

# TREASURY

MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WALES

## THE UNCHANGING WORD

Separated by a century and thousands of miles, two chaplains share similar stories of the Bible's enduring message. Dan Hardie reports on how the *Active Service Saint John's Gospel* has been impacting people since 1914.

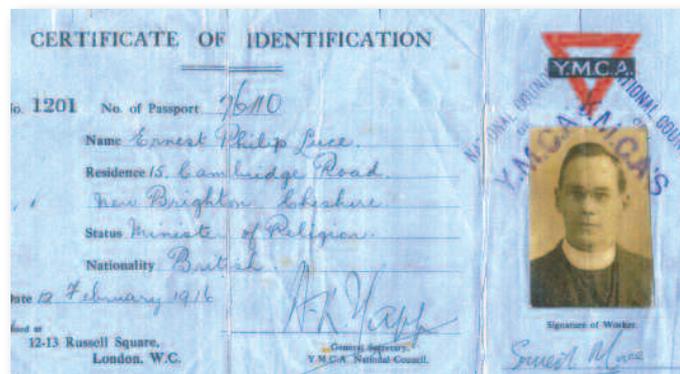
*"We've seen the enduring power of God's Word to bring hope, peace and comfort"*

God's Word spans centuries and transcends borders – it is truly good news for everyone, no matter who we are or where we're from. In 2014, Lifeworlds published the replica *Active Service Saint John's Gospel* to mark 100 years since the beginning of World War 1. Over the past 5 years, as nearly 1 million Gospels have been shared all over the world, and as a different generation – 100 years on – have read its pages, we've seen the enduring power of God's Word to bring hope, peace and comfort.

### A Generous Gift

The replica Gospel's introduction includes the Lord Roberts quote that was used in the original 1914 version: "You will find in this little book guidance when you are in health, comfort when you are in sickness, and strength when you are in adversity." A message that has proved true for the countless number of people who have accepted and read a copy of the Gospel.

During the First World War, Lifeworlds (then known as Scripture Gift Mission) distributed 43 million John's Gospels, in addition to other portions of Scripture. One person using these Scriptures was Ernest Luce, a church minister who joined the war as a



YMCA chaplain, stationed at an airfield in Lemnos, Greece. In his letters home he talks about his joy at receiving 5,300 portions of Scripture, "the generous gift of the Scripture Gift Mission". He writes: "[the portions] arrived at a most opportune moment, for the Nelson Battalion were then formed up waiting the order to embark. I went along the lines and offered the Scriptures to any men who were without a single portion of the Word of God, and large numbers – several hundred – put out their hand and eagerly asked for a copy which I supplied with a silent prayer for God's blessing, and I have no doubt that someone will reap the answer."

### Guidance, Comfort, Strength

A hundred years on, Chaplain Walker is seeing Lord Roberts' promise being worked out in the lives of recruits on HMS Kuttabal, a navy base at Garden Island in Sydney Harbour, Australia: "Spending six to nine months at sea is a tough gig," he says. "The training is intense ... not only are [personnel] physically tested, but they are emotionally tested. Perhaps the hardest part is being disconnected from loved ones and homes. Integrating back into family life is difficult, and many suffer PTSD and other mental health issues as they try to find their

place." He shares a story of one recruit who has returned home: "I was with Dave just a week after he had arrived home from a nine-month posting. He and his wife had had a huge fight and tensions were still high. He was seeking guidance and to reconnect with his faith. As we spent time together, he took out the WW1 Gospel that he had been given during his post, and he turned to John 14:18 and read, 'I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.' He explained, 'This verse got me through the hard and lonely times out at sea, it got me through the sleepless nights. Now I need it more than ever.' I noticed the Gospel was well used – dog-eared, underlined. It was an active service to this young man, and brought God's Word into dark and difficult places."

These are just two stories, among countless, of lives impacted by God's Word. Over the 130 years Lifeworlds has been in existence it has published and distributed millions of resources, all sharing good news with people all over the world. Over many years, and across different contexts, cultures and situations, people have been reading and responding to the Bible's unchanging message – one of hope and transformation in Christ.

### Pray

- Praise God for over 130 years of Lifeworlds.
- Give thanks for how the Bible brings new life no matter who we are or where we live.
- Pray for people all over the world who have read God's Word and responded to its message.

# NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

## CITY ROAD, CHESTER BIBLE EXHIBITION



*Dorothy Whitehead, Maureen Roberts, Beryl Simonds, Ann McGrath, Joyce Dodd, Margaret Newman, Adeline Parker, Noreen Owen, Angela Bebbington, Mavis Crofts and Beryl Williams.*

## GORSE MISSION, SWANSEA

The church entertained the South West Wales Presbytery when its final meeting of the year was held in the church on 17th October.

Sadly the church will be compelled to close in 2022 when the lease on the land upon which the church stands expires. The vision of those who initiated the Mission over a hundred years ago has been continued through a faithful and lively youth work that has been closely associated with the Swansea and District Sunday School Union. Each Sunday night Mr

John King holds a service at a local elderly care home, while his wife, Eirwen plays the piano for the Sunday evening service at Gorse that is conducted by the present minister, Revd Moon Sook Choi.

The table collection at Presbytery was donated to the Leprosy Mission.



*Revd M S Choi, Eurwen and John King*

# 100th BIRTHDAY

by Glynis Owen

On November 18th we celebrate the 100th birthday of Mrs Dilys Evans. Readers will remember the ministry of the Revd Gwilym Evans and his wife, Dilys in a number of churches in our denomination. Brought up in Cathedral Road Presbyterian Church, Cardiff, Dilys met Gwilym in the early 1950's and, on marriage in 1954, joined him at Anfield Road, Liverpool. Two years later their first son, Martyn, was born and, after a move to the churches of Rhyl and Pensarn, Timothy was born two years after Martyn. Following five years of ministry on the North Wales coast, they had a Call to Nant y Moel in the Ogmore Valley, then a return north to Connah's Quay (Wepre and Golftyn). Finally, they accepted the Call to Cardiff, to Cathedral Road and Fairwater in 1972 and ministered there until retirement in 1982. They took their membership to Trehill, where Gwilym served as Minister until his final illness. Dilys Evans is now our senior elder and Mission Secretary at Trehill, where she



*Dilys Evans (October 2019)*

continues to serve faithfully and to challenge us all to be outward-looking. We thank God for her life of faith, witness and service to Him and to the Presbyterian Church of Wales. We wish her a very happy 100th birthday and pray that God will continue to bless her richly in His Service.



*One Sunday at Nant y Moel in 1962*

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