



Esgobaeth Llanelwy / Diocese of St Asaph

Newyddion Ymweliadau Visitation News

Introduction



While I was watching Pope Francis' Funeral Mass, the image of his coffin being transported past the infamous Colosseum, where so many of the first Christians had suffered a terrible martyrdom, struck me powerfully. The commentary explained that one of the late Pope's great gifts had been to encourage the Church to offer hope to those who have little of it.

Christian hope enables us, through the Spirit of God, to rejoice, that whatever the world may throw at us, our future has already been bought and paid for by Jesus. Those early martyrs in the Colosseum knew of this hope as they met unbearable privations. It seems the late Pope's commitment to softening the boundaries of the Church as an institution, has led those on the fringes to feel included in the life of the Christian family, and to come to know that Christ's love for them is real and his mercy enables all of us to make a fresh start.

In our own diocese, we have been holding fast to three pivotal aspects of church life – Growing Faith, Bringing Hope and Demonstrating Love. This year, we are focusing on bringing hope.

As I read in this edition of Visitation News of the wonderful initiatives taking place across the Teulu Asaph, it is plain to see that in these outreach projects, the Church is providing a way in for people on the fringes to discover what the Letter to the Hebrews refers to as *the hope that is set before us*.

Recently, I had an opportunity to share, with others, a sandwich and a coffee in one of our churches. It was wonderful to see this happening whilst at the same time, the altar and the sanctuary of the church were there for all to see, reminders of *where* we were – a place of promise, where, with God, ordinary things are made sacred, giving glimpses of that hidden reality where God's presence breaks through and makes all things new.

We must never underestimate how and where God works – it is often most powerfully witnessed at the fringes and the boundaries, where we least expect him to be. As a friend used to tell me, when facing some enormous task, "you have to start somewhere!". That 'somewhere' will be just the sort of place where these wonderful initiatives are taking place. May God bless our endeavours to bring hope to those he calls us to serve.

The Venerable Gerwyn Capon
Archdeacon of Montgomery

Cyflwyniad gan Archddiacon Maldwyn, yr Hybarch Gerwyn Capon

Wrth wyllo Offeren Angladdol y Pab Ffrancis, cefais fy nharo gan y ddelwedd bwerus o'i arch yn cael ei chludo heibio i'r Colisëwm drwg-enwog, lle merthyrwyd cynifer o'r Cristnogion cyntaf mewn ffordd mor erchyll. Esboniodd y sylwebydd mai un o roddion mawr y diweddar Bab oedd annog yr eglwys i gynnig gobaith i rai sy'n brin ohono.

Mae'r gobaith Cristnogol yn ein galluogi ni, trwy Ysbryd Duw, i lawenhau bod Iesu eisoes wedi prynu ein dyfodol a thalu amdano, beth bynnag y bydd y byd yn ei daflu atom.

Parhad ar dudalen 2...

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 **ecclesiastical**

Parhad o'r clawr...

Roedd y merthyron cynnar yn y Colisëwm yn ymwybodol o'r gobaith hwn wrth iddynt wynebu creulondeb annioddefol. Ymddengys bod ymrwymiad y diweddar Bab i ystwytho ffiniau'r eglwys fel sefydliad wedi arwain pobl oedd ar y cyrion i deimlo'u bod yn rhan o fywyd y teulu Cristnogol, ac i sylweddoli bod cariad Crist atynt yn beth real a bod ei drugaredd yn galluogi pawb ohonom i ddechrau o'r newydd.

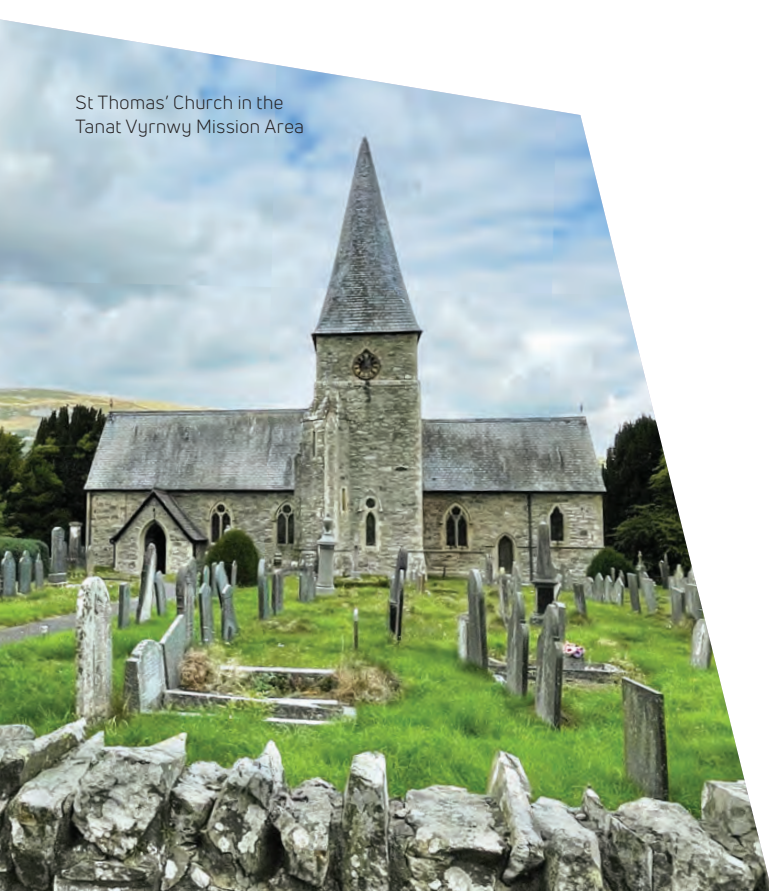
Yn ein hesgobaeth ni, rydym wedi bod yn gafael yn dynn mewn tair agwedd ganolog ar fywyd yr eglwys – Tyfu Ffydd, Dod â Gobaith a Dangos Cariad. Eleni, rydym yn canolbwyntio ar ddod â gobaith.

Wrth i mi ddarllen yn y rhifyn hwn o Newyddion Ymweliadau am y cynlluniau gwych sydd ar waith gan Deulu Asaph, mae'n amlwg, o'r prosiectau hyn i estyn allan, bod yr eglwys yn cynnig ffordd i mewn i bobl ar y cyrion fel y gallant ddarganfod yr hyn y mae'r Llythyr at yr Hebreaid yn cyfeirio ato fel *y gobaith a osodwyd o'n blaen*.

Yn ddiweddar, cefais gyfle i fwynhau brechdan a choffi gydag eraill yn un o'n heglwysi. Roedd yn hyfryd gweld hyn yn digwydd o fewn golwg i allor a chysegr yr eglwys, gan atgoffa pawb ble roedden ni. Dyma fan llawn addewid, man lle mae pethau cyffredin yn cael eu gwneud yn sanctaidd gyda Duw, man lle mae presenoldeb Duw yn torri drwodd ac yn gwneud pob peth yn newydd.

Ddylem ni fyth feddwl yn rhy gyfyng ynglŷn â sut a ble y bydd Duw yn gweithio – yn aml, daw'r dystiolaeth fwyaf grymus o'r cyrion, y manau mwyaf annisgwyl i ni. Fel yr oedd ffrind yn arfer ei ddweud wrthyf i pan oedd gennyf dasg enfawr o'm blaen, "Mae'n rhaid i ti ddechrau yn rhywle!" Y "rhywle" hwnnw yw'r union fath o fan lle y gwelwn y cynlluniau ardderchog hyn yn digwydd. Boed i Dduw fendithio'n hymdrechion i ddod â gobaith i'r rhai y mae Ef yn ein galw i'w gwasanaethu.

St Thomas' Church in the Tanat Vyrnwy Mission Area



Fundraising Bacon Butties

The congregation and community of Penybontfawr in the Tanat Vyrnwy Mission Area have developed a tasty way of raising funds for a building project. On the second Saturday of each month, a dedicated team of volunteers from St Thomas' Church cook and serve bacon butties at the nearby village hall.

There are no kitchen facilities currently in the church, so using Canolfan Pennant was their only option. Between 60 and 80 bacon (or sausage) butties are served each month and so far more than £7,000 has been raised towards the fundraising.

The Vicar of St Thomas' Church, the Revd Prebendary Norman Morris, said: "The idea for the bacon butty sessions came about after COVID in February 2022. We've recently celebrated three years of serving bacon butties and the team was delighted to realise so much money had been raised through their volunteering efforts. This is an amazing achievement for a small village like Penybontfawr."

“ It's not just about turning up on a Saturday morning. We've had to ensure we meet all the necessary food hygiene requirements. Powys County Council Hygiene Inspectors recently visited and approved everything we're doing and we passed with flying colours. ”

Almost ten years ago, St Thomas' was facing closure, with this part of Montgomery Archdeaconry having a number of small churches with tiny, unsustainable congregations. While some closed and three joined the pilgrim church scheme, St Thomas' was saved from closure, and the congregation has been re-invigorated with the arrival of new members.

The plan now is to raise funds to renew the roof slates on the Victorian church and carry out general refurbishments, with the intention of installing a small kitchen and toilet facilities.

Norman added: "Saturday morning Bacon Butties at Penybontfawr is a fine example of the church filling a social need post-COVID, while raising the profile of the church. And it's all been self-financing without grant support from the diocese.

"The hope now is to refurbish St Thomas' so it can continue to be an active place of worship and also have better facilities to meet the needs of people in the village!"

Bacon Butties at Penybontfawr takes place on the second Saturday of every month in Canolfan Pennant in the centre of the village from 10am – 12noon.

Support and resources for Churchwardens from Ecclesiastical

Ecclesiastical understands that volunteering for the role of Churchwarden and supporting your church can be a demanding job. Managing a treasured building and ensuring that it's a safe place for your congregation to worship, visit and enjoy can be daunting, but you don't have to do it alone.

Ecclesiastical church support managers

At no additional cost, Church Support Managers are there for their Ecclesiastical church customers. Providing tailored help and training to support church insurance needs, they can offer guidance on risk management, health and safety legislation and direct you to online resources. They can also deliver online and in-person group training sessions around topics including the basics of insurance, fire safety, fundraising, climate change and net zero, open churches and theft of metal.



Heather Ford



Joseph Davies

Heather Ford – Church Support Manager for the North.

Heather has roots in the Church, having previously worked for the Diocese of Manchester, and understands the demands of church life. Heather is passionate about supporting churches to understand how insurance can help, rather than hinder, to enable people to focus on their ministry and thrive.

Joseph Davies – Church Support Manager for the South.

Joseph is very much part of the Church family – his father was a parish priest, his mother a hospital chaplain, his wife was recently ordained as a curate, and he spent nine years as a vergers at Salisbury and Ely Cathedrals.

“ Fundraising is crucial for sustaining church activities and initiatives. I am always delighted to offer guidance on effective fundraising strategies. We have an excellent online Fundraising Hub which has lots of information about how to get started and how to keep going on your fundraising journey. ”

✉ meetus@ecclesiastical.com
 🌐 ecclesiastical.com/church/church-support-managers

Fundraising hub

Fundraising plays a key role in boosting finances for your church. Ecclesiastical's fundraising hub offers user-friendly support guides which take you from 'where to start' through to 'key factors for successful fundraising' and everything in between.

If you have an Ecclesiastical policy, you can also contact their fundraising helpline, to arrange a call back from their expert team.

📞 **0345 601 9959**
 🌐 ecclesiastical.com/church/fundraising



Ecclesiastical's plain English guides

If you are looking for help in areas such as legal expenses, building work, or outreach, Ecclesiastical has a range of easy to understand Made Simple Guides to help, and their comprehensive document library is full of useful tools like risk assessment templates and Guidance Notes.

🌐 ecclesiastical.com/church/#madesimple

Ecclesiastical church insurance team

Do you have questions about your Ecclesiastical policy?

📞 **0345 777 3322** – lines are open 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays
 ✉ churchteam@ecclesiastical.com

Risk Advice Helpline

Are you looking for advice on how to minimise risks as you manage your church?

📞 **0345 600 7531** – lines are open 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays
 ✉ risk.advice@ecclesiastical.com

A claims team that really cares

Ecclesiastical's claims team are experts.

📞 **0345 603 8381** – 24-hour reporting service
 🌐 ecclesiastical.com/claims/claim-online

Ecclesiastical would love to hear from you

Do you have a story for Ecclesiastical? Perhaps you overcame a fundraising problem or found a way to get your local community more involved with your church. Sharing 'a day in your life' could really help other Churchwardens and members of the PCC.

✉ meetus@ecclesiastical.com

Contains promotional material

Month-by-month support

To help you plan maintenance and manage your church and its grounds, Ecclesiastical has created a calendar to keep you organised and on track – you can download your copy using this link:

 ecclesiastical.com/risk-calendar



Get monthly tips straight to your inbox



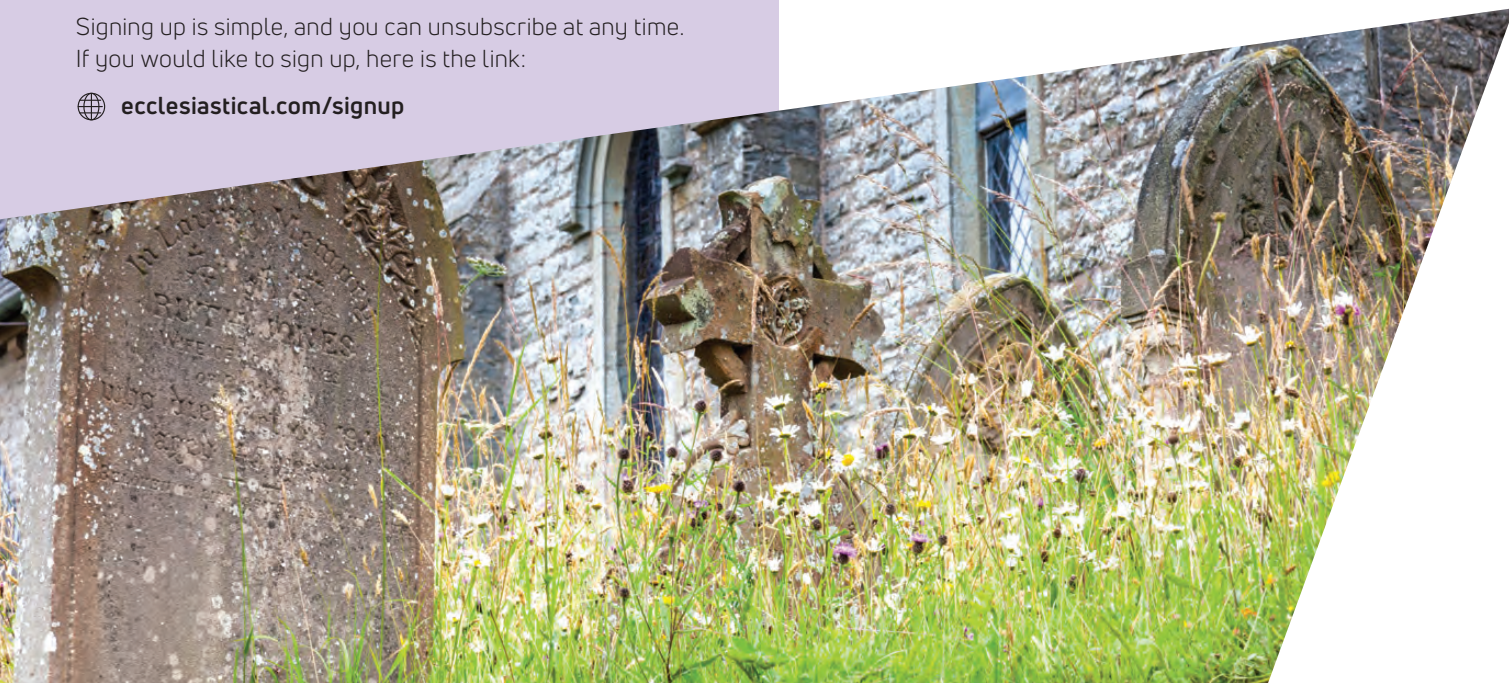
Join the community of church leaders who receive Ecclesiastical's monthly e-newsletter. It's packed with valuable advice about church security, event planning, fundraising and more.

Many of Ecclesiastical's customers already benefit from this e-newsletter, and we hope you'll join them.

Feel free to share the sign-up link with others in your church community who might be interested.

Signing up is simple, and you can unsubscribe at any time. If you would like to sign up, here is the link:

 ecclesiastical.com/signup



Why should net zero be a focus for churches?

A Q&A with the Church of England



BENEFACT TRUST



Julian Atkins

In 2024, our Group's charitable owner, Benefact Trust, pledged £1.5m towards the Church of England's ambitious goal of reaching net zero by 2030. Benefact Trust's funding is focused on equipping and inspiring churches across the UK to start their journey to net zero and reduce their impact on the environment.

Benefact Trust sat down with Julian Atkins, Net Zero Programme Director for the Church of England, to talk through some of the most commonly asked questions about the Church's net zero goal.

Whilst many of us want to play an active role in tackling climate change, the prospect can seem overwhelming due to the scale of the issue, the urgency to take

action and the abundance of complicated information. In Benefact Trust's short Q&A with Julian, he emphasises how important it is to keep things simple and start small.

Julian discusses what net zero actually means, why the Church has a responsibility to reduce its impact on the climate and low-cost ways to get started. Watch 'Net Zero and the Church' on Benefact Trust's YouTube channel:

 youtube.com/@benefacttrust

Here you'll find a host of helpful videos, including a full podcast with Julian Atkins.

Ecclesiastical supports sabbaticals

Ecclesiastical aims to support Anglican clergy by offering financial assistance for life-affirming sabbaticals through their **Ministry Bursary Awards** (MBAs).

Established in 1987, these awards have distributed over £1.4 million, benefiting more than 1,500 clergy members. An MBA can rejuvenate and enhance the ministerial development of clergy, offering them opportunities to engage in extended study, travel, or other enriching activities that can have a lasting impact on their personal growth and to the ministering of their congregations.



St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral in Kolkata, West Bengal, India

The **Revd Adam Dickens** is a recent recipient of such an MBA and he told Ecclesiastical:

“ I was very grateful for the MBA grant as it facilitated my sabbatical visit to Kolkata and wider West Bengal where I spent a month engaging with projects run by the Cathedral Relief Service of Kolkata Cathedral, as well as visiting various establishments that came under the ambit of the Diocese of Calcutta; these included churches, schools, colleges, a TB clinic, an AIDs hospice and a residential home.

“ It was an extremely rich time as I was offered a window into the joy and despair of life for people living in the city (as well as some of the rural areas in the state of West Bengal) and the creative ways in which church communities were responding. It provided interaction with a very different culture to the one I'm used to inhabiting, with all the challenges and growth that comes with it. ”

The application window for the 2026 MBA programme opens in spring 2025 and closes in September 2025. In 2026, we are particularly keen to see more sabbaticals which aim to support the drive for carbon net zero.

If you would like to find out more about the Awards, including eligibility criteria and application details, please visit:

 ecclesiastical.com/mba



Give yourself a financial health check

In today's world, with the high cost of living and rising taxation, it's more important than ever to ensure your finances are in top shape.

Expert advice for clergy



Ben Dabbs

Ben Dabbs, an independent financial adviser with Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Service (EFAS), emphasises the importance of financial planning for clergy. “With little time available for clergy in their busy lives to focus on themselves, it's important for them to seek expert advice to manage their finances effectively and ensure their personal well-being and that of their

dependants is planned and catered for,” he explains. “Too often, clergy members will delay financial planning until the twilight of their ministry, which can lead to unnecessary hardship.”

Plan ahead with confidence

To help you review your financial arrangements, such as life assurance, pension savings, investments, mortgage options¹ and retirement planning, it's worthwhile seeking expert advice from an independent financial adviser who understands your circumstances and can put in place a plan to help give you peace of mind for the future.

If you would like to arrange a financial health check or receive a brochure providing information about the advice and services available, please contact EFAS at:

 **0800 107 0190**
 **getadvice@ecclesiastical.com**
 **ecclesiastical.com/financial-advice**

¹Your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on a mortgage. The value of your investments including pension investments can fluctuate, and you may not get back the amount you invested. Your capital is at risk.



Join the Movement for Good



Ecclesiastical is part of the Benefact Group and we do financial services differently – we give all available profits to charity and good causes. It's thanks to our customers that we can make this happen.

The Movement for Good Awards is our annual giving programme and anyone can get involved. The Awards give you the opportunity to nominate the charitable causes that matter most to you.

We're proud to have supported churches, Scouts groups, food banks, hospices, heritage charities and more, all nominated by their supporters.

How to nominate a charity or church to win £1,000

1. Visit movementforgood.com/ecclesiastical
2. Nominate before 15 December 2025. Your nomination will be included in all the remaining £1,000 draws in 2025, so the earlier you nominate, the more chances you have. It's one nomination per charity, per person, so you can get as many as you like in the mix.
3. Further down the page, there are resources you can personalise and share with your colleagues and congregation to encourage more nominations.
4. Keep scrolling to sign up for notifications, including special £5,000 draws and larger awards through partnership funding.

You'll also find more information about the Awards, including the terms and conditions at:

 movementforgood.com/tc

Best of luck!

Trust Ecclesiastical to insure your home and give back to your church!

As a church official, your home could serve as both a living space and a place for your ministry. You might host prayer meetings and counselling sessions from your home, or even help parishioners plan weddings and funerals. You will be supporting your parishioners throughout the years, and Ecclesiastical Insurance is there to support you, with their tailored home insurance policies.

A home insurance policy from Ecclesiastical Insurance can be adapted to suit the needs of the clergy in your work on behalf of the Church, or the general needs of your congregation and community.

Ecclesiastical Home Insurance

Ecclesiastical Home Insurance provides up to £750,000 for buildings and £75,000 for contents as standard. This cover includes protection for your home, personal belongings and even contents away from home up to £3,500. Additionally, 24-hour home emergency assistance and legal expenses are included, helping to ensure you are covered in unexpected situations.

But there is more!

When you take out a new home insurance policy with Ecclesiastical, they will donate £130 to an Anglican church or cathedral of your choice¹ – this programme has already contributed over £500,000, to churches across the country.



You can trust Ecclesiastical. They regularly win coveted awards for their home insurance products. In November last year, they retained their top spot in the Fairer Finance Home Insurance league table for a record twentieth time and remain the UK's most trusted home insurance provider!² Importantly, in today's online world, they also have an 'Excellent' score on Trustpilot too.³



When you talk to the friendly experts at Ecclesiastical's UK-based Head Office, they will work with you to make sure that your home and its contents are well-protected against a variety of risks. By choosing Ecclesiastical, you're not just insuring your home; you could also be helping your church. Call us today!

 **0345 777 3322** and quote **CHOPS25**
 **ecclesiastical.com/homeinsurance**

¹Terms and conditions apply. Visit ecclesiastical.com/trust130-terms. ²Fairer Finance Home Insurance customer experience rating, spring and autumn 2015 – 2024. ³Trustpilot reviews – 419 between 1 February 2023 – 14 April 2025. Correct at time of going to print.

A Food Bank with a Difference in Aberconwy Mission Area

Churches in the Aberconwy Mission Area have come together to support people in their local community through Aberconwy Care and Share.

The project is partly based at St Michael and All Angels Church in Llandudno Junction but covers the entire Mission Area and runs like a food bank but with a couple of significant differences. Firstly, no official referral is required and secondly, volunteers make a monthly delivery to those in need.



St Michael and All Angels

Aberconwy Care and Share was started four years ago in response to the Coronavirus pandemic by the leader of St David's Mission Hub Church in Penrhyn Bay, the Revd Juliet Fraser. Juliet, along with an extensive team of volunteers, runs the scheme which provides monthly food parcels to around 27 families.

"We realised that many people were falling through the net of other types of support," said Juliet. "It may be because they're on zero-hour contracts, or are old-age pensioners, or people living by themselves, and they're not getting any help from social services, but they're really struggling. They have to make hard decisions about whether they put their heating on or whether they buy food. We wanted to ensure everyone could receive the help they need."

Aberconwy Care and Share decided to operate by delivering to people, especially those who couldn't access another food bank due to illness, disability or those with small children who would struggle to collect their shopping. Volunteers buy and deliver a week's-worth of shopping to the family or families they are allocated. They shop during the last week of each month and have a budget based on the size of the family. Up to £60 is allocated for a small family and up to £80 for a large family. Volunteers keep their receipts and are reimbursed immediately by the charity's treasurer.

"We have a list of cupboard supplies which we give to the volunteers but as they get to know the family, they will learn what they like and which items they need more or less. They can use their discretion, so they are providing what the family really needs. For those families receiving a delivery, perishable items such as milk, butter, bread, etc can be included."

Once a month St Michael's is staffed for those with transport to collect their food. "Although we have a fabulous team of volunteers,



The Revd Juliet Fraser and Norman Garland

some of whom buy and deliver to more than one family, inevitably we have more families in need than volunteers to shop and deliver. We collect and store non-perishables items in St Michael's and people can come and select their shopping. We don't have the facilities here to store perishable items so it is all tins and packet food here.

"The idea with both parts of the food bank is to support people over a difficult time in their lives and help them so they don't have to worry as much about their situation."

Aberconwy Care and Share relies on donations and grant funding to keep going. "People donate both food and money and we have a brilliant secretary who sources grant funding so we can continue to offer this service," said Juliet. "As people know they're getting this food delivery once a month, it helps them to plan their budgets and finances."

"This project is a way of expressing the love of Jesus out into our communities and for them to know that the church cares, that we do care about our communities and people."

Aberconwy Care and Share needs more volunteers to shop and deliver food. If you can help, or for more information, please contact Julie Regan:

✉ julieregan59@googlemail.com



Knitting and Nattering in a Light, Airy Church



A group from St Mary's and St Peter's in Bagillt meets every Tuesday lunchtime in their church to Knit and Natter. The group started after the first COVID lockdown but had to halt their meetings almost immediately when further restrictions came in. After the pandemic, the group resumed, making use of a warm, light and airy space at the back of the church.

At the beginning, there were eight regular attendees. Now they regularly welcome 18 people, some of whom attend church for worship and others who support the church by helping with coffee mornings and other fund-raising activities. Some of the group meet for lunch beforehand and others arrive when they can. They all enjoy refreshments together mid-afternoon.

The organiser of Knit and Natter is the church's worship leader, Diane Craig. She said:

Although it's called a Knit and Natter Group, members do many kinds of crafts including crochet, weaving and sewing. Some people just come to enjoy the relaxed atmosphere and have a cup of tea and a chat.

Over the years, the group has knitted blankets and clothes for premature and stillborn babies in Ysbyty Glan Clwyd and this is an ongoing project. We have also made crocheted and knitted goods for an animal rescue centre and for our annual Christmas Fayre. Last year we had a stall at the Christmas Market organised by the local community council, with all proceeds going to church funds. We are currently knitting poppies for a display at our VE Day party and for Remembrance Sunday.

There is no organised programme and no pressure to do anything, but new skills are taught by the members to others and there's always someone willing to teach something new.

The Knit and Natter Group runs at the same time as the Well-Fed Food Hub. The Flintshire-based social enterprise provides affordable meals and instructions for cooking them, as well as offering nutritious ready-meals free of Ultra-Processed Food. Members of the public can call in to order their meals and pick them up the following week. One of the ladies from the group, Linda, does the ordering and distributing the meals.

Diane added:

The link between the Knit and Natter Group and the Well-Fed Hub means we act as a warm space in winter so that people can save on their heating at home which is much appreciated currently. We're lucky to have a very nice, light, airy space at the back of the church where we can meet each week. We laugh a lot and enjoy ourselves which always helps everyone to feel better. Friendships have been formed, and we have regular outings on coach trips and meals out together.

Earlier this year, the group welcomed a trainee nurse from Chester University who is studying a module of complementary medicine as part of his course. He visited the group to understand how it encourages positive well-being among those who attend.

The Knit and Natter Group meets every Tuesday between 12.30 and 3.30pm at the back of St Mary's and St Peter's Church. All are welcome. If you would like further information, please contact Diane Craig on:

✉ 01352 733542



For more information

Call: 0345 777 3322 **Email:** churchteam@ecclesiastical.com

Facebook: Ecclesiastical



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