

# St. Dyfnog's Church, Newsletter.

January 2012.

Manrhaeadr.

**From the Vicar**

**Epiphany 2012**

Already we are in the second week of a new year with Christmas behind us and a sense of excitement about what this year will mean for each of us, for our church and for our local community.

The " three wise men " or " magi, have made their visit to the stable, after a long and at times perhaps discouraging journey.

Yet it was a journey that was so worthwhile as they had found a God who cared so much for the world that he had come to dwell among his people.

They left with a new sense of hope and confidence to return to their everyday lives - a good lesson for us all at the beginning of a new year.

So, for 2012 I suggest we all travel with Christ and then look ahead with confidence.

**Michael**

## **The Christmas Fair.**

On the first Saturday in December the Christmas Fair was held, an excellent turn out of friends and parishioners made it a very joyful occasion. Helen's stall was full of exciting Christmas gifts, and was soon surrounded by happy shoppers! Toys, plants, crafts, produce and books sold well. Olive, Queen of the Raffle, had, as ever, managed to collect a table full of wonderful prizes, and with the help of Avril, soon attracted customers. Roz and Diane ran an interesting bottle game, and seemed to have many people trying their luck. The new coffee urn was put to good use reviving buyers, before they set out on a second spending spree! The final total was £1000 - an excellent result, and reward for all the hard work that went into the preparation.

## **Carols at the Vicarage**

We spent a lively evening at the Vicarage, singing carols, listening to the performers all encouraged by Stan, who has many years of doing this to his credit. Who can forget his rendering of The Floral Dance, without which Christmas would not be complete. Thanks also to Helen who accompanied everybody, in her usual accomplished style. Thanks also must go to the makers of the Shepherds Pies, they were delicious. And to Jane for master minding the whole event with her usual good humour and efficiency, who also managed, as ever, to have all their decorations up, giving us a real feel of Christmas.

Many many thanks Mike and Jane for welcoming us into your home for the start of the festive season.

**SvdB.**

## Pet Rules.

*To be posted VERY LOW on the refrigerator door - nose height.*

Dear Dogs and Cats,

The dishes with the paw print are yours and contain your food. The other dishes are mine and contain my food. Please note, placing a paw print in the middle of my plate and food does not stake a claim for it becoming your food and dish, nor do I find that aesthetically pleasing in the slightest.

The staircase was not designed by NASSA and is not a racetrack. Beating me to the bottom is not the object. Tripping me doesn't help because I fall faster than you can run.

I cannot buy anything bigger than a king sized bed. I am very sorry about this. Do not think I will continue sleeping on the couch to ensure your comfort. Dogs and cats can actually curl up in a ball when they sleep. It is not necessary to sleep perpendicular to each other to the fullest extent possible. I also know that sticking tails straight out and having tongues hanging out the other end to maximise space is nothing but sarcasm.

For the last time, there is not a secret exit from the bathroom. If by some miracle I beat you there and manage to get the door shut, it is not necessary to claw, whine, meow, try to turn the knob or get your paw under the edge and try to pull the door open. I must exit through the same door as I entered. Also, I have been using the bathroom for years - canine or feline attendance is not required.

The proper order is kiss me, then go smell the other dog or cat's bottom. I cannot stress this enough!

To pacify you, my dear pets, I have posted the following message on our front door:

To All Non-Pet Owners Who Visit & Like to Complain About Our Pets:

- 1.They live here. You don't.
- 2.If you don't want their hair on your clothes, stay off the furniture. (That's why they call it "fur"niture.)
- 3.I like my pets a lot better than I like most people.
- 4.To you, it's an animal. To me, he/she is an adopted son/daughter who is short, hairy, walks on all fours and doesn't speak clearly.

contd.

Remember: In many ways, dogs and cats are better than children because they: -

1. Eat less.
2. Don't ask for money all the time.
3. Are easier to train.
4. Normally come when called.
5. Never ask to drive the car.
6. Don't hang out with drug-using friends.
7. Don't smoke or drink.
8. Don't have to buy the latest fashions.
9. Don't want to wear your clothes.
10. Don't need a small fortune for university / college.

And finally,

11. If they get pregnant, you can sell their children.

### **The Mothers' Union Christmas Meeting**

The members met as usual in Dorlan and after partaking of nibbles and Bucks Fizz settled down to answering a Christmas Quiz. This was won jointly by June Hughes and Pamela Roberts.

After tea, the Branch Leader read a story of Baboushka, the Russian lady who, having been too busy to join the Three Wise Men, spends her life trying to find the Christ Child, leaving her gifts as she goes by.

The afternoon ended with an exchange of Christmas gifts., and the singing of 'Away in a Manger'. The hostesses were Glenys, Poppy, Diane and Roz.

### **Snippets about January**

It was Julius Caesar who reformed the Roman calendar and created the new month in the depths of winter. He named it after the god Janus, the god of beginnings, depicted with two faces, one looking forward, one back. Busts of him were placed over doors to keep out evil.

The first Monday after January 6<sup>th</sup>, was called Plough Monday, because it was the day when work began again on the farms and spring ploughing began.

The old tradition is now commemorated on the first Sunday after January 6<sup>th</sup> - known as Plough Sunday, when a plough is often brought into church and blessed, prayers being offered for a good harvest.

Eastern Orthodox Christmas is celebrated in early January. In Russia the children talk at this time of Mama Baboushka and wonder what gift she will bring them. They place their shoes beside the fireplace hoping to find them piled high with toys and good things in the morning. Mama Baboushka will have called, still searching for the Christ Child. H.J.J.

## **St Dyfnog's Well**

As many of you will be aware, the holy well in the woods behind St Dyfnog's Church has fallen into a state of disrepair. A group of Llanrhaeadr villagers and other interested parties has formed and has been meeting over the last four or five months to work out ways to halt the decline, and to conduct a programme of restoration of the well and in particular the slippery path and crumbling bridges leading up to it, to improve access.

The starting point is a Scoping Study, where Cadwyn Clwyd will bring in professionals to assess exactly what needs doing, how it will be done and how much it will cost. This initial study alone will cost £5,000; with a grant from Cadwyn Clwyd and also from Tir Mostyn Wind Farm, we have already achieved £4,000, and will need to raise the rest through our own fundraising.

We are starting with a breakfast/brunch on Saturday February 11<sup>th</sup> from 10.30am to be held in Llanrhaeadr Chapel vestry, and we would love to see as many as possible there to help us preserve this precious piece of our culture and history for future generations, the community and visitors. Please feel free to come along to find out more about the well's history and see photos on display. Thank you.

**Jessie**

## **Altar Frontal**

On Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December we dedicated a new Altar Frontal, Pulpit & Lectern falls, Burse & Veil, which were such a fitting memorial and tribute to the life of Mrs Rita Rowland of Bachymbyd Fawr. The dedication was a time to celebrate and reflect upon a life so special and well lived.

They have been in use throughout the Christmas and Epiphany period, and will be used regularly at times of celebration and when white is our liturgical colour.

Over the past months Judith Mitchell, Fran Kilcoyne & Shirley Vanderbijl, under the direction of Susanne Owen, have worked so hard to produce these beautiful items which will enhance our worship and add to the church building for our visitors.

All made from local Welsh tapestry, and with a Celtic cross motif, they are so fitting for a Welsh country Parish church.

From all of us a huge Thank You to Susanne and her team.

**Michael**

## **Deanery Lent Quiet Day**

A number of us attend these days at St Beuno's quite regularly now, and find them helpful during Advent and Lent each year. Overleaf you will find a booking form, which when completed, I am happy to collate for Canon Peter Wykes.

Please be sure to book in soon as places are limited

**Michael**

## Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd.

Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd is situated two miles from Rhuthun on the Wrexham road. There is a great deal of interesting, often curious, historical information about both church and the community.

St. Cynfarch and t. Mary's church was built of wood and plaster, the floor consisting of flattened earth. It is thought that it was rebuilt in stone at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the original church having been destroyed by Owain Glyndwr.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the great age of church restoration, changes were made to give the building the fine appearance we see to-day.

It is not know exactly how long burials have taken place in the churchyard, but it is possible that these may date back as far as the thirteenth century, Griffith Parry, who died in 1792, had this inscribed on his grave at his own request:

'Praises on tombs are trifles vainly spent,  
A man's good life is his best monument.

There were many other interesting inscriptions, but in the early nineteen sixties graves were removed and broken up, and the ground levelled. No record was kept. This caused some controversy at the time, and in a letter to the Denbighshire Free Press a local historian wrote:

cont.

' the old churchyard contained many old tombstones, each one a paragraph in local history.'

There was a time when the parish clerk would walk ahead of a funeral procession, tolling a small hand-bell. This was partly because of the narrowness of local lanes at the time.

On a more light-hearted note, there is a well authenticated anecdote concerning the church. Many years ago a much respected cleric agreed to take a harvest thanksgiving service. He arrived early and retired to the WC, which was situated close to the church. While there, he lit his pipe and threw the match down the seat. The service got under way and the cleric was on the point of announcing the first hymn when everyone became aware of the smell of burning. When the verger went outside to investigate, he discovered the toilet was engulfed in flames.

In the eighteenth century, and contrary to Christian thinking, the church was dominated by status and class. Following a service the cleric would be first to leave. When he reached the door, the rest of the congregation followed in order of social rank. Firstly there would be members of landed gentry families, and they would be followed by the respectable middle-class and tenant farmers. Finally at the bottom of the hierarchy, there would be working class people, notable farm labourers.

Acrimony would sometimes arise when two squires, who regarded themselves as social equals, vied with each other for the forward position.

## Ewe and Me

Shall I tell you a story about my ewe and my one storey flat. It has a small flat yard only a yard or two square near the town square. So you will see why I only have one ewe. Her name is Rose. She has a fleece the colour of flour and wears a flower on her head. At one time she had a blue tail which blew in the wind, which used to wind her up. She may have been born in May, and that being Spring I would gamble it puts spring into her gambol. She has four legs, two in the fore, and two in the back too. One year when I looked behind her ear I thought she was a male, but a letter in the mail confirmed, as I told you, she is a ewe. I will grass on her and tell you that she ate eight mouthfuls of grass on a date. She also ate a date and a pair of pears.

One week she looked weak and I thought she was going to die, because she had licked the blue dye on her tail. She was well again when I gave her some water from the well. I do not know whether the weather affected her.

In due course, when the dew was on the ground I took her on an outing on a lead with lead in the collar. I was sure she would like to see the sea and the shore. She would whine when we passed the wine shop and meet the butcher selling meat. If she stalled and stopped near a stall, the man would shoo her off with his shoe. We saw his son, in the sun, cutting wood with a saw. I had given her some dough to spend, and she gave me no peace until I let her buy a piece of dough from the bread man as he went by. He also bred moles in his garden. He had moles on his nose and who knows where else.

When we could see the sea she baa-ed at the barred entrance to the quay. We had read about a boy who had a key to the quay from where you could see the red buoy. She shed a tear when I would not let her stand on the three tier stack of chairs kept in a shed so that she could see the sea better. But near the Bank there was a bank on which we stood. I made a check on how much money I had, then went to the Bank to change a cheque. Whilst I was there, signing one of their cheques, I tied her fast, with my tie, to a post outside the Post Office, as the tide was coming in fast. She wanted to hire some steps, but I lifted her higher so that she could wave when she saw the big wave coming. We saw a bird of prey and we decided to pray that it would not peck us.

On the way home, we sat with Miss Muffet who was eating her whey. Rose wanted to buy some, so we rose and went to peer at the pier which was by a shop where we could buy some whey for a sum of money. We had taken a different route home and she tripped on a root, jumped up to look at a calf and hurt her calf. I wound my tie around the wound which I had to tie in a knot. I did not want to tire her, so we sat on a tyre. We could hear the crickets in the grass, and the children playing cricket. I had a coat with a soft nap on which she took a nap.

We saw some lambs gambolling in the warm air, and I asked Rose whether she thought of producing an heir. She blushed bright red. I told her she looked like the Union Jack with her blue tail. She said she was Welsh and would prefer to be a dragon than a flag. She was cross and asked me to flag down a car to take her home.

As it was still light I thought we would go for a light snack or, even to lift her spirits, a tot of spirits. I knew her wounds would heal but she was complaining of a pain in her heel from when she stepped on a pane of glass. Her weight was too much for me to carry her, so we decided to wait for a lift. She and I are a good team, but I knew she would be cross should it teem with rain and ruin her new flower. I got her a club to help her walk towards a club we could see. In

time we got there and ordered some pies made with thyme and served by a maid.

Rose was tired and I knew she would refuse to walk on a road with so much refuse. I decided to hire a taxi from higher up the road. When we arrived home, Rose said she never wanted to go on another outing and she certainly did not want to produce heirs, just so that the butcher with all his airs and graces could have produce to sell in his shop.

She felt she had the right to learn to write, so that she could write a story about me and my one storey flat, and because she was cross with me for telling the tale about her blue tail and the Union Jack. I was not party to this and said "No", because I know, if I gave a party with my friend playing the harp, she would harp on about the noise and write a piece in our local newspaper about her right to peace. I think she is jealous of the Polish man who comes to my flat to polish the furniture, play the harp, sew and.....So I said "No". NH.

## **Financial Information / Gift Day - Ash Wednesday 10.30 St Dyfnog's**

Ash Wednesday falls on 22<sup>nd</sup> February this year and our Parish Treasurer, Phil Williams and myself, will be in church from 10.30 until 12 midday to offer advice on planned giving via the Gift Direct Scheme, and also to receive any one off donations for the life and work of St Dyfnog's.

The morning will conclude with a short Holy Eucharist at 12 o' clock, and we hope you will be able to come along.

**Michael**

**" We're here again, Lord! "**

On the next page I have included a prayer, which was produced some years ago for a publication called, " Year Round, " produced by the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

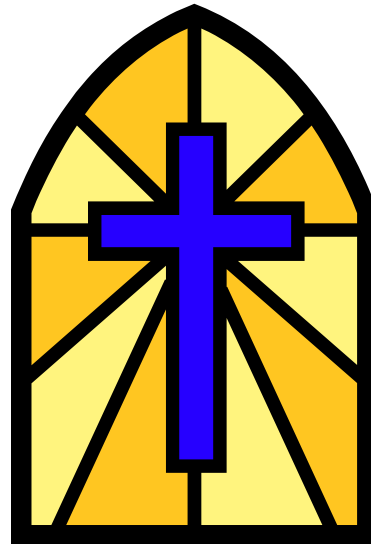
I love its simplicity and honesty about the way it probably encapsulates some of our feelings when we are together before God, as a Church family, Sunday by Sunday. Let me know what you think!

## **Prayer Light Stand**

Sadly the box on the stand was forced open sometime during this past week and a small amount of money taken. Nothing else in the church seems to have been touched. I suppose initially, I was angry about this, but on reflection I felt very sad for the person who felt themselves driven to do this and, if in difficulty, not able to ask us as a church, for some help.

Probably, we should remember the person in our prayers.

Michael



**Deanery of Denbigh Lent Quiet Day  
Thurs. March 1<sup>st</sup>. St. Beuno's 10-4p.m.**

**Led by Bishop Stephen Lowe**

**Cost £20 ( includes coffee, tea and lunch)**

**To book please complete the slip below and send with payment (cheques to Denbigh District Deanery) and s.a.e. for confirmation of place to:-Rev. Canon Peter Wykes, Clattwm, Plas Chambers Rd. Denbigh LL16 5UP**

.....  
Lent Quiet Day March 1<sup>st</sup>

Name .....

Tel .....

E-mail .....

Any special requirements .....