



# TEULU ASAPH

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CONNECTING OUR DIOCESAN FAMILY

**HAF 2025 | SUMMER 2025**



**Cyfarfod ag aelodau o'r  
Teulu Brenhinol**

**Deng mlynedd o Ardaloedd  
Cenhadaeth**

**Meeting with  
Royalty**

**10 Years of  
Mission Areas**

**AM DDIM | FREE**



## FROM THE EDITOR

**Welcome to the summer edition of our St Asaph diocesan magazine, *Teulu Asaph*.** In this issue we're marking ten years of Mission Areas! Our starting point is a document written in 2015 which describes life in our churches in 2020. All will become clear (I hope) as you read the reflections on the progress of Mission Areas on pages 4, 5 and 10.

*Teulu Asaph* is looking ahead too through an interview with the diocese's first Pioneer Missioner. You can read her plans for wild creativity and holy surprises on page 8. Plus, there's plenty of news from across the diocese throughout this edition.

You might be noticing that *Teulu Asaph* looks a little different. That's because we've changed the font in

response to feedback over accessibility. Hopefully the new look is clearer and makes the articles easier to read. Do let me know what you think!

Please send me your news, articles and photographs for the Autumn edition. You can find the deadline date for submissions below, and details of how to reach me are just here.



*Karen*

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Cover image: St Ethelwold's Church in Wales pupil, Harper Taylor, presenting a posy to the Princess of Wales. See page 6 for the full story. Photo credit: Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey

© Diocese of St Asaph 2025 *Teulu Asaph* is edited by Karen Maurice, designed by Daydream Designs and printed by Harlequin Printing and Packaging. The deadline for content and images for the next edition is Monday 28 July 2025. Please send copy and high-quality images to karenmaurice@cinw.org.uk for inclusion. While we welcome all contributions, unfortunately we are not able to print everything.







## GAIR GAN YR ESGOB



## BISHOP'S WORD

### Edrych Yn Ôl, Symud Ymlaen

**Yn 2015, lluniodd yr esgobaeth ddogfen yn “edrych yn ôl” o 2020. Ynnddi, fe wnaethom ni geisio rhagweld bywyd yn yr esgobaeth yn 2020 pe baem yn cymryd argymhellion Adroddiad Harries o ddifrif ac yn sefydlu Ardaloedd Cenhadaeth. Prin y gallem fod wedi rhagweld cythrwfl 2020 a Covid. Fodd bynnag, o edrych ar y ddogfen bron ddeng mlynedd yn ddiweddarach, mi ddywedwn i ein bod wedi cyflawni llawer o’r hyn yr oeddem yn gobeithio amdano yn y ddogfen honno.**

Fy nheimlad i yw bod Ardaloedd Cenhadaeth wedi gwreiddio yn yr esgobaeth. Mae gennym ugain o ardaloedd cenhadaeth, a phob un yn unigryw yn y ffordd y mae’n rhoi ein galwad gyffredin ar waith. Fodd bynnag, mae eglwysï’n cydweithredu ac yn gweithio fel un yn wyneb yr heriau sydd o’n blaenau ac, yn bwysicach fyth, yn cydweithio wrth genhadu ac estyn allan. Mae Timau Gweinidogaeth ar y Cyd yn gweithio gyda’i gilydd i’n bywiocáu.

Rydym bob amser yn poeni am arian, ond y gwir amdani yw ein bod yn gwneud yn well nag yr ydym ni’n ei gyfaddef wrthym ein hunain. Fodd bynnag, does arnaf i ddim eisiau dibrisio ymdrechion gwirioneddol pobl yn y maes hwn – diolch.

Yn bwysicaf oll, mae’n ymddangos ein bod ni’n gwybod beth yw’n pwrpas – rhannu sut i ddilyn Iesu, a sut mae ffydd yn arwain at fywyd cyflawn. Yn ddiweddar, bûm mewn dau wasanaeth Conffyrmasiwn arbennig, gydag ymgeiswyr o bob oed a chefnidir. Mi wnaethon nhw greu argraff fawr arna i. Mae Duw yn dal i alw pobl i’w wasanaethu. Awgrym hyn i gyd yw ein bod ni’n tyfu o dan arweiniad Duw, a bod Duw yn ein bendithio. Rwy’n llawenhau yn hyn, ac yn y bywyd sydd gennym yn gyffredin. I Dduw y bo’r diolch!

### Looking Back, Moving Forward

**In 2015, the diocese produced a document “looking back” from 2020. In it, we projected what life would be like in the diocese in 2020 if we took the recommendations of the Harries Report to heart and completed the implementation of Mission Areas. Little did we suspect the upheavals of 2020 and Covid. However, looking at this document nearly ten years on now, I would say that we have achieved a lot of what we hoped for in that document.**

My sense is that Mission Areas have bedded down in the diocese. We have 20 Mission Areas, and each one is distinctive in the way it lives out our common calling. However, churches are co-operating and taking a united front in the face of the challenges before us, and, more importantly, co-operating in mission and outreach. Shared Ministry Teams are working together to energise our life.

Money is a perennial worry, but the fact is that we’re doing better than we tell ourselves. However, I don’t wish to underestimate the very real efforts that people are making on this front – thank you.

Most importantly, we seem to know what we’re about – sharing how to follow Jesus, and how faith brings fullness of life. Recently, I have had two significant Confirmation services, with candidates of all ages and backgrounds. These candidates were so impressive. Vocations continue to flourish. All this suggests that, under God, we are growing, and that God is blessing us. I rejoice in this, and in our common life. Thanks be to God!



## Ten Years of Mission Areas

Ten years ago, churches across the diocese were forming into Mission Areas. Some, like Mold Mission Area, are celebrating their 10th birthday this year. Others, like churches around Ruthin, started operating as a Mission Area from 2013. As more Mission Areas were formed, a series of toolkits were provided to guide churches through the process. Within the second toolkit was a document from Bishop Gregory called *A Retrospective Document, looking back from 2020*. In it, he “gave a picture of the diocese as we hope we will have become”. *Teulu Asaph* invited people from across the diocese to revisit this document and reflect on ten years of Mission Areas. Here are the **Revd Canon Martin Batchelor, Mold Mission Hub Leader’s** reflections.

It is fascinating to re-read the Retrospective, looking back on our then strategy of *Unlocking our Potential*. It’s easy to forget how much changed in the decade before 2020 and, since then, how much society and church have undergone further changes and faced new challenges.



**Shared Ministry Team, Mold Mission Area, 2024.**

I came to this diocese in 2000 and even then St Asaph had a reputation in the Church in Wales for being one of life, faith and willingness to grasp a vision. Not long after I arrived, the Province produced what was known as *the green paper* which was meant to herald radical change. Instead, it introduced a new way for dioceses to be funded through the block grant but did little to offer substantial change. What became apparent however, was that change was necessary and here in St Asaph we began those conversations well before the Harries Report came out in 2012. There was, I remember, a lot of honesty of how clergy and congregations were feeling, and a recognition that we needed to rise to the challenge. The priority was not finance but growing the church and supporting clergy well-being.



**Commissioning Mold Mission Area, 2015**

Diocesan structures began to change. The Standing Committee became more robust and Area Deans started talking about how ministry could be shared. All this took place before 2012, so when the Harries Report came out we were well placed to respond. We were clear however that what the report called Ministry Areas we would call Mission Areas. Mission and nurturing discipleship were at the centre of their purpose and the name sought to reflect this.

However, to get Mission Areas to work meant looking at whether the current deaneries fitted an area. I was Area Dean of Hawarden at the time, and it was decided in 2014 to hold a three-deanery meeting with Hawarden, Mold and Holywell to see if boundaries and communities fitted. Eventually all three deaneries became Mission Areas but with some changes, particularly in Hawarden and Mold. In Hawarden (renamed Borderlands) we recognised that things might change again and in 2024, Borderlands became two Mission Areas: Deeside and Rhos a Mynydd.

Despite the challenges and even failures, the whole development since 2012 has seen some great things happening, particularly in ministry development and taking on new mission opportunities. I think we need to learn from our mistakes and continue to pray and discern the future. There are things we have not fully addressed and maybe we need to revisit them. However, I do think we are in a far better place than we were.



**Mold Mission Hub Church Team, 2022.**



**Suzanne Wardell is the Lay Mission Area Leader of Cedewain Mission Area.** She took up the post in 2020 and reflects on the creation of Mission Areas.

Do you ever wake up and think, "Why?", or even, "How did I end up as .....(fill in as appropriate)?" I've asked myself both questions many times, particularly in relation to becoming a Mission Area Leader (MAL)!

While I was not the first lay leader in the diocese, lay leadership was not common. I was licensed in 2020 and at that time one of the greatest hurdles to overcome was the practicality of having a job description – there wasn't one. The nearest we had was the job description of a Rural Dean, which, for obvious reasons, wasn't ideal and wasn't reflective of the role of a MAL. But what was the role of a MAL? As no-one could actually tell me, I decided that I would have to 'wing it', and in many ways, I'm still 'winging it'.



**Cedewain MA Safari Lunch**

It's hard to think back to how things were before the creation of MAs. But what is still very clear in my memory is the suspicion; the sense of loss of power and the confusion that happened during the transition. At the time, I attended a small rural church, and collectively we had no idea about what was happening. We worried about no longer being a parish church, and were concerned that the church's money could be used by others in the new Mission Area. Looking back now, I can see that the handling of this huge change in status of these churches was not done brilliantly, communication being the main issue.

For the first few years of being an MA, there was a great deal of bureaucracy, changes to peoples' roles and a lot of misunderstanding amongst the congregations. It has taken many years to establish and nurture the



**Open the Book Team**

'one-ness' of a MA. Slowly, the benefits have begun to become apparent, and the sense of 'we're all in this together' has strengthened.

Currently, the problems of aging congregations, falling numbers and consequently financial concerns are uppermost in peoples' minds. There is no doubt that a MA structure has come at a financial cost, with centralised roles requiring professional admin staff. Add into this the fact that these professionals are working with a volunteer workforce, and it can cause tensions.

But it is NOT all bad news or hard work. To me the magic word here is mission – a term not commonly used before the creation of MAs. In fact, there were many meetings with churches where I had to explain the meaning of mission! The move away from simply counting how many were in church on a Sunday and how much collection was taken, to what do we, as Christians, 'do' in our communities on a daily basis has seen so many projects created: projects which have touched the lives of so many. I'd like to think that as a MA we now live in a kinder, more thoughtful and more Christian place. Of course, our acts of worship in church are important, but there is so much more we can do as God's people, regardless of what that structure is called.

Would I recommend the role of MAL to someone?

Hmmm... ask me again in another 10 years!!



**Lunch Soup Lunch, All Saints Newtown.**



## Meeting the Princess of Wales... and unexpectedly, the King!

**A Church in Wales School in Shotton was selected to attend the Commonwealth Day Service at Westminster Abbey in March. Two members of staff from St Ethelwold's VA School took three pupils to London for the day, with one of them, nine-year-old Harper Taylor, given the special task of presenting a posy to the Princess of Wales. For head teacher, Paul Oliver, and school secretary, Leanne Duggan, it was an "honour and privilege" to attend. Here's a snapshot of their special day.**

The day started early for Dawid Hajdecki, Vanessa Kopacz and Harper Taylor with a train journey to London. It was the first time any of them had been to London and they all commented on how busy and crowded it was! After a ride on the London Underground to Westminster, the first landmark they spotted was the London Eye. "It was GIGANTIC," said Vanessa. "There were tonnes of people in the pods and they looked TINY from where we were standing!" "The London Eye was my favourite," said Dawid, "because it was so big!"

Inside Westminster Abbey, the group had to wait a long time for proceedings to begin but they had front row seats and once the service got underway, there was plenty to keep them occupied. Members of the Royal Family processed past them, there were Masai dancers and a performance from Joan Armatrading, amongst much more. Harper describes herself as being "nervous" as she waited for the service to begin, "because" she said, "I was trying to imagine what it was going to be like" presenting the posy to Princess Catherine. This happened immediately after the service.

Harper was waiting at the door of Westminster Abbey. She said: "My favourite part of the day, without a doubt, was presenting Princess Catherine with a posy. I only learned how to curtsy that day so that part was difficult, but she was lovely to me and we had a good chat about where I had come from and about the service. When the King walked out, he shook my hand. I wasn't expecting that and I didn't tell my teachers until the next day!"

"This was the most amazing school trip I have ever been on. My parents saw us on TV and they were so proud of me. I am proud of myself."

While the group were attending the service in London, the rest of the school back in Shotton were able to watch the service live on the BBC.

Thinking back over the day, the headteacher, Paul Oliver, said: "It was both an honour and privilege to take our pupils to The Commonwealth Day Service. It made me appreciate the incredible effort that our school community makes to give our pupils an incredible wealth of experience. Special praise to our secretary, Mrs Duggan, who took a punt on applying for tickets which resulted in front row seats and one of our pupils presenting a posy to The Princess of Wales. Memories are made of this."

You can find out more about the Commonwealth Day service at  
<https://thecommonwealth.org/commonwealth-day>





## New Priests and Deacons

Five new deacons and one new priest will be ordained by the Bishop of St Asaph this year. The service at St Asaph Cathedral will take place on Saturday 28 June at 10am and is open to everyone. The **Revd Pam Hallam** will be ordained as a priest and will continue to serve in Offa Mission Area.

The following people will be ordained deacon:

- **David Dobbs** to serve in the Estuary and Mountain Mission Area
- **Jampa King** to serve in the Dyffryn Clwyd Mission Area
- **Sharon Morgan** to serve in Hope Street
- **Ian Williams** to serve in the Estuary and Mountain Mission Area
- **Glyn Wise** to serve in the Aled Mission Area.



## Goodbye to Mike Peters MBE

The Church of St Bridget and St Cwyfan in Dyserth hosted the funeral of *The Alarm* frontman Mike Peters MBE, last month. Thousands gathered from around the world to pay tribute to the Dyserth-born musician, with the road outside the church closed to accommodate the crowds. The service was taken by the Revd Gregor Lachlann-Wadell with access to the church by invitation only. It's the second high-profile funeral held in the diocese in recent months. In January, the Revd Jayne Coxall, officiated at the funeral of James Lee Williams, better known as drag queen, The Vivienne.



## Congratulations to Newtown Architect

The architect behind the re-ordering of All Saints Church in Newtown has received a highly commended in The Church Architecture Awards. Charles Cowan thoroughly re-ordered the church and rebuilt a modern extension. His work resulted in "a warm and welcoming space which retains a sense of quiet spirituality and provides a new community focus for this part of mid-Wales", wrote the judges. Congratulations to Charles.

## Choir Trip to Finland

Young choristers from St Asaph Cathedral travelled to Finland in May for a concert tour and cultural exchange. Almost 30 young people from across northeast Wales performed in the iconic Helsinki Cathedral as part of the trip which celebrated the link between the Dioceses of St Asaph and Helsinki.

In addition, they took part in a choir workshop alongside Finnish young people, performed in local churches and visited sites of interest around Helsinki. More than £20,000 was raised in local sponsorship to ensure the trip was affordable for the young choristers. At the same time, the Archdeacon of Wrexham, Hayley Matthews, and the Diocesan Secretary, Olwen Lintern-Smyth, visited churches and community projects across Helsinki.





## Wild Worship and Holy Surprises – the Hopes of our First Pioneer Missioner

Earlier this year, the first of three Pioneer Mission Priests was appointed. The **Revd Helen Dawson** is beginning work in the Caereinion Mission Area. The Revd Dr Cass Meurig Thomas has recently been appointed to Tanat-Vyrnwy Mission Area and a third Pioneer will be recruited for Valle Crucis Mission Area. As Helen embarks on this new role, *Teulu Asaph* asked for her thoughts on life as a pioneer missioner in the muddy, marvellous margins of Wales.

I never thought I'd end up here, preparing to pioneer in rural mid-Wales, armed with my camping kit, a deep suspicion of the crow that taps on my bedroom window, and a roomful of crafting goodies, but here I am... middle-aged, menopausal, and full of a wild hope that God is doing something good, even in me!

This kind of ministry isn't flashy. It's slow, seasonal, and surprisingly sacred. It's about having an amble (I don't walk faster than this) and bumping into God on the lane. It's about showing up to the livestock auction or summer fair with no agenda other than to listen, to love. It's about watching God's grace flourish in places and people.



### Why does this form of ministry appeal to you?

Because it honours mystery, relationship, and more importantly, God's timing, not mine. I feel that it makes room for real life. As a divorced mum, I know what it is to live in the mess and the muddle, to carry heartbreak and still need to prepare dinner. I don't necessarily need a polished pulpit; but sitting with God who sits with us when the rain is horizontal, that's where I can be. This kind of ministry doesn't ask me to be perfect, it asks me to be faithful. It gives me space to bring all of who I am...fat, funny, flawed...and still be a vessel of grace.

### What sort of events or ways of being church are you thinking or praying about?

I'm praying about creating spaces where people feel safe enough to be spiritually curious. I'm dreaming of wild worship. Not wild as in chaotic, but wild as in rooted in creation. Church under the trees, prayers-by-firelight, communion-by-picnic and a handful of friends on a hilltop. I'm interested in hospitality, in the sacred strength of being seen, fed, and invited to belong. Holy things have the space to happen when people feel safe and loved, I just want to make space for that.







### How are you getting to know the communities?

With a decent pair of boots, a flask of tea, an open heart, and being where the stories are. I'm trying to say yes to most things, even if I don't know what it is. Lambing? Yes. Zumba night? Yes. Coffee morning where I eat more than I contribute? Absolutely! I ask questions. I listen to the stories people tell, I try to show up regularly enough that I'll stop being "the new lady from the church" and start being "our vicar, Helen."

### Where are you seeing glimpses of what God is already doing?

I'm seeing God in the quiet care neighbours show one another, in the resilience of communities that rally in times of need, and in unexpected moments of spiritual openness. Sometimes it's a simple question someone asks, or the way a story is told with more hope than despair. God is already here, in the ordinary holiness of rural life; and part of my calling is to name and nurture those signs in ways that more traditional forms of church may not have the space to do so.

### How does your role fit with existing churches?

I see us as different threads in the same tapestry. It's not an either/or role, but more of a both/and. I'm here to reach the people who wouldn't dream of sitting in a pew

on a Sunday morning but might say yes to a barbecue, or a walk, or a nature night (bats!). The traditional churches hold stability and the sacred rhythms; pioneering adds a bit of wild creativity; a willingness to experiment, to risk ideas and perhaps even to fail, but still try again.

### What are you most looking forward to in this approach to mission?

The holy surprises. The times someone says, I'm not religious, but... and something sacred comes out. I'm looking forward to the shared stories, and the kind of worship that doesn't need a roof to be real. I'm looking forward to the laughter, the awkward silences, the companionship, because in my experience that's where the Holy Spirit often moves. Not in the fireworks, but in the slow steady burn which warms the soul. I'm looking forward to deep relationship and shared purpose. And honestly? I'm looking forward to not having to pretend. I'm not a young, hip church planter. I'm a Welsh vicar with hot flushes, a dodgy ankle, and a deep love for God's people; and maybe, just maybe, that's exactly what's needed.





## Ten Years of Mission Areas

One of the most recent arrivals in the diocese is **the Director of Transforming Ministry, the Revd Mike Haslam**. He was working in the Church of England when the Diocese of St Asaph was forming Mission Areas ten years ago. Having taken up his post in Wales in November 2024, Mike offers his observations on Mission Areas.

Hope and vulnerability, excitement and despondency, growth and a struggle for survival. In my first six months as Director of Transforming Ministry in the Diocese of St Asaph, I have seen all of this and more. I've been privileged to travel to the four borders and the four corners of the diocese and many places in-between and to listen to fellow members of the Teulu Asaph.

Vulnerability and hope are words which have travelled with me for a long time, and I have found them here too. In a village or estate where the pub, the school and the shop have all closed, why are we surprised that the church is also struggling to survive, as the roof feels as if it's falling in (physically and spiritually)? Vulnerability is a lived reality for us, personally, as churches and communities.

I also know that the Diocese and Mission Area can sometimes feel like an administrative and financial burden. I hope and believe that we can be a blessing as well. I certainly believe that the Diocesan and Mission Area structure sustains prayer, worship and mission in communities where it wouldn't otherwise be possible. We can still sometimes be too clerical, too hierarchical, too drawn to spend time on 'planet church'. We can still struggle to have the energy, time and confidence to live and share faith in our communities. Yet, like all churches

and all dioceses, we are a work in progress. Wherever I go, I meet people who want to explore the next steps and that gives me great hope.

There are villages where over 10% of the population are members of the church. To me, these are big churches and full of hope and potential, even if there are only 15 people in the congregation. In urban and rural communities I have seen people who are full of faith, hope and love, and want, by God's grace, to do a new thing. I've seen work with our amazing church and community schools, with social and environmental justice, and with chaplaincy. I have seen people who continue to faithfully pray and seek God's will. I have seen a wonderful growth of discipleship and lay ministry and leadership. At the time of writing there are 19 people who believe that God is calling them to be ordained, and I hear from new people almost every week. Out of all of this faith, hope and love, I see churches growing, spiritually and numerically, and communities being transformed.

We don't exist for our own sake. We exist to worship and serve God and to live and share our faith, that God's Kingdom might come on earth as it is in heaven. Thanks be to God.



If you'd like to explore the next steps for mission and ministry in your Mission Area, please get in touch with me on [mikehaslam@cinw.org.uk](mailto:mikehaslam@cinw.org.uk). It would be good to meet and work with you.







**As we enter the summer season, our Diocesan Rural Affairs Advisor, the Revd Hermione Morris, reflects on her year so far and lists some training opportunities coming up.**

At the end of March, the Provincial team of Rural Life Advisors had an opportunity to spend time with the full-time students at St Padarn's Theological College in Cardiff, exploring what ministry in a rural context may look like. It was a joy to share with them the all-encompassing breadth and depth of ministering in rural communities and churches. We were overjoyed that the majority already had experience in this context and hope that we were able to offer some fresh perspectives and enthusiasm.

One of the key messages was that rurality is not simply about the agricultural sector. While it remains the backbone in many rural locations, it is no longer the beating heart of some communities, as it was previously. As we continue to see farmers protesting about the legislative changes being introduced, please be praying for this sector. They are dealing with these proposed changes and other concerns, such as the cost-of-living crisis, bovine Tb, other animal diseases, environmental schemes, and increasing levels of deteriorating mental health.

You may wish to think of simple ways of communicating your support and prayers to farming families in your Mission Area.

### Rural Mission Sunday

Rural Mission Sunday is a good opportunity to celebrate the wider rural community by holding an event sometime over the coming months. It is often celebrated on the third Sunday of July but can be moved to another week to better suit your community. Your celebration could be a special service or other event, or something as simple as a 'thank you' mailout/social media post. Do whatever helps you and your community celebrate all that is good about churches and communities in rural locations, including the opportunities God faithfully provides for us to share His Gospel, and come alongside people on their journeys through life.

There is so much good happening in the rural communities and churches in the *Teulu Asaph* – let's celebrate it and encourage ourselves and others in the process. If you have a story to tell from your church or Mission Area, please do send it to the editor of *Teulu Asaph* for inclusion in future editions and/or for the Diocesan website.

### Forthcoming Courses

- 24-25 September 2025: **Rural Mission and Ministry Course** organised by the Arthur Rank Centre. Details at [www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk](http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk)
- 20-21 October 2025: **Rural Ministry Conference** to be run by St Padarn's Theological College at The Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells. If you're interested in attending, please put the date in your diary now, and further information will follow.



## Brymbo'n ymuno i nodi 80 Mlwyddiant Diwrnod VE yn Wrecsam

Gwahoddwyd plant Cyfnod Allweddol 2, Ysgol y Santes Fair, ysgol yr Eglwys yng Nghymru ym Mrymbo, i Eglwys San Silyn, Wrecsam ar gyfer gwasanaeth i ddathlu 80 mlwyddiant Diwrnod VE.

Wedyn, cawsant eu croesawu a'u tywys o gwmpas Wrecsam gan y Dirprwy Faer a mwynhau'r dathliadau a'r orymdaith yn y ddinas.

## Brymbo join VE Day Anniversary in Wrexham

Children in Key Stage 2 from St Mary's Church in Wales School in Brymbo were invited to St Giles' Church in Wrexham for a service to celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day. Afterwards they enjoyed the parade celebrations in Wrexham city centre, in the company of the Deputy Mayor who greeted them and escorted them around the city.



## Hwdis Gadael Blwyddyn 6

Cynhaliodd disgyblion Blwyddyn 5/6 yn Ysgol y Santes Fair, Brymbo, ddigwyddiad ar gyfer cymuned yr ysgol i godi arian i brynu hwdis i'r disgyblion sy'n gadael eleni. Bu'r plant yn gweithio mewn grwpiau i greu busnes a chawsant £5 yr un i gychwyn eu menter. Roedd yr ymgyrch godi arian yn llwyddiant gan godi dros £300!

## Leavers' Hoodies

Year 5/6 pupils at St Mary's in Brymbo held an event for the school community to raise funds to buy Leavers' hoodies. Children worked in groups to create a business and were given £5 each to kickstart their enterprise. The fundraising was a success with more than £300 raised!



## Bedydd i Blant Meithrin

Mae plant meithrin Ysgol Madras, Llannerch Banna, wedi bod yn dysgu am ddigwyddiadau arbennig a gynhelir mewn eglwysi, yn enwedig bedyddiadau. Ym mis Mawrth, aeth y plant i'r eglwys i fedyddio dwy ddol y dosbarth: Megan Jane a Daniel Peter. Esboniodd y Tad Jeremy Dussek wrth y plant beth sy'n digwydd wrth fedyddio babi. Taenellodd ddŵr o'r bedyddfaen ar bennau'r doliau a defnyddiodd olew arbennig i wneud arwydd y groes ar eu talcen. Wedyn aeth y plant yn ôl i'r ysgol am barti.

## Nursery Christenings

The nursery children at Madras School in Penley have been finding out about special events that happen in a church, in particular christenings and baptisms. In March, the class went to the church to christen their two class dolls: Megan Jane and Daniel Peter. Father Jeremy Dussek explained to the children what happens when a baby is christened. He poured water from the font over their heads and used special oil to make the sign of the cross on their forehead. Afterwards, the children went back to school for a party.







## The Parson's Field – Maes y Parson



**In 2018, an opportunity emerged to create a community garden on land close to the Rectory in the village of Tregynon in the Cedwain Mission Area. As [Suzanne Wardell, the Mission Area Leader](#), explains, it's a simple idea which is really bringing the community together.**

Historically, The Parson's Field belonged to the Rectory in Tregynon. Part of the field was sold to the Local Education Authority to build a new school in the 1990s. This left a parcel of land still in the ownership of the Representative Body of the Church in Wales (RB). Over the years it became derelict and, frankly, an eyesore in the middle of the village. In 2018, Powys County Council (PCC) and the RB sought village ideas as to what to do with it, as it couldn't be used for housing development. From this, the seeds of an idea were sown – What about a community garden?

The church of St Cynon stands across the road from the land, and a group of church members put forward a proposal to the RB to create a community garden. After all the legalities were agreed – a lease was created with the Mission Area and RB, a management committee was formed and planning permission was sought and granted for a change of use – work started. The management committee was made up of church members, a school governor, an ex-county councillor and members of Tregynon community. Funding was given by PCC's Fund for Nature and donations, and alongside Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust and other partners, the volunteers began to create a green space in the heart of the village.

Four years on, and the garden is really taking shape. There are fruit trees, raised beds, a flower border, picnic

tables, compost bins, sheds, memorial trees for the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee and King Charles' Coronation, a wild-flower meadow, a willow arbour and a pebble pond. The space is used for church events – the Dawn Service for Easter Day has been held three times there – plant swaps, digging days, village events – including picnics, a lantern festival, wassailing – and for the second year it will be part of the National Garden Scheme open gardens, raising money for health charities.

This garden brings people together. The volunteers who tend to it come to work, spend time with each other over tea and biscuits, make new friends, but also to enjoy God's creation.

If you are thinking of starting a community garden, and think you could benefit from the experience gained from The Parson's Field people, please feel free to email [suzannewardell@cinw.org.uk](mailto:suzannewardell@cinw.org.uk) for a chat.



St Asaph is encouraging all churches to become eco churches. You can register and start taking the first steps on your eco-journey via the diocesan website at <https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/eco-church/>

**ECO CHURCH**  
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## New Services Appealing to the Community

Since the *Thy Kingdom Come* campaign after Pentecost 2023 the congregation in Holy Trinity, in Trefnant, have all been praying for five people they would like to see come to faith, writes the **Revd Rebecca Sparey**.

At the end of 2024, we decided that we would hold a special non-Eucharistic service each month to which people could be invited. Services are linked with special events, such as a Renewal of Vows service for St Valentine's Day in February, where we also displayed wedding dresses through the ages; a Covid Remembrance Service in March, and a miniature Shetland pony came along in April to lead a Palm Sunday procession. Our hope is that there will be at least one service in the year that appeals to everyone in the village, and they choose to come along. So far, our numbers have been swelled for each of these services, and we are looking forward to the rest of the year.



## World Day of Prayer

An ecumenical service for World Day of Prayer was held in St John's Church in Pontrobert in Caereinion Mission Area in March, reports **Ann Molton**. The liturgy was prepared and written by women from the Cook Islands, in the South Pacific. Several of us entered into the spirit of the Islands by making headdresses. A member of the village also lent us a canoe. After the service we all enjoyed refreshments, based on bananas and coconuts.

## 257 and counting...

...that's the number of Fridays that Denbigh Mission Area's Said Service of Evening Prayer has been held since it was first launched on Zoom in May 2020, writes **Kath Mitchell-Dawson**. Around 12 to 16 people, mostly from St Dyfnog's and around the Mission Area, gather virtually from their homes at 5pm on Friday evenings to worship together. The services are led and the lessons are read by different people each week, and we focus on a specific occasion or festival as the Church's Calendar allows. Each service starts with some introductory music, and finishes with a brief voluntary, either on organ or piano. All are welcome to join us. If you would like to taste and see if they suit you, please email John Harris ([ighcymru@outlook.com](mailto:ighcymru@outlook.com)) for the Zoom Link. It's also on the St Dyfnog's website [www.stdyfnog.org.uk](http://www.stdyfnog.org.uk).

## Sunny Party in Penylan

**Gill Bottomley** writes: Blessed with glorious weather on Sunday 11 May, All Saints' Church in Penylan celebrated the special birthday, 'retirement' and wonderful ministry of the Revd Canon Trish Owens. It was a joyful occasion, made happier in the knowledge that Trish will still be part of our church! Thank you, Trish!







### Support for Water Aid

Earlier this year, a burst water main in Dolgarrog left many homes in the Aled Mission Area and other parts of North Wales without water for several days. As **Huw Lloyd** writes, the experience prompted people in churches to act.

At the time of the burst, Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water put out a statement saying: "...Around 8,000 households lost supplies last night and around a further 33,000 properties are now at risk of losing supplies until the repair is complete."

Being without water made us realise how much we take our supply for granted and how fortunate we are, and so churches in the Aled MA decided to raise money for Water Aid, a charity that helps people in countries that don't have secure drinking-water supplies.

We raised money from donations in our churches, and we held a concert 'Waves of Hope' in St Paul's Church in Colwyn Bay. Altogether we raised about £1,500.

The concert had performances from *Coastal Voices* which is a local, acapella, mixed choir based in Abergele, led by Sara Brown. They performed an eclectic range of songs and also got the audience to take part.

Also, a newly formed brass ensemble was delighted to support this particular cause. They performed a selection



of short pieces ranging from well-known classical themes to popular folk songs. These melodies were infectious and left people foot-tapping or humming along!

There was a performance of eight songs sung by Eva Morrow, a 15-year-old pupil from Ysgol y Creuddyn, accompanied on the piano by her mother, Amy.

Water Aid is an international not-for-profit, determined to make clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene normal for everyone, everywhere within a generation. Since 1981, it's directly reached 28 million people with clean water; 28 million with decent toilets; and 26 million with good hygiene.

### New Worship Leaders in the Ceiriog Valley

There was great rejoicing at St John's Church, in Pontfadog, as seven new Worship Leaders were commissioned by the Archdeacon on Montgomery to serve in the Ceiriog Valley in the Valle Crucis Mission Area. Anthony Appleton, Fasil Onimole, Tim and Jackie Latham, Jonney and Alison Bendall and Kerris Sweeney have all completed the Leading Worship course with the Revd Cass Meurig Thomas over the last year.

Cass said: 'It's been a pleasure working with our new team and we had some great discussions. Some of those commissioned will be leading worship in the two churches in Pontfadog and Llanarmon and others at The Table in The Mustard Seed, our cafe outreach in Glyn Ceiriog. I'm confident they will help to grow and sustain our ministry here in the valley.'







## The Unstoppable Power of Hope – 80 years of Christian Aid



Christian Aid is marking its 80th anniversary this year. It was founded in 1945 by the British and Irish churches to support refugees in Europe. On the first Sunday after VE day in 1945, churches asked war-weary people to give generously and unconditionally to those who needed support. More than £80,000 (£3 million plus in today's money) was collected for emergency supplies in mainland Europe. Christian Aid supported, equipped and enabled partner churches there to meet the needs of their people.

Since then, Christian Aid and its partners have worked to fight poverty and injustice, providing long-term development support for communities worldwide while highlighting suffering, tackling injustice and championing people's rights.

This is 'the unstoppable power of hope'.

As part of Christian Aid Week this year (11-17 May), Ysgol Pant Pastynog near Denbigh organised a coffee morning and invited members of the local community to join them. Christian Aid's Wales Church Engagement and Fundraising Officer, Llinos Roberts, brought along a display showing the work of the charity. Could your school or church or Mission Area do something collaboratively to mark 80 years of Christian Aid? It could be an act of worship, a fundraising or creative campaigning activity? Schools, churches and Mission Areas are being encouraged to work together to reflect on what 80 years of the "Unstoppable Power of Hope" means in North Wales today. Details have been sent to church schools. If you'd like to find out more, please email Louise Williams, Head of Education, Children's and Youth Work: [Louisewilliams@cinw.org.uk](mailto:Louisewilliams@cinw.org.uk)

The Diocese of St Asaph will be working with Christian Aid to share widely the collaborative activities of schools, churches and Mission Areas over the coming year.

