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BABELL ZION NEWYDD

Rhiw Babell Pensarn Caerfyrddin SA31 2JQ



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**LLANGUNNOR
NETWORK**

TEACH THE CHILDREN THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

The arrival of the Christmas season brings with it thoughts of decorative outdoor lights that turn houses and gardens into a beautiful kaleidoscope of colours. During this time of year we also think of evergreen trees with their enchanting scent of pine needles. We are reminded of Santa Claus and his reindeer, of candles, bells, stars, wreaths, ornaments, hollies, candy canes and presents. But, sad to say, the most important reason for celebrating Christmas seems to have been left out of the celebrations – Christ Himself.

Some of us make it a practice to set aside one evening of advent a year to cruise the residential areas of the city or town we live in and admire the unique display of Christmas lights. I am overwhelmed by all the work and money that goes into some of those elaborate outdoor Christmas displays. I sometimes wonder how many of the occupants living in those houses, decorated with hundreds and hundreds of lights, have actually seen the inside of a church at least once in the past year. Are their efforts all just for show or are they really and truly expressing their love for Christ in their own particular way through this medium? It seems that for many people the most important part of what Christmas is all about is missing from their celebration. People have become so caught up in the materialistic aspect of the season that they leave out the real reason for the season. I'm not suggesting that there is anything wrong with adorning our homes with lights, trees, ornaments and all the other festive things that occupy our thoughts during advent. But they should be placed in their proper perspective.

You might ask, what then is the relationship of lights and ornaments and gift giving to Christ's birthday?

Well, there is a Christian connection with all of the things we think about at Christmas including gift giving and Christ's birthday. We give gifts because we attempt to humbly imitate God the Father who gave His Son as His gift to us on that first Christmas morning. Gifts were also brought by the Magi. Gold, frankincense and myrrh were presented to the Baby Jesus at the stable in Bethlehem. Gift giving is part of our Christian heritage. They are nice to give and they are nice to receive. But, our main focus should be on the holy season – the birthday of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

So what is the true meaning of Christmas?

This theme focuses on children but this could also be a reminder for adults too.

"I just finished the household chores for the night and was preparing to go to bed when I heard a noise in the front of the house. I opened the door to the front room and to my surprise, Santa himself stepped out from behind the Christmas tree.

He placed his finger over my mouth so I wouldn't cry out. "What are you doing?" I started to ask. The words choked up in my throat, and I saw he had tears in his eyes. His usual jolly manner was gone. Gone was the eager, boisterous soul we all know.

He then answered me with a simple statement. "TEACH THE CHILDREN."

I was puzzled. What did he mean? As I stood bewildered, Santa said, "Teach the children! Teach them the old meaning of Christmas - the meaning that now-a-days Christmas has forgotten.."

Santa then reached in his bag and pulled out a FIR TREE and placed it before the mantle. “Teach the children that the pure green color of the stately fir tree remains green all year round, depicting the everlasting hope of mankind, all needles point heavenward, making it a symbol of man’s thoughts turning toward heaven.”

He again reached into his bag and pulled out a brilliant STAR. “Teach the children that the star was the heavenly sign of promises long ago. God promised a Savior for the world, and the star was the sign of fulfillment of His promise.”

He then reached into his bag and pulled out a CANDLE. “Teach the children that the candle symbolizes Christ who is the light of the world. When we see this great light, we are reminded of Him who displaces the darkness.”

Once again he reached into his bag and removed a WREATH and placed it on the tree. “Teach the children that the wreath symbolizes the real nature of love. Real love never ceases. Love is one continuous round of affection.”

He then pulled out of his bag an ornament of himself. “Teach the children that I, Santa Claus, symbolize the generosity and goodwill we feel during the month of December.”

He then brought out a HOLLY LEAF. “Teach the children that the holly plant represents immortality. It represents the crown of thorns worn by our Savior. The red represents the blood shed by Him.”

Next he pulled from his bag a GIFT and said, “Teach the children that God so loved the world that He gave His begotten Son. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift. Teach the children that the wise men bowed before the Holy Babe and presented Him with gold,

frankincense and myrrh. We should always give gifts in the same spirit of the wise men.”

Santa reached into his bag and pulled out a CANDY CANE and hung it on a tree. “Teach the children that the candy cane represents the shepherds’ crook. The crook on the staff helps to bring back stray sheep to the flock.”

He reached in again and pulled out an ANGEL. “Teach the children that it was the angels that heralded in the glorious news of the Savior’s birth, singing “Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good will toward men.”

Suddenly I heard a soft twinkling sound, and from his bag he pulled out a BELL. “Teach the children that as the lost sheep are found by the sound of the bell, it should bring mankind back to the fold.”

Santa said, “Remember, teach God’s children the true meaning of Christmas and do not put me in the center, for I am but a humble servant of the One that is, and I bow down to worship HIM, our LORD, our GOD.”

Wouldn’t it be nice if children as well as adults celebrated Christmas through the eyes of this Santa Claus.

It has been the custom by some families to leave an empty chair at the table when enjoying their Christmas dinner. The empty chair left at the table is intended for Jesus. In this way Jesus is included in His birthday celebration.

May you all have a blessed and holy Christmas this year!

Our sincere sympathies go to Vi, Ruth, Lleucu, Erin, Ffion and Huw as they come to terms with the passing of Mandy. Also to Nelda on the passing of her Step-Father recently. They shall not be forgotten.

Christmas The Story will be performed again this year at the English Baptist Chapel, Lammas Street.

Calling all knitters, crocheters or anyone with a hidden talent who is willing to teach others. We are hoping to set up a sisterhood in the New Year where we would meet on a regular basis and knit, crochet etc to raise some funds for our own church and also for causes in the community. If anyone is interested, please let Helen know.

A very big thank you goes out to all who contributed in any way they could towards this year's Christmas Fayre. The amount raised currently stands at £384. Thanks also goes to the English Baptist Chapel for allowing us to use their facilities again this year and to Mrs Jean Long and her team for giving us of their time in the kitchen.

A couple of events are in the planning for next year's diary. Helen will be giving a presentation on her time in Patagonia and Trevor will be giving another of his renowned talks. Dates and times will be confirmed and notified in Newsletter and will be announced in services.

Mae ein cydymdeimlad dwysaf gyda Vi, Ruth, Lleucu, Erin, Ffion a Huw wrth iddyn nhw ddod i delerau â cholli Mandy.

Hefyd i Nelda ar golli ei llys-dad yn ddiweddar. Yn angof ni chânt fod.

Bydd y Stori Nadolig yn cael ei berfformio eto eleni ac mae angen i wirfoddolwyr fod yn rhan o'r perfformiad.

Mae angen merched i wau a chrosio neu sy'n fodlon addysgu eraill. Rydym yn gobeithio dechrau Chwaeroliaeth lle byddem yn cyfarfod yn rheolaidd a gwau, crochet ac ati i godi arian ar gyfer ein heglwys ein hunain a hefyd am achosion yn y gymuned. Os oes gan unrhyw un ddiddordeb, rhowch wybod i Helen.

Diolch yn fawr iawn i bawb a gyfrannodd mewn unrhyw ffordd tuag at y Ffair Nadolig eleni. Hyd yma fe godwyd £384. Mae ein diolch hefyd yn fawr i Eglwys y Bedyddwyr Saesneg yn Heol Awst am ganiatau i ni ddefnyddio eu cyfleusterau eto eleni ac i Mrs Jean Long a'r tim am roi o'u hamser yn y gegin.

Mae rhai digwyddiadau i ddod yn y flwyddyn newydd. Fe fydd Helen a Gwyn yn rhoi cyflwyniad ar eu hymweliad diweddar â Phatagonia ac fe fydd Trevor yn rhoi noson i ni ar thema sy'n agos at ei galon.

Caiff y dyddiadau eu cadarnhau yn y Cylchlythyr nesaf ac yn y gwasanaethau.

Don't Forget Jesus

Christmas is a special time
To reflect on Jesus Christ,
The wonder of His lowly birth
Brings meaning to our lives

There really is no other reason,
We celebrate this day,
The birth of God's precious son
And the life, He willingly gave

But so much seems to distract us
In the busyness of our lives,
We lose our focus in all the happenings,
Not knowing, we leave out Christ

We lose sight of the true meaning
As we endlessly rush about,
Trying to find that perfect gift,
Seems to cloud our Saviour out

We need to stop and reflect awhile,
Remembering our precious Lord,
His birth, His life and sacrifice
And all that He stands for

For though the world may celebrate,
It seems, though, for other reasons,
Let's keep in mind that Jesus Christ
Is the true meaning of the season.

© By M.S.Lowndes



Please remember in your prayers this month:

Nelda Davies

Vi Williams and Family

Mr Ian Davies

Mrs Nan Thomas

O God our Father, we are preparing to celebrate the birthday of your Son Jesus Christ. While we recall his coming as a tiny baby in weakness and humility, may we be reminded that one day he will come in power and glory. Lord Jesus, this Christmas as we sing the familiar carols, hear the familiar readings and ponder on familiar mysteries give to us the gift of pure worship. Teach us to be reverent, yet teach us how to express the love that burns within our hearts as we think of your goodness to us. That you have come to be our light in darkness, our hope in despair, our strength in weakness, our shelter in the storm and our Eternal Saviour.



MONTH	Flowers	Cleaning
January	Nan Thomas	Pat Morgan
February	Esme Phillips	Nelda Davies
March	Julia Edwards	Janet Davies

DATES FOR DIARIES

- 10/12 4:30 pm Welsh Candlelight Service. Cor Ty Tawe will be participating during this service.
- 17/12 4:30 pm English Candlelight Service. Crescendo Choir will be participating during this service.
- 17/12 12:30 Christmas Dinner at Ivy Bush.
- 22/12 5:00 pm Christmas Party where I'm sure Santa will be paying us a visit!!
- HO HO HO!!
- 
- 24/12 No regular Sunday Service during the day as there will a Communion Service at 11:15 pm.
- 25/12 9:30 am Christmas Morning Service of Reflection led by Mr David Folland.

A visit to Patagonia.

It was something which had been brewing for quite a while: a visit to Patagonia. But how should we go about it?

It was Hazel
PATAGONIA

Charles Evans who started the ball rolling when she sent out an appeal to all Welsh Choirs for money to help with the Welsh Primary School and centre in Esquel Patagonia. Whom should we contact if interested? Rev Eirian Wyn Lewis, a minister with the Baptists in Mynachlog Ddu was the answer and one who was making his tenth visit this year and it happened every two years. There was no time to waste.

Well as you all know, we have been. It was a three week tour of not just “the Wladfa” but also Buenos Aires, Bariloche, The Iguazu Falls and Rio de Janeiro.

When we reached Esquel, a town founded by the first Welsh Settlers after landing in 1865 on the Mimosa, it was to Capel Seion that we went. The services are in Spanish and in Welsh held alternately in Seion and Bethel Trefelin. From Esquel to the Gaiman and Trelew where the three day Annual Eisteddfod was held. To herald this year’s Eisteddfod and to present the programme and titles for next year’s competitions the Gorsedd made its procession to the Maen Llog led by three men on horseback. It was a sight to behold. But I shall say no more for there will be an evening to share our experiences on a date to be announced.



Taith i'r Wladfa

Roedd rhyw dynfa eleni i fynd i Batagonia a doeddwn i ddim wir yn gwybod pam. Beth bynnag, pan ddaeth llythyr oddi wrth Hazel Charles Evans i Gôr Ty Tawe yn gofyn am nawdd i helpu gyda pharhad yr Ysgol a Chanolfan Cymraeg yn Esquel a Threfelin dyma fi yn cysylltu â hi a holi sut i fynd ati. Roedd Parch Eirian Wyn o Fynachlog Ddu yn trefnu taith bob yn ail flwyddyn ac roedd yn mynd ar ei ddegfed siwrnai eleni. Pa well amser i fynd? Roedd yntau hefyd wedi bod yn Weinidog am dri mis yn y Gaiman sawl blwyddyn yn ôl ac felly yn gwybod i'r dim beth i'w drefnu ar ein cyfer. Roedd y daith y tu hwnt i bob disgwyl ond fe gewch glywed yr hanes i gyd ar noson i'w threfnu yn y dyfodol agos.

Digon dweud bod cael troedio llwybrau y Cymry gynt a laniodd ar y Mimosa nôl yn 1865 yn ddigon o ryfeddod a chael siarad Cymraeg mewn gwlad oedd mor bell o Gymru yn fwy o ryfeddod byth.

Helen

Services for the next three months/Gwasanaethau'r tri mis nesaf

	Pregethwr /Preacher
03/12/17 10:30 am	Mr David Folland
10/12/17 4:30 pm	Welsh Candlelight Service
17/12/17 4:30 pm	English Candlelight Service
24/12/17 11:15 pm	Rev Adelaide Wheeler Cocks Communion/ Cymundeb
25/12/17 9:30 am	Christmas Day –United Service of Reflection led by Mr David Folland
31/12/17	To be advised
07/01/18 2:00 pm	Rev Iestyn ap Howell Communion/ Cymundeb
14/01/18 2:00 pm	Rev Aled Maskell
21/01/18	To be advised
28/01/18 10:30 am	Mr David Folland
04/02/18 10:30 am	Rev Adelaide Wheeler Cocks Communion/ Cymundeb
11/02 2:00 pm	Rev Iestyn ap Howell
18/02	To be advised
25/02 2:00 pm	Rev Chris Rees

Ministers and Service times may be subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.

----- Announcements and Preparing Communion Table

December	January	February	March
Pat/Sian	Helen/Carole	Carole/Helen	Ian/

Editor this month: Mrs Carole Rees

Please forward any news/articles to Carole at carolerees4@gmail.com
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