

# Babell Chapel / Capel y Babell Pensarn Caerfyrddin

## Winter Newsletter Cylchlythyr y Gaeaf



Minister/Gweinidog  
Revd Mike Shephard  
01558 822595

Secretary/Ysgrifennydd  
Mrs Helen Gibbon  
01267 290518



### Winter 2013



This newsletter has been digitised as part of a project to archive material relating to Llangunnor so that a record exists for future generations.

Thanks to Mike Shephard for permission to do this.



Online at

<http://www.llangunnor.net>

## **DEAR FRIENDS**

*Mary replied to the angel: "May it happen to me as you have said." (Luke 1:38)*

What would have happened had Mary said 'No' and not 'Yes? What if she had been too frightened to have said 'Yes?' to God?

At one level it would have been understandable had she refused to become the 'highly favoured lady' of the well known hymn. It isn't so very long ago that unmarried mothers were ostracised by village communities and children, born out of wedlock, treated with disdain. Some of us can remember those 'good old days' and few of us would like to see the experience being repeated.

Imagine what it would have been like for Mary. It must have been an agony to be an unmarried mother in a Jewish village and the gossips would have had a field-day. Not every young woman wanted to be favoured in this way and most would have preferred *not* to be 'chosen' by God. No one could have blamed her had she said 'No.'

Most of us would avoid pointing the finger of blame at Mary if only because four fingers would then point back at ourselves. Who among us has never said 'No' to God? Who of us has never chosen the less sacrificial pathway or easier option? Who can say that they have not embraced the flower instead of the thorn or replaced the cross with a cruise?

What if she had said 'No?'

All heaven held its breath as God's mighty plan for the redemption of the world hung upon the 'yes' or 'no' of a slip of a girl from Nazareth. That perhaps is the most remarkable thing about the whole episode: that all the divine eggs were put into one very vulnerable basket. If there was a contingency plan we know nothing of it and, true to form, God was once again tethered to the free response of the beautiful but wilful creatures he had made in his own image and likeness. Their cooperation, their participation, their freely given 'yes' to him was a crucial and indispensable ingredient in whatever redemptive plans he might have. There were no short cuts: there are no short cuts. God has put himself entirely in the hands of a Jewish girl, because only from this acceptance, this God-given capacity to say 'yes,' could God's original creative purpose come to fruition.

All of which moves us from sacred story to ordinary day; and from a sentimental view of Christmas to the world with which we have to do. For the story of the Annunciation is not simply a two thousand year-old fable which it pleases us to embellish. It is the most relevant New Testament story for us today. The question is not: 'What if she had said "No?"' The question is: 'What if *we* say "No?"'

Or more importantly: 'What if we say "Yes?"' The Annunciation, like the sacrifice of Calvary, is something that happened once for all and can never be repeated. Yet annunciations, like crucifixions, take place every ordinary day as God encounters us and challenges us to take upon ourselves that difficult task with far reaching, personal consequences.

The consequences of saying "Yes" will undoubtedly run before our eyes. The excuses – the understandable excuses – will form upon our lips. But if we can move beyond them and say "Yes" – albeit in fear and with trembling – we might be permitted to cradle something inestimably precious in our arms. To say "Yes" to God is to embrace his new life with all its terrible demand, and transforming joy.

With all good wishes for a happy Christmas

MIKE SHEPHARD

### **A MEDITATION BY MICHEL QUOIST**

*As for thy own soul, it shall have a sword to pierce it ( Luke 2, 35)*

*Lord, I pity your poor mother.  
She follows,  
She follows you,  
She follows mankind on its Way of the Cross.*

*She walks in the crowd, unknown, but she doesn't take her eyes from you.  
Every gesture of yours, every sigh, every blow, every wound, enters her heart.  
She knows your sufferings,  
She suffers your sufferings,  
And without coming near you,  
Without touching you,  
Without speaking to you,  
Lord, with you she saves the world.*

*Often, mingled with the crowd, I accompany men and women on their Way of the Cross,*

All of which moves us from sacred story to ordinary day; and from a sentimental view of Christmas to the world with which we have to do. For the story of the Annunciation is not simply a two thousand year-old fable which it pleases us to embellish. It is the most relevant New Testament story for us today. The question is not: 'What if she had said "No?"' The question is: 'What if we say "No?"'

Or more importantly: 'What if we say "Yes?"' The Annunciation, like the sacrifice of Calvary, is something that happened once for all and can never be repeated. Yet annunciations, like crucifixions, take place every ordinary day as God encounters us and challenges us to take upon ourselves that difficult task with far reaching, personal consequences.

The consequences of saying "Yes" will undoubtedly run before our eyes. The excuses – the understandable excuses – will form upon our lips. But if we can move beyond them and say "Yes" – albeit in fear and with trembling – we might be permitted to cradle something inestimably precious in our arms. To say "Yes" to God is to embrace his new life with all its terrible demand, and transforming joy.

With all good wishes for a happy Christmas

MIKE SHEPHARD

### **A MEDITATION BY MICHEL QUOIST**

*As for thy own soul, it shall have a sword to pierce it ( Luke 2, 35)*

*Lord, I pity your poor mother,  
She follows,  
She follows you,  
She follows mankind on its Way of the Cross.*

*She walks in the crowd, unknown, but she doesn't take her eyes from you.  
Every gesture of yours, every sigh, every blow, every wound, enters her heart.  
She knows your sufferings,  
She suffers your sufferings,  
And without coming near you,  
Without touching you,  
Without speaking to you,  
Lord, with you she saves the world.*

*Often, mingled with the crowd, I accompany men and women on their Way of the Cross,*

for worship, but for a variety of purposes. We are so fortunate at Babell *not to be* a listed building. It means that we have freedom to adapt our building to modern needs and are not compelled to preserve structures which have little relevance in a rapidly changing world. I count myself fortunate to be the minister of a church that is prepared to embrace change and where the words “We have never done it that way before” are seldom voiced.

We are so glad to see our *Sunday Club* beginning to attract young people with the regular attendance of Ellie Grace, Kian, Ioan and Joshua giving us a huge boost. Add to their number the occasional attendance of Jacob and Joshua Vaughan and we have yet another source of encouragement for Babell. One is especially glad to see the commitment of our youth leaders, Helen Gibbon and Sian Cassell, bearing fruit and we thank them warmly for all they do on our behalf. On Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September I stood in for Helen and went home feeling that it is easier to preach a sermon to adults than to work with children! Helen and Sian – Well Done!

The modest growth amongst young people does mean that we are very close now to having our own ‘*five a side*’ football team. Ian Lewis, a reporter with the Carmarthen Journal, has suggested the name *Babell Bulls*. It does have a certain ring to it!!!! Our thanks to the Carmarthen Journal for being so prepared to publicise our activities. We are grateful, too, to photographer, Karie who is becoming a familiar face at Babell being present, indeed, throughout the opening of the Friendship Centre on 19<sup>th</sup> Sept.

On a less happy note, we think of those who are unwell. We remember *Vernon Williams* very prayerfully. We think of *Ena Wilkins* and *May James*. Speaking more positively, we are glad to see *Nan Thomas* looking so well and continuing to make a good recovery. We send best wishes to all friends who have had health concerns or experienced bereavement in recent months.

A very sincere welcome to *Esme Phillips* who was received into the membership of Babell on the first Sunday in September. It was she who let it be known that “three young boys have moved into the house opposite” thus paving the way for growth in the number attending our Sunday Club. Thank you, Esme!

I do hope that all of us will follow Esme’s example and *invite others* to attend church with us. It would be wonderful, too, if everyone with links to Babell committed themselves to attending church, the fact being that it

is easier to be part of the 'many' than of the 'few.' I know something, at first hand, about losing faith in the Christian Church and would be the last to judge anyone. I can also testify to the God who refuses to let us go and who pursues us, persistently, in the hope that we will return to him. I can vouch for the truthfulness of Augustine's words – *Thou hast created us for thyself O Lord and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee.* I firmly believe that, with your help, we can make Babel a very special place and, accordingly, am asking for your assistance in the achieving of that end. With help we can do so much. Without your help we could well fail. How did the poet express it – *Of all sad words of tongue and pen the saddest are these: It might have been.* The words of Helen Keller are also very apt and one is grateful to Joy Thomas for sharing them with me: *"No pessimist ever discovered the secrets of the stars, or sailed to an uncharted land, or opened a new heaven to the human spirit."*

Our congratulations to our friends, *Lyn and Janet Davies* on celebrating their Ruby Wedding Anniversary. We wish them continued happiness in the coming years.

*Congratulations*, too, to the young people associated with our church who did so well in school and university examinations. I have asked Sian or Helen to elaborate on your achievements and comment will appear elsewhere in the newsletter.

In closing our family news can I remind you that the Winter Newsletter is due out at the beginning of December. I am typing Family News in early October, the fact being that the newsletter needs to be completed by the end of the month. Gwen and I take November off as a holiday month. I would ask, therefore, that you will forgive me for the omission of events occurring in late October and November. We look forward to sharing Christmas activities with you.

MFS

### **SOME OF THE SIGNS OF AGEING**

1) Feeling stiff 2) Groaning when you bend down 3) Saying, 'It wasn't like that when I was young' 4) Saying, 'In my day' 5) Losing hair 6) Not knowing any songs in the top ten 7) Getting hairy ears, eyebrows, nose, face etc 8) Hating noisy pubs 9) Talking a lot about joints/ailments 10) Forgetting people's names 11) Thinking policemen, teachers and doctors look young 12) Needing an afternoon nap 13) Struggling to use technology 14) Wearing your glasses around your neck 15) Misplacing your glasses/bag/keys etc 16) Preferring a night in than a night on the town 17) Taking a keen interest in the The Antiques Road Show 18) Getting bed socks for Christmas and

being very grateful 19) You can't lose 6lb in two days any more 20) Gasping for a cup of tea 21) joining the WI 22) Taking an interest in the garden and becoming obsessed with bird feeding 23) Really enjoying puzzles and crosswords 24) Always driving in the slow lane 25) Consider going on a 'no children' cruise or holiday 26) Your ears are getting bigger 27) Joining the National Trust 28) Drinking Sherry 28) Feeling you have the right to tell people exactly what you are thinking even if it isn't polite 29) Preferring going to bed with a good book than with your spouse 30) Being called Victor Meldrew by members of your family.

Well, how did you do? I scored 25 out of 30. This did not surprise me in the least as I was reminded some ten years ago that I was getting on in years. A young man came into the CAF/CASS Office and explained to business support that he had lost the letter of appointment and couldn't remember whom he was meant to see. Upon being asked to describe the officer in question he replied: "*He is the old guy with glasses.*" Never mind! Keeps one humble, I suppose. I have borrowed the following funny story from the newsletter of Memorial Baptist Church, in Swansea. It is relevant to those of us who are convinced that we look younger than those of a similar age.

*My name is Alice Smith and I was sitting in the waiting room for my appointment with a new dentist. I noticed his diploma, which bore his full name.*

*Suddenly, I remembered a tall, handsome dark-haired boy with the same name who had been a fellow pupil in the school I had attended thirty-odd years before. Could this be the same boy that I had a secret crush on, way back then?*

*Upon looking at him, however, I quickly discarded any such thought. This balding, grey-haired man with deeply lined face was far too old to have been my class-mate. I asked him, nonetheless, if he had attended Margam Park Secondary School.*

*"Yes, Yes, I did. I'm a Marganner!" He beamed with pride.*

*"When did you leave to go to college?" I asked.*

*He answered "In 1965. Why do you ask?"*

*"You were in my class," I exclaimed.*

*He looked at me closely, then the elderly, balded, wrinkled grey-haired man asked "What subject did you teach?"*

The woman telling the story had the ability to laugh at herself and that is important, whatever our age. We would nevertheless do well to remember that several biblical characters were called of God, not in their youth but, rather, in their later years. One of my favourite verses in the Bible speaks of a God who can breathe life into those who, humanly speaking, are past their sell-by date. It is found in Isaiah 40 and verses 29 – 31 and is worth remembering, particularly as we come to the close of yet another year.

**God gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases in strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted. But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.**

MFS



**TALKING POINT** *The Muslim father who restores our faith in humanity*

More than a quarter of young British adults mistrust Muslims according to a survey, and nearly three quarters think they are not doing enough to tackle extremism in their communities. The poll was taken before the horrific slaughter of innocent men, women and children in a Nairobi shopping mall by Somali militant Islamist group Al Shabaab. Numerous other people have not been accounted for.

I believe, nonetheless, that we should no more blame our Muslim brothers and sisters than we should hold all doctors responsible for Dr Harold Shipman's murder of 250 patients. Evil exists in all faiths but, generally speaking, the majority of believing people are peace-loving and kind - this being as true of Muslims as of anyone else.

This was very evident when Dr Muhammad Taufiq Al Sattar gave a heart-rending interview to the BBC over the suspected murder of his entire family. His wife, daughter and two sons died after the family home in Leicester was set alight on September 13<sup>th</sup>.

Police have already charged one man with the crime and other arrests are imminent at the time of writing. A part of me hopes that those responsible will suffer for the pain and anguish caused.

It is significant, though, that from Dr Taufiq All Sattar there was no call for vengeance. When he described with quiet dignity his terrible ordeal and his last conversation with his wife and children just hours before they died, I was struck by his abiding faith – which he says gave him strength – and his belief that his family is now in paradise.

This reminded me of all the kind, gentle Muslims I know who have ministered to me in times of need. One gentleman would put his hand on my head and bless me and I found it particularly comforting that his prayers were with me.

Let us not forget that the heroes of the Kenyan massacre were of all creeds and colours. I know my Muslim friends are as appalled and distressed by the slaughter in Nairobi as me, a practising Christian.

Its horror does not divide us. It unites us.

*The above article, in longer form, appeared in the Daily Express (Platell's People) on Sept 28<sup>th</sup>.*

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF BABELL CHAPEL 1788-1911

*Translated from welsh by Esme Phillips*

Babell was part of the Water Street Chapel, Carmarthen in early times but, in 1803 was linked with Cwmdwyfran.

The work at Babell had began with a morning Sunday School for the children of Pensarn which was held, initially, in the homes of Christian people living in the area. In the evening adults would meet for prayer, again in each others home with ministers, such as David James or William Prydderch providing pastoral care.

The first chapel, a simple building, was erected in 1854 being replaced, in 1876, by a larger structure. This building was officially opened in 1870 but was not finally completed until six years later. The delay was caused by a fire, with resultant repairs adding £25 to the overall cost. That seems a tiny sum of money today but then it was a substantial debt. It was a blessing that the fire was discovered before it got out of control as the consequences could have been disastrous.

The record of the opening ceremony lists several ministers as being present. These include the names of David Lewis, J. Wyndham Lewis, Thomas Job, Hugh Jones (Tabernacle), Rhys Saunders and Evan Evans. It was a memorable occasion with particular gratitude being expressed to Rev George Evans who had played a major part in making the event possible. It was also noted that the cause had been greatly helped by the sum of £373 and One Shilling gifted Babell in the will of Mr E Vaughan of Spilman Street, Carmarthen. That, too, was a large sum then and was spent wisely.

The first regular minister was called to Babell in 1896. He was Rev Samuel Evans but was known to everyone as 'Uncle Sam' – a name that spoke volumes. He was devoted to his calling and possessed a deep understanding of people's various needs. He walked miles in order to minister to people and people were proud to refer to him as "Our Minister." There is a picture of him in Cwmdwyfran Chapel.

Music was always important at Babell and for fifty years Williams Williams was in charge of the singing. He was a man of tender ways and was interested in getting young people into the ministry. He died on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1902.

It is interesting to note the names of some of the deacons who have served Babell and one wonders if their descendants are involved in church life today: Captain Jenkins, Benjamin Williams (Pipwrwen), James Lloyd, William Evans (Moelfre), David Thomas (Croesyceiliog Fach), Hendry Jones (Church St, Carmarthen), Thomas Rees (Waverly Stores, Carmarthen) and W Jones (Bryn Cyrne).

The present Chapel was opened in March 1907 and was necessitated by the growth in membership which was so characteristic of those times. It was also an age when churches frowned on alcohol with it being stipulated that Communion Wine had to be non-alcoholic. It was at this time that the church was licensed for marriages. A small organ arrived to complete what was essential.

The Membership of Babell around 1908 totalled 93 with 122 attending Sunday School. In that year £43 was collected for the payment of ministry with almost £3 being collected for overseas missions. The history makes mention of a man called Jackie Lot, a fisherman who helped George Cadwaladar and others in caring for Babell. One cannot help notice that no woman is named!

*Thank you for this Esme. The translated material was found in the loft of Esme's*

## **THE CHURCH OF THE WHOLLY UNDECIDED**

Brothers and sisters;  
I speak to you today as the Church of the Wholly Undecided;  
I wanna hear you say "Yeah!"  
I wanna hear you say "No!"  
I wanna hear you say "It's a bit beyond me, really!"

We are gathered here together,  
Sister side by side with brother,  
To proclaim we are Agnostic;  
Don't know one way or the other.  
In this, we won't be shaken,  
Though hard the winds may blow;  
In doubt we are united  
And we cry: "We do not know!"

Brothers and sisters;  
I wanna hear you say "Errrrrrrrrr!"  
I wanna hear you say "There are two sides to this, you know!"  
I wanna hear you say "It's as broad as it's long!"

We hold no fear of persecution,  
It pains us not to be derided  
As we stand here in the Church  
Of the Wholly Undecided.  
Oh my brothers and my sisters,  
I know I speak for you  
When I say we know for certain  
That we havn't got a clue.

Brothers and sisters;  
I wanna hear you say "It's beyond my comprehension!"  
I wanna hear you say "Well, it's a bugger, innit?"  
I wanna hear you say "I Dunno!"

Faith is like a mountain;  
Do you think that we should climb?  
I did not see it happen;  
I was not here at the time.  
Oh my friends, be ye contented,  
For ignorance is bliss;  
We stand foursquare behind our message  
And we don't know what it is

Brothers and sisters;  
I wanna hear you say "I am not a sheep!"  
I wanna hear you say "I will not mindlessly do everything I am told!"  
I wanna hear you say "Baaaaaa!"

We know that we don't know,  
So let our vision still be pure;  
We are Agnostic Fundamentalists;  
We're fundamentally unsure.  
Peace, my sisters and my brothers;  
The Agnostic does not smite;  
We are tolerant of others;  
There's a chance they may be right.

Brothers and sisters;  
I wanna hear you say "Death to nobody whatsoever!"  
I wanna hear you say "The infidel might have a good point, you know!"  
I wanna hear you say "Well, I'm baffled, me!"  
I want you all to clap now.

Submitted by Anne Wright

### **FURTHER FAMILY NEWS**

We extend condolences to the family of *Muriel Vaughan* who passed away recently. Muriel had dementia and I did not have the privilege of knowing her. This, I feel, was my loss. We think, too, of the family and friends of *Harry Johnson* who passed away, in late October following a short illness.

We send best wishes to our good friend, *Vi Williams*, who sustained a fractured hip when she stumbled at home. She has undergone surgery and we wish her a full recovery. She is much missed when not in church.  
We send good wishes as well to *Ena Wilkins* who is presently on Gwenllian Ward at Glangwili Hospital. We trust she will feel better soon.

**Tell Them by Their Hair** Can you identify the following Bible characters?

1) My great strength was in my long hair. 2) My hair at one time weighed 200 shekels. 3) We walked in a fiery furnace but our hair was not singed. 4) My hair grew long like eagle's feathers. 5) I wore a garment of camel's hair. 6) I wiped Jesus' feet with my hair. 7) I was lifted up between earth and heaven by my hair. 8) My hair caught in a tree and I could not get loose.

*Answers*

*ANSWERS 1) Samson 2) Absalom 3) Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego 4) Nebuchadnezzar 5) John the Baptist 6) Mary 7) Ezekiel 8) Absalom*

contributed by Joy Thomas

## JULIAN OF NORWICH

If you ever find yourself in Norwich it's worth setting aside an hour or so to visit the Church of St Julian and the 'cell' adjoining it where the writer and mystic reputedly lived.

We've spent two happy family holidays in Norfolk over the past few years as the county has lots to offer. Peaceful waterways rich in wildlife; the surging power of the North Sea crashing on to a wonderful coastline; quaint windmills on quiet byways; luxurious second homes of the rich and famous (including royals); and window shopping in the designer outlets of North Norfolk – now dubbed Chelsea – by – the – Sea due to the influx of the trendy, wealthy London set. All the above offer the holiday maker a chance to relax and recharge batteries.

Lovely, interesting and restful as all the above attractions were I'd always been drawn to the sayings of Julian of Norwich. Over the years I'd caught odd references to her on the radio or in sermons and I liked one of her most famous quotes, *'All shall be well.'* It appealed to me, maybe when seeking calm and re-assurance on the roller-coaster ride life hurls us on to.

So, on one of those typical summer days of the 'anorak on-off-on-off' variety we set off to explore Norwich and track down the cell of Julian of Norwich.

I set off confidently towards Norwich Cathedral (for those friends on the sponsored walk – yes I was going the wrong way – again!) The cathedral is built of a soft – honey – toned stone in the shape of a cross, a stunning Romanesque building whose spire soars above the modern sky-line. It houses many treasures, statues of saints, lovely stained glass windows and inspired art – all of it knitted together by the real feel of a living Christian community, as was made apparent by an informative notice-board.

The volunteer guides were friendly and welcoming, eager that visitors enjoyed the delights of a cathedral they obviously loved. However, when asked about Julian's cell there were kindly shakes of the head, helpful directions, much pointing and arm waving to which husband nodded sagely while I 'zoned out.' Did you know men's brains, apparently have a larger area dedicated to special awareness – which is probably why they can parallel park cars and know right from left – very annoying.

It turned out the cell is in St Julian's Church, about a 15 minute walk from the cathedral. The church is tucked away down a small alley off King Street and is a simple, relatively unadorned building.

Julian of Norwich 1342-1429 was the first woman to write a book in English. She wrote it over 20 years whilst living in a small room attached to St Julian's Church. It was not that unusual, seemingly, for some men and women (some were monks or nuns but not all) to live a life of retreat in prayer and contemplation – beside a church. It was here that Julian lived as a hermit or anchoress. People came to her for comfort, help and advice as they wrestled with worries or problems in their daily lives.

Do you think that spiritual insight grows from physical suffering? Well when Julian was only 30 she was very seriously ill and it is said that she received a series of visions of the Passion of Christ and the love of God. When she recovered she wrote what she'd perceived.

Her book, still considered a spiritual classic today, is called *The Revelations of Divine Love*.

Her perception was that there is no wrath in God. She understood that God's love is like that of a tender loving parent whose love for a child is total, unquestionable, never-ending, unshakable. Do you remember one of the first verses we learned as children – 'God is Love' / 'Duw Cariad Yw?' It seems so simple, yet so profound. It seems so obvious, yet how we doubt, how we get snared and entangled in theories and 'what-if' scenarios.

Julian's cell had a glass-less window looking out onto the alley. It was from here that she spoke to people – one of whom was a woman called Margery Kemp from King's Lynn who wrote in her diary about how spiritual and holy Julian seemed.

On the afternoon we visited the church itself was empty except for one man who was sitting in the cell. It was a plain room with stone walls and floor, a few information boards and wooden chairs faced a simple altar. We tiptoed around then sat for a while. I felt uneasy, our fellow visitor was either in deep anguish or deep meditation. I hesitated. Should I say something? Should I offer comfort? Should I say something inane like 'Nice the rain has stopped?' No, that would be stupid. I sat quietly wondering whether companionable silence would help. I sensed he didn't want to talk, at least not to me. He was already in fervent communication.

Years have passed and occasionally I've thought about the man in the cell. I do hope his circumstances have resolved themselves. I hope he heard the words of comfort, '*All shall be well, all shall be well, all manner of things shall be well.*'

In a way St Julian of Norwich still offers comfort as there are meetings of prayer and contemplation held in many towns. They are held in people's homes or churches when groups of between 6 -15 gather, usually a mixture of clergy and lay people. Music is often used as a lead in to silent prayer and after about an hour music sounds the closure of contemplation. The nearest group to us is one in Haverfordwest. The others are in Bangor, Benllech, Fleur-de-lis, Llandrindod Wells, Llandudno and Porthcawl. Some useful Web Sites:-

Here is a prayer of Julian of Norwich

*God of your goodness, give me yourself: for you are sufficient for me. I cannot properly ask anything less, to be worthy of you. If I were to ask less I should always be in want. In you alone do I have all.*  
*Duw o'th ddaioni, rho dy hunan imi, oherwydd yr wyt yn ddigon imi. I fod yn deihwg ahonot ni fedraf ofyn am un peth llai.*  
*Pe bawn yn gofyn am lai, buaswn wastad mewn angem oherwydd ynot ti yn unig y caf y cyfan.*

*Patricia Morgan*

Thank you for this, Pat. You have a poetic style of writing and an ability to engage the reader. There used to be a Julian Meeting in Trinity College. I love silence in prayer. I really enjoyed reading this.

MFS

## A PARABLE OF THE TALENTS FOR TODAY

Today's reading comes from the letter to the Economists, Chapter One: The updated parable of the talents.

1. An ennobled Chief Executive Officer travelling on business called his servants to deliver unto them his investment portfolio.
2. And unto one he gave five talents, which was a lot of money; to another, two talents, which was a fair sum; and to another, one talent, which wasn't as much as the others, though still not to be sneezed at; to every man according to his ability; and set off on his trip.
3. Then he that had received the five talents went and purchased shares in a consortium of Spanish and Greek banks called Banco Iberico-Graeco, because they looked cheap and he thought BIG was a pretty nifty acronym.
4. But there did come a global euro-economic crash and he did lose the lot.
5. He that had received two talents invested the two in a business making top quality apostrophes for discerning bookshops such as Waterstone's.
6. But Waterstone's did then drop their apostrophe and his company did collapse. And the financial pages of the newspapers did describe it as Apostrophe Catastrophe.
7. But he that had received one talent went and digged in the earth and hid his CEO's money.
8. After a long time the CEO cometh and reckoneth with them.
9. He that had received five talents came and said unto the CEO with a peerage: My lord, I have blown the lot.
10. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, the people from Waterstone's did abandon their apostrophe and ruin me and deprive me of all that thou gavest.
11. Their CEO said unto them, Oh wretched servants; thou hast been complete mugs, I will dispense with thy services, and forthwith did sack them.
12. Then the third servant came and said, Lord, I went and hid thy talent in the earth to await the passing of the economic storm. And when the storm had passed, I dug up my talent and it was worth far more than before, as all worldly goods had been devalued.
13. And I did look at the value of thine own goods and did find that thine waste of seven talents on the other two had ruined confidence in thy acumen and wreaked financial havoc and caused a run on thy share price.
14. With my one talent, I was thus able to buy up thy company and am therefore happy to inform thee that thy services are no longer required.
15. And the lord did go into the wilderness with much weeping and gnashing of teeth and great debt.
16. For unto some that hath shall be given, and unto others shall be taken away that which they hath. For economics is an inexact science.
17. And the servant who did bury his talent did rejoice and with his profits did buy up Greek and Spanish banks and the bankrupt apostrophe company.
18. And using bail-out funds from Germany channelled through Spain and Greece, in a manner nobody could fathom, he did obtain a royal warrant to supply apostrophes to greengrocers.
19. And he did become very rich. For some people have all the luck.
20. Here endeth the fiscal lesson.

From the 'Beachcomber' column/Daily Express/Gwen S.



Remembering those who fell during the Great War 1914-1918 from  
the community of Llangunnor

The following fell during the First World War with links to Llangunnor. They gallantly sacrificed their lives for King and Country in the Great World War of 1914-1918, and are hereby recorded as a mark of the deep appreciation and respect due to their glorious memory



Evan Thomas Davies - Penybryn  
Morgan Morris, Brynhyfryd  
Robert Hugh Harris Bryntowy  
William Llewellyn Morgan, Penybank Farm  
A Fallon, Bolahaul Farm  
William James Tansill, Victoria Place (Died of fever)  
Freddie George Tansill, Victoria Place

Research is ongoing to discover more names of the fallen with links to Llangunnor so that their memory may not be forgotten.

If you can help or want more information please visit

<http://www.llangunnor.net>

**LLANGUNNOR  
NETWORK**





## Cofio rhai a fu farw yn ystod y Rhyfel Mawr 1914-1918 o'r gymuned Llangynnwr

Gostyngodd y canlynol yn ystod y Rhyfel Byd Cyntaf gyda chysylltiadau â Llangynnwr eu aberthu ddewr eu bywydau ar gyfer y Brenin a'r Gwlad yn y Rhyfel Byd Mawr 1914-1918, yn cael eu cofnodi drwy hyn fel arwydd o werthfawrogiad dwfn ac yn parchu oherwydd eu cof gogoneddus



Evan Thomas Davies - Penybryn  
Morgan Morris, Brynhyfryd  
Robert Hugh Harris Bryntowy  
William Llewellyn Morgan, Fferm Penybank  
A Fallon, Fferm Bolahaul  
William James Tansill, lle Victoria (Bu farw o dwymyn)  
Freddie George Tansill, lle Victoria

Mae ymchwil yn mynd rhagddo i ddarganfod mwy am y gostwng enwau gyda chysylltiadau i Llangynnwr fel bod eu cof na fydd ei cof yn cael ei anghofio. Os gallwch eich helpu neu os hoffech gael rhagor o wybodaeth ewch i

<http://www.llangunnor.net>

**LLANGUNNOR  
NETWORK**

# Young people's News

## Examination successes

### A-Level

Hannah Nicholas has already started at Aberystwyth University studying Theatre and Media. Many congratulations on her A-LEVEL success and all the very best for the future.

Congratulations also to Iestyn Evans on his A-Level results and we wish him well as he starts on his university course in Cardiff reading Criminology.

### GCSE

Congratulations to Erin and Ffion Walters and Dylan and Steffan Nicholas on their excellent GCSE results and all the very best in the sixth form at Bro Myrddin.

Lleucu Walters has returned to her second year at Reading and Heledd to her final year at Aber. We wish them well.

## Sunday Club

A warm welcome to Mr and Mrs Ian and Kelly Davies to Llangunnor and especially to their three children Cian, Ioan and Josh who have started the Sunday Club. Ellie Grace is also a keen member together with her mother Liz who is a fantastic help.

## The Gymanfa Ganu

This year the Gymanfa Ganu was held in Ebeneser Abergwili with Owain Griffiths Llandeilo conducting. Next year it will be held at Penygraig, Croesyceiliog.

# Newyddion y bobl ifanc

## Llwyddiant Arholiadau

### Lefel-A

Mae Hannah Nicholas wedi dechrau ar ei chwrs ym Mhrifysgol Aberystwyth yn astudio'r Theatr a'r Cyfryngau. Llongyfarchiadau mawr iddi ar ei llwyddiant Lefel A a phob dymuniad da i'r dyfodol.

Llongyfarchiadau hefyd i Iestyn Evans ar ei ganlyniadau Lefel A a phob dymuniad da iddo yntau wrth iddo ddechrau ar ei gwrs Troseddeg ym Mhrifysgol Caerdydd.

### TGAU

Llongyfarchiadau i Erin a Ffion Walters a Dylan a Steffan Nicholas ar eu canlyniadau TGAU a phob dymuniad da iddynt yn y Chweched ym Mro Myrddin.

Mae Lleucu Walters wedi dychwelyd i'w hail flwyddyn ym Mhrifysgol Reading a Heledd Evans i'w blwyddyn olaf yn Aber. Dymuniadau gorau iddynt.

### Clwb Sul

Croeso mawr i deulu Mr a Mrs Ian a Kelly Davies i Langynnwr ac yn enwedig am ddod â'u plant, Cian, Ioan a Josh i'r Clwb Sul. Mae Ellie Grace hefyd yn aelod brwd erbyn hyn gyda'i Mam yn gymorth mawr.

### Y Gymanfa Ganu

Cynhaliwyd y Gymanfa Ganu eleni Yn Ebeneser Abergwili dan arweiniad Owain Griffiths Llandeilo. Daeth nifer fawr o blant ynghyd a'r rhannau arweiniol gan blant Siloam Pontargothen yn raenus iawn. Gobeithio y bydd gyda ni blant yno y flwyddyn nesaf ym Mhenygraig, Croesyceiliog.

## **BITTER END**

Palliative care, they said,  
is when we care without tests, operations.  
Preparations for their death is what we make  
We don't give drugs and potions  
for drugs and potions sake.  
We care, trust us.  
So we did, you, me, and mam.  
You because you knew she deserved only the best,  
me, because I too trusted, like you;  
and mam because she had to.

At fifty seven, when told her brain was shrinking,  
plaques and tangles no longer linking,  
she laughed at their diagnosis.  
At their prognosis she said,  
I have given life in birth,  
I'm not ready to receive this death.  
When my time comes I'll be too old  
and unknowing to know its time to go.

But, this cruel illness  
swept through mam like fire,  
at sixty one her life chose to expire.  
This cruel disease turned our horror  
to despair, you begged with tear stained face  
and wringing hands, please,  
take this suffering out of mam's hands.  
They said, too much,  
would be too much,  
what then would we have gained?  
trust us, trust palliative care

Besides, this pain is her imagination,  
it's just her body's natural reflexation,  
The gaping sores and bruises  
are due to sensitization,  
and you do know her mind  
is beyond restoration?  
She'll die a natural death.  
It's been proved by experiments  
and tests palliative care is much the best

But our mam's not here to prove your theory!  
 She's our mam, who gave us life, we love her dearly;  
     these tears may blind my eyes,  
     but Nothing! Nothing can disguise  
         the pleading in her cries.  
 Where's her dignity? Her choice?  
 Who will give heed to her voice?  
 Has the world gone mad with some disease?  
 when a murderer can choose and place his pleas,  
     to die by gun, gas, or injection  
     whilst our mam, pleads for release  
 but is rewarded by your fallacious, moralising, rejection.

Siwla Virago

*Thank you for this Siwla. I found it very moving. It is a thought provoking poem with which many will identify. Some people say that death must be left in the hands of God. We don't leave birth in the hands of God. We plan it and control it. We prevent conception or end a pregnancy. I hope the day will come when, subject to safeguards, those who desire a dignified exit from this world and entry into the next phase of existence will be granted their wish – with loved ones gathered around to bid them 'God Speed!' What do others think?*  
*Siwla is a friend of Gwen and they both work as volunteers in the Salvation Army shop in Llandeilo. We appreciate her contribution to our newsletter.*

### **ON A LIGHTER NOTE**

The results of a computerised survey indicate that the perfect minister preaches for exactly 20 minutes. He (or she) condemns sin but never upsets anyone. He works from 6am until midnight in pastoral duties and also acts as church caretaker, administrator and music leader. He is happy to be paid a modest salary and gives half of it to the poor. He is trendy but ordinary, extrovert and introvert, jovial and serious. He is 28 years old, speaks fluent English, Greek, Hebrew and Welsh. He is an experienced and gifted speaker. He is excellent with the elderly, relates well to youth and has a deep understanding of family issues. He spends most of his time relating to those outside the church but is always available in his office when needed. If your minister does not measure up to these standards, simply send this letter to six other churches who are ready to change theirs. Then bundle up your minister and send him or her the church at the top of the list. Within twelve months you will receive 1,643 ministers. One of them should be perfect.  
**WARNING:** Don't break the chain. One church failed to pass the letter on correctly and got their old minister back in six weeks!

From '*How to survive and thrive as a Church Leader*' /Nick Cuthbert

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

### Sunday Arrangements

<u>December</u>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2pm	Helen Gibbon/Communion
	8 <sup>th</sup>	4.30 pm	<b>CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT</b> <i>This will be a Welsh Service</i>
	15 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Family Service
	22 <sup>nd</sup>	4pm	<b>CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT</b> <i>This will be an English Service</i>
<u>Christmas Eve</u>		11:15 pm	Carols/Communion/Candlelight
	29 <sup>th</sup>	2pm	Revd John Morgan
<u>January</u>	5 <sup>th</sup>	2pm	Minister/Communion
	12 <sup>th</sup>	2pm	Revd John Morgan
	19 <sup>th</sup>	2pm	Minister
	26 <sup>th</sup>	2pm	Hugh Waddell
<u>February</u>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2pm	Minister/Communion
	9 <sup>th</sup>	2pm	Revd Geraint Davies
	16 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 am	<b><u>FAMILY SERVICE/Minister</u></b>
	23 <sup>rd</sup>	2pm	Revd John Morgan

### OTHER DATES

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November from 10am/ Christmas Fayre at John Street Day Centre/ Proceeds for Babel Chapel Funds.** Your support will be appreciated

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November at 12.30pm/** Football tournament at the Leisure Centre. This will be the first occasion that our church team will have played a competitive game. Good luck! Please note - WE NEED ADDITIONAL PLAYERS. They must be of Junior School age. They can be boys or girls.

**Our Christmas Lunch will be held on Sunday 15th December at 12 noon.**  
The venue will be the Falcon Hotel. Names to Helen as soon as possible please.

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December at 5pm/** Children's Party at Babel.

## ONE LIFE

He was born in a  
stable, in an obscure  
village. He worked  
in a carpenter's shop  
until he was thirty.  
He never travelled  
outside his homeland.  
He didn't own a house,  
never won an election,  
never went to college.

He never had a lot of money. He had no credentials but himself.  
He became a nomadic preacher. Popular opinion turned against  
him; He was betrayed by a close friend. Others deserted him.  
He was condemned to death, and crucified between two thieves  
on a hill overlooking the town rubbish tip and when dead was  
laid in a borrowed grave. Nineteen centuries have since passed  
and today he is the central figure of the human race. All armies  
that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the rulers  
that ever reigned and all parliaments that have ever governed

have not affected the  
life of people on earth  
as much as this man.  
He is the Messiah,  
Son of God, Saviour.  
He is JESUS CHRIST.

\*\*\*\*\*

I am the way, the truth  
and the life. No man  
comes unto the Father  
but by me. My Peace I  
leave with you, peace I  
give unto you. Let not  
your heart be troubled,  
neither let it be afraid.

Submitted/Nan Thomas