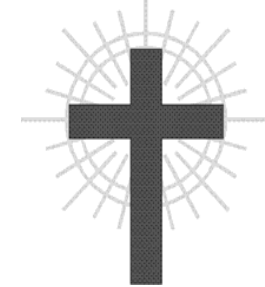


THE MESSENGER

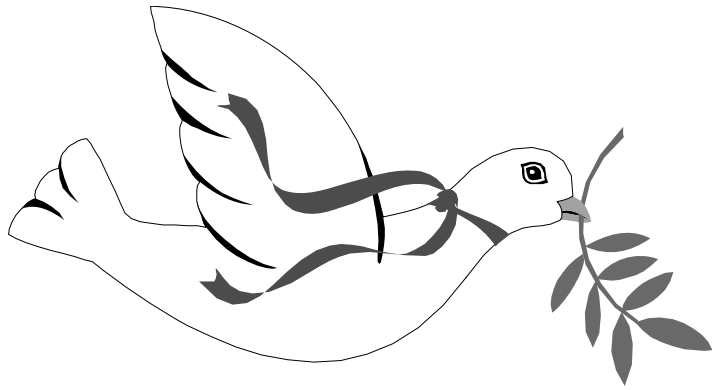


Monmouth

Circuit

**Monmouth
Trellech
Broad Oak
Gwern-y-Saint
Llancloudy**

April/May 2009



Penallt Flower Festival and Village Fayre

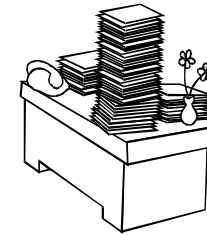
17th, 18th & 19th July 2009

The Event includes a flower festival at
The Old Church, open gardens, arts,
crafts and produce stalls, refreshments,
organ recital, an evening BBQ and much
more....

All proceeds to go to the fabric of The Old
Church.

Please come and visit us.

For further details call 01600 860277



From the Minister's Desk

Since I last wrote to you Pam and I have had our visit to India. I have spoken about it to all the congregations. Whilst I shouldn't be surprised, I am moved by the faith and the faithfulness of the Christians we meet in India. They know the Gospel is "Good News". They have come to know that Jesus brings new life and new hope into their lives and communities and they expect things to happen when they pray.

This is the Easter message, new life through the resurrection of Jesus. They have experienced the hopelessness of Good Friday when everything was dark and hope was gone. They have come through personal resurrection to the victory of Christ and have experienced for themselves something of the joy of that first Easter. They have the desire of the two who returned from Emmaus, they want to share the good news with those around them.

When I told someone about our trip to India and the response of people there to the Gospel, her comment was "Don't we have the same bible as them". Yes we do but, for them, the bible is their most precious possession. Many people in this country never look at the word of God and, for many, Easter is just an excuse for a holiday.

I pray that our Easter celebrations will reach out to touch those who have never understood the love God has for them. Shortly after last Easter I saw two posters. The wording on them said this:

**“It wasn’t nails that held Jesus to the cross.....
But His love for you and me”**

**“Jesus had so much to live for.....
And so many to die for”**

May Easter be a time of rich blessing for us all.

Barry

Dates for your Diary

Thurs 9th April, Maundy Thursday Communion, Monmouth 7.30pm.

Friday 10th April, Mediation Monmouth 10.00am. Walk of witness
Monmouth (1.15pm provisionally start at St. Mary’s)

Good Friday, Service Trellech 7.00pm.

Sunday 12th April, Easter morning Communion Monmouth 8.00pm.
Followed by Easter breakfast at 9.00pm.

Because of my holiday commitments the date of the final circuit meeting of the Monmouth Circuit will have to be changed. I am suggesting Thurs 18th July as the new date. Meeting to be at Llancloudy at 7.30pm.

Meetings of the Circuit Meeting for the Chepstow and Lower Wye Circuit will be:

Thursday 9th July at 7.30 pm at Trinity Methodist Church, Newport

Tuesday September 15th at 7.30pm at Monmouth



An American decided to write a book about famous churches around the world. So he bought a plane ticket and took a trip to Orlando, thinking that he would start by working his way across the USA from south to north. On his first day he was inside a church taking photographs when he noticed a golden telephone mounted on the wall with a sign that read \$10,000 per call. The American, being intrigued, asked a priest who was strolling by what the telephone was used for. The priest replied that it was a direct line to Heaven and that for \$10,000 you could talk to God. The American thanked the priest and went along his way. Next stop was in Atlanta. There, at a very large cathedral, he saw the same looking golden telephone with the same sign under it. He wondered if this was the same kind of telephone he saw in Orlando and he asked a nearby nun what its purpose was. She told him that it was a direct line to Heaven and that for \$10,000 he could talk to God. "OK, thank you" said the American. He then travelled all across America, Europe, England, Japan and New Zealand. In every church he saw the same looking golden telephone with the same \$10,000 per call sign under it. The American decided to see if the Welsh had the same phone. He arrived at Llanelli in Carmarthenshire, Wales and again in the first church he entered, there was the golden phone, but this time the sign under it read '40 pence per call'. The American was surprised so he asked the priest about the sign. Father, I've travelled all over the world and I have seen this same golden telephone in many churches. I'm told that it is a direct line to Heaven, but in all of them the price is \$10,000 per call. Why is it so cheap here?" The priest smiled and answered "You're in Wales now, son - it's a local call!"

Jean Morgan

British Heart Foundation

On February 10th 2009 (Saint Valentines Day) from 10am to 12 noon an enjoyable coffee morning took place in the Church schoolroom in aid of the British Heart Foundation. It was organised by the newly formed Social and Catering committee and proved very successful. The stalls consisted of books, cakes, good bric a brac, CDs and videos. Coffee, tea, biscuits and cakes were served and it was good to see that most people ended up pushing their tables together and sitting around them in a circle enjoying their elevenses and fellowship together; in fact at 12 noon some folks had to be (very politely) turned out. The remaining goods were left out so that the following morning after Sunday service people were able to look while enjoying their coffee, and gave donations for the items remaining. The very pleasing sum of £193 was raised and many thanks are expressed to the committee that organised this event and to all who supported it.

Ann Smed

Craft Fair

in the hall of

Monmouth Methodist Church

Saturday 4th April '09
10am - 4pm

embroidery, stained glass, jewellery, rugs,
photography, turned wood, house signs,
needlework, cards, cakes and more

the Church will be open to visitors where
Monmouth Ladies Choir
will be singing from 2pm - 3pm

refreshments available all day

admittance covering Church and Hall 50p



CHURCH SOCIAL AND CATERING COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Church Council in the Autumn of 2008 it was decided to set up a Social and Catering Committee to organise social functions and catering for events in the Church. Jennifer Copestake was asked to invite people to serve on this committee. The committee is now in operation and we have had two meetings.

So far we have organised a very successful Coffee Morning in aid of the British Heart Foundation. You will see a report of this Coffee Morning elsewhere in The Messenger. On 4th April we are organising a Craft Fair and about 15 people with various crafts will be setting up in the Hall to display and sell their crafts. This is a new undertaking for the Church and we hope that you will give it your support. On 28th April we are providing a meal for friends from St. Julian's Church.

Later in the summer we have three occasions when you are invited to join in fellowship and fun with friends.

13th June: Jean & David Morgan invite you to Dorothea, Llansoy for a Cream Tea from 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.

4th July: Open House at the home of Dorothy & John Lloyd Williams from 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.

August: Ann & Patrick Mills will be opening their garden for us to visit. Please look out for further details of our programme in the future.

Jean Morgan

Christian Comment

Lent is a time when many people give up something, if just sweets and chocolates, to identify, if only in a small way, the time Jesus spent in the wilderness seeking His way forward. A more rewarding way would be to follow the advice of this anonymous writer:

"At this time mend a quarrel, search out a forgotten friend, dismiss suspicion and replace it with trust; write a love letter, share some treasure, give a softer answer, encourage the young, manifest your loyalty in a word or deed. Keep a promise, find the time, forgo a grudge; forgive an enemy. Listen. Apologise if you were wrong. Try to understand. Flout envy. Examine your demands on others. Think of someone else first. Appreciate, be kind, be gentle. Laugh a little more. Deserve confidence. Take up arms against malice, or envy. Decay complacency. Express your gratitude, Worship God. Gladden the heart of a child. Take pleasure in the beauty of the earth, and wonder of it all. Speak your love, and speak it again and again.

What better way to keep Lent?

(Taken from a newspaper cutting).

Jean Morgan

The Positive Side of Life

Living on Earth is expensive, but it does include a free trip around the sun every year.

How long a minute is depends on what side of the bathroom door you're on.

Birthdays are good for you; the more you have, the longer you live.

Happiness comes through doors you didn't even know you left open.

Ever notice that the people who are late are often much jollier than the people who have to wait for them?

Most of us go to our grave with our music still inside of us.

If Walmart is lowering prices every day, how come nothing is free yet?

You may be only one person to the world, but you may also be the world to one person.

Some mistakes are too much fun to only make once.

Don't cry because it's over; smile because it happened.

We could learn a lot from crayons: some are sharp, some are pretty, some are dull, some have weird names, and all are different colours ... but they all exist very nicely in the same box.

A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.

Have an awesome day and know that someone who thinks you're great has thought about you today! "And that person was me."

Working for God on earth does not pay much, but His retirement plan is out of this world.

Liz Hicks

ART FOR AFRICA

Advance Notice!

This year's exhibition, the nineteenth, will be held in Catbrook Memorial Hall for the fourth successive year. Opening times are Friday 3rd July from 6 pm to 9 pm; Saturday 4th July from 10 am to 6 pm and Sunday 5th July from 10 am to 6 pm. There will be all the usual popular attractions - art and craft by local artists, refreshments, cakes, plants, books, Traidcraft and more. As always, all the proceeds will go to a Christian Aid project in Africa. We are currently awaiting details from Christian Aid of another thrilling project.

Update on last year's project

The really good news is that last year's project to provide clean water, sanitation and a better environment to more than 54,000 people in the Siltie region of Ethiopia has been fully funded. Aled Pickard, Christian Aid Cardiff, reports that, "Water Action is, pending the rest of the money pledged by churches, fully funded. This is the first time that UK and Ireland churches, trusts, foundations, major donors and programme funding have worked together - and it has been a really great success. I want to thank all you of you very much for promoting the project. Between us all we have raised Euro 507,000 which is Euro 2,100,000 with the money from the EC!"

And we raised £4.048.20 of that! Thank you!

Please book the date in your diaries now! See you there!

Peter Symes

They're Back! Those Wonderful Church Bulletins!
Thank God for church ladies with typewriters. These sentences appeared in church bulletins or were announced in church services (Summer, 2007 Release).

The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.

The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.' The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been canceled due to a conflict.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say 'Hell' to someone who doesn't care much about you.

Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.

Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I Will Not Pass This Way Again,' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

The Rector will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing: 'Break Forth Into Joy.'

Easter Offering 2008

The Easter Offering envelopes will be available from Palm Sunday. Information about the Easter Offering:-

- 1 The Offering is organised by the Women's Network of the Methodist Church.
- 2 All proceeds go to the fund for World Mission. The money raised enables, among other things, the following to be funded:

Grants for partner churches overseas
Training for Mission partners
World Church in Britain Programme
Mission live programme

Please give generously to make possible the work of sharing the love of God throughout the world.

Easter Offering Dedication Service

The Circuit Offering Dedication Service will take place at Monmouth Methodist Church on

Sunday 10th May at 10.30am
Speaker. Mrs Ann Mills
Leader Mrs Helen Vosper

Ann Smedley

Keith Ward, the Regius Professor of Divinity Emeritus at Oxford, observes that “modern science enlarges our vision of the grandeur of God the creator, and helps us to place our lives in the context of God’s purpose for the whole creation, in which we play a vital part as conscious physical beings, commissioned to care for our physical world. Science provides a new narrative of creation, and we Christians can accept and celebrate it as a complement to the Bronze Age, profound but pre-scientific, poetry of Genesis”.

The Radio 4 Service, which I mentioned above, concluded with this beautiful prayer:

“Almighty God, who, where nothing was, wove the web of being, we give you thanks for all that is bright and beautiful, for all that is dark and mysterious about our world. Invigorate our studies and direct our enquiries, to the end that sound learning may ever grow and prosper to your honour and glory, and the good of all people. And the blessing of God, Creator, Redeemer and Giver of Life, remain with us now and for ever. Amen.”

Amen indeed.

John Lloyd Williams

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24th in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.

Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.

The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM - Prayer and medication to follow.

The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

This evening at 7 PM there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

Sent by Richard McLachlan

A great Christ's man

Christ's College, Cambridge, where I had the enormous privilege of being a student in the early 1960s, is currently celebrating the 200th anniversary of the birth of one of its considerably more famous alumni. **Charles Darwin** was at Christ's from 1827-1831, and it was during this time, that he met Professor John Stevens Henslow, who kindled his interest in things scientific, and helped to arouse his passion to "do something" in the field of science, and also to visit exotic foreign countries.

It was Henslow who recommended Darwin to the Admiralty when they were looking for someone to serve as a naturalist aboard the survey ship, HMS Beagle, during a cartographic survey of South America and chronometric survey of the globe.

The rest, as they say, is history. It was from the observations he made on the five-year voyage of the Beagle, especially of the Galapagos mockingbirds, that Darwin drew the evidence to support his theory that all species of life have evolved over time from common ancestors, through the process he called natural selection. He published his findings in 1859 in his epoch-making book, *On the Origin of Species*.

Inevitably perhaps, Darwin's findings created, and still create, a degree of controversy, amongst some Christians. If we are all "descended from monkeys" over millions of years, how does that square with what the Bible says about creation? Does Darwin's theory of evolution not represent an attack on the idea of a Creator God?

In fact, of course, at the same time as Darwin was writing, a new wave of biblical scholars was also at work, bringing fresh understandings to the biblical texts, especially the Old Testament ones, moving away from literalist interpretations and explaining

many of them in terms of allegory, poetry and metaphor.

It was the Victorian clergyman and author, Charles Kingsley, who wrote to congratulate Darwin on his book, and observed that it was "just as noble a conception" to think that God did not just make the world, but went one step further, by making the world make itself.

Christians should have no fears in welcoming Darwin's work as an immense and vital contribution, which enlarges and enriches our understanding of life on earth, and which in no way need be incompatible with our faith.

Much is made these days by certain "fundamentalist" scientists of the impossibility of reconciling the worlds of religion and science. Many other modern scientists and philosophers, however, take a rather different view. Professor Simon Conway-Morris is the current Professor of Evolutionary Palaeobiology in Cambridge, and a practising Christian. In a sermon in a Radio 4 Sunday Service to commemorate Charles Darwin, he observes that many of his scientific colleagues, be they astronomers or physicists or biologists, will all confirm that the world about us is very cannily constructed. It is strangely fit for purpose. The basic laws and constants of the universe seem to be remarkably fine-tuned to allow the universe to exist, and to produce intelligent life.

Professor Conway-Morris invites us to think of our Universe as not just a fact, but also as an intention, perfused with meaning and an overwhelming sense of going somewhere. Darwin, he points out, discovered the mechanism of evolution, but he never predicted its outcome. Christians believe that outcome was written into the story from the beginning. We have been shown the open door to new worlds. An apparent non-entity, a carpenter, who spoke with unmistakable authority, proclaimed that evil is not permanent and the world will ultimately be wholly transformed.