

# St. Dyfnog's Church Newsletter.

January 2010

Llanrhaeadr.

From the Vicar

Epiphany 2010

**A Happy and Peaceful New Year** - What are we going to do about New Year resolutions? Perhaps we might all be wise to start in a small way and do it for a week, and then for a month, and then - well who knows!

As we look ahead into the coming year, we do not know what lies ahead. Like the Wise Men, led by a star, we do not know where we will all end up - but God does know.

So, for 2010 I suggest we all travel with Christ and then look ahead with confidence.

At Epiphany we all probably think of the visit of the three Wise Men to Jesus, however what if they had been three wise women!

A parishioner suggests things may have been a little different!

Three Wise Women would have: -

Asked the way and got there on time.

Helped to deliver the Baby.

Cleaned the stable.

Cooked a casserole.

Brought practical presents.

And there would have been Peace on Earth.

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However, the meaning of Epiphany is "manifestation" and it is a time in the church year to celebrate the manifestation by God of himself to the world in Jesus.

The challenge for us is to be a part of God's manifestation - this is something of what being a Christian really means - showing the love of God to the world around us by living in the way of Christ in our own lives.

**Michael**

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you."

(Isaiah Ch 60 v 1)

En Vacances

For many years now we have spent several weeks in early summer in the Cevennes, the hilly, wooded area in the Languedoc in southern France first brought to the attention of English speakers by Robert Louis Stevenson in his 'Travels with a Donkey'. Stevenson is still a notable figure in the area and it is possible to take guided walking tours-complete with a donkey - along 'Route Stevenson'.

Among other places, our own explorations have taken us to the Musee du Desert at Mas Soubeyran, a remote complex of ancient buildings and small enclosed fields where the Protestant heroes of the C17 and C18 wars of religion, the 'Camisards', are commemorated in a fascinating and moving museum and where thousands of Protestant worshippers converge every September for a weekend of special services. We have also been to the walled town of Aigues Mortes on the edge of the Camargue, where the Tour Constance, visible for many miles across the flat marshland, is named in memory of one of the Protestant prisoners and martyrs held there at the same period.

From our base by the Gardon river, we often visit the busy nearby market town of Anduze, known as the 'Porte des Cevennes', and noted for its distinctive pottery vases and garden pots of all sizes. Sitting with a coffee or beer and watching the passing parade of visitors and locals, and the truly amazing French driving and parking techniques, is a source of huge enjoyment! On Sundays we often attend morning service at 'l'eglise methodiste evangelique d'Anduze', a small church just off the town centre which attracts a congregation of perhaps 70 every week, with a wide age-range from babies to very senior citizens. We are always made very welcome and indeed the 'meeting and greeting' between members of the congregation before the service is a great experience, with the universal triple kisses or handshakes, as appropriate, and much chatter. There is a real sense of fellowship.

On a 'normal' Sunday, the children stay for the first part of the service, when the singing is often led by a small choir accompanied by a guitar, and the words of a hymn may be projected, rather unevenly, onto the wall. Later hymns are accompanied by a harmonium, played by one of two elderly ladies with- it must be said- limited musical ability. If Pascal, the pastor, has noticed us in the congregation, he will announce the hymn numbers in English as well as French! Some of the tunes are familiar to us, others not, but all are sung with enthusiasm. After the children-from toddlers to teens- have been shepherded away, the service continues with the usual array of notices, reflecting an active church life of youth groups, bible study, and prayer meetings as well as various social occasions. Then readings, hymns, prayers and - the sermon. This is 25 minutes of traditional exposition of a text from one of the readings, often quite academic in tone. Sometimes it involves detailed explanation of the implications of different translations from the original Greek or Hebrew. A stringent test of ones powers of concentration as well as of French - and theological- vocabulary! (Pascal sometimes records his sermons for the use of members of the congregation who are house-bound)

The concluding extempore prayers include an opportunity for members of the congregation to make their individual contribution of petitions, praise or thanksgiving, then there is a final hymn and it's out into the sunshine, with more greetings and gossip before we all disperse, in many cases for the family Sunday lunch in a restaurant which is a French tradition still very much alive. This last summer we decided to take our visiting daughter to a restaurant in the market place which for many years has offered the same two menus at extraordinarily reasonable prices- now 7 euros for 5 courses or 9 euros for 7! (At the moment the euro is almost equivalent to the pound)

This restaurant is so popular that a Sunday midday they will accept no reservations after 12-15, so we fairly sprinted along the narrow lane from the church to make it on time! For those interested, for £9 you get 1 a plate of charcuterie, 2 terrine-help yourself from a large dish left on the table, 3 omelette aux fines herbes- one omelette, bigger or smaller depending on the size of your party, 4 choice of chicken, steak hache(hamburger), sausage or merguez (spicy N.African sausage) 5and6 served at the same time chips and green salad, 7 choice of ice-cream, fresh fruit or a portion of Camembert.

Unlimited fresh bread and iced water is included, of course, and there's a reasonable vin de table at a reasonable price. Service is fast and friendly and one visit is enough to explain its popularity.

People sometimes wonder why we continue to revisit the same place for our holidays year after year; I hope this initial account of some of the aspects which have become so familiar and well-beloved to us over time will explain why.

Ted and Anne Jones.

## **Christmas Fair**

The Christmas Fair was very well attended, stalls selling their products rapidly, the Produce Stall sold out completely, not a crumb left! An excellent raffle was organised as usual by Olive, this year assisted by Avril, over 20 prizes had been generously donated - many thanks to all who contributed to the event giving their time, contributions and bringing along their friends, making the whole affair so enjoyable, and profitable! The final total being just over £ One thousand and two hundred pounds. Well done everybody.

### **Recipe for American Apple Cake**

5 oz. Butter or marg.  
2 large eggs.  
8ozs caster sugar  
1 teasp. Almond essence  
1 teasp. Baking powder  
8 oz. Self raising flour  
12 oz. Bramley apples, peeled cored and sliced  
1oz flaked almonds  
Demerara sugar

#### **Method.**

Grease a loose bottomed round 8" tin.

Put all ingredients except apples almonds and sugar, in a mixing bowl. Mix well till smooth. Spread half the mixture over base of tin.

Spoon prepared apple over and cover with rest of mixture.

Sprinkle with almonds and Demerara sugar

Cook at 160C for about 1 1/2 hours until pale golden brown.

**Enjoy! This also makes a very nice pudding too.**

**Margaret Raba**

*We are always happy to print your favourite recipes- please send them in, they can be left, with any other contributions, in the Choir vestry for collection. Thank you - S.vdB.*

### **Mothers' Union**

The December meeting was held at the home of Poppy Webster. It was planned to be a light-hearted afternoon and the speaker certainly fulfilled that wish. He was our old friend, ex-schoolmaster Islwyn Parry, joining us for the fifth time. As usual he was brimming over with amusing anecdotes and with the comical things children say.

He was warmly thanked by Heather Roberts.

There followed a splendid tea provided by several members, along with seasonal drinks and afterwards followed an exchange of gifts among all there.

Poppy was thanked and further thanks were expressed to Olive Panter for her generosity through the year in providing raffle prizes. She was presented with a home-made cake.

**Mbale - Uganda**

Some of you will have seen the News in the Daily Post in mid-December that the new First Minister, Carwyn Jones, has announced a three year agreement, under the United Nations programme, to help the Mbale area of Uganda.

This should have rung bells with M.U. members, for our Diocese is linked with the Mothers' Union in Mbale in the Wave of Prayer, observed by members world wide during five days in July every year.

It seems that coffee is the region's biggest export, but if the temperature should rise by just 2 degrees centigrade, they will be unable to grow their crops. One project will work under Fair Trade to run a tree-nursery, providing the shade necessary to lower the temperature for the coffee plants of 6,000 farmers while absorbing the carbon from the atmosphere.

Some years ago you may remember that I wrote in the Newsletter some time ago of the visit to our diocese in 1978 by Mrs Yemima Wasikye, the wife of the Bishop of Mbale. He tragically was murdered, along with a coach load of church members by marauding soldiers of Idi Amin, their bodies being thrown into the Nile. We are still in touch with Yemima who is in failing health sadly.

Helen Jenkin Jones

#### War time food.

The Ministry of Food was established five days after the outbreak of war on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1939 and rationing began the following January. Lord Woolton was appointed Minister of Food. He was the chairman of Lewis's store in Liverpool, was a qualified scientist with experience of WW1 supply distribution. He was a gifted communicator. He made broadcasts about food regularly and got excellent leaflets published on how to make the best meals from the rations and use available food, such as vegetables, herrings, oatmeal, dried eggs. Large posters urged everyone to Dig for Victory on new allotments. Wild food should be collected and berries preserved. U-boats attacked shipping but Britain struggled on till American Lend-lease arrived with spam and dried eggs in May 1941. Potato Pete had his own recipe book and carrots made you see better in the dark, to beat the blackout. "The Manual of Nutrition" and "The ABC of Cookery" appeared in 1945. Children were issued with free orange juice or rose-hip syrup and cod liver oil (I issued mine at bath-time- it was easier to clean up the bath!) Urban workers could buy cheap meals in British Restaurants, (have you ever forgotten the smell?) Churchill banned the name "Communal Feeding Centres.

**Don't try this one!!**

Bread and Marmalade Pudding.

4oz breadcrumbs/1 pint milk/3-4 tablespoons marmalade

Place half the crumbs in 1 1/2 pt, pie dish. Cover with milk, marmalade, add rest of crumbs. Bake in moderate oven for 1 1/2 hrs. (Min. of Food Nov.'45)

Rationing did not finally end till 1954. In some ways catering became more difficult in those years, as Lease/lend imports were no longer available and peacetime production had to gear into action. Memories of whalemeat or snoek faded as tins of cat food appeared! Bread rationing was highly unpopular.

### Letter of recommendation.

1. Trevor Adams, my assistant programmer, can always be found
2. hard at work in his cubicle. Trevor works independently, without
3. wasting company time talking to colleagues. Trevor never
4. thinks twice about assisting fellow employees, and he always
5. finishes given assignments on time. Often he takes extended
6. measures to complete his work, sometime skipping coffee
7. breaks. Trevor is a dedicated individual who has absolutely no
8. vanity in spite of his high accomplishments and profound
9. knowledge in his field. I firmly believe that Trevor can be
10. classed as a high-calibre employee, hence the type that cannot be
11. dispensed with. Consequently, I truly recommend that Trevor be
12. promoted to executive management, and a proposal will be
13. executed as soon as possible.

Addendum:

Trevor was standing and looking over my shoulder while I wrote this report.  
Kindly re-read only the odd numbered lines.

### Inappropriate Sentences

It is not only children who write entirely inappropriate sentences, sometimes their parents are equally careless, with amusing results: -

"John has been home because my wife has had twins. I can assure you that it will not happen again."

"Dylan has not been to school because he could not go. Dr. Jones says it would be better for him to stay at home until he has been. When he has been he can come back"

"I do not want Rhodri to take his clothes off for PE. He has had the runs, so is it alright if he does it in his running shorts"

### Some well-known phrases - but who first wrote them?

One fell swoop - Milk of human kindness - Vanish into thin air - To the manner born - more in sorrow than in anger - budge an inch - Play fast and loose- to be cruel to be kind - to be in a pickle - tower of strength - down the primrose path - salad days - cold comfort - to beggar description - in my mind's eye - **Shakespeare, 400 years ago, still fresh to-day!**

*Another Limerick from Maureen*

*I wake up each morning and dust off my wits, take up the paper and read the obits, if my name is not mentioned, I know I'm not dead, so I have a good breakfast and go back to bed!*

This story took place over the Christmas/New year's holiday break. Lauren was a 19 years old and in college.

It was the Saturday before New Year and it was about 1.00pm in the afternoon, and Lauren was driving to visit a friend, when an UNMARKED police car pulled up behind her and put its lights on. Lauren's parents have 4 children (of various ages) and have always told them never to pull over for an unmarked car on the side of the road, but rather wait until they get to a service station, etc.

So Lauren remembered her parents' advice, and telephoned 112 from her mobile phone.

This connected her to the police dispatcher she told the dispatcher that there was an unmarked police car with flashing blue light on his rooftop behind her and that she would pull over right away but wait until they got to a service station or busy area.

The dispatcher checked to see if there was a police car where she was and there wasn't and he told her to keep driving, remain calm that he had back - up on the way.

Ten minutes later 4 police cars surrounded her and the unmarked car behind her. One policeman went to her side and the others surrounded the car behind. They pulled the guy from the car and tackled him to the ground..... The man was a convicted rapist and wanted for other crimes.

This e-mail was sent to me, and has apparently been verified by the Dorset Police. Certainly the 112 works there from mobiles, and presumably works in other areas - has anybody heard of anything like this? Apparently you are under no obligation to stop for an un-marked police car - is this a fact?

### **Can you believe it!**

According to one school of medical opinion in the nineteenth century, plunging children into cold water cured them of convulsions, coughs, inflammation of the ears, navel and mouth, rickets, pimples and scabs, suppression of urine, vomiting and want of sleep.

Bathing in cold water was also recommended for a wide range of adult afflictions. It was suggested that 'in winter, snow may be mixed with water. With weaklings, warm water may be used at the beginning, then by and by, colder and lastly quite cold water'

Extended cover.

'the most interesting 10 years of your life could start now', promised Northern Rock Building Society in a circular addressed to "R.M. de Berenguer, deceased", and sent to the administrator of the estate.

Drinking and driving made easy.

A patrol car was patrolling the M1 late one evening, when the officers saw a Rolls Royce parked on the hard shoulder, with a man slumped against it on the far side.

They pulled over and asked the man if he had been drinking. When he admitted that he had, they immediately breathalysed him and found him well over the limit. After some disagreement as to which officer should drive the Rolls Royce back to the station, one of them went across to the driver's seat - only to find that sitting patiently inside was the chauffeur.

## Gift Aid & Parish Giving

The 2009 Parish Financial Year came to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> December, and our treasurer, Mr Philip Williams is completing his Annual Accounts.

Already we are facing a large increase in our Parish Share of funding the work and mission of the church within our diocese and parish for 2010 and so we will all need to rise to the challenge by asking ourselves if we are giving prayerfully and sacrificially, or just *carefully*.

I am well aware that the issue of giving is a sensitive one, but our use of money must always be a true measure of the depth of our spirituality.

The one single, most reliable, most accurate practical measure of our spiritual lives, how we stand before God, is our use of money.

Sixteen of the thirty eight parables of Jesus were concerned with managing money and our possessions.

Some more thought provoking facts - the Bible has 500 verses on prayer - less than 500 on faith - but more than 2000 on money and possessions!

Money is not " private " business, it is everyone's daily business and must always be viewed in the light of the gospel.

It is, of course, necessary and something we should enjoy and yet not lose sight of the good we can do with it, if managed properly.

However, how we manage and use our money remains the best litmus test of our spiritual lives.

At the close of 2009 we no longer have a Church Fabric Fund as this has been spent on funding our work and mission as a parish. This means that we are living beyond our means and so facing our own " credit crunch. " Clearly we cannot continue to fund our work and mission in this way, and quite simply, to use a current expression, we will all have to " up our game " where possible.

Whilst I cannot prescribe individual levels of giving, perhaps I can suggest we all review our giving, preferably weekly and via Gift Aid Envelopes, and seriously give some thought to the real value of the £1 coin these days - what does it say about our calling as Christians, that Jesus gave everything he had for you and me, and finally what is the work, life and mission of St Dyfnog's worth to you.

Please think carefully about taking a set of weekly envelopes from Mr Reg Fardoe our Gift Aid Secretary and if you would like to talk any of these issues over then I will do my best to help.

**Michael**

## **Village Carol Concert 2009 - Carols for Cancer**

On Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December the Llanrhaeadr Sports and Recreation Committee hosted an evening of seasonal readings, songs by the children of Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch and carols, at St Dyfnog's.

The church was full for the event and provided an opportunity for the village family to be together.

Committee members organised refreshments and during the evening Andrea spoke of her work at a hospice which offered support for people dealing with cancer. A collection was made for the hospice and its work.

### **Young at Heart**

Do you believe in miracles?  
In magic? In dreams come true?  
Do you believe in fairy tales?  
The way you used to do?  
Do you marvel at the rainbow?  
As it lights the distant hill?  
When you hear the children singing  
Do your eyes begin to fill?

Do you search for hope and beauty?  
For gifts, of peace and joy?  
Is there a corner of your soul?  
The world just can't destroy?  
Do you cherish all your blessings?  
And count them every day?  
Then youth will live within your heart!  
Don't let it slip away.

B. Sellars  
The Farm  
Old Green Lane  
Greenmount  
Bury, Lancashire

