

TEULU ASAPH

GROW **FAITH** • BRING **HOPE** • DEMONSTRATE **LOVE**

CONNECTING OUR DIOCESAN FAMILY

GAEAF 2025 | WINTER 2025



Dangos Cariad

Demonstrating Love

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FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to this festive edition of *Teulu Asaph*, which covers Advent, Christmas, Epiphany and through to Lent. As Advent begins, so does the church's year and we're using the new year to shift the focus from *Bringing Hope* to *Demonstrating Love*. It will all make sense when you read Bishop Gregory's article on page 3.

This edition is full of examples of churches demonstrating love, and we've got plenty of good news from our Church Schools across the diocese. We should give a special mention to Ysgol Pant Pastynog which has become the first school in North Wales, and the first Welsh-language school in the country, to win a Christian Aid Global Neighbours Award. You can find out more on the News pages.

And of course, if we're talking about schools' news, there are a few examples of the many hundreds of entries into

Bishop Gregory's Christmas Card Competition. Look out for the winner announced on our social media platforms.

Please enjoy this edition and share it with your family, friends, neighbours and colleagues. I wish you every blessing as we journey through Advent to Christmas, Epiphany and into 2026.



Karen

Karen Maurice
Editor

karenmaurice@cinw.org.uk
07918 133420
Diocesan Office, High Street,
St Asaph, LL17 0RD



CONTENTS

- 3 Gair Gan yr Esgob / Bishop's Word
- 4 Safe, Warm Spaces for All
- 5 Wonderfully Made
- 6 30 Years of St Kentigern Hospice
- 6 Diocesan Offering 2026
- 7 Newyddion / News
- 8 Mission Week 2025: Life to the Full
- 10 Reel Theology
- 10 Video Commentaries
- 11 Health and Wellbeing in our Rural Communities
- 12 Ysgolion / Schools
- 14 Eich Newyddion Chi / Your News
- 16 150 years of Mothers' Union

Cover photo: Volunteers at the Henllan Warm Space. See page 4 for the full story.

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Dangos Cariad

Mewn gair, y mae ffydd, gobaith, cariad, y tri hyn, yn aros. A'r mwyaf o'r rhain yw cariad.

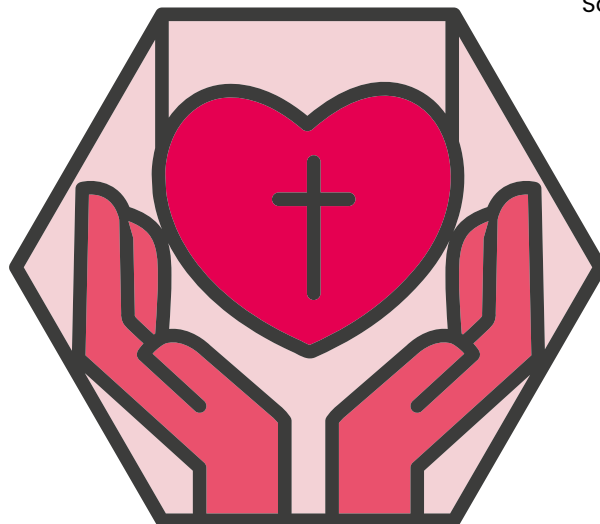
(1 Corinthaiaid 13:13)

Dyma, o bosib, un o adnodau mwyaf cyfarwydd y Testament Newydd. Mae geiriau'r apostol Paul wedi cynnig arweiniad i'n hesgobaeth ni dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf. Ar ôl myfyrio dros tyfu ffydd yn 2023-24, buom yn ystyried *dod â gobaith* yn y flwyddyn ddiwethaf hyd at y gynhadledd esgobaethol, a byddwn yn canolbwyntio ar *dangos cariad* yn 2026.

Hoffai pob eglwys feddwl ei bod yn "dangos cariad" ond pan oedd Iesu'n sôn am gariad, nid oedd yn gwneud pethau'n hawdd i ni: "Carwch eich gelynion", meddai, "Ac os bydd rhywun yn dy orfodi i'w ddanfôn am un cilomedr, dos gydag ef ddau", a "... pwy bynnag sydd am fod yn fawr yn eich plith, rhaid iddo fod yn was i chwi" – a'r gair Groeg gwreiddiol yw "caethwas", nid y term llai llym, "gwas". (Lc 6:27, Mt 5:41, Mc 10:43)

Oherwydd nid teimlad addfwyn, tyner o garedigrwydd ac ewyllys da yw cariad mewn Cristnogaeth. Mae'n golygu ymddwyn yn radical gan ymrwrthod â'r gred mai chi yw canolbwynt eich bydysawd a rhoi eraill yn gyntaf. Ysgrifennodd yr Ymerawdwr Rhufeinig paganaidd Julian, "Mae'n warthus bod ... y Galileiaid annuwiol (ei enw ef am Gristnogion) nid yn unig yn cynnal eu tlodion nhw eu hunain ond ein tlodion ni hefyd, a phawb yn gweld bod ein pobl ni'n brin o gymorth gennym."

Felly pan ddywedwn fod galwad arnom yn 2026 i "ddangos cariad", mae angen i *Deulu Asaph* fod ar flaen y gad yn gwasanaethu ein cymunedau, yn gweithio gyda phobl sydd ar gyrion cymdeithas. Fel y gofynnir yn aml, "Pe baech chi'n cael eich cyhuddo o'r drosedd o fod yn Gristion, a fyddai digon o dystiolaeth i'ch cael yn euog?"



Demonstrating Love

Right now three things remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.

(1 Corinthians 13:13)

This is perhaps one of the most famous verses of the New Testament, written by the apostle Paul, and which has guided our diocese over recent years. Having looked at *growing faith* in 2023-24, this last year, culminating in the Diocesan Conference, we looked at *bringing hope*, and into 2026, we will focus on *demonstrating love*.

The one quality that all churches would like to think they have is "love", and yet, Jesus, when he talked about love, did not make things easy: "Love your enemies", he said, "If someone compels you to go one mile with them, travel two", and "Whoever wants to be the first among you must become the slave of all" – and the word in the Bible is slave, not the more accommodating term, servant.

(Lk 6:27, Mt 5:41, Mk 10:43)

For love in Christianity is not some gentle quality of kindness and benign goodwill, it means a radical putting yourself out of the centre of your universe and putting others first. The pagan Roman Emperor Julian wrote: "It is disgraceful that ... the impious Galileans support not only their own poor but ours as well, when all people see our people lack aid from us."

So when we say that we are called in 2026 to "demonstrate love", the *Teulu Asaph* needs to be at the forefront of serving our communities, working with those on the edge of society. As the popular question goes, "If you were charged with the crime of being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?"



Safe, Warm Spaces for All

Churches across the diocese are demonstrating love to their communities in all sorts of ways, and as winter bites, offering hospitality in a warm space has become a common way to support people. This year, the congregation of St Sadwrn's Church, Henllan, in Denbigh Mission Area was the winner in Wales for the National Churches Trust, Church and Community Volunteer Award. *Teulu Asaph* went along to visit their Warm Space.



All this contributed to the churches award, alongside the monthly Prayers and Bears service for the reception and nursery classes at the local school. The children and their teddies are invited to explore the church, do some crafts, hear a Bible story, and feel welcome in a building which has served this community for centuries.

The award also recognised the team's commitment to sustainability – noting that they have achieved the rare Gold Eco Church Award, only the second church to do this in all of Wales.

Congratulations to the team at Henllan.



Every Thursday for the last two years, volunteers from the church and community have run a Warm Space. It's open from 11am and offers a two-course hot meal, alongside friendly conversations, card games, dominoes and access to surplus food.

A team of volunteers from across the village collects food destined for landfill from local supermarkets. This forms the basis of the weekly meals, prepared and cooked in Henllan Institute, next door to the church. Anything left (and there's always plenty) is laid out for people to take. There are regular deliveries, so the Institute is usually open every day for people to collect food.

Sixty hot meals are cooked every Thursday by a team comprising volunteers from church, local chapels and the wider community. On the menu when *Teulu Asaph* visited was chicken, ham and mushroom pie with vegetables, followed by cake and custard. Also visiting was Cwmpas which holds a digital clinic every fortnight, offering advice and assistance to build online confidence. Just inside the front-door is a book swap, with a regular turnover of books.



Love Holway

Every Tuesday at 12.30pm, the Love Holway project in the Estuary and Mountain Mission Area opens to over 50s to enjoy a bowl of hot soup and a warm welcome! On a Wednesday, the Pantry is open for soup, and people can buy 10 items of groceries for a donation of £2.50 and take home free, healthy vegetables.

Warm Hubs in Wrexham

St Giles Church, the Wrexham Mission Hub, runs a Warm Hub in the church every Tuesday (1pm–3pm). It's open to everyone and there's always people to talk to while enjoying a hot drink and biscuits. Across the road at Hope Street Church, a warm hub takes place every Monday from 10am–1pm.

There are many other warm hubs running in churches across the diocese. If you feel your local community would benefit from a church-run warm hub, you can contact the Diocesan Engagement Officer, Sarah Wheat, for advice: sarahwheat@cinw.org.uk.





This year saw the launch of an Arts and Environment project in Corwen, focused on the church of Saints Mael and Sulien, in the Valle Crucis Mission Area.

The *Wonderfully MADE* project, which takes its name from Psalm 139, ran a series of events for children and families, as the church's **Worship Leader, Kaye McLelland**, explains.

The idea for *Wonderfully MADE* came from an assignment for the *Introduction to Christian Mission* module of the *Theology for Life* course, which I have been studying. For children and families, the MADE stands for Music, Arts & crafts, Drama, and the Environment. It had grown out of the local community's identified need that more activities for young people were required in the town, as well as opportunities for creative arts that they might not get the chance to do in school. For the discussion group, which met in the Owain Glyndwr (aka the "OG"), the community-owned pub and hotel that runs along one side of the churchyard, MADE stood for Meet, Ask, Discuss, Explore.



Over the summer, we offered a "try an instrument" music day, an art competition, a granny-craft day, a drama workshop, and (in association with Action for Health), an environment day when we built a bug hotel in the churchyard. This was followed by a pop-up board-game café in half term (with refreshments including home-made cake and hot chocolate with plenty of sprinkles!). We're also planning an all-age fancy-dress nativity for Advent.

The music day was particularly popular, attracting over 30 people to chat about music and to try a selection of guitars, drums, keyboard, brass and wind instruments.



Granny-craft day saw people doing cross-stitch, embroidery and knitting as well as other crafts, and taking time to talk over a cuppa and a bring-and-share lunch. Not everyone was there for the craft; some just came for a chat! We had some brilliant entries for the art competition, and we are planning to use some of the work on stationery and publicity for the church. And we now have a swanky new bug hotel in the churchyard, enough to rival the human hotel next door.

The most important thing, though, has been to offer a welcome into our church. The Holy Spirit has turned up to our activities, on several occasions bringing families through our doors who were at difficult or pivotal points in their lives. We were able to provide them with a space to be and show them God's love and welcome.





30 years of St Kentigern Hospice

A special service of celebration and thanksgiving for the work of St Kentigern Hospice took place at St Asaph Cathedral in November. The service, organised by a team of volunteers led by Angela Hind, Karen Dalton and Sue Last, marked 30 years since the opening of the hospice. For *Teulu Asaph*, the hospice volunteers outline below some of the highlights from the service.

A packed congregation of hospice friends, supporters, families, volunteers, staff and trustees attended what was universally agreed to be an inspirational event led by St Asaph Cathedral's Canon Pastor, the Revd Canon Josh Askwith, with the assistance of hospice chaplain, Dr Matthew Thompson.

The service included Canon Josh blessing and anointing an Icon of St Kentigern, which Matthew commissioned for the Hospice's Man Myfyrio (Place of Reflection) Chapel. One of the volunteers, Jenni Frost, had put him in touch with renowned local artist Paul Pigram, who then produced and generously donated the beautiful new icon.

Matthew gave a moving talk on the importance and relevance of St Kentigern's life to the work of the hospice. He highlighted the Christ-like virtue of unconditional, self-giving love that guides our hospice ethos, bringing hope and comfort to people from any background and belief when facing the realities of palliative care.

Sue Last, former volunteer chaplain at St Kentigern Hospice, superbly articulated and clearly illustrated the



nature of all the vital services offered by the hospice over 30 years and their huge, positive impact on all who have accessed and delivered them.

Prayers and readings by staff and governors included the very appropriate *Hafan Gobaith* (*Haven of Hope*) lyrics read by Nurse Cathrin Roberts, the *Parable of the Good Samaritan* read by hospice supporter Christopher Wynne (Wynne Construction) and *The Mustard Seed Cure for Sorrow* read by Angela Hind (Trustee).

Our hymn singing was also enhanced by a Welsh choir of volunteers that Cathrin Roberts brought together. Graham Eccles very kindly played the organ.

Refreshments were provided afterwards, giving participants a welcome opportunity to share their memories of the 30 years of outstanding service to our community provided by St Kentigern Hospice and their hopes for the next 30 years.



Diocesan Offering 2026

The 2026 Diocesan Offering will go to Wrexham-based Boxes of Sunshine. The campaign was launched at the Diocesan Conference at Coleg Cambria in October by the charity's founder, Kev Hill, whose daughter Kirsten passed away, after a short and sudden battle with Acute Myeloid Leukaemia. She was 14. The charity has been founded in her memory and sends out gift boxes to young people living with chronic illnesses or lasting health conditions. Every box is designed to lift spirits, remind recipients they are not forgotten, and show that

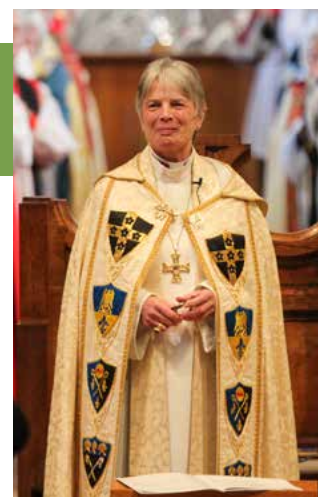


many people care. You can find out more about Boxes of Sunshine and how to donate to the diocesan offering at <https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/diocesan-conference/diocesan-offering/>



Enthronement of the 15th Archbishop of Wales

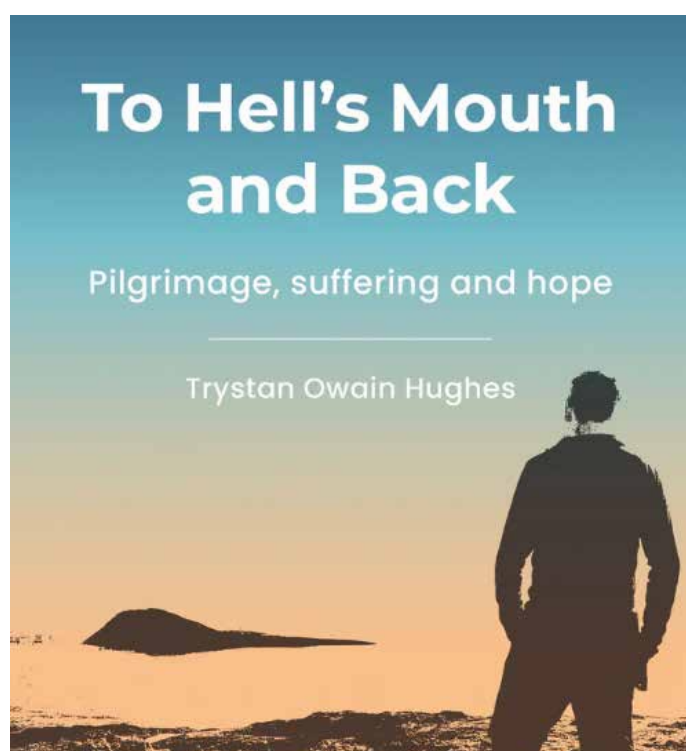
Hundreds of people packed into St Woolos' Cathedral in Newport, for the enthronement of the Most Reverend Cherry Vann as the 15th Archbishop of Wales. At the ceremony on Saturday 8 November, Archbishop Cherry was enthroned in the Archepiscopal Chair in front of the High Altar. The Chair will remain at Newport Cathedral throughout her time as Archbishop. She is the first woman to serve as Archbishop of Wales, making this enthronement a truly significant and historic occasion.



Online Lent Course

The Church in Wales will be launching an online Lent Course, led by the six Cathedrals in Wales, and presented by one of St Asaph's Pioneer Missioners, the Revd Cass Meurig Thomas. The course called *From Pancakes to Palm Crosses* will take participants on a pilgrimage across Wales, visiting each of the six historic cathedrals for each week of Lent. It is designed to be completed in study groups, with discussion questions and videos provided, but it can also be completed alone. The bilingual course materials will be available in January.

The Archbishop of Wales has selected her Lent Book. *To Hell's Mouth and Back: Pilgrimage, suffering and hope* is written by Trystan Owain Hughes and is available from BRF Resources: www.brfonline.org.uk/products/to-hells-mouth-and-back-pilgrimage-suffering-and-hope



First Award for North Wales School

A Church in Wales School near Denbigh has become the first in North Wales to achieve a bronze award in Christian Aid's Global Neighbours Scheme. Pupils at Ysgol Pant Pastynog organised coffee mornings, collected rubbish and engaged with local businesses to help them understand the root causes of poverty and injustice, and to empower themselves as agents of change in the work of transforming the world. The Global Neighbours Scheme is open to every school and is being run as Christian Aid marks its 80th anniversary. You can find out more at <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/schools/youth-and-schools-wales>



Healthy, Affordable Food for Church Schools

Church Schools across north-east and mid-Wales will be able to support local families with better access to good-quality food, thanks to a partnership with a Flintshire-based social enterprise. The Diocese of St Asaph is working with Shotton-based Well-Fed to identify schools where ten families would benefit from 12 weeks of subsidised meals, a free slow cooker and cookery lessons. Meals will be delivered once a week to each of the schools for those families participating in the project. Following the 12-week programme, the service will become available to everyone, including other families and staff in the school. Well-Fed is the only food production business in Europe which does not use any Ultra-Processed ingredients in its meals.



Mission Week 2025: Life to the Full

This year, for the first time since the pandemic, the diocese's only shared faith secondary school, St Joseph's Catholic and Anglican High School in Wrexham, hosted a Mission Week. As its chaplain, the **Revd Lara Stroud** explains, the week is a special occasion in the life of the school.

Mission Week normally occurs every four years, but this year was the first one since the cycle was interrupted by Covid. The theme was taken from the Gospel of St John 10:10, "I came that they may have life and have it to the full."



Life to the Full

Mission Week is a time when we, as a school, have an opportunity to pause, reflect and pray about our Christian values, which form the very foundation of who we are as individuals and as a school community. This life of faith is rooted in Jesus Christ, who came precisely that we might have "life to the full". Christ taught us that a full life is one of service and sacrifice, gratitude and grace. When we look beyond ourselves and minister to those in need, we follow in Jesus' footsteps. Mission Week gives us all a chance to reflect on our gifts and how we might use them for the benefit of others. To help us do this, we invited visitors from a range of professions and organisations that serve others, to come to school and share their life and work with us.

Invited guests

During the course of the week we welcomed around 40 guests to school, including: BBC foreign correspondent Fergal Keane, OBE, who spoke about the effects of

violence and war, and where he sees hope in the future; John Pridmore, a former gangster who transformed his life through conversion and reconciliation and who spoke of redemption; and Leah Burman, the daughter of a Holocaust survivor, who spoke movingly of her father's experiences so that we may never repeat them. Other guests included volunteers and employees of local charities such as the SVP (St Vincent de Paul Society), BAWSO (which tackles abuse, violence and exploitation), HCPT (a charity offering pilgrimage holidays to Lourdes), and TCC (Wrexham based charity empowering communities); a volunteer chaplain at HMP Berwyn; Nightingale House; Rise Theatre; Hope





House; and Papyrus, to name just a few. There were also organisations who help people overseas, including Amnesty International; Reaching the Unreached; Teams4U; Mary's Meals.

Praying the Rosary

In the chapel, pupils took part in Taizé prayers and Prego sessions. In answer to the call of Pope Leo and the charity Aid to the Church in Need, who asked for a million children to say the Rosary for peace in the world, hundreds of the children joined in praying the Rosary on the Tuesday of Mission week.

Members of our own Diocese of St Asaph contributed as well. The Revd Mike Haslam, diocesan Director of Transforming Ministry, led sessions with years 10 and 11 about conflict and how it can be used as a catalyst for

positive social change. Youth workers Jon and Esther Andrews and their team of Hannah Daniels, Cat Birch, Sharon Dean and Jane Greenwood spent three days with pupils in prayer spaces, giving them an opportunity to pray in various ways. We really appreciate the time and effort spent in making this week an enjoyable and meaningful experience for the pupils.

All our guests were so very generous with their time, sharing their stories and faith with the pupils. We sow the seeds and we know that in time the Holy Spirit will bring to fruition the gifts and talents God has bestowed on our pupils. In fact, some of the speakers were former pupils who came to share their work with our school community! It truly was a wonderful week, and while the sessions are over and the guests have left, the spirit of Mission Week will continue for a long time to come.





Reel Theology: Exploring Spiritual Themes in Film

This year, the Llangollen group of churches have been doing something a little different for their sermons during the long Trinity season. **The Priest in Charge of Llangollen, Father Lee Taylor**, based in the Valle Crucis Mission Area, explains what he calls “Reel Theology”.

Our regular worshipping community were asked to choose a favourite film, and I was given the joyful (and sometimes daunting) task of preaching on it. The choices were wonderfully varied: everything from Disney classics to old black-and-white dramas. Each film opened a window on to some aspect of faith, hope or the human condition.

The idea grew out of the shape of the Church’s year. After the great festivals of Easter and Pentecost, we enter the long “green” season of Trinity, often called “ordinary time”. It’s a time for steady reflection, for thinking about how faith is lived out in the everyday world. Film felt an appropriate way to do this, because cinema speaks the language of ordinary life: love and loss, courage and fear, forgiveness, friendship and the longing for meaning.

Each Sunday we found ourselves discovering God in unexpected places: in stories of adventure and sacrifice; in animation and comedy; in tales of redemption and reconciliation. The conversations that followed the services were as lively as the films themselves; people noticing spiritual themes they’d never seen before, others finding that a familiar movie suddenly illuminated a piece of scripture.

Films, like the parables of Jesus, can open the imagination to mystery. Both point beyond themselves to the divine story in which all our lives are set.



Video Commentaries on Biblical Texts

Every church service involves a reading from the Bible, but the context for that passage is not always apparent. The retired vicar of Llansilin, the Revd Richard Hughes, is making a series of videos to help congregations better understand the New Testament.

“O foolish Galatians”, writes St Paul in Galatians chapter 3. If this is being read in a Sunday service, the congregation may not know why they are foolish.... which is why I am making a series of explanatory videos about the contexts of biblical texts. But it is not a simple matter.

The twists and turns of human development separate us from the world of the New Testament. If a young couple find it difficult to conceive, they consult a doctor. In the first century they cultivated the shrine of Artemis at Ephesus, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

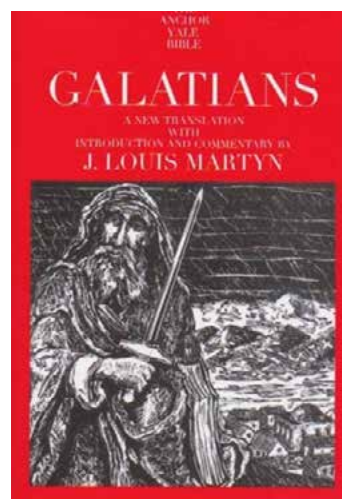
The literary style of the New Testament is unfamiliar to us these days. St Luke’s Acts of the Apostles, composed perhaps some 40 years after the event, observes the writing conventions of the day, which would be

unacceptable now. We don’t know what St Peter said on the Day of Pentecost. Luke wasn’t there. He gives us a neo-classical reconstruction of events.

I started making these videos as a distraction when I was worried about my wife who was taken into a home. But it soon became clear that they could be useful generally.

I have tried to reduce the contents of the commentaries into simple and acceptable videos. They are meant to give rise to further discussion. I hope people will find them informative.

You can access the films at <https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/church-service-resources/>





Health and Wellbeing in our Rural Communities



We know as we head into the winter months that there is much to celebrate, not least the Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour. Yet, the many life challenges that people encounter still remain, and may seem worse with the darker and shorter days. As our Rural Affairs Advisor, the Revd Hermione Morris, reflects, many experience a dip in their mental wellbeing at this time of year.

There have been significant challenges for those who make their living through farming and management of the countryside in recent years. In addition to the challenges that anyone may experience, such as bereavement or ill health, many farmers will be struggling for animal feed as we go through winter. They have had to start using fodder earlier, and they harvested less, due to the hot weather we experienced this year. There are also the ongoing financial pressures and worries as a result of the introduction of the Sustainable Farming Scheme and its impact on the subsidies farmers receive, and due to the changes in Inheritance Tax.

Whatever our personal perspective on these matters, they are having real impacts on the health and wellbeing of all those affected – farmers, their families, their wider communities. As we celebrate at this time of year, please keep them in your prayers, and reach out to them in whatever ways you are able – simply displaying the contact details of agricultural and/or mental health support agencies in your church building, noticeboards, and community spaces will demonstrate that we, as part of God's church and family, are aware and that we care.

Details of support agencies can be found on the Diocesan website's rural pages <https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/rural/> – please contact them direct for any publicity material.



Provincial Rural Training, a report from the Revd Ashleigh Askwith, Aled Mission Area

As Llandrindod Wells faded in the rear-view mirror and the countryside unfolded before us, a rainbow hovered over the autumnal fields. It felt like a fitting conclusion to the two-day

Provincial Rural Ministry Conference, a reminder of hope, promise, and God's presence in the everyday beauty of rural life.

Over the two days we explored sessions on rural mission, working with farmers, connecting with rural ministry and rural pioneers. Yet perhaps the most valuable moments came between the sessions, in conversations shared over coffee, as rural ministers from across Wales encouraged, inspired and listened to one another.

There were many points I have taken away with me but perhaps the funniest and most profound to me was: "Sometimes the sheep judge me." The story it came from was funny but it came with a deeper reminder to me, that we are often quick to judge and be judged. We may sometimes feel like the work of rural ministry is small, insignificant or even unnoticed. Yet what I witnessed was far from small, as faithful and creative people served their communities with quiet dedication. Above all, we were reminded throughout all the sessions that rural ministry is about presence, being there through every season.

Across St Asaph Diocese, many church communities connect with rural ministry, even on the fringes. In recognising one another's work and sharing experiences, we can face the joys and challenges of serving God's people with encouragement and hope.





Cystadleuaeth Cerdyn Nadolig

Mae cannoedd o blant o'n Hysgolion Eglwys ar draws yr esgobaeth wedi cymryd rhan yng Nghystadleuaeth Cerdyn Nadolig Esgob Llanelwy. Eleni, mae'r thema wedi'i hysbrydoli gan yr angylion a fu'n canu am enedigaeth Iesu yn Luc 2:13-14 ac mae'r dyluniadau wedi canolbwyntio ar gerddoriaeth, llawenydd a gobaith, a dangos cariad trwy rannu'r newyddion da yn eang. Caiff y dyluniad buddugol ei gyhoeddi ym mis Rhagfyr a'i droi'n Gerdyn Nadolig y bydd yr Esgob Gregory a'i wraig, Claire, yn ei anfon at deulu, at ffrindiau ac at gydweithwyr ledled y byd.

Christmas Card Competition

Hundreds of children from across our diocesan Church Schools have been participating in the Bishop of St Asaph's Christmas Card Competition. The theme this year has been inspired by the angels who sang of Jesus' birth in Luke 2:13-14 and the designs have focused on music, joy and hope, showing love by sharing good news widely. The winning design will be announced in December, and it will be turned into a Christmas Card which Bishop Gregory and his wife, Claire, send to family, friends and colleagues around the world.



Gŵyl y Cynhaeaf trwy'r Oesoedd a Gŵyl y Cofio

Mae Ysgol Sant Chad yr Eglwys yng Nghymru, Hanmer, wedi cofnodi 350 o flynyddoedd o gynnydd amaethyddol wrth iddi baratoi i ddathlu'r 350. Yn y gwasanaeth, buon nhw'n olrhain esblygiad peiriannau amaethyddol, yn diolch i Dduw am y tir ac yn rhoi gwên ar wyneb pawb o weld llysiau yn dawnsio a thractor yn ymlwybro tua'r allor! Bu'n eiliad lawen ac adfyfyriol i'r gymuned gyfan.

Ar Sul y Cofio, bu Prif Swyddogion yr ysgol a'u dirprwyon yn cynrychioli'r ysgol yn Eglwys Sant Chad. Aethant ati i osod torch wrth y gofgolofn ac arwain gweddi er cof am yr aelodau o'r lluoedd a gollodd eu bywydau. Roedd eu presenoldeb a'u harweiniad, a werthfawrogydd yn fawr, yn ein hatgoffa mor bwysig yw coffadwriaeth.

Harvest Through the Ages and Remembrance

St Chad's Church in Wales School in Hanmer has been marking 350 years of agricultural progress in celebration of the school's upcoming 350th anniversary.

The service traced the evolution of farming machinery, gave thanks to God for the land, and brought smiles to all with dancing vegetables and even a tractor making its way up the aisle! It was a joyful and reflective moment for the whole community.

On Remembrance Sunday, the school's Head Boy, Head Girl and their deputies represented the school at St Chad's Church. They laid a wreath at the war memorial and led prayers in honour of those who gave their lives in service. Their presence and leadership were deeply appreciated and served as a poignant reminder of the importance of remembrance.

Cerrig Caredig

Mae prosiect i ledaenu caredigrwydd yng nghymuned Isycoed, ger Wrexham, wedi cysylltu plant o un o Ysgolion yr Eglwys yng Nghymru â chefnogwr pêl-droed yn America.

Aeth disgyblion Ysgol Sant Paul, Isycoed, ati i addurno cerrig â negeseuon cadarnhaol a'u gadael o gwmpas eu pentref, fel rhan o'r Gwener Godidog a gynhelir yn yr ysgol bob pythefnos. Teithiodd un o'r cerrig yr holl ffordd i Washington DC, a dywedodd y sawl a gafodd hyd iddi bod y garreg wedi dod â lwc dda yn ei sgîl gan fod tîm pêl-droed Wrexham wedi ennill y gêm y bu'n ei gwyllo.

Daeth y syniad o greu Cerrig Caredig yn sgîl sesiwn dysgu a llesiant o dan arweiniad y disgyblion. Dyluniodd

ac addurnodd pob plentyn neges gadarnhaol ar eu carreg. Yna, aethant am dro yn yr ardal leol i guddio neu ddosbarthu'r cerrig. Roedd pob carreg yn cynnwys nodyn oedd yn annog y sawl a gâi hyd iddi i dagio'r ysgol ar y cyfryngau cymdeithasol. Dywedodd pennaeth yr ysgol, Emma Jones: "Bu'r ymateb yn wych; mae gwenau'r plant a'u negeseuon ystyriol wedi goleuo cymuned Isycoed. Mae'r plant wrth eu boddau â'r adborth hyd yma ac maen nhw'n edrych ymlaen at weld i ble arall y gallai eu cerrig deithio. Gobeithio bydd y camau bach caredig hyn yn parhau i ymestyn ymhellach gan ddod â llawenydd i eraill. Rwy'n falch iawn o'r plant. Maen nhw'n rhyfeddol o garedig ac ystyriol."

Kindness Rocks

A project to spread kindness through the community of Isycoed, near Wrexham, connected the children of a Church in Wales School with a football fan in America.

Pupils of St Paul's in Isycoed decorated rocks with positive messages and left them around their village, as part of their fortnightly Feel-good-Friday. One rock made it all the way to Washington DC where the finder said it brought him luck as Wrexham AFC won the match he attended.

The idea to create Kindness Rocks came from a pupil-led learning and wellbeing session. Each child designed and decorated their own rock with a positive message. They then went for a walk in the local area to hide or deliver

them. Every rock included a note encouraging the finder to tag the school on social media. The school's headteacher, Emma Jones said: "The response has been fabulous; the children's smiles and thoughtful messages have truly brightened our community in Isycoed. The children are thrilled with the feedback so far and are excited to see where else their rocks might travel. We hope this small act of kindness continues to ripple outwards and bring joy to others. I am very proud of the children, who are incredibly kind and thoughtful."



Thank you so much St Paul's VA Primary School for my lovely kindness rock. How lovely to see you all out delivering kindness on a Friday afternoon... See more





Rededication for Wrexham Church

A church in Caia Park in Wrexham has been blessed and rededicated after a major refurbishment project. The Bishop of St Asaph visited St Mark's Church at the end of October meeting members of the congregation over breakfast and leading a service of dedication for the renewed church. Grants and gifts totalling more than £850,000 enabled the refurbishment work to be carried out. This included replacing the roof and the heating system, installing accessible toilets, adding ramped access, refitting the kitchen and reworking the meeting spaces. The large window facing the altar has been reglazed offering a view over the community that St Mark's serves.



Forget-me-not Installation

In September, Ffrindiau St Trillo Friends group held a coffee morning at St Trillo Church in Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion (Valle Crucis Mission Area) to support Dementia Awareness month and to raise money for Alzheimer's Society. As part of the event, the group created an art installation of approximately 400 forget-me-not flowers made from plastic drink bottle bottoms, which cascade from the church porchway. The total raised on the day was over £300. The group would like to thank everyone that helped and supported the event in any way.



Welcoming Visitors

Growing visitor numbers and excellent reviewer feedback have followed after a church in the Caereinion Mission Area upped their welcome to visitors. St John's Church in Dolanog created a knitted Noah's Ark and devised an activity to encourage children to help Noah find all the animals. Following positive feedback in the visitors' book, the congregation added interpretation material at the back of the church for visitors. In addition, a prayer tree has been created and the congregation ensures that all prayer requests are included in the weekly intercessions. Over the summer, refreshments were provided in the church for visitors, and both the donation box and a QR code to make online donations have seen more activity. For the congregation, knowing that people are finding peace when they visit their church is a positive outcome for their efforts.



Dedicated Verger

The congregation of St Paul's Church in Pentre Broughton in the Alyn Mission Area would like to thank their Verger, Kevin Holmes, who has given 25 years of dedicated service. Kevin is a very generous and humble person and was overwhelmed when a token celebration was made to mark this achievement. He said: "It has and is, an honour and privilege to serve as the Verger."





Madras Community Choir

A special concert to raise funds for the roof of St Collen's Church in Llangollen was given by the Madras Community Choir in September. The group, formed in 2011 to mark the 200th anniversary of Penley Madras Church in Wales School, performed a variety of music, interspersed with solos and duets. More than £400 was raised towards the restoration of the medieval hammer-and-beam-roof in St Collen's Church.

Fundraising Concert for FCN Cymru and St Myllin's Church

Despite diabolical weather (which we thought would keep people away), a superb concert was held in Llanfyllin (Tanat Vyrnwy Mission Area) to raise funds for FCN Cymru (Farming Community Network) and St Myllin's Church, writes the **Revd Hermione Morris**. The performers were Cor Penllys, a local choir that rehearses in Llanfihangel yng Ngwynfa, and the Revd Cass Meurig Thomas. The sizable audience enjoyed a fabulous mix of pieces, in what was described as a "wonderful atmosphere", enjoyed by all, performers included. Around £1,500 was raised and was split between the two causes.

FCN is celebrating 30 years since its founding to support farmers, their families and communities. The Wales National Manager, Linda Jones, attended the concert and spoke about the work they do.



Advent by Patricia Sumner

For Advent, *Teulu Asaph* is featuring a poem by Patricia Sumner from Dyffryn Clwyd Mission Area. Patricia is a writer, poet and editor. She has had three poetry collections, two plays, educational resources and many children's stories published, and has won awards for some of her poems and plays.

Advent

It's knowing
in those first flickerings of awareness,
before the curtains are drawn back
to reveal another dull dawn,
that today will be different, new, utterly extraordinary.

It's knowing
that overnight drifts of snow
have blanketed the land
in layered silence,
obscuring sharp edges and echoes –
a hushed stillness too loud to ignore.

And it's knowing,
without even looking,
that darkness,
now softened and changed,
will soon reflect
an astonishment of light.



Mothers' Union will be celebrating its 150th anniversary throughout 2026.

There will be a special service at St Asaph Cathedral on **Wednesday 25th March at 2pm** with Bishop Gregory.

All members past, present and future are invited.

A boxed afternoon tea is available for £10 ordered in advance from **secretary.stasaphmu@gmail.com**

We're a Christian movement helping the world's hardest to reach communities to transform their lives. Ending violence, ending poverty, ending injustice. Our vision is a future where everyone can thrive.



Find out more today secretary.stasaphmu@gmail.com