

Babell Chapel/Capel y Babell Pensarn

Autumn Newsletter Cylchlythyr yr Hydref 2014

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Dear Friends

"We must learn lessons from this tragedy and ensure that nothing like this happens again."

How familiar those words are. Subsequent to every disaster they are repeated "We must learn from our mistakes and ensure that errors of this kind are consigned to history." A few months or years pass and, surprise, surprise, the same folly is being replicated.

Someone has said: *"The one lesson that history teaches is that men and women never learn the lesson that history teaches."*

Man's seeming inability to learn from the past is a recurring theme in the Bible and in the Book of Judges in particular.

The writer of the book confronts the people with a potted account of their history in the hope that they will realise that their generation, no less than the generation that preceded it is passing monotonously through the same five stages: 1) the people worship the Lord and obey him; 2) they forsake the Lord and provoke him to anger; 3) the Lord delivers them into the hands of their enemies; 4) the people are distressed and cry to the Lord for help; 5) the Lord has pity on his people and saves them. Thirteen times the same cycle repeats itself, as though existence were a treadmill, a circular grind from which we cannot break loose.

We find a similar cynicism in the writer of Ecclesiastes who believed quite firmly that there is no progress in the world, no evolution possible, nothing of value transmitted from one person or one generation to another; all things move in a circle accomplishing nothing. "What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9).

The New Testament Book of Revelation is not my favourite book and its place in the canon of scripture, in my opinion, is questionable. I am tempted to quote Martin Luther who said that either the book *finds one mad or leaves one mad*. It has become the happy hunting ground of religious eccentrics who, divorcing the book from its historical context, seek to use it as an Old Moore's Almanac and show their education to have been a waste of time. What the book does do, albeit symbolically and figuratively is to demonstrate humankind's inability to learn from experience.

At one point in the drama seven successive angels blow their trumpets to

herald God's judgement on the evil of the world. The trumpets sound and seven catastrophes, of gathering intensity, fall on humanity. A third of the earth is scorched by fire, a third of the sea turned to blood, and a third of the world plunged into darkness; then comes a plague of scorpions followed by an invasion of 200 million cavalry, their horses breathing fire, smoke and sulphur, snuffing out most of mankind. Only a remnant of the earth's population remains, yet even of this remnant we read these sombre words: "The rest of mankind who survived these plagues still did not forsake the gods their hands had fashioned, nor cease their worship of devils and of idols made from gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk. Nor did they repent of their murders, their sorcery, their fornication, or their robberies" (Revelation 9:20-21). In other words – "We never learn, do we?"

We have just commemorated the 100th Anniversary of The First World War. It was described as 'the war to end all wars.'

That prophecy held true for only twenty one years as, in 1939, the world was plunged into bloodshed on an unprecedented scale.

Since then there have been other major conflicts, several of which have had the tacit approval of the United Kingdom and, on occasion, its direct involvement.

History will form its own judgement on our decision to enter the arena of war in Iraq and Afghanistan. It was only through the will of the people that some of our politicians were thwarted in their resolve to become involved in Syria.

When will the world learn that violence begets violence and that those who take the sword shall die by the sword? When will we spend as much on the things that belong to peace as we presently spend on implements of war.

Once, long ago, Jesus stood on Olivet, looking down on Jerusalem, the city that would, very shortly, destroy him. His words should haunt us still:

O JERUSALEM, JERUSALEM, Stoning the prophets and destroying those sent you by God. How often would I have gathered your children together as a mother hen gathers her little ones under her wings BUT YOU WOULD NOT.

That is our fundamental problem. We Never Learn!

MIKE SHEPHARD

THE ARTIFICIAL LEG

The leg was attached to the stump
by an assortment of straps and wires.
He quickly tired
when he walked,
as movement was achieved by swinging his leg out wide
in circular fashion. That is why he talked
to everyone he met. The pause gave space for him to get his breath
for the next stride.

Children laughed, cruelly, at his gait,
calling out 'Peg leg!' as he went down the road;
It was ignored,
save for that time
when, with stick in hand, he turned to give chase
but, losing his balance fell; He wiped the grime
from his hands. The humiliation, though, was ingrained,
in his face.

Then the smile again. His was the courage
which could say, "Aah Well!"
But who could tell
what he really thought?
He never once talked about 'his' war:
the shattered dream, ruined life or broken heart.
Nor could I ask, not even once,
of surgeon's saw.

Of all this, and more, his leg bore witness,
encapsulating, in itself, what remained unsaid.
After he was dead
that leg still
spoke of things which, in these, my mature years
I can better understand. It ever will
remind me of him, inspiring hope;
Sometimes tears.

In memory of Tom Penny (Tom Peg Leg), my maternal grandfather. He was born in 1892 and died in 1957. He had lost his leg at the Battle of the Somme during the First World War. It is hard to believe that I am older than he was when he passed away. I am certainly a lot fitter than he was in his sixties. There again, I have had a much easier life. I have never experienced warfare. My limbs remain intact. I have never had to cope with wearing an exceedingly heavy artificial leg. To Tom Penny. And to millions like him. Thank you!

Mike Shephard ©

FAMILY NEWS

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of Ena Wilkins who passed away recently. Ena had links with Babell going back many years and will be missed by those who knew her.

We send our very best wishes to all who have been unwell recently. We think especially of Bethan, daughter of Edwina Jones, who has undergone further hospital treatment. Do well, Bethan.

A big thank you to everyone who gave so generously on the occasion of our Gift Day. Close on £1000 was given – a very credible total, particularly as many friends give sacrificially throughout the year. We are also grateful to those members of Babell who, whilst not being present very often, continue to remember that the work goes on in their absence and give financial support. Our thanks.

Thank you too to everyone who made our sale of work, on 19th July, so successful. The total exceeded £450 and that is most heartening.

Our gratitude to our friends, Trevor and Linda, for hosting another quiz night in July. We enjoy these evenings so much and appreciate the work that they put into them. The proceeds, once again, went to church/friendship centre funds.

Our Friendship Centre continues to play an important part in the lives of people. It has been good to see new faces and to wider the sphere of our friendship. Do please continue to make it known as we want to grow, not only in numbers but as an influence for good in the community.

It is an open secret that one of our new friends heard about us in a local supermarket. Recognising his need of support, he was told by a woman, with whom he had got into conversation that he should call in at Babell. He did so and describes it as a wonderful place to be. We thank him for his encouragement and value his visits.

The Friendship Centre, as with the church, does, of course, close throughout the month of August. A custom which, at first, struck me as being strange, is now viewed as being both sensible and wise. We all need a break and having a month off enables the church to recharge its batteries and enjoy a refreshment of spirit. The true meaning of 'Holiday' is 'Holy Day' and the root of 'Holy' and 'Whole' is similar. Used wisely, a holiday is a chance to rediscover God and the wholeness that God can give us. It provides that much needed 'time out' and during August I make a conscious decision *not* to attend any church. It may seem an odd thing for a minister to say but we can sometimes desert God by entering his service. We can become so busy that we lose him completely. He grants us permission, on occasion, simply to be his 'tired' child and to 'do' nothing. How did someone put it: "All work and no play"

It goes without saying that when we come back in September we will find a very different situation at Babell.

For one thing the 'Big seat' will have gone and will have been replaced by a platform, upon which the lectern will stand and from which I will lead the service. I would never dream of forcing my own view on any other minister but I have a dislike of traditional pulpits. As I see it, pulpits separates pastor and people, add to the feeling that ministers are 'six feet above contradiction' and reinforce the stereotype of teacher and pupil. Pulpits, I think, belong to an age when our chapels were little more than preaching stations and when congregations, generally, were people who filled the pews. In an era when all age services are becoming the norm a platform facilitates a greater degree of interaction than is possible with a pulpit. More important still we hope that *this* platform will soon be graced by a choir, to be recruited and led by our friend, Helen Gibbon, and which will take part in our worship on a monthly basis. It will symbolise all that is best in music and, with Helen as leader, will be an offering of "Our Utmost for The Highest."

We will no longer be sitting on hard wooden pews but in comfortable chairs which, unlike varnished seats, will not become tacky on very hot days or stain one's clothing! Chairs will also allow for a more flexible use of our building as they can be turned around or even removed temporarily as the situation demands. Our church, in consequence, can be used as a community resource and not only for worship. One does appreciate that memories are associated with the pews and that their removal will be the source of pain for some. For that we apologise. If Babell were being built today, of course, its architecture and fittings would be modern in style. Just as our house décor and furnishing has 'moved on' so must those of our churches, the fact being that, at home, we have long discarded the type of seating used by our grandparents or great grandparents. The pews, incidentally, are being offered for sale on a first come first served basis, any money raised being used to help purchase alternative seating.

Our church will retain its atmosphere of dignity and reverence. It will remain a church. I very much hope to see a cross erected to the front of the church, on your left and want it to replicate the cross at the English Baptist Church, in Carmarthen, where I was minister from 1987 to 2000. It was made by a close friend, the late Tom Phillips and was, for me, a wonderful aid to worship. It stands eight feet high, is rough-hewn and is illuminated from behind. In front of it is a lighted candle. It is a sermon in itself.

Also to the front of the church will be a large screen upon which can be displayed worship material or the words of hymns. This will allow for a wider use of hymns than are contained in any one hymnbook. Every generation needs hymns that reflect their own experience of God. Many older hymns are lovely. Others give echo to an outdated theology which we moderns find embarrassing and which is no longer true for us. Interesting though it may be to "extol the stem of Jessie's Rod" few of us have a clue about its meaning and, for those not used to hymn singing such sentiments can repel rather than attract. I say nothing about the hymns which speak of being washed in Christ's blood and which trivialise the essential meaning of the cross. The monitor screen will enable us to sing the very best of hymns from a variety of traditions and will surely enhance our worship.

Meanwhile, the outside of the church will have been painted in what we trust will be “a striking colour.” In short we want to make a statement. We want to say that this church is alive and well and is anxious to make a contribution to the life of our community. We want the building to be welcoming and non-threatening to those unfamiliar with church life. One of the colours is called ‘Nirvana.’ It’s quite fitting I think speaking, as it does, of blessedness and peace. The word is much used in Buddhist circles encompassing what, for the Christian, is summed up in the idea of ‘heaven.’ There should be one difference, however, as Buddhism, per se can come across as a selfish religion. The character in Buddhism who I like most is the *Bodhisatvar*. He or she willingly sacrifices their hope of attaining Nirvana and devote their lives to helping others enter a state of Blessedness. Jesus put it so well when he said; “greater love hath no man or woman than this. That they lay down their lives for their friends.”

Babell will have changed when we return in September. The Church, though, is not the building. It is the people. There will be the same welcome here. There will be the same enthusiasm. There will be the same degree of acceptance, toleration and love. WELCOME BACK.

MFS

A PRAYER

This is the beginning of a new day
God has given me this day to use as I will.
I can waste it – or use it for good.
But what I do today is important,
Because I am exchanging a day of my life for it!
When tomorrow comes,
This day will be gone forever,
Leaving in its place something that I traded for it.
I want it to be gain,
And not loss;
Good, and not evil;
Success and not failure;
In order that I will not regret the price that I paid for it.

Heartsill Wilson/ submitted by Esme Phillips

Quotable Quotes

Roll on the day when our hospitals have all the resources they need and the army runs a jumble sale to buy a missile.

Source unknown

First they came for the Jews and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for the communists and I did not speak out because I was not a communist.

Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for me -

and there was no one left to speak out for me.

Pastor Niemoeller (victim of the Nazis)

One day youngsters will learn words they do not understand.

Children from India will ask: What is hunger?

Children from Alabama will ask: What is racial segregation?

Children from Hiroshima will ask: What is the atomic bomb?

Children at school will ask: What is war?

You will answer them.

These words are not used any more, like stage-coaches, galleys or slavery –
Such words are no longer meaningful. That is why they have been removed from dictionaries

Martin Luther King

I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.

Albert Einstein

Naturally, the common people don't want war, but after all it is the leaders of the country who determine the policy and it is always a simple matter to drag people along . . .

Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to do the bidding of their leaders. This is easy. All you have to do is to tell them they are being attacked

and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and for exposing the country to danger. It works the same in every country

Hermann Goering/ Nuremberg Trials

The money required to eradicate hunger for everyone in the world has been estimated at \$30 billion a year. It is a huge sum of money
About as much as the world spends on the military every eight days.

Source unknown

Reporter: Mr Gandhi, What do you think of Western Civilisation?

Mr Gandhi: I think it would be a good idea!

Newspaper Report

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less
Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee.

John Donne

A SPECIAL PLACE

God has a special place for still-born things,
The things that never were and should have been:
The little songs no singer ever sings,
The beauty of a picture hung unseen,
A noble heart that loved with no return,
and deeds well-meant which somehow turned out ill
A lovely flame that vainly tried to burn
But could not last, though all the winds were still,
The early flower that no one ever sees
Making its way through ground iced hard with sleet,
A Caesar to whom no man bends his knee,
The Christ-like smile that meets each fresh defeat:
God treats them very tenderly for he
Knows what the pain of stifled things can be.

Dorothy Quick/ Poem and quotations, contributed By Gwen Shephard

EVIL TRIUMPHS WHEN GOOD PEOPLE DO NOTHING

The trees, at last, decided that they must have a king:
Their leader, wise, all knowing, possessed of many rings –
Would be a tree of stature, who stood erect and tall:
Such was the image in the mind, of all trees, large and small.

They thought first of the mighty OAK: Its glorious canopy,
Suggested that the time had come, to claim its destiny.
Alas! She cried: I cannot! I do not have the time!
To leave my little acorns, would surely be a crime.
They pleaded with the noble ELM: "Say Yes! It is our will!"
I dare not! Said the other. The stress would make me ill!
She told them of relations, in Holland, all unwell:
I am preoccupied just now; so many have been felled.
They called upon the ROWAN TREE: Its berries, shining bright,
Did gleam, like jewels in a crown; a splendid, kingly sight.
'You must be king!' The forest cried; 'We need you Mountain Ash!'
Is that the time? The tree exclaimed: *I really have to dash!*
The SYCAMORE had problems too; as did the SCOTTISH PINE.
The MONKEY TREE was puzzled – confused in bark and mind.
The BIRCHES and the LARCHES were not prepared to stand;
The WILLOWS, weeping loudly, refused to lend a hand.
Afraid of courting trouble, the POPLARS said: *NOT US!*
The YEW TREE thought itself too old, for any kind of fuss.
The ALDERS and the ELDERS; the BEECHES and the LIMES;
Were grateful for the honour, but said: *Some other time!*

Now, in the wood, a BRAMBLE grew; one of the prickly band.
It said: *I am prepared, if asked, to rule this forest land:*
I know that I lack stature, and am but bush; not tree:

But, nonetheless, I'll do it! You need a king. Choose me!

And, so, it came to happen: The trees, at last agreed,
To make the BRAMBLE BUSH their king; and called it MAJESTY!
And the moral of the story? Of that there is no doubt:
Evil spreads its barb and thorn; WHEN YOU AND I OPT OUT.

Mike Shephard ©

TALKING POINT

For months, we have watched ISIS tighten their grip on the territory and people they control. They are well funded and well organised, strengthened by the chaos of the civil war in Syria and the actions of the disastrous Maliki government in Iraq. They are one of the most barbaric forces we have witnessed in the world since the genocide in Rwanda.

These terrible people pose a direct threat to the lives of civilians who oppose their hardline religious views, they destabilise further an already volatile region and they will increasingly create young jihadists who will find their way to countries like our own.

The idea that this is not our problem is wishful thinking at best, and catastrophic complacency at worst.

The consequences of allowing an extremist caliphate to be formed, stretching from Syria to the borders of Iran are almost unthinkable. Not only would it bring further horrors to innocent people, the likes of which we have seen graphically in the last weeks, but it would potentially risk a full scale Sunni-Shia conflict with profound consequences for us all. Perhaps worst of all, a fundamentalist caliphate would be a magnet for jihadists around the world and it would soon be used as a base from which to export terrorism and extremism.

So, we need to be clear, ISIS are our enemy and need to be defeated. Either we use our military power to degrade and diminish their capacity for evil or ensure that we supplies our allies in the region with the equipment and knowledge they need to do the job themselves.

In the West, we need to understand that Islamist fundamentalists hate us, not just because of what we do, but because of who we are. Our systems of law and government and our concept of rights, especially women's rights, and religious tolerance undermine their very existence in the long-term.

There is not going to be a cost-free option available in a situation like this. The cost of failing to act could be higher still.

Liam Fox/Daily Mail/August 13th/ Abbreviated

From a leading Muslim voice, a troubling question . . .

Why aren't British Muslims Condemning the maniacs killing in the name of Islam?

The Muslims mistakenly parading themselves as jihadists 'defending' Islam are plumbing new depths of horror in their vicious campaign to impose a 7th Century Islamic tyranny across large swathes of Iraq and Syria. Indiscriminate slaughter, public beheadings and systematic starvation are all features of their murderous campaign, propped up by pernicious propaganda that inspires awe in their followers and fear in their victims. What is particularly disturbing is the support given to the militants by many deluded British Muslims. It has been estimated that more than 500 young British men have gone to fight in the Syrian civil war, many of them moving across to Iraq to become volunteers in the Islamic State movement, which aims to resurrect a medieval-style caliphate in the region.

What is terribly worrying is that, in the face of the IS atrocities, and extremist British Muslims' involvement in jihadism, mainstream Muslims here have remained largely silent at what is happening in Iraq today.

Where is the mass outcry against the systematic killing of the Iraqi Yazidis, the deadly harassment of Christians and the mindless destruction of their churches?

Where are the co-ordinated protests against the Islamic State? Where are the popular calls for an end to organised genocide by Sunni Muslim militants in Iraq?

The silence from the mass of British Muslims is deafening and represents pure hypocrisy and double standards from Muslims in this country. Only a few weeks ago, more than 200,000 people – a large proportion of them British Muslims – took to the streets of London and Manchester to protest against Israel. The Jewish state was denounced as a pariah, its actions in Gaza condemned as disproportionate. Yet there has been nothing like this level of justified outrage over the senseless savagery of the Islamic State in Iraq.

If Muslims around the world, including those in the UK, had united against jihadism in the same way that they have done against Israel, then the extremists would be far weaker. Indeed. Idiotic British Muslims lusting after adventure might be deterred from joining IS and collaborating with injustice and immorality in the Middle East.

We have to accept that the growing strength of IS is partly the direct consequence of the ill-fated and illegal war launched by George Bush and former Prime Minister Tony Blair. There is little doubt that Saddam Hussein was a despot, but his overthrow has plunged Iraq into long-term political and social chaos.

Tragically, this is the venomous world to which so many young British Muslims are being drawn. They are encouraged by pro-jihadi messages proclaimed by some mosques, mullahs and madrasses who fuel and exploit their disillusion with British Society. Alienated from the liberal West, partly because of their own hardline ideology, partly because of poverty and social isolation, they feel that they have no practical stake in modern Britain. In consequence they fall prey to the language and imagery of the radicals,

which presents jihad as the ultimate expression of true religious devotion. The conflict is portrayed to these deluded young men as an exciting, heroic adventure in the desert, where they can wield rifles, carry out executions and send 'selfies' back home while doing God's work.

A potent part of the jihadi appeal is the promise of sex. Here is one of the ugly hypocrisies of fundamentalism. On the one hand is a deeply puritan, repressive 'theology' that subjugates women and seeks to stamp out normal physical contact between the genders. On the other is a misogynistic vision of paradise, reminiscent of a sleazy nightclub, full of nubile, insatiable women eager to please their men. In one of the more grotesque versions of Islamic fundamentalism, the spiritual reward for each 'martyr' will be the company of 72 voluptuous virgins. This vision has an undoubted appeal to a sex-starved young Muslim from urban Britain.

Needless to say, the reference to 72 virgins in paradise has absolutely no basis in the Koran, or in authentic Islamic theology. It comes instead from a dubious prophetic tradition produced three centuries after Mohammed's death. The zealots might like to see themselves as devout believers, but in fact they are profoundly un-Islamic.

The Koran specifically declares that Muslims are allowed to take up arms for only two reasons: either because of religious persecution or because they are being driven from their homes. It is laughable to pretend that either condition applies in contemporary Britain. In the same vein, there is not the slightest justification in the Koran for the persecution of non-believers, most especially Christians. Indeed, Chapter 109, verse 6 confirms that everyone has a right to believe as they please. In Chapter 2, verse 256 it states that there is no compulsion in religion. Therefore no Muslim can demand that anyone should be forcibly converted to Islam – precisely what the barbaric Islamic State has been doing in northern Iraq at the point of a rifle

The words of the Koran are being twisted and perverted to serve the jihadists' ends. In Britain, the silence of the moderate Muslim majority is only serving as an ally of bigotry and injustice. We should be condemning with utmost urgency the atrocities committed in the name of Islam.

In the aftermath of the tragic July bombings in 2005, there was not a single march organised by the UK Islamic community against those fanatical killers. No Muslim group took to the streets chanting 'not in my name' after the brutal murder of 52 innocent people by these Muslim assassins.

Yet just a year later, for three weekends in a row, London was brought to a complete standstill by Muslim protests about the publication of a cartoon of Mohammed in an obscure Danish magazine. Not only did the demonstrations show contempt for freedom of expression, which is one of the bulwarks of Western democracy and is, moreover, sanctioned in the Koran. It was also a demonstration of a warped sense of religious injustice.

Mainstream Muslims in Britain have yet to come out against the toxic forces of militant jihadism, which is inflicting so much carnage across the Middle East. **Unless we do so loudly**

and clearly, we are colluding with a theological tyranny that has no basis whatsoever in Islam's sacred scripture.

Dr Taj Hargey/ Director of the Muslim Educational Centre, Oxford/ Imam of the Oxford Islamic Congregation

Comment

When I read the above article I wanted to applaud. The problem with extremism is that it alienates those who are, usually, tolerant of all views. It is easy to conclude that the extremist represents a generally held view and that the actions of an organisation, such as Islamic State, has the tacit approval of all Muslims. That is why it is essential for moderate Muslims to speak out. Let us pray that they will do so in increasing numbers. The future of our society could well depend upon them doing so.

I understand that an Islamic Centre is to open in Carmarthen. We must all help build bridges between the Islamic and Christian Communities in our town.

MFS

THE COMING QUARTER

<u>Sept 07th</u>	2pm	Minister
<u>Sept 14th</u>	2pm	Revd John Morgan
<u>Sept 21st</u>	2pm	Minister
<u>Sept 28th</u>	2pm	GYMANFA/ No Service here
<u>Oct 5th</u>	2pm	Minister/ Reopening of Babell/Communion
<u>Oct 12th</u>	2pm	Revd John Morgan
<u>Oct 19th</u>	10.30am	Minister/Harvest Festival/ All Age Service
<u>Oct 26th</u>	2pm	Minister
<u>Nov 2nd</u>	2pm	Revd Geraint Lloyd/ Communion
<u>Nov 9th</u>	2pm	Mr Mark Lonney
<u>Nov 16th</u>	2pm	Mr Hugh Waddell
<u>Nov 23rd</u>	2pm	Revd John Morgan
<u>Nov 30th</u>	2pm	Revd Geraint Davies

NB We are hoping to meet at YR AELWYD SHELTERED HOUSING COMPLEX during September. This is due to the fact that the work at Babell will not have been finished. BABELL WILL RE-OPEN ON OCTOBER 5th at 2PM

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY CLUB WILL MEET AT BABELL AS USUAL

ESME PHILLIPS REMEMBERS

I worked as a nurse at St David's Psychiatric Hospital Carmarthen for some years and remember this period as a very happy time in my life.

I am grateful for the opportunity of sharing my memories of those years as it enables me to pay tribute to a profession which, whilst having to contend with many handicaps and frustrations, brought with it far more gains than losses.

I entered the profession in the late 1950s. Many of my friends pursued a career in teaching or banking. Some decided to become general nurses. In choosing to work in a psychiatric setting I was opting for a neglected field of service as, historically, it had been something of a medical Cinderella. Florence Nightingale, in her published works and letters, repeatedly stressed the psychological aspects of general nursing but seems to have taken no interest in training nurses to specialise in psychiatric illness.

For me, it all began on a cold, misty morning in February when, at a little under 18 years of age, I found myself standing in the front hall. Strange settings and unfamiliar faces – made worse by the questioning of the porter who wanted to know everything about me. It was worse than the actual interview!

At last I was escorted to the nurse's home by a buxom looking nurse of about fifty years. She was very much to the point and had the stride of a sergeant major.

Days were long in the early years – 7am to 8pm. Who minded? They were happy years despite the lack of domestics and porters. The work had to be done!

No one could do this type of work with any degree of satisfaction unless they are truly interested in it.

The new Mental Health Act came into force in 1959. It was a change for the better. There were new medications available also. Dormitories were long, before this, with four rows of beds. There were over a thousand patients there then, both male and female.

There was a change of emphasis at this time. Social evenings were organised. There were coach trips, exchange visits, talent competitions and cabaret shows. I remember one of these with great fondness as it featured Ryan and Ronnie. We took some patients to pantomimes in Swansea. I recall a popular innovation during the early 70s called the Pig and Whistle Bar where patients could obtain soft drinks and crisps during the social gatherings.

The Nurses of today have entered a great tradition, enhanced by the scientific, technological and sociological advances which have occurred. Looking back it was hard work. It was, though, an experience I would not have wanted to miss. I enjoyed the challenge of the work in which I was involved. It will be difficult to adequately thank the people who gave me my opportunity to learn about mental illness. We don't know when this illness will strike. We are all vulnerable.

The future, of course, must be in the community as that is the way forward

Thank you Elsie. Now we know where your wonderful compassion comes from. Apologies for having to abbreviate the article due to lack of space

A week at the National Eisteddfod in Llanelli



National
competitions

It was Carmarthenshire's turn to host the Eisteddfod this year and having decided not to had the advantage of enjoying as many of the activities and concerts as indeed was humanly possible. To say that the committees had produced a varied programme of events is a huge understatement. I have never seen so many events, activities and lectures held on the Maes not to mention the customary competitions and preliminaries held in various chapels in Llanelli and in the various tents on the Maes. Here is my attempt to write a diary of my week at the National.

Thursday evening July 31st:

Pitched the caravan on the fields of Stradey Castle. A lovely convenient location. We just had to cross the road and we were on the Maes which was on Sandy Road on the Coastal Path.

Friday August 1st: Had the dog with us which meant a daily constitutional around the Maes carafannau which this year had around 800+ caravans, tents and mobile homes. Went to the opening Gala Concert. This was a concert held by the Carmarthenshire secondary schools and local Performing schools and each school presented a programme of ten minutes from a show. What a marvellous start to the week! The young people of Carmarthenshire certainly showed what they could do in shows like Dick Penderyn [Bro Myrddin], Grav [Stradey], Pum Diwrnod o Ryddid [Dyffryn Aman], Er Mwyn Yfory [Bro Dinefwr], Nia Ben Aur [Maes y Gwendraeth], Cofio DJ Williams [Ysgol Berfformio] and Cofio Llangydeyrn [Menter Cwm Gwendraeth.] There were also performances by former soloists from Trinity - St David's University. There were 350 young people on stage that evening and they were superb. Grav in memory of Ray was also performed for two nights in the Ffwrnais theatre and Cofio Llangydeyrn was held in the Literary Tent for two afternoons. I had already seen this show in Llangydeyrn during the week of festivities commemorating the saving of Llangydeyrn and the Gwendraeth Fach Valley from being taken to form a reservoir in the sixties. What a show! From the very young to the oldest member of the cast.

Saturday August 2nd:

The competitions begin and four choirs came to battle it out in the afternoon with the local choir Côr Llanddarog being firm favourites to win for the fourth time. And it happened! Heledd is a member of the choir and was overjoyed.

Sunday August 3rd: The Sunday Service started promptly at 9.30 with guest preacher being Rev Beti Wyn. She took the Beatitudes as her text with emphasis on Blessed are the peacemakers, not peace keepers as she reminded us. We as Christians are to be peace-makers as Christ intended us to be at all times. Christ was speaking in troubled times in the Middle East as indeed they are today. At the Maen Llog and in every ceremony in the Pavilion we hear the words A oes Heddwch? The audience respond "Heddwch!" "Is there peace?" "Peace!" What Beti Wyn wished for was that we reflect on these words during a week which was also commemorating the beginning of the First World War. The Eisteddfod Choir sang 'Tangnefeddwyr', immortal words written by the Welsh poet/pacifist Waldo Williams on seeing, from a distance, Swansea in flames after the 1941 Blitz. The words have been memorably set to music by Eric Jones and the song sang by the children's choir led by Ann Davies was also an Eric Jones composition. A special note here for Nelda who was a member of the choir and who I'm sure will have fond memories of Eisteddfod Sir Gâr.

The rest of the day was spent on the Maes with another choral competition in the afternoon. Before that, a cup of tea and a welshcake in the Churches Together/Cytun tent and a catch up with people whom you usually only meet yearly on the Maes. There were 9 choirs competing in the under 35 membership choirs and their task was to produce a 12 minute programme of popular songs. The term popular is debated every year! What makes a truly popular programme? This year it was the local choir Tonic, conducted by Heulwen Thomas who lives in Llangunnor, who got it right. They won the competition with their renditions of *Joshua fit de battle of Jericho*, *Seal Lullaby* [Eric Whitacre] , *Anfonaf Angel*[Robat Arwyn] and *Gwenllian* [Eric Jones]. It is always a singer and a conductor's nightmare to get the programme right. After a meal in the caravan and a walk with Mali [the dog!], back to the pavilion for the Gymanfa Ganu conducted by Catrin Hughes. The hymns were all well known and the Eisteddfod Choir of over 200 members sang the anthem '*Gwel uwchlaw Cymylau Amser*' and also the winning hymn tune set to words by Rev John Gwilym Jones won by Robert Nicholls. We shall have to learn it.

Monday August 3rd

Stewarding afternoon today. I had to find the steward's office to kit me out in my yellow jacket and then find my way to Capel Als in the heart of town for the Towyn Roberts memorial prize. This is a scholarship of £5000 given to the most promising singer who presents a 20 minute programme to include one song by a Welsh composer. There were 5 singers this afternoon.

The evening saw us back in the pavilion for the Noson Lawen. Côr Llanddarog performed *Tangnefeddwyr* and also joined in a hearty rendition of *Sosban Fach* with the Three Tenors and the whole cast which included a Children's Choir representative of the primary schools, Gillian Elisa who is presently doing well in the role of Grandmother in the West End show Billy Elliot, the Siren Sisters and Gwenda and Gaynor with the compere of the evening being Nigel Owens.

Tuesday August 4th

A visit to the Maes in the morning to hear Denzil Davies former MP for Llanelli speaking on the classics. A very interesting talk on his Latin and Greek education in the Carmarthen Boys' 'Gram', further studies at Oxford, the influence of Plato's Republic, the Crito trial and death of Socrates, and how he compared the politics of today with those of Athens and those of Sparta with today's China.

The afternoon was spent stewarding the Towyn Roberts competition again in Capel Als. 7 soloists this time and all on the way to careers in opera. The four who came to the stage were Eirlys Myfanwy, Elen Williams, Elgan Llyr, and Alex Gilbert. Elen Williams is the grand-daughter of the late Henry Thomas former Carmarthenshire County Education Director. But it was Eirlys from Trimsaran who won the day this time. Eirlys sang with us in Babell in a performance of *Er Hwyllo'r Haul* with Côr Ty Tawe not so long ago. I'm sure we all wish her every success in the future. Gwyn meanwhile follows his own interests and goes to the Babell Lân to hear Alun Gibbard in conversation with Delme Thomas and Llyr James on the life of Carwyn James.

In the evening we both go to the pavilion and this time it was the turn of the Young Farmers' Movement to show what they could do and they certainly did that. It was an evening full of talented youngsters who took us on a journey from the beginning of the movement 70 years ago to the present day. The production was scripted by Dyfrig Davies and Nia Clwyd from Llandeilo. Of special interest to me was my nephew Dafydd's rendition of '*Yr Aradr Goch*' and the quartet in which he sang with Eirlys Myfanwy, Eirian Davies and Ffion Haf. They sang *Y mae Gobaith yn y Tir* which was one of the many highlights of the evening.

Wednesday August 5th : A day on the Maes. There were a few things on the Maes which Gwyn and I wanted to see. Firstly in the Literary Tent, Gwyn's cousin Guto was interviewed by Glynog Davies on his mother's life, the late Jennie Eirian Davies.

Then onto the Aberystwyth University tent which was holding a reunion. Not many of my particular year present but I'm sure as we get older this will not be the case in years to come.

In the evening a chance to hear the youth choirs in the pavilion. The Richard Burton competition which had already been held was won by Steffan Cennydd who lives in Llangunnor and who some of you will remember took the part of Joseph for us at the Aelwyd a few years back when he was in primary school. What a premonition!

Four youth choirs competed with Côr y Cwm taking the prize as well as the Choir of the Festival.

Thursday August 6th

BBC News anchor man Huw Edwards was in town to be questioned by Beti George on his father, the late Prof Hywel Teifi Edwards. A very interesting discussion took place in the Babel Lân, especially when it came down to the question of Huw not being able to raise his five children through the medium of Welsh. With Huw being at work and having married a non Welsh speaker it was nigh on impossible. However, his father had said that it was important that they knew the story of the Welsh people and that they were aware of their rich Welsh heritage.

Following this came Rev D Ben Rees who spoke of the two brothers, Jim Griffiths and the hymn writer Amanwy [David Griffiths]. I'm sure we have all at one time sang "*Melys ydyw cywair ein telynau glân*" – the words by Amanwy and the hymn tune also named after him by Gwilym R Jones. A very interesting talk and so easy to listen to.

Next came Dr Derec Llwyd Morgan and Dr Lyn Davies to speak on two of their favourite Carmarthenshire hymn writers. Both had William Williams Pantycelyn on the top of their list as well as David Charles of Carmarthen and Tomas Lewis Tallylchau. After this it was time to have a bit of fresh air.

While all this was going on Nelda was rehearsing as a member of the Eisteddfod choir all day in the Graig for the concert that evening: The Gounod '*Missa Solenne*' and the Faure *Requiem*. We were not disappointed. Under the direction of Grant Llewelyn and soloists Fflur Wyn, Trystan Llyr Griffiths and Gwion Thomas a memorable concert was had. While I'm in the Pavilion Gwyn is at the Ffwrnais enjoying a performance of Nia Ben Aur with some of the original cast of 1974.

Friday August 7th : Another day to enjoy some of the local talent. The recitation competition was of special interest due to a friend taking part. Then in the Cardiff University tent nephew Steffan was taking part in a debate on the Silk Commission and the presumed effects of Scottish independence on Wales.

In the evening there was the choral competition for choirs under 45 voices. I went to the Pavilion and Gwyn to the far end of the Maes where Bryn Fon was performing on the outdoor stage. By the time I arrived the show was almost at an end. Never mind, I will be able to see 'Mynediad am Ddim' tomorrow night.

Saturday August 8th : Took the awning down before the rain. Packed the caravan. It's the traditional day for Male Voice Choirs and as much as I would have liked to hear them all, I had to buy my Christmas Cards and take one last look at the stands on the Maes. I finally got to see the three chief choirs competition which Pontardulais won and then it was back to the caravan before the rain. I had to content myself with listening to the Blue Riband Competition on the radio and

was pleased for the baritone Andrew Mathews whom I remember as a pupil at Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera at the beginning of my career there.

It was a week to remember and many performances not seen but this only proves how much goes on in Carmarthenshire culturally especially amongst the young people and this is to be celebrated. Mae'r eisteddfod drosodd am flwyddyn arall ac mae pob pwyllgor i'w longyfarch am yr arlwy ardderchog a gynigiwyd. Roedd hi'n anodd iawn mynychu pob dim a'r dyddiadur uchod yn dangos gymaint yn fwy sydd i'r eisteddfod bellach na'r Pafiliwn pinc. Ond fe gawsom wledd ac edrychwn ymlaen yn awr at Eisteddfod Meifod y flwyddyn nesaf.

Oedfa a Gymanfa Ganu yr Eisteddfod

Y Parch Beti Wyn James Priordy oedd pregethwr gwadd yr oedfa eleni ac o dan ei harweiniad cawsom oedfa bendithiol. Cawsom y cyfle unwaith eto i ystyried ein perthynas â'n gilydd drwy fyfyrar ar yr adnod "Gwyn eu byd y tangnefeddwyr." [Dwedaf fwy yn fy nyddiadur uchod] Yr eironi oedd fod gwyl hapus fel hon, lle'r oedd y geiriau "A oes heddwch?" yn cael eu bonllefain o leiaf bump o weithiau yn ystod yr wythnos, yn cyd-ddigwydd â brwydrau a rhyfeloedd gwaedlyd mewn sawl man yn y Dwyrain Canol. Pe bai pawb yn parchu Duw a pharchu cyd-ddyn, beth bynnag ei greddau a'i ddaliadau, yna fe fyddai creadigaeth Duw, fel yr oedd wedi ei bwriadu, yn wir baradwys i fyw ynddi. Dau orchymyn oedd gan Iesu sef "Câr yr Arglwydd dy Dduw â'th holl galon, â'th holl enaid, â'th holl feddwl ac â'th holl nerth, a'r ail - 'Câr dy gymydog fel ti dy hun.'" Dyma sydd arnom angen sylweddoli a gweithredu arnynt mewn cymdeithas sydd yn brin o oddefgarwch ac sy'n gyflym dyfu yn gymdeithas hunanol a chwenychgar. Mae Llyfr Gwyn Caerfyrddin yn gofnod yn ein hoes ni o'n dyletswydd i fod yn dangnefeddwyr ac yn heddychwyr. Ewch ati i'w lofnodi.

**Cynhelir Oedfa Heddwch
yng
Nghapel Y Priordy,
Caerfyrddin
Nos Sul, Medi 21
am 5 o'r gloch.**

Roedd hi'n arferiad cynnal y Gymanfa Ganu ar ddiwedd yr wyf yn glo ar y cyfan ond erbyn heddiw fe'i chynhelir ar y Sul cyntaf ac mae dal disgwyl mawr amdani. Ni chawsom ein siomi. Credaf bod y Parch Ifor ap Gwilym yn llygad ei le yn ei lythyr i'r Pedair Tudalen Gydenwadol. Er mai adref oedd yntau ac yn gwylio ar y teledu, gallaf innau ategu ei sylwadau, fel un a oedd yno. Mae e'n diolch am Gymanfa "wefreiddiol."

"Cawsom ein codi i dir cerddorol ac ysbrydol aruchel." Mae e'n canmol yr arweinyddes Catrin Hughes a'r meistr wrth yr organ sef Allan Fewster am eu doniau ac am fod "pobl capel a'i bethau wrth y llyw."

Diolch am ddwy oedfa gafaelgar.

Helen Gibbon

Newyddion yr aelodau



Llongyfarchiadau mawr i **Heledd Evans** ar raddio mewn Hanes o Brifysgol Aberystwyth a phob dymuniad da wrth iddi ymuno â thim y Cylchgrawn Cymraeg Golwg yn Llanbed ar Fedi 1af.

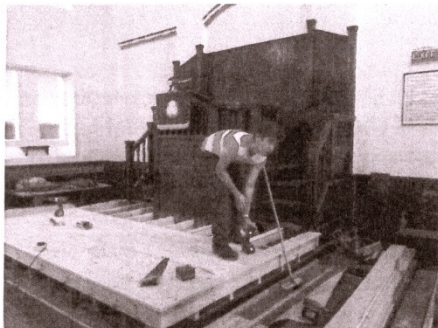
Mae **Mari Ann Jones** sef wyres Mrs Edwina Jones yn gwneud yn dda iawn yn y byd tecstilau. Llongyfarchiadau mawr iddi hi ar raddio o Brifysgol UWIC Caerdydd ac ar ei llwyddiant diweddaraf ym myd ffasiwn dynion. Wrth sôn am Mari cofiwn am ei mam Bethan sydd wedi cael llawdriniaeth yn ddiweddar. Dymunwn adferiad llwyr iddi.

Llongyfarchiadau mawr hefyd I Aled Bwlch y Gwynt ar raddio yn y Gyfraith eleni o Gaerdydd ac hefyd I Dafydd ar ei ganlyniadau Lefel A.

Mae **Erin a Ffion, Dylan a Steffan** yn parhau gyda'u hastudiaethau Lefel A. Llongyfarchiadau iddynt hwythau ar eu canlyniadau UG/AS ac i **Iwan** ar ganlyniadau TGAU. Mae Iwan wedi derbyn prentisiaeth gwaith saer gyda James Boucher ac yn brysur iawn gyda'r newidiadau yn y capel. Mae'n wir dda i'w weld yn dysgu ei grefft fel hyn. Mae ei frawd Daniel hefyd yn dilyn prentisiaeth fel trydanwr a dymunwn iddo yntau bob llwyddiant.

Adnewyddu'r adeilad

Mae gwaith mawr wedi bod yn mynd ymlaen trwy fis Awst ac mae'n diolch yn enfawr i bawb a fu wrthi mor ddiwyd. Diolch am y gwaith peintio i Martin ac Alan Price, i James Boucher ac Iwan am y gwaith saer ac i Dai Dyer am yr holl welliannau i'r adeiladwaith. Hefyd i Steffan Jones am ostwng y nenfwd. Rhaid dwyn i gôf y gwaith diwyd a wnaeth Vernon dros y blynyddoedd yn peintio ac yn twtio i gadw'r capel mor lân ac mae i fyny i ni bellach i sicrhau parhad i'w waith ddi- flino.



"Beth? Dim amser i gael paned!"

"What? No time for a cuppa!"

The Christmas Story in Carmarthen

Part of a letter from Chair of Cytun, Rev Peter Cutts

Dear Friends,

Did you know less than 36% of British 18 – 25 year-olds have any idea of the Biblical account of the first Christmas? Over the last 5 years churches in Cardiff have been coming together from across the city and beyond to change that statistic and reach a new generation with the news of Christ's birth. Thousands of school children and shoppers have turned in from the cold to Tabernacle Church in Cardiff City Centre to experience a quality 20-minute production telling the story in an accessible way. Many have been attracted by the live donkeys outside the church or the giant puppet camel escorted by three kings. Some schools have booked to go back year after year.

In 2013 the production was taken up for one week by the churches of Aberdare, where there was standing room only at some performances – for photos and further information see www.cynonnativity.org.uk The production relies on narration and has been fully translated into Welsh so that the language of performance is arranged to suit the visiting parties.

Now we have the opportunity to bring the Christmas Story to Carmarthen – but only if *all* the churches of Carmarthen will get behind the venture. It's going to need people with vision and skills, but most of all it's going to need ordinary people from our churches who may not have a clue how they can help but who are willing to say, 'we're in this together with you, bringing what we can for the sake of God's kingdom.' It's not only a wonderful opportunity to bless our town and surrounding area but also to see how God blesses His Church when we come together as one for His purposes.

This initiative was whole-heartedly welcomed at a meeting held in August and Sian and myself have volunteered to be on the Steering Committee. If you can help we would be most happy. Bydd y perfformiadau yn Saesneg a Chymraeg. Here is what is needed. Ni fydd angen dysgu geiriau/ No need to learn words. All has been sound tracked.

People with the following gifts / talents / interests:

Sewing / costume making

Woodwork (to make a manger and a crib)

Craft skills, prop making

Acting

Setting up and monitoring / managing a Facebook page

Staging, lighting, sound, etc

Publicity

School trips sub-committee

Dressing the exterior of the church

Caring for the needs of the donkeys

Stewarding

Cleaning / Making teas and coffees

FUN QUIZ, Monday, 7th July 2014

We are grateful to the Llangunnor Network for providing a very generous prize of four £10 gift vouchers. The Network aims to preserve the history of Llangunnor whilst promoting and supporting local events and organisations. Their easily accessible website provides information concerning events in the Community of Llangunnor. They also fielded a team for the quiz.

Perhaps the summer is not the most suitable time for a quiz and just 7 teams entered the fray on this occasion. The imaginative team line-up included Calypso; Team Rhiannon; Weakest Links; Intrepid Heroes; Trouble Makers; Jelly Beans & LCC Twits. Just 13 points separated the top and bottom teams and the statistical average overall was 66% of all questions asked being answered correctly. This is remarkable as I, as question master, got heavily criticised, and quite rightly so, by Linda, for the section on 'Odd One Out' which in fairness was a nightmare – my apologies!! Another topic which will be revised is Round 5 on Religious Knowledge as clearly Mike has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the topic; only hindered by a blind spot for Dairymaids!!

This time Team Rhiannon and Jelly Beans were joint winners and both teams kindly donated their prize to the Friendship Centre. Thank you very much indeed. The team of Trouble Makers made a wonderful start scoring heavily on the first two rounds but sadly fell into decline during the latter stages of the quiz. However, it should be remembered it is not so much the winning that is important but the taking part, and their reward was a small bottle of wine each. One of the team's members, who is a non drinker, graciously accepted a packet of 'Smarties' instead.

The ladies of the Chapel had been busy making a wonderful range of cakes for the mid-quiz break. The teams descended like locusts on tables filled with goodies washed down with copious cups of tea before entering the fray once more. It is this aspect of the evening many of us, including me take for granted. The amount of work behind the scenes to make a successful evening so often goes unnoticed. So I would like to record my sincere thanks to all the cake makers and those who served and refreshed the weary quizzers. I know Vi is not keen on taking part in quizzes but works tirelessly in the background to make the evening a success. Thank you Vi.

My thanks for all the people in the teams who made it a fun evening. Personally, I have to say that I enjoyed the quiz immensely – I would say that wouldn't I. I am lucky to have Linda to provide me with very sound advice, which I sometimes ignore at my peril, as happened this time. I really should pay more attention. 'Could do better' my school report used to say!!

Mike advises me the next quiz could be before Christmas (late October/early November perhaps). Watch this space. By popular request there will definitely be a section on James Bond 007 films so start swatting immediately.

Trevor Lloyd

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE - A GREAT IDEA

An informed source has revealed that a new calendar will be introduced next year for those attending Babell Chapel and the Friendship Centre to cope with any backlogs or other difficulties they may face in planning ahead. If it proves to be successful it is likely to be adopted by other hard pressed chapels in Wales in future. The special calendar is particularly useful for dealing with rush jobs associated with chapel life such as finding ministers when Mike's away, scheduling staff for the Friendship Centre and any future events such as quizzes etc.

NEW MONTHLY CALENDAR FOR 2015						
NEGOTIATION	SUNDAY	SUNDAY	THURSDAY	THURSDAY	WEDNESDAY	TUESDAY
8	7	6	5	4	3	2
15	14	13	12	11	10	9
22	21	20	19	18	17	16
29	28	27	26	25	24	23
36	35	34	33	32	31	30

The principle behind it is as follows:

- 1 Most things are usually wanted yesterday - so initiating requests on the 4th could be answered on the 3rd or even sooner.
- 2 As the scheduling for most weekly tasks is either Thursday or Sunday an additional Thursday and Sunday have been introduced. This allows for the expansion of the Friendship Centre and provides an extra day of rest
- 3 Mondays have been done away with thus avoiding that sinking feeling after uplifting Sunday fellowship.
- 4 Likewise Fridays and Saturdays are considered unproductive after the euphoria of the Friendship Centre the day before, and these too have been done away with altogether
- 5 To assist with uncompleted tasks which need to be completed by the end of the month, five extra days have been added to each calendar period to help out.
- 6 To avoid overruns from the previous month's last minute panic jobs, there is no 1st of the month to be set as a deadline.
- 7 A new day has been added to the calendar known as Negotiation day which is where all the serious discussions and decisions are made in a panic free environment.
- 8 Between each month there is a Bank Holiday. This will normally be just one day, although at Christmas and Easter this is extended to two days.

You probably have come to the conclusion this new calendar could potentially produce its own problems as there are 35 days in each month as opposed the rather hap hazard system we currently endure. The solution is simple enough. The miserable winter months of January and February will be done away with completely. With the introduction of 12 days of Bank Holidays this leaves just three odd days (four in a Leap Year) unaccounted for. As we have suffered successive Governments capable of losing billions of pounds with little or no effort, and with absolutely no accountability, making 3 or 4 days disappear should present no difficulty whatsoever!!

THIS CAN AND WILL WORK - HONEST!!

Elizabeth Duffy
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21 August 2014

Hello Mike

I am writing to you regarding a week of events I'm organising for Older Person's Day (1.10.14) in Yr Aelwyd sheltered scheme, which I believe Lee Whatley has mentioned to you. I want to extend a welcome to yourself and the congregation of Babell, our near neighbours, to come to Yr Aelwyd during that week and share the enjoyment of our activities. I wondered also if you might take the opportunity to come to our Information and Resources day on Monday 29th September 10 am – 12.30 to inform of the activities in Babell, especially the Friendship Club.

It will be set up with tables for each group and I have asked a variety of agencies to join us including 50+ Forum, Timebanking, Community Engagement Team (council), Eiriol advocacy, U3A, CSV befriending, Carers Forum, Art Care Celf Gofal, St Cynnor WI, Parkinson's, Stroke and Osteoporosis teams from the hospital, amongst others. I think it would be a good networking opportunity and also ideal for tenants in Llangunnor to know what is happening in Babell. It is very interesting to see in the press how you are altering the inside of the church and this event may just coincide with the completion of the works.

I enclose a copy of the provisional programme for your information, as I finalise and get them to print.

Venetia, whom I work with in the Chemo Unit, has kindly agreed to drop this letter in on my behalf.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Your sincerely



Lis Duffy

PROGRAMME

MONDAY 29 September

Information and resources.

10-12.30

What is available to older people locally? Agencies and groups coming to offer information.

1.30-3.30 pm

Regular **sewing group** and invitation to other sewers to join in Quilting and Patchwork. £2.

7 pm

Alun Lenny, local historian, speaking on **Riotous Carmarthen**

TUESDAY 30th September

10 am

Coffee morning - **Ivor Wilson**, entertainer. **Free to public.**

6-8 pm

Quiz. £2 pperson or 2 time credits.

WEDNESDAY 1st October

10 am

Disabled group - **Fun bingo session.** Welcome to all.

2 pm

Age Cymru regular **Arts and Crafts session** joined by Michelle from Shelbyart and open to other crafters.
£1 admission or two time credits.

6 pm

Film Night Saving Mr Banks 50p admission or 2 time credits

THURSDAY 2nd October

2 pm

Age Cymru **LIFT exercise** class for 50+

6.30 pm

Regular Sugarcraft session, ? demonstration

FRIDAY 3rd October

3 pm

Show: Grand Slam

Professional duo performing fun bilingual show. Hwyl a sbri.

Ticket £6, includes hot drink and cake.

Raffle and mini auction.



Mrs Williams, who won the raffle at the church fete, kindly gave her prize bark and raised £7.50 for the church roof.

BROADENING HORIZONS

When I first became a Christian,
my faith was black and white.

I said: "*It's in the Bible*
and therefore it is right."

But time, rolling onward,
brought with it, shades of grey;
And what I once thought certain,
Is questioned more today.

My faith was more dogmatic
in those simplistic times.
The '*saved*' and '*lost*' stood either side
of '*my*' dividing line.

That line became less definite
as one learned of other creeds;
and found in many a Christ-less life,
Christ-like words and deeds.

In earlier days I'd clearly seen
the bounds of hallowed ground;
and built a kingdom in which Jew,
and Moslem were not found.
Such narrowness, these long years on,
fills me with deepest shame.
If God *be* God, then he is known,
by many different names.

Eternal truth, I now perceive,
is like an endless sea.

It is too big to be contained,
in *one* theology.

It flows into a thousand bays;
and as one seeks, one finds,
an ever pressing need to leave,
that *smaller* God behind.

The God who holds the future,
in the hollow of his hand;
is greater far than finite minds,
can ever understand.

I can see him; in the distance,
but his gift to you and me -
is the space to know him better:
It is called – *ETERNITY*.

Mike Shephard/Minister/ Babell Chapel, Carmarthen ©