiative with a tray of Polyanthus (BOGOF) from Raglan Garden Centre.

### **Update - RSPB Big Garden Watch – Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January – St Teilo's Churchyard**

Picture this: one lone, intrepid birdwatcher braving the storm, (it lashed down), armed with nothing but determination, a raincoat that gave up the fight ages ago, and binoculars that, at this point, were more useful as makeshift goggles. Every gust of wind felt like a particularly unsympathetic nudge from Mother Nature, and the rain was as relentless as a church bell summoning the congregation on a Sunday morning.

Perched in the churchyard, I probably looked like a statue dedicated to bird enthusiasts everywhere. Even the most steadfast jackdaws had opted for a Netflix marathon in their nests instead of venturing out. Yet, I stood my ground, squinting through the wind and rain, hoping for a glimpse of feathered bravery. No sparrows, no robins not even a rogue pigeon but to my utter delight I saw and heard 2 x goldcrests and 3 x hawfinches – not on the list of average garden birds to be seen but now added, thus putting the church firmly on the RSPB map. The true spirit of a birdwatcher – wind, rain and plenty of enthusiasm (oh and a flask of hot coffee and homemade cake – perfect).

### **The Dawn Chorus – sounds heralding Spring.**

The dawn chorus is one of Mother Nature's most enchanting phenomena, signalling the arrival of Spring. As the days start to lengthen, from March the chorus really begins in earnest, peaking between May and June, and continues through, for some birds, to August. Blackbirds, robins and song thrushes are among the first to be heard embodying the saying "The early bird catches the worm". Depending on your location, you might hear wading birds if listening by the water's edge or in heathland, linnets and if you are really lucky, a

cuckoo, which once common in Spring, is sadly now in decline and on the red danger list. This symphony of bird song is primarily a way for birds to attract a mate and /or defend their territory.

These birds can be heard in the tranquil moments just before and after sunrise, their melodious songs tracking the first light of dawn in the east across the country to the west. The song thrush and robin have been singing since December and I have noticed an increase in the variety of birds starting to chime in, increasing their numbers every morning. The resident chorus will soon be joined by their migratory cousins, the blackcaps, willow warblers and chiff chaffs etc.

The **1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in May** is National Dawn Chorus Day and what a lovely way to celebrate the joy that birds, large, small and all colourful in their own way, bring to our daily lives. Therefore, **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May** – it would be lovely if you would come and join me listening to the dawn chorus in the churchyard (more details to follow in next month's TNT).



### **St Teilo's Eco Church Events - Dates for your Diary:**

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May** - National Dawn Chorus Day (time tbc in next month's magazine).

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May** – Plant Sale – an information table about Eco Church.

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June to Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> June** - Caring for God's Acre Churches' Count on Nature Week (more to follow in next month's magazine).

### **St Cadoc's, Penrhos**

Currently nestled in the serene embrace of St Cadoc's churchyard, a tapestry of vibrant crocuses and golden daffodils unfurls, painting the landscape with their cheerful hues. The crocuses, with their delicate, cup-shaped petals, burst forth in a symphony of purples, whites, and yellows, dotting the lush green grass like nature's confetti. Their bright and varied colours bring joy and a sense of optimism after the long winter months.

The daffodils, with their trumpet-like blooms, stand tall and proud, their sunshine-yellow faces waiting to sway gently in a passing breeze. In Victorian floriography, daffodils can symbolise unrequited love, conveying a sense of admiration from afar. Crocuses and daffodils both carry rich symbolisms, often associated with themes of renewal and the arrival of spring. Together, these blooms create a breathtaking tableau, a celebration of life and renewal amidst the timeless stillness of St Cadoc's weathered stone walls and gravestones. The scene is a poignant reminder of the beauty and resilience of nature, offering solace and hope to all who wander through this sacred space.



# Community News

## Llanvapley Gardening Club

The next Gardening Club meeting is on 5th March at 7pm at Llanvapley Pavilion. Everyone is most welcome, and a guest fee is £5. Please just come along if you'd like to learn more about roses.

The speaker this month is Dean Peckett talking about Rose Cultivation, Pruning and Training.

Dean says "My talk will cover rose pruning techniques and how to train roses to encourage more flowers. I will also talk about the annual care and maintenance of roses, recommended mulches, fertiliser, planting etc., and I'll show images of roses in flower with rose variety recommendations. Followed by Q and A."

## Selby Sounds Handbell Ringers

Meet every Friday at 4.00pm in Llanvapley Village Hall – a warm welcome always guaranteed (along with tea and cake).

## Llanvapley Sports Pavilion & Village Hall.

### History Lecture in the Village Hall

On Thursday, 20 February, Llanvapley hosted a lecture titled '*Llanvapley in the 1800s – A Century of Transformation*' by Dr. Phil Allsopp. The event attracted a large and engaged audience, who enjoyed a comprehensive overview of the significant changes that took place during the century. Drawing on his recent academic research, Dr. Allsopp presented compelling evidence to illustrate these transformations. The lecture concluded with a lively and insightful question-and-answer session. The LSSA extends its gratitude to Dr. Allsopp for his engaging and informative presentation.

## Winter Warmer even - Open to all



**Worried about your winter fuel bills?  
Confused about tariffs and discounts?  
Want to cook healthy, warming meals  
that don't cost the earth?**

**Please join us at *Llanvapley Pavillion*  
for a (free) community event  
'WINTER WARMER'**

- **energy-saving advice**
- **cooking demo**
- **delicious hot lunch!**

**Thurs 6th March  
11am-1pm**

**All  
welcome!**

**WIN A  
SLOW  
COOKER!**



## Energy Saving Presentation Open to all

Thursday 13th March at 7.00pm at Llanvapley Hall - Energy Saving Presentation, for warmth, money and environmental savings. This has been organised jointly by the LSSA & Llantilio Crossenny WI.

## Llantilio Crossenny WI News

February's meeting of the WI saw members gather to discuss a variety of pressing matters and upcoming events. Following the absence of Minutes in January due to the Annual Christmas Dinner. Lin extended a warm welcome to all attendees before delving into the agenda.

Lin distributed brief information on draft resolutions, urging members to note their preferences. She assured that the outcomes would be communicated to the GFWI. Gratitude was expressed to the organisers of the Christmas Dinner and to Shez for the media coverage. Preparations for the VE celebrations are already underway for May 11<sup>th</sup>, including cake donations, hamper contributions and a potential flag raising ceremony.

The meeting concluded with an insightful presentation by Sergeant Lana Rees Williams from Gwent Police on how to avoid being scammed. She emphasised the importance of vigilance against criminals seeking personal information. Members shared their own experiences and appreciated the valuable advice. Sergeant Rees Williams, after being thanked, joined members for refreshments and she even won a raffle prize, leaving with warm memories of Llantilio Crossenny WI.



## St Teilo's Bell Ringers

**Message from a Learner** - I started this hobby 6 months ago and I absolutely adore it - not just the skills required both mental and physical, the achievement as an individual with learning rope skills, knowing the sound of your bell, timing, feel, balance, the history, the reliance in being part of a fabulously friendly welcoming team and the camaraderie is second to none. If you can - do it, it takes you into another world and it's fun.

## Bore Coffi

We had our monthly Bore Coffi on 25th February: Les, Nick, Myfanwy and me (Jenny Goodwin). Myf had brought a book called 'Rhandir Mwyn' (literally mineral allotment) in the Blaenau Tywi - Upper Tywi Valley. There was a lovely school photo of her dark-haired Mum in the late 1920s. Les produced a quiz about Dewi Sant whose life is celebrated on March 1st. It made me realise how ignorant I am about the Patron Saint of Wales. Fortunately, Les had both questions and answers courtesy of ChatGPT. Discussing A.I. in Welsh was quite a stretch!

At that point David Sheers arrived, unaware that it was a Welsh Bore Coffi! He had brought some signs for the footpath through the Solar Farm that he and Les will put up. There is information in English and Welsh, and we learnt that bwncath is buzzard, and uchelwydd is mistletoe.

The conversation then moved to all things rubbish - sbwriel. Myf and some others have been picking up rubbish in Llantilio, and so it would seem have others, which is wonderful. I mentioned my neighbour, Ray Fisher from Whitcastle, who is often out clearing drains, and litter picking, locally and also in Abergavenny.

It was a very enjoyable and relaxed morning over coffee and biscuits, and we set a date to meet again on **Tuesday 18th March 10.30-11.30**. in Llanvapley Pavillion. Croeso Cynnes i gyd - A warm welcome to one and all. Any questions, ask Les 01600 780376

## The Big Lent Walk 2025

If you fancy a challenge, why not join 'Llanarth and Friends', who undertake to walk 200km during the period of Lent for 'The Big Lent Walk'. This is a challenge where we are asked to walk 200km over the 40 days of Lent and get sponsored to raise money to help people fighting extreme poverty globally.'

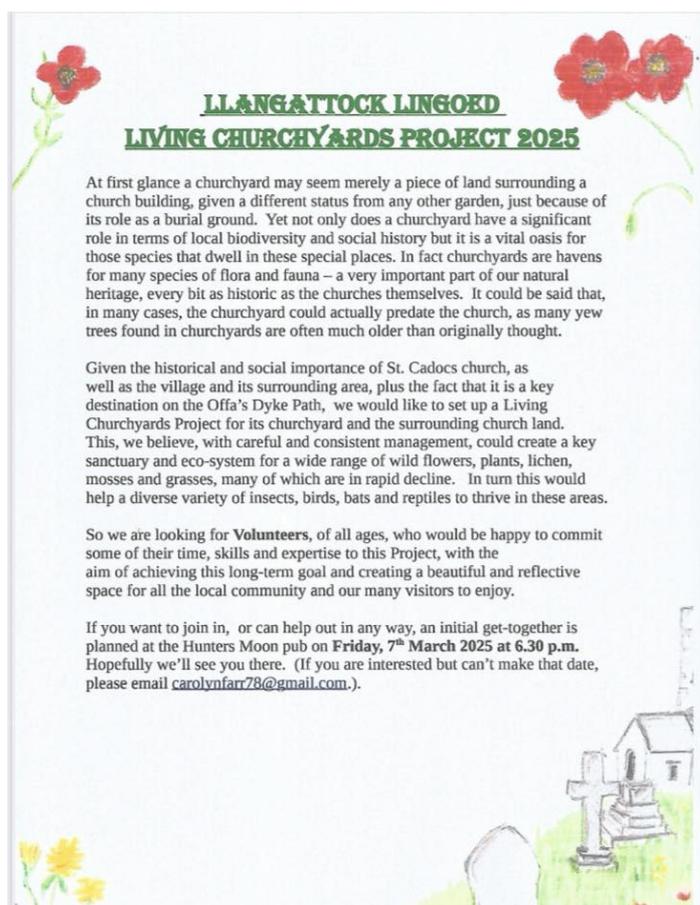
The group is organised by Julie Lunt from the Catholic Church in Llanarth, who some of you will know from Taize, and for her flute playing. This is some information from Julie:

The money raised by this year's Big Lent Walk supports the work of CAFOD and Sciaf in reaching out 'to people living in poverty with practical help, whatever their religion or culture. (CAFOD and SCIAF are the official relief and development agencies of the Catholic Church for England, Wales and for Scotland, and are members of the global Caritas Internationalis family). Through their global Church network, one of the largest in the world, they work with local partners and have the potential to reach many people in need. They also campaign for global justice, so that every woman, man and child can live a full and dignified life. If you would like to join us - I am a 'friend' - let me know and I can put you in touch with Julie who sets up a fund raising page and logs our weekly tallies. Don't be put off by the 200km - all you have to do is commit to what you think you can realistically walk over the 40 days whilst still being a challenge for you. During the period we try and do at least one walk together. And by the way if you would like to sponsor us, just let me know! Jenny Goodwin [jenny.goodwin@btinternet.com](mailto:jenny.goodwin@btinternet.com) / 01600 780067

## News From North Monmouthshire Ministry Area

On Friday 7th March (6:30pm, Hunter's Moon Inn), there will be the first meeting for St Cadoc's, Llangattock Lingoed's Living Churchyard Project. This is a great opportunity to find out how we can better care for our churchyards as areas of biodiversity. You can also find out more about the Eco Church scheme and its newly launched survey here:

<https://ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk/>



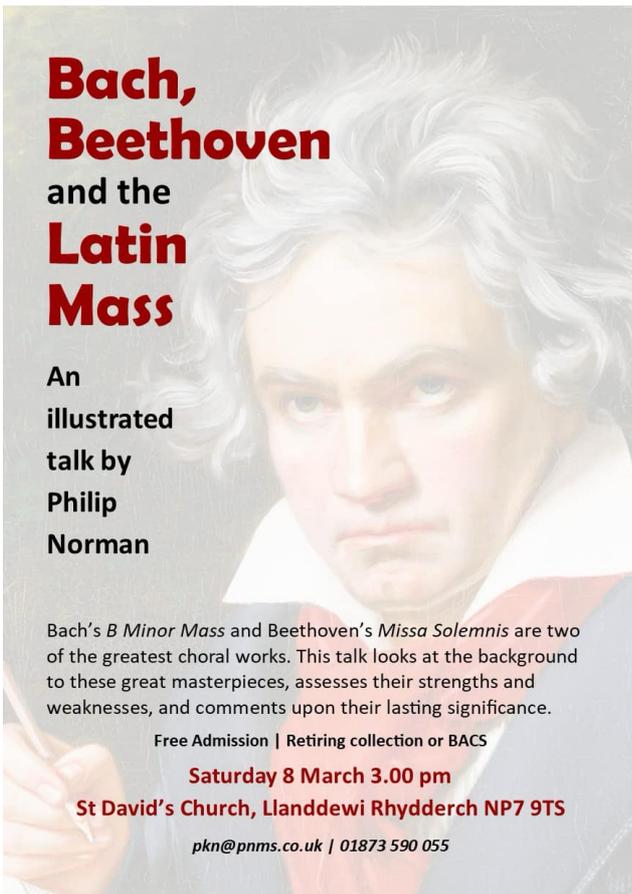
**LLANGATTOCK LINGOED**  
**LIVING CHURCHYARDS PROJECT 2025**

At first glance a churchyard may seem merely a piece of land surrounding a church building, given a different status from any other garden, just because of its role as a burial ground. Yet not only does a churchyard have a significant role in terms of local biodiversity and social history but it is a vital oasis for those species that dwell in these special places. In fact churchyards are havens for many species of flora and fauna – a very important part of our natural heritage, every bit as historic as the churches themselves. It could be said that, in many cases, the churchyard could actually predate the church, as many yew trees found in churchyards are often much older than originally thought.

Given the historical and social importance of St. Cadoc's church, as well as the village and its surrounding area, plus the fact that it is a key destination on the Offa's Dyke Path, we would like to set up a Living Churchyards Project for its churchyard and the surrounding church land. This, we believe, with careful and consistent management, could create a key sanctuary and eco-system for a wide range of wild flowers, plants, lichen, mosses and grasses, many of which are in rapid decline. In turn this would help a diverse variety of insects, birds, bats and reptiles to thrive in these areas.

So we are looking for **Volunteers**, of all ages, who would be happy to commit some of their time, skills and expertise to this Project, with the aim of achieving this long-term goal and creating a beautiful and reflective space for all the local community and our many visitors to enjoy.

If you want to join in, or can help out in any way, an initial get-together is planned at the Hunters Moon pub on **Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 6.30 p.m.** Hopefully we'll see you there. (If you are interested but can't make that date, please email [carolynfarr78@gmail.com](mailto:carolynfarr78@gmail.com).)



**Bach,  
Beethoven  
and the  
Latin  
Mass**

An  
illustrated  
talk by  
**Philip  
Norman**

Bach's *B Minor Mass* and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* are two of the greatest choral works. This talk looks at the background to these great masterpieces, assesses their strengths and weaknesses, and comments upon their lasting significance.

Free Admission | Retiring collection or BACS

**Saturday 8 March 3.00 pm**  
**St David's Church, Llanddewi Rhydderch NP7 9TS**

[pkn@pnms.co.uk](mailto:pkn@pnms.co.uk) | 01873 590 055

On Saturday 8th March, Philip Norman will be giving another interesting talk, this time on Bach, Beethoven and the Latin Mass. This will be at St David's, Llanddewi Rhydderch at 3pm. There will be no charge.

## **My Last Word....as Guest Editor**

March is a month rich with Christian celebrations, each with its unique significance. These celebrations reflect the diverse and rich traditions of Christianity.

### **SHROVE TUESDAY – 4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2025**

Shrove Tuesday, also known as Pancake Day or Fat Tuesday, is the day before Ash Wednesday, marking the beginning of Lent in Western Christian churches. The term "Shrove" comes from the word "shrive," meaning to confess and receive absolution. Historically, it was a day for Christians to confess their sins and prepare for Lent.

The day is associated with various traditions, particularly the consumption of rich foods like pancakes. This practice originated from the need to use up ingredients such as eggs, sugar, and fat, which were traditionally given up during Lent. In many countries, Shrove Tuesday is celebrated with pancake races and other festivities.

In some places, Shrove Tuesday has evolved into a carnival-like celebration, with parades and parties. For example, in New Orleans, it is known as Mardi Gras, which means "Fat Tuesday" in French.

Overall, Shrove Tuesday is a day of feasting and celebration before the solemnity of Lent begins.

### **LENT**

Lent is a period of 40 days (excluding Sundays) leading up to Easter in the Christian calendar. It begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter Sunday. During Lent, Christians in the UK and around the world prepare for Easter by observing a time of fasting, repentance, and spiritual discipline.

The purpose of Lent is to reflect on Jesus Christ's sacrifice and his 40 days of fasting in the desert. Many people choose to give up certain luxuries or habits, such as sweets, social media, or other indulgences, as a form of self-discipline and to grow closer to God.

In addition to fasting, Lent is also a time for prayer, charity, and self-examination. Churches often hold special services and events, such as Ash Wednesday services where ashes are placed on the forehead in the shape of a cross, symbolizing repentance.

Overall, Lent is a meaningful period for Christians to prepare their hearts and minds for the celebration of Easter.

## **MOTHERING SUNDAY – 30<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2025**

Mothering Sunday, also known as Mother's Day in the UK, has a rich history that dates back to the Middle Ages. It is celebrated on the fourth Sunday in Lent, which is also known as Laetare Sunday or Mid-Lent Sunday.

Originally, Mothering Sunday was a day to honour the "mother church," the church where one was baptized. People would return to their mother church for a special service. This tradition was known as "going a-mothering". Over time, the day evolved to honour not just the church, but also mothers themselves.

In the early 20th century, Constance Adelaide Smith revived the observance of Mothering Sunday to honour Mother Church, mothers of earthly homes, the Virgin Mary, and Mother Nature.

Today, Mothering Sunday is a secular celebration of mothers and motherhood in the UK, Ireland, and some Commonwealth countries. It is a day to come together and give thanks to all mothers, past, present and future.

**Reminder – The clocks will go forward at 2.00am Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March.**

### **Other celebrations:**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> March – St David's Day**

*St David's Day, celebrated on 1st March, honours the patron saint of Wales, Saint David. It is a cultural and religious celebration marked by parades, wearing daffodils and leeks, and various festivities to commemorate Welsh heritage and Saint David's contributions.*

#### **10<sup>th</sup> March – Commonwealth Day**

*Commonwealth Day is a day celebrated to honour the unity and diversity of the Commonwealth nations.*

#### **17<sup>th</sup> March – St Patrick's Day**

*Is a cultural and religious day celebrating the patron saint of Ireland, Saint Patrick, and the arrival of Christianity in Ireland.*

#### **19<sup>th</sup> March – St Joseph's Day**

*Is a feast that honours St Joseph, the husband of the Virgin Mary and the earthly father of Jesus and celebrates his role as a model of fatherhood, a protector and provider.*

## **25<sup>th</sup> March – Annunciation Day**

*Is a feast day commemorating the angel Gabriel's announcement to the Virgin Mary that she would conceive and give birth to Jesus, marking the beginning of Jesus' incarnation in the womb of Mary.*

## **20<sup>th</sup> March – Spring Begins**

*Spring Begins, marking the start of the spring season. It is a time when the days start to get longer, and nature begins to awaken with blooming flowers and warmer temperatures.*

## **A Church Magazine – what is it?**

The church magazine offers numerous benefits to our local community. It serves as a vital communication tool, keeping everyone informed about upcoming services, events, and important announcements. For instance, this magazine provides details about services, celebration of Saints' Days and local events this month, ensuring that all community members are aware and can participate. Our TNT is more than just a publication, it is a reflection of our communities, our stories, our achievements, our people and the spirit of togetherness. It keeps us connected, informed and inspired.

The magazine fosters a sense of community by sharing news and updates from the four churches, such, in last month's, the annual draw for Llanvetherine Church, the Carol Services at Llanvapley & Penrhos and the delightful Christingle at St. Teilo's. These stories highlight the efforts and achievements of the community, creating a sense of pride and belonging.

Moreover, the magazine promotes community initiatives like the Eco Church project and the RSPB Big Garden Watch, encouraging environmentally conscious practices and collective action. By providing information and updates on these initiatives, the magazine helps the communities stay engaged and work together towards common goals.

### **Why Contribute?**

#### **1. Share your stories:**

Every member of our parish has a unique story to tell. Whether it is a personal experience, a family tradition, or a memorable event, your stories can inspire and connect us all.

#### **2. Showcase Your Talents:**

Do you have a knack for writing, photography, or artwork? This is the perfect platform to showcase your talents and share your creativity with the community.

#### **3. Stay Informed and Engaged:**

By contributing to the magazine, you help to keep everyone informed about upcoming services, events, and important announcements. Your contributions make the magazine a valuable resource to all.

#### **4. Build a Stronger Community:**

When we share our experiences and talents, we strengthen the bonds within the parishes. Your involvement helps create a sense of pride and belonging for everyone.

## **How to Get Involved:**

### **1. Submit articles and photos:**

We welcome articles, photos, stories, and artwork from all community members. Whether it's a short piece or a longer feature, your contributions are valuable.

### **2. Join the Team:**

If you enjoy writing, editing or distributing the magazine, consider joining our volunteer team. Your efforts will help ensure the magazine's success.

Together we can make our parish magazine a true reflection of our community's spirit and diversity. I encourage each of you to take part and share your unique voice. Let's celebrate our parishes and each other through the pages of our magazine.

## **HOT OFF THE PRESS!!!**

Just as we were going to print, we just received this letter from Gwent Wildlife Trust as it had been sent to the wrong person in error. Despite the delay, we are eager to follow up on the important findings regarding Grassland Fungi in our churchyards.

### **Letter received from Gwent Wildlife Trust**

#### **Churchyard Grassland Fungi Surveys**

We were visiting churchyards across Gwent last autumn, looking for Grassland Fungi, as churchyards are great sites for these important, beautiful, but very fragile communities.

We are only just beginning to understand their role in the ecosystem of grasslands; however it is becoming clear they are particularly important to their health, the wildflowers they support, and in turn all the animals that rely on these.

The Grassland fungi that include a variety of colourful "mushrooms" called Waxcaps, as well as curiously shaped clubs, spindles, corals etc., make themselves known when they fruit in the autumn. The sight of these is increasingly scarce however, as they are very vulnerable to being lost through ploughing, herbicides and use of fertilisers. Once lost they are extremely hard to get back so preserving the important sites is crucial.

We were very pleased to find Waxcaps at 5\* of the 7 churches with very impressive numbers at St. Teilo's Llantilio Crossenny. Their presence is very important and a sure indication that the grassland has been cared for well over many years, which we are grateful to the church community for doing. The number and diversity of species at St. Teilo's was so great that we consider it worthy of being recognised as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS).

There are many associated benefits with being an LWS. We are able to offer wildlife and management advice to LWS owners and managers. Additionally, there are hoped to be grant schemes in the future to help with capital works projects that support the restoration and enhancement of LWS. Furthermore, there are the invites to Landowner Days, and Newsletters that you will receive.

Species lists for the sites where we found grassland fungi are included at the end of the letter for your interest, or any of the individuals/communities associated with the various churches that may be interested. Obviously, we would like the site to retain its value and even be enhanced. Basically, if the current management continued it would be great. The basic principle is:

- No use of fertilisers or herbicides, which is also conducive to the wildflowers flourishing.

- The grassland fungi thrive best and fruit in the autumn when the grass is low, so allowing the grass/wildflowers to grow until August, and then cutting these and removing the arisings, followed by more regular cutting until October, and then allowing the fungi to fruit without cutting is ideal.

Obviously, these are just recommendations, and the management of the land is entirely yours, as there are no restrictions associated with their identification as an LWS. Status as a LWS is purely recognition that your land is one of the best places for wildlife in SE Wales and a cause to be proud.

People I met working in the churchyard at St. Mabli's Church were certainly keen to see our results.

**St. James The Elder, Llanvetherine**

Butter Waxcap
Golden Waxcap

**St. Mabli's, Llanvavpley**

Scarlet Waxcap
Meadow Waxcap
Snowy Waxcap
Golden Waxcap
Apricot Club
Meadow Cora

**St Teilo's Llantilio Crossenny**

Scarlet Waxcap
Pink Waxcap
Golden Waxcap
Meadow Waxcap
Butter Waxcap
Snowy Waxcap
Parrot Waxcap
Apricot Club
Meadow Coral
Golden Spindles

[https://www.plantlife.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Waxcaps\\_GrasslandFungiGuideManagement.pdf](https://www.plantlife.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Waxcaps_GrasslandFungiGuideManagement.pdf)

From the Editor - to be continued, as we will follow up with Gwent Wildlife Trust (GWT) to discuss their findings and explore potential conservation efforts for the Grassland Fungi. We plan to collaborate with GWT to monitor the health of these ecosystems and implement measures to protect them. Updates on our progress and any new discoveries will be shared in future editions of this magazine to keep our community informed and engaged.