

# Vision

*From the Parish of Casllwchwr & Gorseinon  
Mawrth March 2022 | Rhifyn Issue 010*



Grand plans to transform bulding



Meet our new Bishop



Fond Christmas memories



We are one church meeting in two locations,  
St Catherine in Gorseinon and St David in Loughor.

---

## CONTACT US

### St Catherine's Church

Alexandra Road  
Gorseinon, SA4 4AF  
(01792) 892849  
post@stcath.org.uk

[www.stcath.org.uk](http://www.stcath.org.uk)

## VICAR

### The Reverend Dr Adrian Morgan

adrian@stcath.org.uk

The Vicar takes a day off every Friday, so please be aware that any messages left will not be attended to until the next working day. In the event of an emergency only, please contact a Warden.

## Parish Wardens

Phil Davies 07810 054469  
Dorothy Dancer (01792) 550576

## Assistant Wardens

Rob Samuel (01792) 415223  
Moirira Pritchard 07443 225 856  
Dhan Williams (01792) 699576  
Roddy Lewis 07588 026975

## Book our Facilities

---

Our Facilities, which include a large Hall, several smaller meeting rooms and well equipped modern kitchen, are available for hire throughout the week. All our facilities offer wi-fi connectivity. Check availability at [www.stcath.org.uk](http://www.stcath.org.uk).

## Contributions for the Magazine

---

Anyone wishing to contribute an article for the next edition of *Vision* should contact a member of the Editorial Team:

Sheila New	(01792) 927579	Rob Hulme	(01792) 521666
Heather Culliford	07974396690	Moirira Pritchard	01792 896314
Rob Samuel	(01792) 415223	Barbara Jones	01792 415970

Contributions can also be sent to [vision@stcath.org.uk](mailto:vision@stcath.org.uk)





# Welcome

---

Although the pandemic is far from over and its effects are still keenly felt, not least in the continuing restrictions imposed upon us, this great edition of Vision is evidence of the fact that parish life has not ground to a halt.

In this edition we share news of a new Bishop, following the retirement of John Davies, who had served as Bishop of this Diocese as well as Archbishop of Wales. We also share how, thanks to a generous grant, we have been able to advance the ambitions of the Big Conversation held in 2018 by inviting architect Jeremy Bell, who attended an open evening at St Catherine's in January 2019, to come up with an ambitious scheme that will breathe new life into our ageing building and open them up for more effective community use.

Moira Prichard writes about how, having suffered tragic bereavement, a faith that has grown through volunteering as a Worship Leader has brought her strength and hope in challenging times; we celebrate the arrival of Ben Jones, who is training with us for full time ministry; and share how curate Glynne James received a royal honour at a special presentation held in St Catherine's in Gorseinon.

There were glimmers of normality over Christmas with a fabulous Christingle and Live Nativity, and volunteers from across the parish pulled together

to pack and deliver bags of kindness to hundreds of homes across our community as part of a nationwide initiative called Love Christmas.

We also share how members of the St David's Eco Church team, the first in the Diocese to receive the A Rocha UK silver award, have been working industriously to care for creation, and how a large grant will now enable them to become paperless! The Baby Basics team have also been hard at work, quickly jumping into action to support Afghan refugees and their families.

There are some gripping Recommended Reads; we share how Paul's love for his trade helped him to meet his bride, Abi; and we also remember some much loved members of our Church family, including Mervin Morgan, Dulcie Young, Betty Howells, Rhiannon Jones and Margaret Demery.

I hope you, like me, enjoy looking back at the last few months, and that you will celebrate all that God has been doing through us in Casllwchwr and Gorseinon.

With my love, always,

*Adrian*

# Plans breathe new life into ageing buildings

---

St Catherine's Church has invited an architect to come up with a scheme that will safeguard the future of our building for generations to come.

Jeremy Bell of JBKS architects, a firm that specialises in the redevelopment of Church buildings, is no stranger to the church as he was invited to share some of his portfolio with the congregation at a well attended open meeting held in January 2019.

The meeting followed the Big Conversation in June 2018, during which more than eighty members of our regular worshipping community got together to share their hopes for the future of the church.

“At the Big Conversation, our congregations shared some of the challenges they faced when using the building on a regular basis,” explained the Vicar, Adrian Morgan.

People shared how the main entrance was often dark and unwelcoming; how the heating, lighting and sound systems were in urgent need of attention; that toilet facilities were poor; how there was a need to consider more comfortable and versatile seating options; and accessibility issues for the disabled. People also shared how the space had always been used by community groups, but there was space to develop this even further.

“Parts of the building need urgent attention before it's too late,” Adrian explained.

“We know that we can't ignore the fact that our heating system is on its last legs. People are cold because it frequently lets us down, it's very costly to maintain, it's noisy and has been causing structural problems to the building for years.”

“The lighting too needs to be addressed and the whole church is in need of being rewired.”

“On top of all of that, there is a lot of water ingress because of issues with the roof and parts of the floor are subsiding too. These issues have been mounting up in the background for decades, but now they can't be ignored,” Adrian explained.

“Left unaddressed, they will continue to deteriorate. The challenges and all of the associated costs will escalate and we will eventually have no choice but to close the building. So doing nothing simply isn't an option.”

After securing a major £10,000 grant from the Swansea and Brecon Mission fund, the Parochial Church Council decided to commission architect Jeremy Bell to come up with an exciting solution. The scheme, which aims to respect the historic integrity of the space will address the issues raised at the Big Conversation and enable the church to be used more effectively as a multipurpose community space, open every day of the week.

We will also begin to explore and develop innovative partnerships that will see the space put back at the heart of the community.

“When Jeremy visited us, he made the point that he was a church builder, not a church destroyer,” shared Church Warden, Phil Davies.

“All of his projects manage to maintain their historic integrity — they still look like the stunning church buildings that they always were, except they're more equipped for ministry and mission today.”

The proposed changes to the church building itself are modest. Water ingress would be resolved and the heating, lighting and sound systems would be replaced by stunning alternatives, in keeping with the Grade II listed building.



*Artist impression of new entrance and café space*

*John Ball  
April 21*

The pews would be removed to make way for a new, level floor making the building fully accessible and a new dais would be installed at the front for a nave altar and to allow fully accessible wheelchair access into the Holy Trinity Chapel and sanctuary, which will remain unchanged. Elegant new chairs will provide comfort and versatility as they will be able to be arranged in different ways for different occasions.

A new toilet will be sympathetically installed in a discreet location at the back of the church, a new welcome area and well designed storage solutions will also be installed, and there will also be stunning, mobile screens at the back of the nave that can be moved for bigger services, whilst creating a sense of warmth and intimacy for smaller gatherings.

The current Church Hall would also be refurbished, addressing all of the outstanding issues but also making it a more versatile space that can be used by more than one group at any one time.

The current entrance and toilet facilities would be refurbished, while the stage would make way for a fully functional kitchen and servery, and the large elegant hall space would be retained.

The current coffee room would become a circulation space, with stairs and lift to a new mezzanine floor and separate access to a large meeting room with its own storage room. The current office and kitchen would become comfortable, multi-functional meeting spaces with adjacent storage in the currently dilapidated, old kitchen space.

The second floor, which along with an improved heating system, will make the whole hall much easier to heat, will cover the entirety of the rear end of the hall, extending over the current side rooms and into the space, above the new kitchen, where the stage is currently situated. From the mezzanine level there will be stunning views of the barrel ceiling and into the hall space. At this level, there will be a new office, a space for refreshments and a toilet, as well as three generously proportioned meeting rooms accessible from a landing space.

The pièce de résistance is a stunning new entrance — which is light, bright and inviting — that will link both the church and hall for the very first time. The new space will include spacious and accessible toilet facilities as well as a café space, which will be open every day of the week.



The new space will be a sanctuary for those who are lonely, it will help to build community among people of every generation, and it will offer support to those in need by providing purpose built space for the Food Bank and our other community projects. It will offer a more comfortable and flexible space to the many valued groups that already use the space, whilst also opening up the space so that it can be used by many more groups too.

The church, currently locked and unused for most of the week, and the hall that can currently only realistically be used by one group at a time — whether it be a group of five or fifty people — will become a busy hub for the community, enabling different groups with a variety of needs to meet there alongside one another.

The plans are very much indicative—the beginning of something and not the end by any stretch of the imagination—and will form a basis for an ongoing, creative conversation with the congregation and wider community as soon as restrictions allow.

“These ambitious plans will not be realised overnight,” Adrian explains.

“Whether they are achieved in their entirety or

only in part, there will need to be a great deal of work to raise the funds necessary and to secure possible grants.”

“But we believe in an awesome God who owns the cattle on a thousand hills and we can trust him to provide.”

“Our forebearers who were responsible for building St Catherine’s Church and Hall were not people with small ambitions. The assets they have entrusted to us are the result of their outrageously ambitious plans — which I’m sure some said would never be achieved — their faith and confidence in God to provide, and their hard work and audacious generosity to achieve their ambitions.”

“God is the same yesterday, today and forever, so I don’t see any reason to believe that we should be any the less ambitious about what he is going to do in our own day.”

“There is no doubt a long journey ahead, but together we have a chance to create something amazing for our community and to safeguard our stunning buildings for generations to come. I hope you will share in my excitement and join me on that journey,” Adrian said.



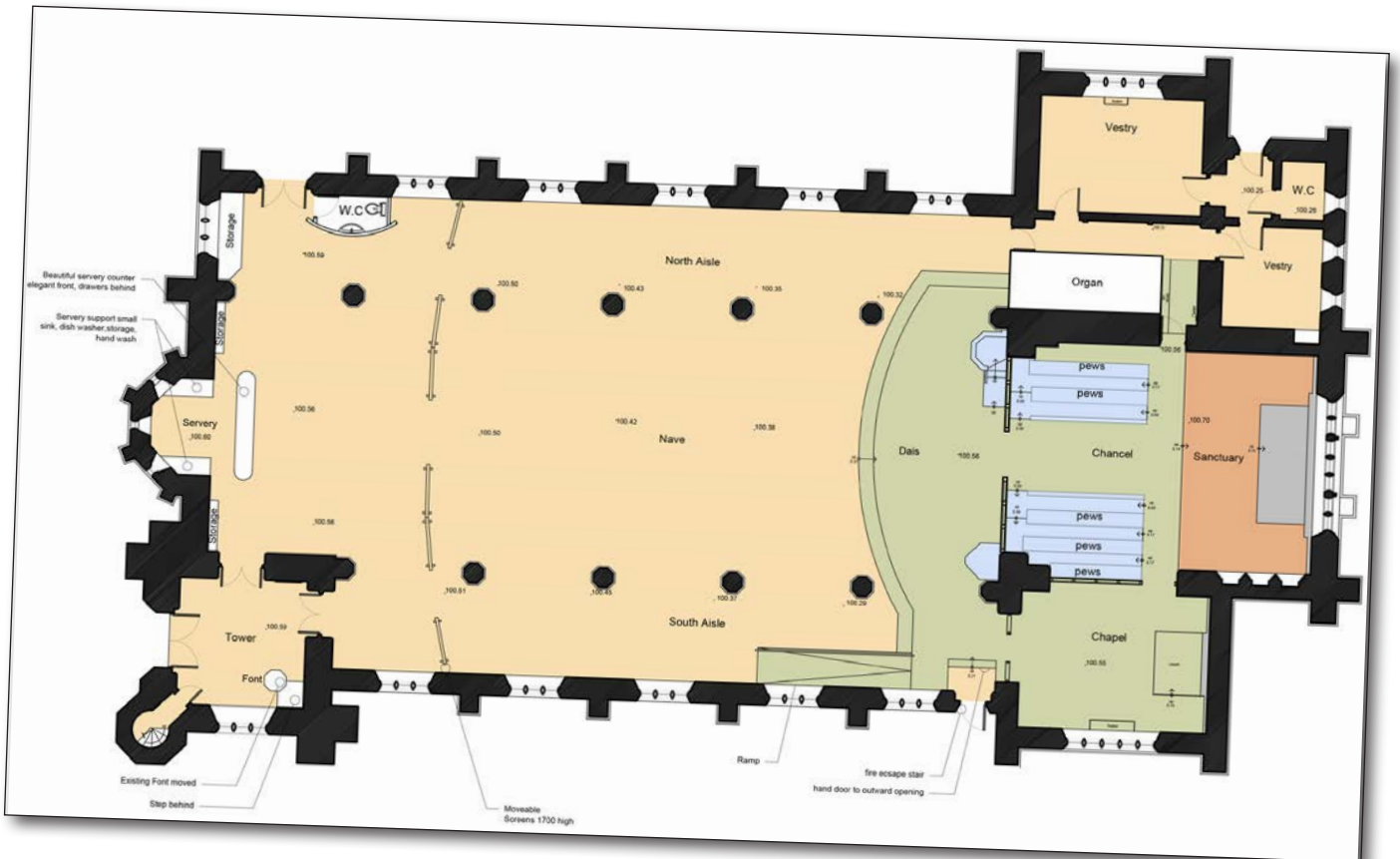
*Architectural drawing of proposed 1st floor plan for the Hall*



*Architectural drawing showing how the new development will link the Church and hall*



Architectural drawing of new entrance and café space



Architectural drawing of proposed floor plan for the Church

# Community rallies to share bags of kindness

---

Love Christmas, is a national initiative which has grown year on year, and one which involves thousands of churches, up and down the country. Christmas is a season for sharing love and kindness and it's a time to offer a fresh message of hope to everyone.

The pandemic has affected every one of us in one way or another, but for some of our neighbours, they are still struggling with isolation, financial distress, poor health, job uncertainty and bereavement. For so many people, putting on a brave face to avoid disclosing their true emotions, is the norm and very often, they hide those emotions from very close family members too. For this reason, the Love Christmas initiative was a perfect way for us in the Parish of Casllwchwr and Gorseinon, to connect with our communities and to show them how much we care!

Our Vicar, Adrian Morgan, has always encouraged his congregations to be at the heart of the community and to display a culture of radical kindness in all that we do.

“Love Christmas was an opportunity, again this year, to put love into action and to bring comfort to our neighbours in the community, by reaching out and sharing bags of kindness with them,” he explained.

Adrian met Nicky Gumbel, the Vicar of Holy Trinity Brompton, London, on Zoom at the beginning of December and pledged our support once again. Very quickly, a team of volunteers emerged to offer their support: church members, family members, friends and people in the community who had no links with the church at all. The project was launched on social media, the planning of the event kicked in, and there was excitement all around!

“When I met with Nicky, he asked me to share with leaders across the UK what the Church here had been able to do, alongside others in the community, to support those in need during the pandemic, including delivering food parcels and prescriptions, as well as helping people to turn their isolation into connection by linking up with phone and shopping

buddies,” Adrian said.

“And thanks to people’s immense generosity, we were also able to make a £15,000 donation to the Food Bank, a blessing which was multiplied many times over - through match funding - to offer £70,000 support to low income families in schools across Swansea. It’s astonishing, but God is in the multiplication business, if only we are faithful.”

“I shared with those on the Zoom call how, encouraged by people’s response last year, we couldn’t wait to get stuck in with Love Christmas again this year.”

Six hundred bags and labels were ordered; Christmas cakes, mince pies, chocolate logs, Chocolate Oranges, sweets, and other Christmas goodies were purchased. Karen, who organised the project, said, “I don’t know what we would have done if we hadn’t been helped by Kelly and Cerian who work at Tesco, Pontarddulais. When I spoke to Kelly, she said, ‘Leave it all to me, and I’ll sort it out for you!’” We are so grateful for all their hard work!

Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr and Gower College Swansea were delighted to be involved in the project too. The students, children and staff collected an astounding number of bags, packed with all the suggested items, and miraculously, additional items were also donated by the school too, which amounted to a further one hundred and fifty bags of goodies becoming available.

Everything was all set for the big packing and delivery event on Saturday 18 December. The church hall was transformed into a packing station; tables and Christmas gifts were organised and a one-way system was in place, so that each group of volunteers, in each one-hour slot, were Covid safe.

As volunteers arrived wearing their Christmas hats, tinsel scarves and Christmas earrings, there was a sense of excitement as people heard the sound of Christmas music playing in the church hall. With lots of joking and laughter, they enjoyed a cuppa, a mince pie and a bowl of marshmallows and enjoyed fellowship outdoors on a very cold morning, before setting off to work to fill their quota of bags inside. One might have been forgiven for forgetting that we





were still well and truly in the middle of a pandemic, but how extraordinary it was that despite this, people were still very eager to serve in this way.

It's a common sight to see our PCSOs walking around the streets of Gorseinon and Loughor and we were delighted that when one passed by on that cold morning, he decided to pop in to see what was going on. He was so impressed by what was happening, that he asked if he could get involved too. He immediately went back to the station, asked another PCSO to get involved and within minutes, a police car turned up and they both filled the car to the brim with bags! We were delighted to have them on board this year and to share the joy of the Love Christmas project with us.

A timetable had been designed to accommodate the volunteers' roles and to keep tabs on the number of bags that would be available at the end of each hour in readiness for delivery. At the end of each session, new volunteers arrived and as they filled their car with the bags, they were given the appropriate street names of homes in the Gorseinon, Penyrheol and Loughor areas, and away they went, to unsuspecting recipients.

A limit of thirty bags was given to each person and they were asked to fill each bag with one of each item, along with an invitation to join us for Christmas and a book called, *Why Christmas* by Nicky Gumbel which people could read, to remind them about the true meaning of Christmas.

It was first thought, that all volunteers would help out on the Saturday morning, but so many people

offered to help, that the timetable had to be extended to 5pm. Many people wanted to pack and deliver; others wanted to pack only; others wanted to deliver only. Whatever time and task people were willing to offer, we were willing to accommodate. It was a truly incredible day!

Love Christmas was the most extraordinary day and one that will be in our memories for a long time! Moira Pritchard, who was involved this year said, "Helping out with this year's Love Christmas was a really special experience, for both the packing and delivering of the bags. For me, it represented the true Christmas experience!"

Dorothy Dancer recalled the morning that she and her husband John set out to deliver the parcels. When she knocked on a door, a lady shouted for her to, "come in." With a little trepidation, she entered; the lady inside was disabled and there was no way she could have answered the door herself. Dorothy told her that she'd brought her a bag of love, for Love Christmas, from her church.

The lady burst out crying, saying, "Is it really for me? Fancy thinking of me!" Dorothy explained.

"It was as much as I could do, to hold back my own tears and I left with a spring in my step, knowing it had made that lady very happy," Dorothy said.

One of our volunteers named Chris, packed and delivered his thirty bags and returned to the church hall to collect even more for yet another delivery session. He emerged from the hall with a skip in his step and beaming from ear to ear said, "I deliver parcels every day of my working life, but packing

and delivering these parcels today and seeing the gratitude and expressions on people's faces when they opened their doors to me, has given me so much satisfaction! I've thoroughly enjoyed myself and can't wait to do it again next year!"

A young teenager named Caitlin had such a great time packing with other volunteers, that she said, "I think I'd like to start coming to this church on Sundays!" How wonderful it is, that a project like Love Christmas, could inspire a young girl to start thinking in this way.

At the end of the day, an astonishing six hundred bags were filled and delivered and the wonderful surprise that more than a hundred and fifty bags of chocolates were left over too.

Phil Davies said, "It reminded me of the story in Matthew's Gospel when Jesus fed the 5,000 and the moment when the disciples picked up the 12 basketsful of food that were left over! What a lovely problem to have!"

With the Live Nativity soon to be held outdoors at St David's Church, it was decided that everything that was left over, would be shared with the crowds of people who turned up, to bless them too!

Many of our neighbours in our communities felt so moved by their experience when they received a bag of kindness, that it resulted in hordes of kind messages being sent by email and posted on social media.

"A few days ago, we received at our door a package

of 'goodies' together with a message for the season. We were both taken aback - what a lovely surprise it was. May we wish you all, in return, a very enjoyable Christmas and New Year," one note read.

Other messages were more poignant. One local resident, suffering from a terminal illness, wrote to share that they had lived near the Church for over half a century, and that this little act of kindness had brought some joy to their family as they face the really difficult challenges ahead.

"I would just like to thank the lady, and the rest of you, for your kind and wonderful gift bag that the lady dropped off last week... I was very surprised and you were all very generous. I have a terminal illness so I can't work anymore and I was very grateful for your gift bag," she said.

Whether you were a volunteer helping to pack or deliver; whether you were a recipient of one of the Love Christmas bags; or you are maybe just hearing about it for the first time, we hope that this story has sparked a sense of joy in your heart. To our neighbours in our communities, we pray that by the giving and sharing of the Love Christmas bags with you, this demonstrates the radical love and kindness we have for you here in the Parish of Casllwchwr and Gorseinon and that this will help to strengthen our connection with you and to let you know that you are loved and that you are not alone, not just at Christmas time, but all year round too!





# Thanks to Heather and Ken



At the end of April 2021, two of our longstanding Church Wardens retired after many years of dedicated service to the church.

Heather Culliford, who had completed a full six year term as the Vicar's Warden, and Ken Sullivan, who served as an Assistant Warden at St Catherine's Church in Gorseinon, retired at the Annual Vestry Meeting.

Paying tribute to them both, Vicar Adrian Morgan praised their commitment to the life and work of the church, and thanked them too for their friendship and support.

"Both Heather and Ken have been remarkable Church Wardens and it's hard to articulate in words how indebted we are to them."

"Heather and Ken have both been hard working, committed and thoroughly dependable—always ready to offer encouragement and support."

Whilst many will be aware of their public, front facing roles on a Sunday morning, their quiet commitment and many hours of hard work and service behind the scenes, for the glory of God, were often unknown and untold.

"Their hard work and dedication has helped to move the church forward and to make the Kingdom of God and the ways of Jesus more visible in our

community," Adrian said.

"But whilst I'm grateful to them for their hard work, what I have appreciated more than anything is their friendship and support."

Paying tribute to them both at a special Eucharist held in May 2021, Adrian encouraged members of the congregation to give thanks for their ministries and presented Heather and Ken with special certificates of recognition for their service from the Archbishop of Wales, John Davies.

As a sign of appreciation from the parish, they were also presented with a specially commissioned print of a pen and ink drawing of Gorseinon, which depicted St Catherine's Church alongside other iconic buildings in the town, produced by Cardiff artist Katherine Jones.

The Annual Vestry meeting saw the formation of the new Parish of Casllwchwr and Gorseinon, bringing together the parishes of Gorseinon and Loughor, and Phil Davies was appointed to serve as Vicar's Warden and Dorothy Dancer as People's Warden for the new parish.

Also appointed to new roles in the parish were Assistant Wardens Rob Samuel, Dhan Williams, Moira Prichard and Roddy Lewis.



# Being a Lay Worship Leader

---



Moira Pritchard, one of our Worship Leaders, shares how her faith has brought her strength and hope in challenging times, has helped her to understand more about being a Christian and to develop the confidence to start sharing the Good News about Jesus with others.

In summer 2020, twelve volunteers worked through a six-week training course to become Worship Leaders, thinking through what makes for good worship; what should be included in an act of worship; and how everything fits together to help a congregation to encounter God.

Whilst many may think that this is the role of the Vicar, it's important to emphasise that good worship should always be the responsibility of a wider team. Why? Not just because there is a shortage of clergy or because they get overworked, but because Worship Leaders bring a range of personality and experience to their role. No one priest, or even two or three, will be able to speak effectively to every member of a congregation in which there are (or ought to be!) young and old, lifelong attendees and new converts, introverts and extroverts, locals and incomers, academic and more practical people. With a varied group of people planning and leading worship, there is wider sympathy and greater reach to the community.

One of those who has been leading worship in the parish for over four years now is Moira Pritchard,

who also serves as one of our Church Wardens.

"I've had a tough couple of years," Moira said.

"Apart from going through the challenges of the pandemic, just like the rest of us, I lost my husband, Doug, in March 2019 and then my son, Alan, in December 2020."

"Loosing Alan was particularly hard as it was totally unexpected. He was young and left behind a wife and two beautiful children."

Moira acknowledged that many people questioned how she could hold onto her faith having gone through such a challenging few years, packed full of grief and trauma.

"The Bible doesn't promise you a trouble free life," Moira insisted.

"But it does promise that God is always right there with you — alongside you, no matter what. It does give you hope too, because we don't grieve without hope. Christians believe that death isn't an ending and that the grave has no hold on us."

"My faith has helped me through the last few years."

Moira has learned a lot about her faith over the last few years, and she's grown as a disciple by stepping out in faith and using the gifts God has given her as a lay worship leader. Investing in her relationship with God in the good times also meant that there were deep reserves of faith on which she could draw in the more challenging times that were ahead of her.

She joined the Lay Worship team in 2018, working with a small group of volunteers in Loughor to plan and lead acts of worship.

"Members of the team each had different roles — leading the service, reading Bible passages or praying, and offering short reflections to help the congregation get to grips with the Bible and to learn how to apply it to their own lives," Moira explained.

After completing her training, Moira was first encouraged to take on a role that she was comfortable with, but it was not long before she was venturing out of her comfort zone and doing other things too.

"Once I completed my training, I was encouraged initially to do what I was comfortable with. My preference was always to lead services as I found it easy! But after gaining my confidence, I slowly started getting to grips with other things too — even sharing reflections!"

For Moira, getting her teeth into a Bible passage and having to think about it for herself has helped her grow in faith and to develop the confidence to share her faith with others.

"I love being a Lay Leader. I have learnt so much!" Moira insisted.

"When you have the role of sharing a reflection, it makes you think, carry out research and dig deeper into the reading to understand the relevance to us today."

"When you are praying, you have to think about the theme or readings and link your prayers to the overall message. It has made me listen more attentively to the readings every time I'm in Church and if I'm not sure about anything will either ask questions of others — the clergy or other team members— or do some delving myself."

One of the things Moira loves most about services led by Lay Worship leaders is the opportunity it gives to experiment, be creative and do something different.

"What I particularly love about being a Lay Worship Leader is the variety we can bring to the services. We have the straightforward reflection on a particular reading but often the theme will generate a wealth of ideas. We have done short sketches where

we each play a role; we have delivered presentations and held discussions."

"Before each service, we hold planning meetings and it's wonderful that all our ideas are heard and discussed," Moira said.

"I remember us getting together to discuss an Advent service," Moira shared with a smile.

"I came up with an idea which initially seemed totally off the wall! I badged it up as Christmas the Prequel. I explained my thought processes and although my idea was 'a little different', the team encouraged me to run with it. I wasn't expecting that!"

"You want me to put it together?" I asked in nothing short of terror!

We all hear the familiar Bible passages from the New Testament about Jesus' birth, but many of them link to prophecies in the Old Testament too. What I wanted to do was help people make those links.

Another service that stands out for Moira is a Christingle service 'with a difference', with Worship Leaders encouraging the congregation to make their own Christingle as the leaders talked them through the various parts of the Christingle and helped them to understand its significance.

"When it came to identifying what each part of the Christingle represented, I got the congregation to construct their own Christingle. To say it was a messy process is putting it mildly, but it was fun."

Worship Leading has also given Moira and the team an opportunity to hone their acting skills for *Open the Book*, a project that involved going into local schools to read and act out some familiar Bible stories.

"We decided to 'test' *Open the Book* on our congregation by getting them to act out the story of Jonah. It was brilliant! We used props and encouraged different people to take on roles for the story."

"Covid has meant that we haven't been able to practise those skills we learned in local schools for a while, but I don't think that the children could beat the enthusiasm we encountered from the congregation — they were amazing!"

Optimistic about the future, and the opportunities being a Worship Leader offer people to learn and grow as disciples of Jesus, Moira is keen to see the team continue to grow.

"Why not give it a try," she insists.

"It may take you out of your comfort zone at first, but I'm sure you'll find it very fulfilling, and you're guaranteed lots of fun."

# One step closer to normality for Christingle and Nativity



**W**e all look forward to family services when Christmas is approaching, and this year, like so many other things affected by Covid-19 infection numbers, the question remained right until the very end – “Could this happen in person this year?”

Last year the answer was a resounding no, but we made the best of things, creating Christingle goodie bags containing ready-made Christingles which were lit in family homes whilst watching an online service. A far cry from the year before when over one hundred children and their families had fun making their own in the church hall, before celebrating together in the church. Whilst Covid didn't allow us to go back to this fantastic celebration, we thankfully were able to meet in person again, albeit with restricted numbers present to allow for social distancing in the church, mask wearing and listening to, rather than singing songs together. And it was so nice!

St Catherine's children's team enjoyed preparing more Christingle goody bags and were on hand to give these out to children as they entered the church. These contained their Christingle orange, creative nativity colouring crafts, a beautiful story book of *The First Christmas*, produced by The Bible Society,

and of course, chocolate! Especially welcome were the First Gorseinon Brownie pack, who most years prepare an entertaining Nativity performance, and whilst scaled back this year, their original Christmas poem recital was a highlight of the evening.

Adrian, the Vicar was on good form, chatting with the children during the service and before explaining the meaning of Christmas, he bravely sang 'Santa Claus is Coming to Town', before explaining that often, for many, a bit like Santa in that song, God is a rather distant figure who is trying to work out whether or not we are worthy of his love and deserving of His gifts. But that isn't the kind of God we meet in the Bible. Jesus enters into the complexity of our human story, coming near to us. Ultimately none of us are perfect, but He loves us no matter what. “That love is a gift,” the Vicar said, “and all we need to do is accept it, but when we do, it just might have an impact on us and change us!” The children's knowledge of what the Christingle Orange represented was impressive, with many hands shooting up to explain the meaning to the congregation. Can you remember yourself?

The Orange represents the world, created by God, and the four cocktail sticks the four corners of the





earth, where God is present everywhere. Whether you prefer munching on raisins or mini jelly tots, the sweets remind us of all the good things God has given us in the world (and even in the midst of a pandemic, there are still so many good things to thank God for). The lit candle that helped transform the building's atmosphere tells us that Jesus is the Light of the World—and at Christmas he stepped into a world of darkness and mess, and His light gives us direction, forgiveness and freedom. The final element of the orange is the red ribbon around the middle, that links the Christmas story to what happened at the first Easter, where Jesus put his money where his mouth was, and actively gave up his own life, literally bleeding for us, so our rebellion against God could be forgiven and forgotten, and if we want it, we get to be not just God's friend, but his precious child.

This year, when the Christingle oranges were lit (whilst families sat in their seats — no congregating in the aisle this year), it wasn't the families that sang the familiar Christingle song, but four enthusiastic Vicars found on YouTube! Adrian wasn't quite brave enough to join in with them on his own though! The Brownies then treated us to an originally written Christmas poem, which was so good we thought we'd share it here:

**C** is for Christmas of wonder & joy! The time to celebrate the birth of a boy.  
**H** is for Herod, they fled through the track. The Emperor was greedy...they must pay their tax!  
**R** is for Regal - it all makes sense, they brought gold and myrrh and frankincense.  
**I** is for Innkeeper 'No room' he said. No vacancies, but they needed a bed!  
**S** is for shepherds in Bethlehem that night. They covered their eyes at the dazzling light.  
**T** is for Together that first Christmas day. All praising the baby, asleep on the hay.  
**M** is for Mary, no crib for a bed. He's laid in a manger, where cattle once fed!  
**A** is for Angels, who sang in the sky. Praising the Lord- for His glory on high.  
**S** is for Saviour it's news of great joy! A King has been born...it's a baby boy.

As the congregation left the service this year, they also had something completely new to look forward to, in the form of a live nativity performance, and chance to sing carols with gusto the following week, as Loughor Town Band and members of

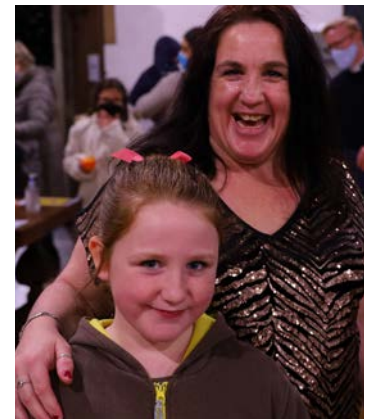


the Casllwchwr & Gorseinon parish put on their very first live, outdoor nativity service, complete with Toby the donkey — at St David’s Church. The weather held up, with sunshine and a fun Sunday afternoon was had by both the adults dressing up and getting into character (retired Vicar Andrew Knight made a very convincing horrible King Herod!), and children arriving as their favourite nativity characters, and joining in with the performance. One child actually came as a star, and did a fab job of physically leading the wise men to where Mary, Joseph and Jesus were in the stable.

Getting to sing Christmas carols together was a real treat (albeit outside, where good ventilation reduced the risk of transmitting the virus), and Loughor Town Band led the large crowd with favourites such as ‘Away in a Manger’ and ‘Oh Little Town of Bethlehem.’ The singing even got some beeps from passing cars!

To make sure no-one got too cold (it was Welsh weather at the end of December, after all!) free hot drinks were served along with tasty mince pies and other Christmas treats after the service, whilst children got to say hello to Toby the donkey and get their photo with him, or even got to sit on him. This was as long as electric wires from the sound system were packed away first, as Toby mistook them for snakes and made his displeasure known by refusing to move if he saw one!

Following this, there were plans for an outside carol service on Christmas Eve, in Parc y Werin, Gorseinon, again with Loughor Town Band, which although not the same as the usual service in St Catherine’s, that is usually full to bursting, there was lots of anticipation and interest in attending it. Unfortunately Covid restrictions did put a stop to this (followed closely by a rainy forecast), but a seed has been sown. However, as all of us know, Coronavirus has forced us all to think outside the box and do things differently, and whilst we hope to be even more back to normal next Christmas with our familiar favourite services, maybe there’s a place for these new, outdoor celebrations to continue too?



# Welcome, Bishop John!

---



The Archdeacon of Wrexham, John Lomas, an aircraft engineer, who served in the Royal Navy during the Falklands War, has been chosen as the 10th Bishop of Swansea and Brecon.

During his twelve years as an aircraft engineer in the Royal Navy, Archdeacon John serviced helicopters, Phantom F4 jets and then Sea Harrier jets on the carriers HMS *Illustrious*, *Invincible* and *Ark Royal*, serving in the Falklands War. After leaving the Navy he spent two years in the Middle East, working on tornado jets at Dhahran military airbase during the first Gulf War. He eventually left the career to train for ministry and was ordained in 1994.

Since then, John has served in St Asaph Diocese and has played a key role in planting churches and transforming those in difficulties. As Archdeacon of Wrexham he was part of the team leading the diocese's successful £1.9m bid for a major evangelism project in the heart of Wrexham in partnership with Holy Trinity Brompton – now Hope Street Christian Community. Prior to that John was the diocesan Transition Minister, helping parishes with no current Vicar to think about the future in innovative ways. As Vicar of Holywell for a decade he oversaw the building of a new church, St Peter's, as a resource for

the whole community.

The announcement of John's appointment as Bishop of Swansea and Brecon was made by the Church in Wales bishops. It follows the retirement in May 2021 of the Archbishop of Wales, John Davies, who was also the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon.

The appointment was confirmed on 22 November 2021 at a meeting of the Sacred Synod of Church in Wales Bishops at St Giles' Church, Wrexham. Archdeacon John's consecration as Bishop will take place at Brecon Cathedral at a date yet to be fixed.

The new Archbishop of Wales, Andy John, said Archdeacon John had a passion for evangelism. He said, "John will be an excellent addition to the Bench of Bishops and I am delighted he has accepted this role. He has a passion for evangelism and for supporting clergy in pastoral ministry. Above all, he is people focused—he knows how to get alongside others and to help them. His experience in the Royal Navy, in particular, gave him an appreciation that life can be tough and he faces challenges with hope and



energy, as well as a gentle sense of humour.”

The Bishop of St Asaph, Gregory Cameron, added, “John has served the diocese of St Asaph faithfully and with distinction. Now he brings his considerable passion for the Gospel and his creative flair to the service of the people and congregations of Swansea and Brecon, and, while we’re sad to lose his ministry, we are sure that he will bring great blessings to his new diocese. We wish him and Jan every blessing as they begin the transition to a new home and ministry.”

Archdeacon John said he was looking forward to leading the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon as it began its new chapter.

He said, “I feel very privileged to have been appointed as Bishop of Swansea and Brecon and am looking forward getting to know the diocese. My motivation has always been to work with people and clergy to release them and resource them, to build church in the community and to be the very best interpretation of the Good News of Jesus in whatever

situation we find ourselves, whether we are in a large urban setting or a small deeply rural setting. Helping people on the road to living their best life in Christ is a huge privilege.”

He said his time in the Navy, as well as his faith, had given him the confidence to find a way through difficult situations.

“I have been involved in some wonderful life changing projects and worked in and with some amazing teams and I am confident that will continue in this next stage of my ministry. I am very much a fan of keeping things simple, straightforward and understandable. I love the simplicity of the Swansea and Brecon Diocesan message of ‘Gather, grow, go’. I hope to work with the people of the diocese to make sure that these three words burst into life, that gathering happens, growing happens and going happens. And as a consequence a living Gospel is seen, experienced and proclaimed.”



## Bishop John's journey to ministry

Originally from Ashton-under-Lyne, Archdeacon John joined the Royal Navy after leaving school to train as an aircraft engineering mechanic in the Fleet Air Arm. He worked on Phantom F4 jets, Lynx helicopters and Sea Harriers on airship carriers around the world, and served in the Falkland War. After leaving the Navy he spent two years in the Middle East working on Tornado Jets.

John began training for ministry at St Michael's Theological College in Llandaff, Cardiff, and was ordained in 1994.

His first curacy was at Rhyl where he served for five years from 1994 to 1999. He then returned to the Royal Navy as a Chaplain to the 3rd Destroyer Squadron serving on HMS's

Edinburgh, Glasgow and Liverpool. During this time he served in Sierra Leone and returned to the Falkland Islands. While there, he led a poignant service of remembrance at the Mount Pleasant War Memorial which was inscribed with the names of those he had served with nineteen years earlier.

John returned to Wales as Vicar of Holywell in 2001, where he spent the next 10 years and oversaw the building of the new St Peter's Church.

He was made a Canon Cursal of St Asaph Cathedral in 2008 and served as Area Dean of Holywell from 2008 to 2011.

John was appointed Transition Missioner for Corwen from 2011 to 2013, followed by a year as Transition Missioner for Bangor Monachorum. He became Archdeacon of St Asaph in 2014 and, following a diocesan reorganisation, was appointed Archdeacon of Wrexham in 2018.

John met his wife, Jan, in

school and they married nearly forty-two years ago. They have two daughters and five grandchildren.

In his spare time, he enjoys walking and reading and is looking forward to hikes in the Brecon Beacons.

He is also looking forward to paying his respects at the Harvard Chapel at Brecon Cathedral, the regimental chapel of the South Wales Borderers. His grandfather served in the regiment in the First World War. In the 1990s, John was Padre to the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers.

# A love of his trade found Paul the love of his life

---



Sheila New asked the couple to describe their special day and to share a little about their journey, from their first meeting to how Paul popped the question!

Paul and Abi met nine years ago in Abingdon, Oxford whilst working for the same hospitality company. Abi helped Paul with some management cover, and they soon became friends.

Paul was born in Loughor and moved to Penclawdd at the age of ten. St Catherine's Church had always played a big part in his life as his parents and grandmother were Church members and actively involved in Church life. As a youngster, Paul sang in the choir and also enjoyed ringing the bells.

"I started working part-time in restaurants as a Sixth Former and soon fell in love with the trade," Paul said.

"After leaving school, I had my heart set on a full time career in the hospitality industry. I moved around the country a great deal with my work and met Abi at a restaurant in Abingdon."

Abi was born and grew up in Worcester. She always had a love for animals and horses became her passion during her childhood. She was convinced

that she would become a Vet until she got her first waitressing job at the age of sixteen.

"I quickly realised that I was a people person and this was the job for me!," Abi said.

Abi worked hard and soon became a manager, which gave her opportunities to spread her wings and move around the country. She was living in Burton on Trent when she and Paul started dating but the distance didn't faze them!

A romance soon blossomed and Paul eventually proposed on Newton beach on 19 February 2020. The couple often took their dog, Maverick, for a walk on the beach at Norton. They had a great affinity with the place and had made some great memories there.

"It was a wet and windy day and I suggested a walk down the beach. I had it in my mind that I was going to propose that day, so the wind and rain wasn't going to dampen my plans," Paul explained.

Abi was thrilled and of course said yes! Once they were engaged, they were both keen to set a date and



Paul's longstanding connection with St Catherine's meant that there was no doubt in their mind that they wanted to get married there. At the beginning of March 2020, they met with Adrian, the Vicar, to set the date, 1 August 2020, and couldn't believe their luck when they later found an ideal venue too.

Unfortunately, a few weeks later the country went into lockdown and Paul and Abi had to make the difficult decision to postpone their wedding just a month before they were due to be married.

"We decided that although we were both disappointed, we needed to be realistic as the decision wouldn't just affect us. We had to think about our families and friends too. So we moved the wedding to September 2021, hoping that it would be much safer by then," Abi said.

They both wanted to get married in Church. St Catherine's had always been a big part of Paul's and his family's lives, from Baptisms to Weddings and everything in-between.

Paul took Abi to St Catherine's when they moved to Wales, and she fell in love with it. They attended a Harvest Supper and a few Sunday services and Abi even joined some of the Zoom Prayer Meetings.

"Every time I set foot on the grounds of the Church or virtually attended a service, I always found everyone so welcoming. St Catherine's was a must for the both of us," Abi explained.

Because of the pandemic, the numbers able to attend their wedding were very limited.

"The magic number was thirty," Abi said.

"We couldn't possibly go any lower without having to exclude some important friends and family, but throughout the entire process all of our friends and family were incredibly supportive."

They decided to make a list of thirty, fifty and eighty and then the hard decisions had been made and they just had to wait until the picture was clearer closer to the date.

During the planning stage Abi and Paul both felt that there were some particular highlights, including meeting with Adrian, the Vicar, to plan the ceremony; buying Abi's dress in Worcester and organising

Paul's suit fitting; going to their menu tasting at the reception venue; and finally their wedding rehearsal just days before the actual day itself.

"All these moments gave us 'butterflies.' It was getting more real. We were doing it. We were getting married and nothing else mattered," Abi said.

The day itself was perfect but one of the highlights for them as a couple was seeing each other for the first time on their wedding day as Abi walked down the aisle to her soon to be husband.

"The actual ceremony was relaxed and memorable. It was amazing that Paul's grandmother, Sheila, was able to read from I Corinthians 13 and my brother, Richard, read a poem entitled 'The Art of Marriage' by Wilfred Arlan Peterson."

"When Paul's mum, Karen, sang 'The Lord Bless You and Keep You' it felt like it was the perfect end to the perfect ceremony."

Finally, they loved everything about the reception at Oldwalls Gower. The weather, food and service couldn't be faulted but the most wonderful thing was spending the entire day with their family and friends.

Because of the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, they didn't want to risk travelling abroad but wanted to make sure their honeymoon was special.

"We decided to re-live the first memories we made together," Paul said.

They began at a restaurant in Burton on Trent where they had their first date, then Chester Zoo where they had their second date and finally, Alton Towers where they spent their third date together. The couple then spent a few days in Liverpool where they had taken their first break away. The climax of their honeymoon resulted in a few memorable days in London which was the perfect ending of their honeymoon and the beginning of their life together as husband and wife, and as an almost miraculous footnote to this love story, Paul and Abi, were delighted to find out on 22 October 2021 that they are expecting a new addition to the family in the Spring.





# Large Grant allows St David's to further its Eco Church ambitions



A large grant awarded to St David's Church in Loughor will allow the church to further its Eco Church ambitions by becoming entirely paperless.

In July 2021, St David's Church became the first church in the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon to be awarded an A Rocha UK Silver Eco Church Award.

Ecochurch is a scheme to encourage churches to be more environmentally responsible by asking a series of questions which suggest steps you could take — from remembering those affected by climate change in our prayers to twinning a toilet, or lobbying government!

"We decided to keep going during Lockdown and held meetings to plan actions," explained Gill Knight.

"The gas and electricity supply were changed to 'green' supplies—which also, surprisingly saved the church a little money!"

"We also did some work in the grounds and a grant helped us establish a herb garden, to encourage insect life and provide a community resource, plus some native fruit trees which have been planted in the grass around the car park."

"We also appealed online for a water butt," Gill explained.

Another great achievement for the group of enthusiastic volunteers is the already well established recycling scheme. Set up before the Lockdown, the scheme kept going throughout and occasional forays to litter pick on the Loughor foreshore and around the area see numerous sacks full of items collected for recycling—making the

whole environment more pleasant for humans and for wildlife.

"We recycle many things that the Council doesn't," Gill said.

"Everything from crisp packets, bread, biscuit and sweet packets, toothpaste tubes and tablet blister packs. So far, we've saved 170lbs of waste from going to landfill, which is amazing!"

Finally, our Eco Church ambitions were furthered yet again with the news that St David's had been awarded a £10,000 grant to enable them to become an entirely paperless church.

"The grant will be used to install modern audio-visual screens throughout the church, to make vast improvements to the church sound-system and to install wi-fi throughout the building," explained the Vicar, Adrian Morgan.

"This now means that we can become entirely paperless, perhaps another big step in the direction of enabling us to achieve the big ambition of an Eco Church Gold Award."

There's more that can be done of course—we'd like to encourage people to check their own carbon footprint at a site like <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk>, for example.

All this is made up of small individual actions, which together do make a difference, and express one part of our Christian faith in caring for God's creation.

# Welcome, Ben!

---

Eleanor Lewis catches up with Ben Jones, a trainee Vicar on placement here in the Parish, to find out a little bit more about him, his training and his journey into ordained ministry.

In September 2021 we welcomed Ben Jones to the Parish as an ordinand (a trainee Vicar!) A final year student at St Padarn's Institute, the Church in Wales' Theological College in Cardiff, Ben is due to be ordained a Deacon at Brecon Cathedral at Petertide, in June 2022.

A farmer's son from Cornwall, Ben enjoyed what he described as an 'idyllic' childhood, growing up in a beautiful part of the world alongside his younger brother and sister.

"I'm a Cornishman and I was brought up on the family farm near Launceston, and from a young age I loved playing rugby and football."

Ben's talent as a sportsman was identified from a young age and it earned him a scholarship at a preparatory school in Tavistock and eventually a scholarship to Harrow.

"Harrow was an excellent school with an exceptional extra-curricular programme, which I really valued but scholarship students were often resented by some of the other pupils and I was bullied, particularly during my first term. Older pupils also still indulged in subjecting newcomers to various initiation rites," Ben explained.

As Ben progressed through his schooling, he quickly quelled the inclination of some of his peers to continue this practice, asking them instead to consider how miserable they had been made to feel being at the receiving end.

It was at Harrow that Ben began to explore the Christian faith and to think about following Jesus.

"My family didn't attend Church, although they always lived their lives on Christian principles," Ben said.

"But during my time at Harrow I started attending Bible Study classes and became increasingly interested in the Christian faith — and this led to confirmation."

His interest in sport also continued unabated and he spent some time playing for Bath Academy, Cornwall and South West England.



A place to study law at Swansea University was what brought Ben to Swansea, but he soon realised that a career in the law was not for him.

It was in Swansea that Ben met and married Lucy — and they have a daughter, Eva who is six — and whilst their marriage has sadly come to an end, attending Church locally with her began to fan the flame of a possible vocation.

"I sensed an increasingly strong feeling that I was called to ordination, but I wasn't really sure if I was a suitable candidate," Ben shared.

But when St David's Cathedral advertised the post of Verger, Ben saw this as an ideal opportunity to test his calling, and soon applied for the job — which he got!

"We spent three very happy years in St David's being completely immersed in the life of the Church, and it was there that I became convinced that God had his hand on my life."

Now a full-time, final year student at St Padarn's Institute in Cardiff, Ben spends part of his week studying to complete a degree in Theology for ministry, and the rest of his time here in the parish, training alongside Adrian, our Vicar.



# Glynne is presented with BEM at his spiritual home



Reflecting on his recent honour in the Queen's New Year's Honours List, Reverend Glynne James, a curate at St Catherine's for more than three decades, insisted that he 'was absolutely speechless and felt very humbled.'

"I couldn't believe it and I was very touched that people had nominated me," Glynne said as he reflected on the news that he was to be awarded a British Empire Medal by the Queen.

Many people would not be surprised by the way that Glynne responded to the news about his award, given for his service to police chaplaincy, the community of Gorseinon and to the country, as it is in keeping with the way he has lived his life during sixty-three years of public service.

The British Empire Medal has the words 'God and Empire' engraved upon it and Glynne insists that the honour was not so much his, but for God, Queen and Country. He wanted it to reflect not upon him,

but be "to the glory of God through our Lord Jesus Christ," he said.

Responding to the news of Glynne's honour, the Archbishop of Wales, the Most Reverend John Davies said that he was "absolutely delighted to be told confidentially by Glynne that he was to receive this honour, and I can now openly congratulate him."

"He has, interwoven his faith, his ordained ministry and his secular roles in such a way as to emphasise that faith is not to be compartmentalised, but should infuse all aspects of life, and run through it like a golden thread. That his careful and prayerful support of so many others in so many ways has been recognised in this very public way is richly deserved," Archbishop John said.

One of four children, Glynne was born in Pembrokeshire in 1939, where he attended the local Narbeth Church School and Narbeth Grammar School. Both would have a big influence on his faith,



as would his parents who regularly attended the local Church in the Parish of Lampeter Velfrey.

Glynne left school having gained good qualifications and worked for Costain John Brown, acquiring a sound knowledge of electrical engineering principles. But at the age of eighteen he was drafted into the Armed Forces and joined the Fleet Air Arm, or 'the airey fairies' as they were amusingly called. He served in the Arctic, Middle East and Far East and enjoyed it.

"I'd set my heart on a career in the police, but I was also interested in electrical and mechanical engineering," Glynne explained.

"I wanted to learn a trade and travel the world before I settled down into the police, and I had both as well as a wage in the Fleet Air Arm," he said.

"It was an amazing experience! You had to put up with the uncompromising discipline that prevailed during that time, as well as witness much hardship and poverty that existed in that part of the world."

He first met Beryl when he was twenty-one, on Rogation Sunday in June 1960. She was with a group of young farmers blessing the fields at Carew Church and they both have a good recollection of that Summer's day when they first met.

They were married at the Church where Beryl was organist in 1967 and soon moved to Killay as Glynne had joined the Swansea Borough Police Force in 1964.

Reflecting on their life together, Glynne insists that Beryl has been his strength and support throughout their time together, and he is grateful that they have been blessed with son, Christopher, and a daughter-in-law, Helen. Their three grandchildren, Thomas, Grace and Theo, now live in Swansea with their parents and they are all a huge blessing to Glynne and Beryl.

Having applied for the police while he was still in the Armed Forces, Glynne flew home to Wales as soon as a vacancy in Swansea became available and he soon settled into life as a police officer, first serving as a constable on the streets of Swansea, then progressing through the ranks to Inspector.

It was during his time as a police officer that Glynne first began to experience a calling to the priesthood.

"I set out in life to be a career police officer with no thought whatsoever of becoming a priest. When I did have a calling I questioned it for many years, putting forward all sorts of reasons in my mind why I

was not the right person for the priesthood," Glynne explained.

But despite his best efforts to avoid ordination, God had other plans for Glynne and, after considerable prayer and reflection, he decided to explore the possibility of ordination in 1984.

"When I was interviewed by Bishop Vaughan, I told him that I had avoided putting myself forward for about fifteen years," Glynne said.

"Much to my amazement though, the Bishop looked at me and said, 'That's good news.' No doubt because he knew that the best Priests are not those who think that they are able and ready to do God's work, but rather, understanding the enormity and impossibility of the task, they are the reluctant candidates who know that their job can only be done well in God's strength and not in their own.

The following year, Glynne was ordained and a year later became a Self Supporting Curate at St Catherine's Church, a position he still holds today, and during those thirty-five years he has served five different Vicars, carrying out the full duties of a Parish priest during four lengthy interregnums. Glynne is an amazing, calming presence in the Church and manages to carry out his work with grace, humility and a sense of humour, all skills gained from his life experiences.

The current Vicar, Rev Dr Adrian Morgan paid tribute to Glynne saying that he was 'absolutely delighted to hear that Glynne had been awarded the British Empire Medal in the Queen's New Year Honours List.'

"Glynne is a true gentleman and his service to others is driven by his deep Christian faith, which is evident to all who know him," Adrian said.

"On a personal note, I have always valued his friendship and his quiet, committed support. I'm sure that you'll agree with me that this recognition is well deserved and long overdue. We love Glynne deeply and we wish him every blessing."

In 1995, the ground-breaking news of Glynne's appointment as the first ever Chaplain to the Welsh Police Force was announced.

"Being a Chaplain gives one a deep and fascinating insight into the most unique public body in the United Kingdom. It's a behind the scenes view of how men and women, from all walks of life, cope with a complex, demanding, daunting and dangerous role, which can be both stressful and dehumanising."

"Policing is a harsh and confrontational



“Glynne shows no signs of slowing down, retaining responsibility for the recruitment, retention and advice to his team of police chaplains, providing pastoral care to officers and staff and tending the flock in St Catherine’s Church.”

occupation, which has a profound effect on police officers and staff. As a Chaplain you may have referrals from people of all faiths or none — and be faced with a whole range of complex issues — but in dealing with them, it’s the Chaplain’s role to listen, be impartial and not make judgments.”

Since Glynne’s own ground-breaking appointment, more than twenty-six years ago, he has worked tirelessly to recruit more faith chaplains for the Welsh Police force, working hard to ensure that the team reflected the diversity of the twenty-first century Welsh landscape and in recognition of this, he received a Heart of Gold award.

Bestowing the award upon him, a senior police

commander insisted that Glynne’s “passion for supporting staff of all faiths, as well of those of none — and to providing a service that is reflective of our communities — led Glynne to successfully recruit a further thirteen ecumenical chaplains from multiple faiths, significantly improving the diversity of police chaplaincy in South Wales and standing as a beacon for other forces to emulate.”

At the age of eighty-one years young, Glynne shows no signs of slowing down, retaining responsibility for the recruitment, retention and advice to his team of police chaplains, providing pastoral care to officers and staff and tending the flock in St Catherine’s Church.



# Mothers' Union continues, come what may!

---

Although our Mothers' Union Branch had been as active as ever during the long months of pandemic restrictions, with members generously supporting all our projects and keeping in touch by various means (some of which we had never even heard of previously!) it was wonderful to meet up again face-to-face in September and to start the Autumn season with our customary Eucharist service. Despite the truly atrocious weather, members turned out in force—nothing was going to deter us from coming together at last!

Our Vicar celebrated the Eucharist for us and the lessons and intercessions all reflected the theme of service and commitment, which seemed appropriate at such a challenging time. During the intercessions we remembered those members whom we had lost since we last met and held in our prayers all who are ill and those who mourn. Adrian based his address on the personal prayer of Mary Sumner and was warm in his appreciation of all that Mothers' Union members had been able to accomplish while physically separated.

At our next meeting we shared in a lovely service which Gwyneth Philips had prepared. The five Objects of the Mothers' Union were read and responded to, providing an opportunity for us all to re-affirm our commitment to the Mothers' Union as we came together after such a long period of difficult separation.

Ben Jones, the ordinand who is attached to the Parish until June, had been invited to speak to us and gave a fascinating insight into the path his life had taken to lead him to this point—you can read more in a separate article.

In November we held a service to mark the forthcoming Sixteen Days of Activism Against

Gender-Based Violence, prepared and led by Heather Culliford. A short reflection for each of the sixteen days was coupled with a prayer and appropriate readings had been selected, providing a powerful and moving message. Several members also attended a service in St Mary's, Swansea, later that week, where a three-minute silence was observed at 1.03pm to reflect on the sobering fact that 1 in 3 women will be directly impacted by such violence during their lifetime.

It was lovely to be able to meet for a Christmas service once more and good numbers attended, despite yet more extreme weather—it takes more than a named storm to deter Mothers' Union members! The service included the lighting of the Advent wreath candles, with an explanation of their significance, readings, a reflection by our Vicar, and intercessions. We left, uplifted by coming together again for our celebration of Advent and Christmas. Thanks were expressed to those who had prepared the service, all who participated, to Leslie Griffin for preparing the lovely Advent wreath, and Julie Dobbins, who had played some verses of much-loved carols throughout the service—we left to the magnificent strains of "And the Glory of the Lord" from Handel's Messiah.

Members responded with their customary generosity in bringing contributions for Llys Awen—regular deliveries of groceries had continued throughout the year. A donation had been given specifically to buy a tin of Celebration chocolates for each of the residents and they also received a card and copy of the ever-popular Easy Eats cookery book, as usual. The young people greatly appreciate these gifts, and the knowledge that people are thinking of them as they take that first step to living



independently at such a young age. Donations were also provided for Baby Basics and December saw a record number of parcels of knitted squares and other items being sent to the Wakisa Ministries in Uganda.

Sadly, we have lost four of our faithful members over the past months. Rhiannon Jones was, at ninety-eight, our oldest member and, although unable to attend our meetings for many years, she maintained a keen interest in all our activities. Unfailingly generous and encouraging, she was always welcoming and a delight to visit. Dulcie Young was a faithful member of St David's and of our Branch. Despite severe health problems she remained totally committed and was always generous and supportive. At the beginning of this new year, the sad news arrived of the death of Haidee Williams, another long-serving and dedicated member, who had been ill for some time. A talented writer, her poems delighted us over the years and it was lovely that the last poem which she gave to the Branch was included in the latest edition of the Diocesan MU News. Then, most recently, Carole Scott passed away, having suffered ill health for many years and undergone numerous operations and courses of treatment, all of which she endured with stoicism, patience and grace. Thankfully, she was able to fulfil her desire to meet her grandson, Tobias, who was safely delivered on 30 December and brought her great joy. These ladies are sadly missed and will

always be remembered with great affection.

There was also cause for celebration in 2021. On Sunday, 13 June, Joan Thomas and Betty Newbury, two of our most faithful members, were presented with long service certificates, recognising a remarkable sixty-seven years of membership. Both these ladies have contributed so much to the Mothers' Union and continue to be very active members, supportive of all that the movement does and stands for, and a constant source of encouragement. The presentations took place during our morning service, which was particularly well attended, with Mothers' Union members reading the lessons and leading intercessions. It was lovely to have something to celebrate and the morning was enjoyed by everyone, whether Mothers' Union members or not.

Jean Morris enjoyed her ninetieth birthday during the Summer and Mavis and Stephen Preece celebrated a remarkable seventy-fifth wedding anniversary in December!

Our meetings continue to be held in St Catherine's Church for now, to comply with the current regulations. We have been meeting just once each month, but hope to resume the normal pattern of meeting on the first and third Tuesday afternoon of each month early in the New Year. EMU members are looking forward to being able to resume monthly evening meetings.





# Give Your Worries to God

---

*“Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?” (Matthew 6.27)*

**W**orry changes nothing except you — and not for the better. It won't pay your bills, solve your family problems, or give you a good night's sleep. You don't add one day to your life, or one bit of life to your day by worrying. But you can age prematurely and die before your time.

Read these two Scriptures carefully: ‘Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever. (Psalm 125.1). ‘You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you’ (Isaiah 26.3). Notice

that the same word in both Scriptures is ‘trust’. Worry simply reveals our lack of trust in God! So who are we trusting in? Ourselves! And only when that no longer works, are we willing to hand God the problem.

Can you imagine asking Michelangelo, ‘Are you sure you know what you're doing with that chunk of marble?’ God knows what He's doing, and when you trust Him, ‘His peace will guard your hearts and minds’ (Philippians 4.7). Paul is using a military metaphor here. The Philippians lived under Roman occupation, which was

bad. But they knew that the sentries also guarded their town, which was good. They knew that before an enemy could get them, it first had to pass the guards. And because you're ‘in Christ’, Satan has to go through Him to get to you. Are you getting the picture? Nothing — absolutely nothing — can get to you without first coming through Him! Once you accept that, God's peace will fill your heart.

© UCB *Word for Today*,  
for more information visit  
[www.ucb.co.uk](http://www.ucb.co.uk)

# Blessings at Baby Basics

Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.' (Matthew 10:14)

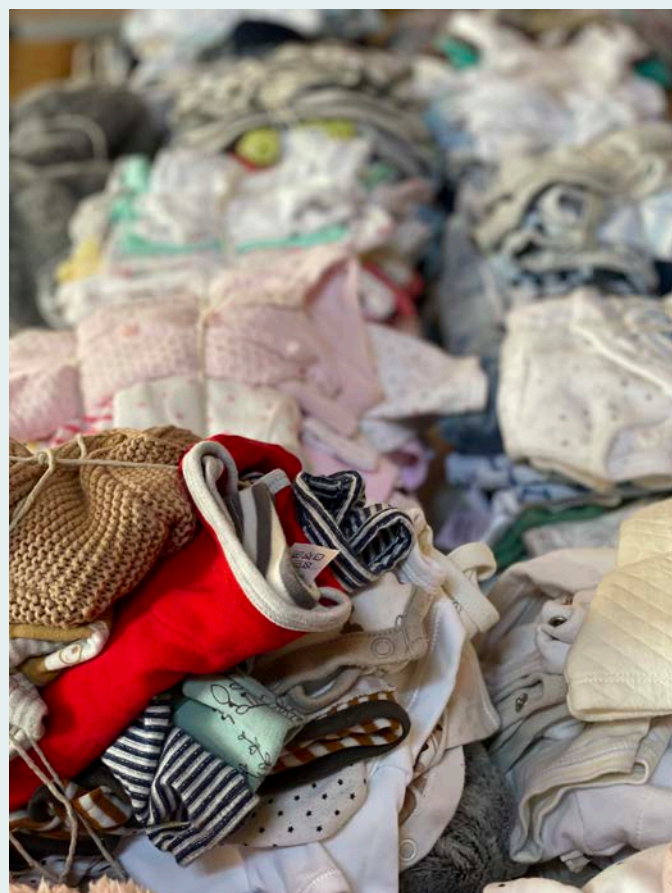
**B**aby Basics, a National charity, aims to support new mums and their new babies, by giving practical help and support that is needed at a crucial time in their lives. Clients are often teenage mums, mums struggling financially, asylum seekers, women fleeing domestic violence or can be victims of trafficking.

For a number of years, St Catherine's Church has supported the charity by providing Moses baskets full of the essentials needed for a new baby: babygrows, vests, dresses, tops, trousers, knitted cardigans, snowsuits etc. The project has developed its support by providing a variety of bundles which can be tailored to suit mum and baby's requirements. Bath-time Bundles include: baby bath, top and tail bowl, changing mat, towels, shampoo, baby lotions, baby wipes etc. Accessories Bundle include: baby snuggle, baby toy, hat, bib, mittens, socks, baby brush etc.

It's important that Baby Basics support 'vulnerable' mothers and their new-born babies in the community and this is done by relying on the professional judgement of Health Visitors, Social Workers, Foodbank and other professional agencies to ensure that suitable clients are identified.

Several volunteers share the love they have for Jesus, by giving generously of their time and energy to 'serve' in a variety of roles needed to achieve the smooth running of the project: sorting out donated clothes, washing and ironing, filling the storage boxes, putting bundles together and delivering to clients.

Members of the congregation, Mothers' Union, and people in the community, have been very generous over the years, providing financial support and donations which enable Baby Basics to be at the heart of the communities of Gorseinon, Loughor and further afield. Asda, in Gorseinon, has always been kind, providing nappies, creams, shampoo, baby wipes, cotton-wool balls for babies and toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, soap, deodorant and sanitary products for mums.



Whilst everyone was feeling anxious during the height of the pandemic and having so much time on their hands, many people made a decision to have a good clear-out of their unwanted, but beautiful quality baby clothes. This was an excellent time for Baby Basics because this meant that the stock cupboard became full to the rafters! At the same time, the dreadful stories began to emerge about the crisis in Afghanistan and the news that the UK would very soon be offering refuge to over 17,000 Afghan families, having left their homeland with just the clothes they were wearing and very little else.

Anna Bolt, a volunteer in the group, felt that Baby Basics should offer support and very quickly, the team jumped into action on a Saturday morning to support the national effort. Sheila New, another member of the team, reflected on the situation





saying, 'I just tried to imagine what the women were having to go through without money, homes, husbands and at the same time, suffering the trauma of having to leave their country fearing torture and death.'

On Saturday, 11 September, the team came together determined to do whatever was needed to help. The Government suggested that the bundles for babies 0-3 months old should consist of: 5 babygrows, 5 vests, 3 leggings, 3 tops, 3 pairs of socks and a snowsuit.

Of course, the Covid pandemic was prevalent in the area, but with only five volunteers, socially distanced in a large church hall, wearing face-masks and with the doors open, the team swung into action, feeling as safe as they possibly could. At the end of the morning, nineteen bundles of clothes were put together and the team felt privileged that Baby Basics could use the generous donations given by the community and multiply those blessings by providing for so many families in desperate need. Gwyneth Phillips, reflected on her involvement that day and said, 'We are blessed with so much in our lives and I felt privileged to help in sharing our blessings with such vulnerable families.'

Karen Davies, who leads the Baby Basics team, explained how she sees donations as blessings from God and how the team can then use those blessings to bless mums and their new babies. She recalled the verse in Acts 20:35 where it says, 'In everything I did,

I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

September was a month where there seemed to be an outpouring of blessings! No sooner the blessings were given, than the most generous of blessings were received once again. A telephone call, which came out of the blue from The Richard Taylor Foundation, who had heard about the work of Baby Basics at St Catherine's, Gorseinon and wanted to give the extremely generous gift of £1,035. It was decided that 10 Moses baskets, 10 Baby Gyms, 10 baby changing mats and 10 bouncy chairs would be purchased and which would provide 10 new mums and their babies to have the best start in life. Not all mums might want or need all four items, so this generous gift has the potential to support many, many more mums and their babies.

All donations are greatly appreciated by Baby Basics at Casllwchwr and Gorseinon and help to share the love of Christ as the team try to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the community.

Anyone needing the support of Baby Basics are asked to contact their Health Visitor, Midwife, Social Worker or Foodbank and a referral will be made to Baby Basics through them.

Offers of donations or anyone wanting to join the Baby Basics team are asked to contact Karen Davies by email, please: [baby.basics@stcath.org.uk](mailto:baby.basics@stcath.org.uk).

# RECOMMENDED READS

Local bookworms share something about the books that have blessed and encouraged their Christian journey

## Anna Bolt reviews *Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers* by Dane Ortlund

I read a lot so every book given as a gift is very welcome. Sometimes though, those gifts are books you may not have bought yourself but when read, bring you so much joy. I received two of those this Christmas. One was *The Five People you Meet in Heaven* by Mitch Albom, the story of a man who encounters the people whose lives his had an effect on, good and bad. It certainly made me think. The other was the beautifully bound *Gentle and Lowly* by Dane Ortlund. A present from a fabulous friend and one of Mike Pilavachi's favourites, it drew me in within the first few pages, just the cwtsh you need on those long, cold, January evenings. Subtitled *The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers*, the title packs a punch and could easily put you off, but the heart of the book is 'the heart of Christ' and that's where you go from the off. This is a book that explores Christ's relationship with you, how he feels and how this is enacted in our lives. A wonderful way to begin a new year.

Dane C. Ortlund is senior pastor of Naperville Presbyterian Church, Illinois. His Twitter bio begins, *rescued by Jesus* and ends *stumbling my way to heaven with Jesus' arm around me* and the book focussed on Matthew 11: *Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.* In The Message Bible this comforting verse is conveyed as: *"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."*(28-30). Dane devotes each chapter to a different aspect of the human heart of Christ, taking us to the depths of his love.

For anyone who has been or is curious to know more about who Jesus is and what his longings are for us, this book reflects on the words in Matthew for the people of today.

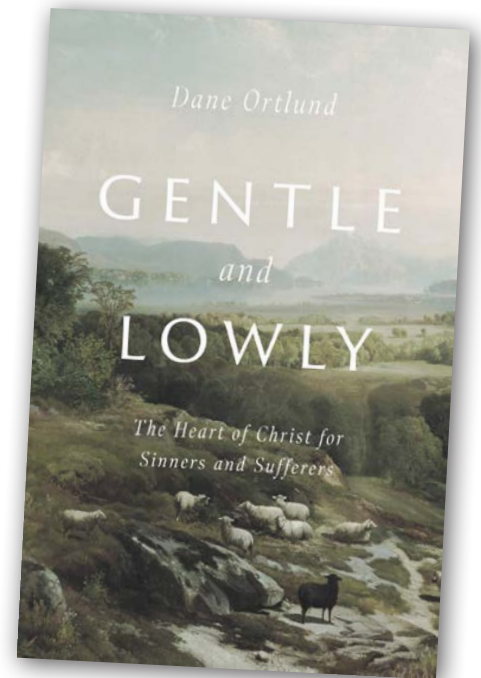
A beautifully and tenderly written book, it is full

of examples of Christ's heart in action. Each concise chapter gives us a deeper understanding of how he, time and time again reaches out, through the ages, with truth, comfort, compassion and empathy. It reminds us, that no matter what we go through, he has been there and done that, that he is waiting beside us and living that life with us. He is right there in the midst and as I read, the words brought comfort, strength and peace.

Ortlund draws on the writing of others, particularly Thomas Goodwin, the 17th century chaplain to Oliver Cromwell, but he deftly makes the scholar's work easily accessible and builds on their theology in a way we can relate to as Christians in the 21st century. It's one of those books you can't put down, but as the end chapters approach, you find yourself reading less because you don't want it to end. A recommended read for all but if you are feeling in any way in need of extra comfort or extra hope, it administers a little bit of the spiritual medicine we all need to steady us in our unpredictable world, leaving us with an overwhelming gratitude for a Saviour who stands between our sin and our God, reflecting a Father's love for his child, knowing that life does not always turn out the way we hoped or planned; that it is not always pretty.

From *dealing gently* in spite of what we do, to *advocating* for us as if in the dock, we learn how Jesus loves to the very depths, like that feeling we get when we yearn for something so badly that we feel it in the very depths of our bodily organs – that actual ache. There are scriptures and messages to take with you into a new year, or at any time when we feel we need to take stock and then press on.

And yet, Ortlund never loses sight of Jesus, the King, but a kind and gracious King. James Dean





is quoted as once saying .... ‘Only the gentle are really strong’. In *Gentle and Lowly* we see how Jesus’ gentleness brings strength and reflect on how our strength is shown in our gentleness, how we take our forgiveness and turn that into love, how we take the heart of Christ revealed and use it as a daily encouragement like chicken soup for the soul.

Be prepared for the final chapters to really get you. *To the end* quotes John 13:1, when Jesus is gathered together with the twelve disciples on the eve of the crucifixion. He knew that one of the twelve would betray him, one would deny him three times and others would abandon him; but he loves them anyway. Jesus doesn’t withdraw or hold back, he doesn’t bear grudges or seek revenge. He instead, deals gently. He never refuses. That’s his heart for us. And then, we look forward to what has been promised: *in the coming ages He will show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus* (Ephesians 2:7). Christ’s heart wants us to stop condemning ourselves as judge and jury over our own lives. We may find it difficult at times to understand and experience the heart of Christ in this life but in eternity we will feel the deep power of his love.

*Gentle and Lowly* opens up that promise just a little more. From a man who says he would rather live without oxygen than a Bible, this is a book to be savoured and read again. As we learn more about who He is, we learn more about who we are. And as we uncover some of our own truths we find out more about our relationship with Christ.

Apologies for the spoiler, but the final lines of the book are:

Your anguish is his home. Go to him.

“If you knew his heart, you would.” (Goodwin, *Works of Thomas Goodwin*).

Ortlund tells us that there are two things we need to do as Christians. Number 1 is to ‘go to Jesus’ and the second is to ‘see number 1’.

I’ve loaned *Gentle and Lowly* to a friend and look forward to lending it to many more. In the meantime I’m off to start on Ortlund’s *Deeper*. I’m ready for an even closer look.

*Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers* by Dane Ortlund ISBN 978-1-4335-6613-4 Available on Eden £11.29 hardback; also available at Amazon as a Kindle edition and Audible Audiobook.

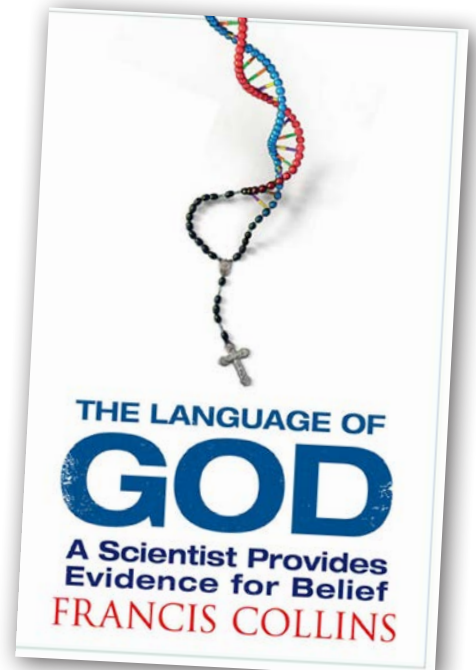
## Clare Morgan reviews *The Language of God; A scientist presents evidence for belief* by Frances Collins.

Earlier in the year, during our weekly Tuesday Evening Zoom prayer meetings, I was asked to prepare a short talk discussing the hot potato topic of creation, evolution, and how faith and science can be compatible. This is a topic I’ve always been interested in, since my university days two decades ago, when I studied Zoology at Cardiff University.

Well, somehow summer holidays came and went, and weeks have passed and I haven’t had chance to talk about this in our prayer group, but in the meantime I attended an online conference (I can’t remember which one) and was struck by an interview with Frances Collins, the American physician-geneticist, a world leading scientist, who discovered the genes associated with a number of diseases and led the Human Genome Project. He is currently the director of the National Institutes of Health

in Bethesda, Maryland. So much so that after the conference finished I promptly went and ordered his book to read.

You are likely to have heard of The Human Genome Project (HGP), which is one of the great feats of exploration in history. Rather than exploring gigantic planets or the cosmos, it’s inward looking aim was to sequence and map all of the genes (together known as the genome)





of human beings. It began on October 1990 and was completed in April 2003, and has given us the ability, for the first time, to read nature's complete genetic blueprint for building a human being. Wow! And in the years since this was achieved, healthcare and medicine have made even more significant advances, and identifying specific genes relating to specific diseases (common and rare), and gene therapy treatments are now not solely future aspirations, but actually becoming more common place. Wow again!

So Frances Collins has built his life and career on scientific rigour and evidence based research and has first-hand working knowledge of DNA, the code for life. And he also has an unshakeable faith in the God of the Bible - something many people think cannot be compatible. How can that be?

In this book, Frances explains his own personal journey from atheism to faith, whilst providing a fascinating insight into the world of modern science, demonstrating how physics, chemistry, and biology, and even reason itself can be compatible with belief in God. I particularly enjoyed reading about how from his Human Genome experience, he sees our DNA as another form of God's instruction book, that we can also decipher to learn more about ourselves, and he sets out to explain genetics and DNA in an easy to understand message.

He writes with humility, grace and great authority from within his specialised field, firstly acknowledging and explaining where current

arguments for science and faith being incompatible are, before logically and clearly addressing the great questions of life, such as 'What is the origin of the universe?' and 'How is there life on earth?'

Inside as well as outside Christian circles, there is much debate relating to science and faith, and the issue of creation, evolution and faith is addressed head on, with Frances explaining commonly held views in relation to this, and gently discussing the actual evidence available that upholds, or reveals cracks within these, leaving the reader to process and make their own mind up.

His is a gentle, interesting and informative read, providing the reader with systematic, logically ordered facts, viewpoints, and considerations to understand, contemplate and ultimately come to their own conclusions of how compatible science and faith ultimately are. In my opinion, such rich knowledge and understanding on these issues can only be a good thing, and will help us engage in better informed conversations relating to science and faith with family, friends and colleagues.

*The Language of God; A scientist presents evidence for belief.* Frances Collins. 2007. ISBN-10: 1847390927 ISBN-13: 978-1847390929 Available on Amazon: New £5.53 Used £1.56 Kindle £5.99 <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Language-God-Scientist-Presents-Evidence/dp/1847390927>



# In memoriam

---



## Betty Howells (1926-2021)

Betty was born on the 22 November 1926, a daughter to David Oliver and Winifred Footman, the third of eight siblings. The family lived in Gorseinon initially before moving to Grovesend.



During the second World War her father built a bungalow at Penmaen and the whole family decamped to evade the bombing of Swansea. Betty had very fond memories of her childhood in Penmaen and liked to visit Three Cliffs as often as she could.

On the day of Betty's scholarship entry examination to Gowerton Grammar, she fainted as she was so nervous. She never sat the exam and went to the secondary Modern in Pontarddulais and after leaving school, she trained as a tailoress in Swansea.

She later was accepted at Swansea College of Art, where she became friendly with renowned local artist Vera Bassett and then took up a position as an Arts and Crafts teacher at Stella Maris Junior School.

She later met and married John Howells and they bought the family farm 'Whitley Fach,' where they raised four children, Isobel, Nicholas, Duncan and

the late Nigel. Due to John's poor health it was mainly Betty who carried out the duties of milking the herd of cows. Twice a day she would carry one hundred gallons of milk from the cowshed, across the yard to the dairy. Betty played a key part in the running of the farm. They were renowned for their 'Leucarum' Welsh ponies, attracting visitors from around the world, including Holland, Sweden, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands.

She was a devout Christian and a part of the Church family in St Michael's Church, Loughor for over fifty years.

## Dulcie Young

Dulcie Young, who died in August, was "supposed" to be an invalid! Lung problems from an early age were eventually diagnosed as Bronchiectasis, and never cured, but Dulcie rose to the challenge. Considered too delicate to sit the 11+ exam, she won a scholarship to Gregg's College, and later qualified through the NNEB scheme. She became a nanny in London, where she met George, her husband, who was a post-graduate student.

They returned to live locally, and Geoff and Nicola were born. Dulcie had many interests at home, but also as leader (Akela) of the local cub

scout pack, where her sister Gill was Bagheera. She was a regular at St David's Church, encouraging her family in that direction. Originally told she was unlikely to live into middle age or be able to work, she achieved 83 years, having worked as a Nursery Nurse in Gowerton Infants School, and later Casllwchwr nursery.

In retirement, she found new interests, including computing, Welsh classes, and the Nordic walking group. She delighted too in her family, which now includes five grandchildren, who are not the only people who continue to miss a very positive person.

## Margaret Demery (1933-2021)

Margaret and her twin brother, Peter, were born in Brynamlwg Road, Gorseinon on 10 September 1933 to parents Mary and John Howells. Her family also included her brother Bill, and sisters Sheila and Betty. As her twin, she had an especially strong bond with brother Peter.

Until the age of fourteen, she attended Loughor Girls' School and then her mother and father paid for her to attend Swansea Business College in Sketty where she learned to become a shorthand typist and book-keeper—something that put Margaret in good stead for the rest of her working career, and of which she was justifiably proud.

Her first job, at age fifteen, was as a receptionist before she joined Ambrose, Davies & Mathews shipping agent in Swansea where she was an accountant's assistant.

She first met David in 1952 at a dance at the Bryn Hall, Brynhyfryd. They married two years later, on 9 October 1954. For the next year they lived with David's sister, Edie, in Treboeth before setting up their own family home. In addition to a very good sense of humour, David had a lovely second bass voice and was a member of the Morryston Orpheus



Choir with whom he undertook international tours to the US, Canada and Germany.

In late 1955, they eventually moved to Bryneithin Road, Gorseinon. Susan was born shortly after in 1956, with Andrew and Beth following in 1960 and 1964 respectively.

The family were very much involved with the community through Margaret's love of the church and its various groups. They would always make a big effort on carnival day, with other family members traveling from Penlan just to dress up, hoping to win the prizes on offer. The family have many fond memories and photos of these events.

As soon as the children were old enough to 'more or less' fend for themselves, as Margaret put it, she went back to work. Firstly, as the Manager of the County Maid bread shop on High Street, Gorseinon and then Manager of the Co-op on Frampton Road. When back issues meant she could no longer cope with the heavy lifting needed to stock the shelves, she joined Lliw Valley Borough Council, a job she loved for the next 22 years. Margaret was a proud and confident woman and the family have heard many first-hand stories of how everyone knew not to mess with Margaret at work.

Unfortunately, David had a massive stroke at the age of forty-five. This resulted in the family moving to the house on Alexandra Road which would remain Margaret's home for the rest of her life. After much care from Margaret, sadly, David passed away in 1987.

In 1980, the first of five grandchildren arrived, and Margaret's new role as Nanna began. In 1994 the family's joy at the birth of Angharad was tempered by the news that Susan was already gravely ill with cancer to which she would succumb a year later. Margaret then dedicated herself to help raising Angharad and it brought her great comfort to see Angharad grow into the woman she is today.

As retirement approached, Margaret started to enjoy global travelling. Holidays with twin Peter and his wife, Yvonne, took her to many places she had only dreamed of including New Orleans, Nashville and Memphis. With friend Rene, she started cruising the oceans and saw a lot more of the world with Egypt and the Holy Land being



particular highlights. However, in her own words, 'the best of all' were the family holidays to Orlando and then to San Francisco.

Margaret loved all her family—children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren—and despite losses and struggles never did she let it slow her down, she was a strong woman who the family have learned so much from and will appreciate the love that she gave them for evermore.

## Mervin Morgan (1942-2021)

Mervin was born on 1 January 1942 in Pontarddulais, the only son to Katherine and Thomas Morgan. He attended school locally and then progressed to Gowerton Boys Grammar School before studying Chemistry at Birmingham University.

After graduating, he secured a job with the Steel Company of Wales in Ebbw Vale before transferring to the Group office in Felindre. He cared for his parents through ill health, and when they died he decided to retire. Soon afterwards he took up golf, eventually becoming the Captain of Allt y Graban Golf Club.

It was at a bridge night in the Golf Club that Mervin met Brenda. They got chatting and realised that they had a number of mutual friends. A romance soon blossomed and within a year, on 20 April 2002, they married at St John's Church in Gowerton. After getting married, they lived in Church Street in Gowerton before moving to Loughor Road in Gorseinon in 2007, and that's where they've lived ever since.

They enjoyed a honeymoon on a cruise along the Mediterranean, meeting friends from Pontarddulais onboard. Over the years, they've enjoyed a number of cruises, including to the Caribbean, where they enjoyed swimming in the warm waters.

When they married, Brenda feared that it would be a terrific change for Mervin, but he took to married life like a natural, developing a close relationship with his four step-sons, Simon, Alex, Paul and Edward. They all loved him and he was their best friend. In the fullness of time, he was

grandad to Luke, Cora, Will and Alex.

It was Mervin who introduced Brenda to golf, and they enjoyed playing at Allt y Graban, and at Fairwood, a nice flat course that was easy to walk. They enjoyed playing bridge and whist, and they also enjoyed playing bowls for Blue Anchor in Penclawdd, and for St Catherine's indoor bowls too.

Mervin and Brenda always enjoyed playing Scrabble and various card games together, and when they were on holiday they would always keep a score so that there was always a winner and a loser by the end of their break.

A lovely man, so considerate and always with a smile on his face, Mervin was always thinking of others and Brenda feels so lucky to have met him.

## Rhiannon Jones (1922-2021)

Rhiannon Jones was born on 19 October 1922, a daughter to Shink and Flori. She had a very happy childhood in Bryntwyod, Llangyfelach with her parents, grandparents and younger sister, Margaret.

There were a number of other relatives in the village—including 'the aunties', her father's five sisters who were living at Llan Cottage—and she always felt very loved and nurtured in the church and community there. The Church in Llangyfelach was a big part of her life, where her father was Church Warden, and where he rang the bells.

After recovering from severe illness, rheumatoid arthritis, in her teens Rhiannon attended Gregg's College, where she did a secretarial course and later had variety of jobs in this area. She was also in the first group of volunteer nurses at Morriston Hospital in the Second World War.

Rhiannon met Dennis in February 1941 when she went for an interview in Darren Colliery during the week of Swansea Blitz. Rhiannon secured the job in the Colliery, and when Dennis—then serving in the RAF—wrote to the office, the colliery owner asked Rhiannon to keep in touch with him on their behalf. A romance soon blossomed and they eventually got married on 6 October 1949 at Llangyfelach Church.

The couple later moved to Morrision, where their daughter, Anne, was born in 1954, and two years later they moved to Gorseinon, first to Alexandra Road and then to Maes y Coed, where Rhiannon has lived ever since. Rhiannon was well known by the neighbours, always making sure that new residents were welcomed with a card, or that there was a gift when a new baby arrived. They were all planning, and looking forward to her one hundredth birthday.

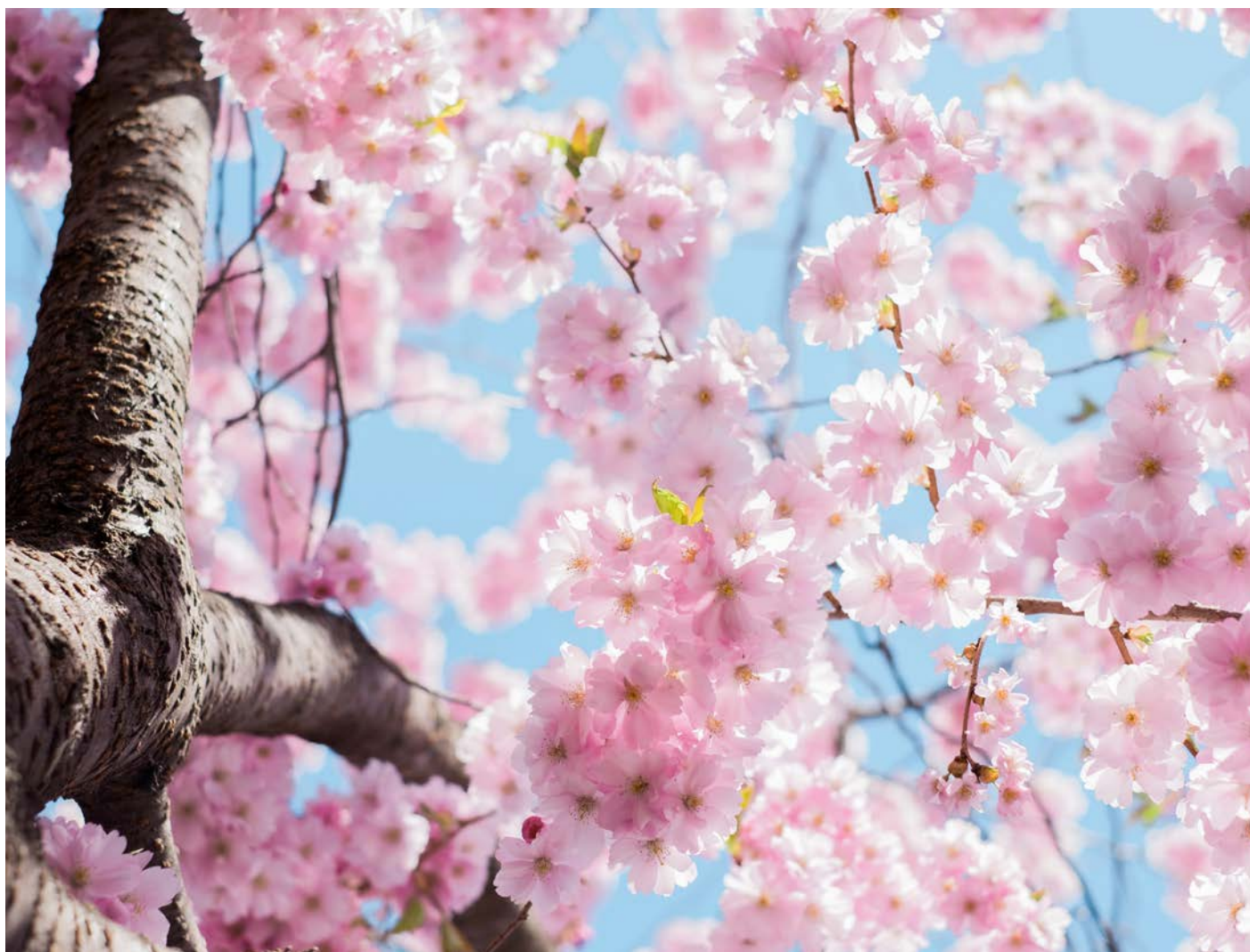
Anne had a happy childhood. Family and friends were always made very welcome at the house and that element of hospitality continued right throughout Rhiannon's life. Although Anne was an only child, she never felt lonely because the house was always full of friends and relatives. Anyone who visited was invited in for tea and there were always copious amounts of homemade Welsh cakes and other treats on offer.

Rhiannon always enjoyed being part of the church community. Mothers' Union was very important to her and she also enjoyed an active time in Townswomen's Guild. She loved gardening and knitting and always kept herself busy.

She returned to work full-time in the late '60s, working first in Bynea, then in the office at C.E.M. Days. Her last job was in Lliw Valley Council Offices, where she worked as a Rates Rebate Clerk.

She was a much-loved mother-in-law to the late Stuart and a wonderful grandma to the late Mathew.

The last ten years had been difficult, but Rhiannon would always try to be cheerful and put on a brave face. Rhiannon enjoyed a laugh, a joke and was even texting on her telephone right up to the very end of her life.





**David Hitchings & Sons**  
*Independent Funeral Directors*

34 Frampton Road,  
Gorseinon,  
Swansea SA4 4XY

Tel: 01792 897323  
Email: davidhitchings@hotmail.co.uk



34 Frampton Road, Gorseinon, Swansea  
Tel: (01792) 897323 Mobile: 07890 100078  
Email: jhmemorials@gmail.com

New Memorials, Cremation Tablets, Vases & Renovation

**Rebecca Evans MS / AS**

**Assembly Member for Gower**  
**Aelod Cynulliad dros Gŵyr**

9 Pontardulais Road, Gorseinon, Swansea, SA4 4FE  
9 Heol Pontarddulais, Gorseinon, Abertawe, SA4 4FE  
rebecca.evans@cynulliad.cymru/rebecca.evans@assembly.wales  
01792 899 081 www.rebeccaevansam.com



Labour Llafur

**SEAGERS**  
Restaurants

**Y BRYNGWYN**

Pwll, Llanelli  
SA15 4DY  
01554 741117

**THE GRILLHOUSE**

Wunarlwydd, Swansea  
SA5 4TR  
01792 879966

**SEAGERS @ No1 HIGH STREET**

Gorseinon

www.seagers.wales



**COMPASS**  
will writers



**Lasting Powers of Attorney**  
**Probate**  
**Wills**

**Telephone: 01792 893200**  
**www.compass-advisors.co.uk**  
77 High Street, Gorseinon, Swansea, SA4 4BL

# Anthony Inkin & Paul Deans

Funeral Directors and Monumental Masons



- Over 30 years experience
  - Private Chapel
  - 24 Hour Service
- Pre-Paid Funeral Plans
  - Helpful Support & Advice Day or Night

Gorseinon 01792 897710  
Pontarddulais 01792 886600  
Penclawdd 01792 851451

*An independent family owned business.  
Serving the local community.*  
[www.inkinanddeans.co.uk](http://www.inkinanddeans.co.uk)



Family Butchers and Poulterers  
Cigyddion Teuluol  
a Gwerthwyr Dofednod

## David Richards

17 Alexandra Road  
Gorseinon  
01792 892880

### "Siaradir Cymraeg yma"

Quality

•  
Friendly Service

•  
Civility

**Home Instead SENIOR CARE**  
*To us, it's personal.*

IT'S NOT WORKING, IT'S  
**CARING**  
WITH HOME INSTEAD...

"Working for Home Instead Senior Care has been **amazing!** I never knew working in the care industry would be so much **fun.** I have met so many **great people** and the hours fit **perfectly** around my studies and social life."

- EXCELLENT TRAINING
- MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO OLDER PEOPLE'S LIVES
- GREAT RATES OF PAY
- FLEXIBLE HOURS

#YOU CAN CARE

Find out more  
07772 797328  
[homeinstead.co.uk/swanse](http://homeinstead.co.uk/swanse)

Each Home Instead Senior Care® Branch office is independently owned and operated. Copyright ©14

## Tonia Antoniazzi MP

*Member of Parliament for Gower*



### My contact and office details

#### Address / Cyfeiriad:

17 West Street, Gorseinon, Swansea, SA4 4AA

**Email / E-bost :** [tonia.antoniazzi.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:tonia.antoniazzi.mp@parliament.uk)

**Phone Number / Rhif Ffôn :**  
01792 899025

#### Website / Gwefan :

[www.toniaantoniazzi.co.uk](http://www.toniaantoniazzi.co.uk)



@Tonia4Gower



@toniaantoniazzi

My Constituency office is open for caseworker drop in Sessions every Monday to Thursday, between 10am and 12pm. You don't need to book an appointment!

**Gweithio'n galed dros Gŵyr**  
*Working hard for Gower*



# Join us in our Weekly Worship

## St Catherine's Gorseinon

10.00am Sunday

10.30am Wednesday

## St David's Loughor

3.00pm Sunday

10.30am Thursday

*For more information on our weekly events and other activities, please visit our website [www.stcath.org.uk](http://www.stcath.org.uk) where you will find the latest details.*

 [www.stcath.org.uk](http://www.stcath.org.uk)

 [/stcathgorseinon](https://www.facebook.com/stcathgorseinon)

 [@stcathgorseinon](https://twitter.com/stcathgorseinon)

 [stcathgorseinon](https://www.instagram.com/stcathgorseinon)



### Do you share our vision?

- I would like to meet with a member of the team.
- I would like to know more about what's going on in the Parish of Casllwchwr & Gorseinon
- I would like to get involved.
- I would like to subscribe to this Vision magazine.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this slip to: St Catherine's Church, Alexandra Road, Gorseinon, SA4 4AF*