

the SUMMER TREASURY 2022

MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WALES



PROMENADING ON

Who would organise the Proms? Each year it is criticised, for being too niche and too broad; too old fashioned and too avant grade.

But this is life. Those organising the Proms are trying (sometimes slightly awkwardly) to appeal to the old and the new; keeping the spirit of tradition whilst recognising the spirit of the age.

Reading this special summer edition of the Treasury, readers will see adverts for new ministries, news of modern heating systems and the appointment

of a new representative at a Christian environmental charity. Readers will find encouraging indicating a newness of life. Readers will also see articles that produce *deja vu*. It is not the first time we publish details of a disaster appeal and sadly it won't be the last. Likewise we publish news of another church closing, this one in South Wales.

This too is life. Thus we sing with the hymn writer: 'Through all the changing scenes of life, in trouble and in joy, the praises of my God shall still my heart and tongue employ.'

PHOTO:
pixabay.com



NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

CHRISTIAN AID EMERGENCY APPEAL

In response to a growing food crisis in East Africa, Christian Aid has launched an urgent appeal. The East Africa Hunger Crisis Appeal will raise funds to support the charity's local partners in Kenya and Ethiopia.

Following the worst drought in forty years, millions of people in East Africa are facing the threat of famine and death. The situation is made worse by the climate emergency, the Covid pandemic and the war in Ukraine. Christian Aid's local partners are already working in the region, supporting over 300,000 people but more must be done to help save lives and give people hope for a better future. Christian Aid's partners in Ethiopia, for example, will be providing life changing support over the next year through the funding of UNOCHA, which will support 200,000 people and 200,000 cattle. The project will

repair 12 water boreholes and provide vital veterinary care for the cattle. Over 500 people will receive \$40 per month for three months to help them buy food and other essentials. 45,000kg of animal feed will be distributed among 450 highly vulnerable families, helping them keep their livestock alive. In Kenya, Christian Aid's partners will provide support to 31,500 people who are experiencing food shortages. By helping to repair six water boreholes, some 30,000 people will get improved access to water. In addition 250 vulnerable families will receive £20 in local currency per month for three months so that they can buy food, medicine and pay off debt.

But far more needs to be done as the region faces its worst drought in 40 years following four consecutive failed rainy seasons. 18.4 million people across Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia are either missing meals or eating a less diverse diet. 7.1 million children are malnourished in East

PHOTO:
Christian Aid



Africa, including 2 million who are severely malnourished. Lack of water means that many people are having to take desperate measures in order to survive, including abandoning their homes in search of food, water and pasture for livestock. Alongside drought making it hard to grow crops, the cost of buying food has also risen significantly. The effect of Russia's invasion of Ukraine has been dramatic upon this region, which imports 90% of its grain from those two countries.

Head of Christian Aid Wales, Mari McNeill, said: 'The situation faced by millions of people in East Africa is desperate. The climate emergency has been affecting the weather patterns for some time but the impact of both the war in Ukraine and Covid-19 means that a real crisis is developing.

'By supporting the work of Christian Aid's partners on the ground through this urgent appeal, we can bring hope to a worsening situation. We know how generous the people of Wales have been to the people of Ukraine in their crisis. Those facing hunger in East Africa now need us to stand in solidarity with them in theirs.'

You may donate to the East Africa Hunger Crisis Appeal by visiting Christian Aid's webpage: christianaid.org.uk/appeals/emergencies/east-africa-hunger-crisis-appeal

[The image is of Adoko Hatoro Engang, 76, Dasenech, South Omo, Ethiopia, outside his temporary home]

TRINITY, WREXHAM

Whilst it may be seen as an unwanted characteristic for people to blow hot and cold, it is a great advantage in a heating system which can keep temperatures at an acceptable level. Much hot air has been spent over the century at Trinity, but (they write) we now have a system which will keep us at a fairly constant temperature, irrespective of weather and preacher.

Our new heating system is an air source heat pump. The equipment and the technology involved allows the system to heat or to cool the building, and on the first Sunday (July 17th, 2022) when this system was used, it was in fact 25 degrees C outside but a cool 20.5 degrees C in the Sanctuary. The air source heat pump works like a refrigerator, but in reverse. It draws heat from the environment to heat the building, but, as we experienced recently, it can also act just like a refrigerator and cool down the building.

Grateful thanks to our various benefactors over the years, whose donations were used to part fund this renovation. Also, many thanks to the Northern Presbytery and PCW for a generous grant from the Strategy Fund. We have thus been

*PHOTO: Before
and after at
Trinity,
Wrexham*

able to totally remove the previous inefficient, ineffective, costly and dangerous under-seat heating pipes in the Sanctuary and replace them, and the heaters in the church hall, with state-of-the-art heat exchange equipment – adding LED lighting and insulation in the church hall as part of our contribution towards PCW's Environmental Policy and hopefully towards the reduction of our energy usage in the church. We are particularly grateful to Mr Steve Wynn, whose experience and expert knowledge supported us in this renovation.

GORSE MISSION

On Sunday, 12th June the closing service at the Gorse Mission, Cwmbwrla, Swansea took place under the leadership of Revd Paul Morgan (Moderator, South West Wales Presbytery). A fuller account of the honourable past will be published in September, the month in which the lease expires and when the land and building reverts to the City & County of Swansea.

In the meantime we republish this poem written in 1908 by Charles Taliesin Rhys entitled, *The Old Gorse Mission*.

*Up yonder, on the Old Gorse Road,
Just by Cwmbwrla way,
There stands a black, old wooden shed,
That's seen a better day.*

*Though placed upon a barren spot,
So drear and full of gloom, -
You'll find that midst those clinker tips,
"A garden sweet doth bloom".*

*"Tis true it seems a poor old place,
Judged by its outward look-
Yet here the people flock to hear
Truths from the "Grand Old Book."*

*Inside its warm and bright enough
For any earth born King.*

*And hardest hearts grow tender when
Our little children sing.*

*Those wooden walls have rung oft-times
With praise to Christ our King:
In ans'ring chimes we seemed to hear
"The Bells of Heaven ring."*

*Within those walls, poor weary souls
Have "laid their burdens down."
Exchanging there, the old "muckrake",
For Heaven's eternal crown.*

*We thank thee, Lord, that to this work
Thou didst give some a call;
Oh! Grant that many souls shall bless
The Gorse Road Mission Hall.*

*We pray, O Father that Thou'llt still
Amongst Thy servants dwell.
And bless our humble efforts when
The "Story Old" we tell.*

*Be Thou our strength, our shield, and
stay,
Without Thee we are naught.
To love, to trust, to live, to die, -
Oh! Lord, let us be taught!*

*And if this lesson well we learn
While sitting at Thy feet,
We know Thy Spirit will us bless
with wond'rous power sweet.*

*Though we be sinful, weak and frail,
We pray Thee, Lord, to use
Ourselves - our bodies and our minds
Whichever way Thou choose.*

*Oh keep Thy servants clean and true,
Bound with the bonds of Love,
That all the Gorse Road Mission Band
May meet in realms above.*

LLANDUDNO & PENRHYN BAY

On Saturday June 11th Reverend Timothy Hodgins was inducted to the joint pastorate of Penrhyn Bay and Gloddaeth, Llandudno. A large congregation gathered and Reverend Brian Matthews, Moderator of the Northern Presbytery led the service, and Reverend David Meredith (Edinburgh) preached the charge.



Tea followed and the next day Tim preached at Llandudno while David Meredith conducted the service at Penrhyn Bay.

A NEW ECO CHURCH OFFICER

Delyth Higgins has joined Christian conservation charity, A Rocha UK, as their Eco Church officer for Wales. Delyth joins us at a time of increasing demand for Eco Church as more churches seek support to take practical action on caring for God's

earth. Delyth is Welsh-speaking and lives in Swansea. Previously she has worked with Renew Wales, the national programme which supports community groups to take action on climate change.

Eco Church has a good take up in Wales with over 150 registered churches. Feedback from these churches highlighted the demand for a more regional presence to coordinate events, networks, and promotion of the scheme.

A Rocha UK aims to widen and deepen Eco Churches reach in Wales. There is the hope that more churches of different sizes and denominations will register for Eco Church.

Wales is home to large churches in growing cities to small, rural traditional chapels and parishes and Delyth hopes to encourage many of them to become Eco Churches.

Churches will benefit from shared learning, support, ideas and resources and speaking with those who have already done something similar. There are already new EC resources available in Welsh which Delyth will build upon as well as being able to offer more talks and



PHOTOS:

Two past ministers of Penrhyn Bay and Llandudno.

Eirys Buckland Evers and Mrs Norma Williams were part of the last meeting of the Northern Presbytery that met in Mold on 13th June



welcome Delyth Higgins to A Rocha UK to expand and deepen the work of Eco Church in Wales when there has never been a more urgent time for the Church to play its role (along with other sectors of society) in caring for this precious planet. She brings insight and wisdom from her years at Renew Wales which has already seen her work with churches on the issue of climate change and having lived in Wales for all of her life (CHECK), has a deep understanding of the culture. . She is joining a very busy Eco Church team and I look forward to working with her.”

TRAINING FOR ELDERS

Thirty PCW elders from across Wales and England have recently completed an on-line training course for elders. The topics they covered, with Revd Wayne Adams as tutor, were

What is an elder?

Becoming an outward-looking church

Caring for each other

Helping lead worship

Being an elder within the connexion

Three of these elders were from the South Wales West Presbytery, Andrew Saunders, Tina Saunders and Stephen Lovell.

Delyth Oswy Shaw congratulated the students for completing the course, engaging well and contributing in discussion groups.

She spoke of how it is encouraging to hear some of their comments:

“I want to be more active and confident in the work, and look for opportunities to initiate new projects.” “I will be more willing to lead as the course has encouraged me to be more confident” “The course was particularly good,

events in the Welsh language. A Rocha UK works to protect and restore the natural world by equipping Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment as a regular part of their individual life and church mission.

Delyth (pictured) says: ‘Since moving house three years ago, I have become even more aware of nature and take an interest in watching the huge variety of birds that come into the garden and the beautiful views towards the mountains in the north – through the changing seasons. I am looking forward to meeting the people around Wales who have, who are and who will be embarking on the Eco Church scheme and in particular, building relationships and networks amongst churches throughout Wales so that they can learn from, support and encourage each other.’

Helen Stephens, Church Relations Manager at A Rocha UK, said: “We are keen to promote and embed Eco Church more deeply across Wales recognising that there are unique challenges in different parts of the country. So we are delighted to



especially for new elders. The trainers had prepared well, and communicated in a clear and interesting way. It was also nice to meet elders from other churches. I have enjoyed the course very much and have also learnt a lot, and am keen to learn more"

There are plans to run the course again, so there will be opportunity for other elders to join next time.

DEATH OF A PAST MODERATOR

The funeral service of Revd Haydn Thomas, BA took place on 18th July in Salem, Canton which is the church of the present Moderator, Revd Evan Morgan, and where Mr Thomas had himself been the minister after his retirement from secular work in 1991. Brought up in Betws, Ammanford, he was ordained in 1956 to serve the churches of Pumpsaint, Cwrtycadno, Cao and Saron, Ffarmers. After a time there he held a second pastorate at Tabernacl, Ty Ddewi until 1965 when he moved into charity work with Help the Aged.

It was during his time in Canton that the church changed from being bilingual to the total use of Welsh in services. The growth of the church can be traced to his time there. He had a link with the Association in the East whilst minister of Holy Trinity,

Barry during the 1990's. He was Moderator of the General Assembly in 2008-9.

CHESTER

On July 2nd friends of City Road church gathered at Greengates in Mold for the annual strawberry tea. It was a lovely sunny afternoon and people chose to either sit in doors in the shade or sit outside and watch the games that were being played. Tea and cakes, and strawberries were in bountiful supply and £200 was raised, a portion of which was given to the Seeds of Hope campaign.



*PHOTOS: Guests
at the City Road
Strawberry Tea*



NEW CHURCH

The Anniversary was held on the 3rd July in a packed church, and many local artists took part. This year, Gwenda Alloway the harpist came from London so she could represent her family who have contributed to church life for many years. The cemetery had received a make over with the grass being cut and the hedges trimmed. A great time of worship was had by all on a glorious summer's evening in the Radnorshire hills.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: Revd Dr Tom Phillips, Sgiwen

Even now I can still hear my physics teacher saying "Start from first principles". After recent attempts at reordering the way we work have been met with varying responses, I think it's time to follow that age old advice. The denomination is a collection of churches united by our faith and our belief in a particular form of church government. Our beliefs are found in the Confession of Faith and these bind us together from Milford Haven to Holyhead.

Across Wales the church of all denominations has recently declined in size, fewer churches, and

a loss of attending members. Our organisational structure is creaking through lack of volunteers prepared to undertake the tasks being asked for.

Our office has grown in size, administration of activities concentrated in the General Assembly and its various committees. Final decisions are being taken far from the local congregations who are feeling disenfranchised. The historic reasons for our administrative growth is understandable. Industry and commerce have gone through similar growth then decline and had to reorganise to meet the new conditions. Restructuring is not something we can avoid as difficult as it might turn out to be. We are increasingly facing legislative demands on the way we conduct our affairs and this has to be catered for in what we do.

The denomination came into being through small congregations gathering together and working in concert. Here is a model we can revert to. As Rev Sangkhuma pointed out in a paper to the S E Wales Presbytery, we are at an advantage in our dire straits, we too are small congregations but unlike our

forefathers have premises we worship in, and which we own. Some buildings are liabilities because of the ongoing costs of maintaining them but their disposal would release capital to procure a more suitable premise.

We are a denomination of local churches. A recent comment on the state of the church in the U S of A made the point that a church is a family. Families come in all sizes, not everyone sees totally eye to eye but are united in that they are a family. If we recognise this and begin there, how can we order ourselves. First I would suggest we return a lot of autonomy to the local church to conduct its own affairs. It will need advice and guidance on legal and similar matters. The Act which created the Properties Board removed the problem of property registration etc and we need to continue this, child protection, health and safety, accounting requirements and legal advice also need attention. We have the specialists in the office and their continuing guidance would be required.

The return of autonomy to the local church would let the members decide how to proceed, how to best use their resources. A town church behaves differently to a rural church, in fact each behaves differently to its neighbour. We need to agree on certain standards but why is there the need of the current chain which has to be followed to get approval to conduct our own local business.

We began with local congregations working together and forming into presbyteries, local interests determined their activities. Those presbyteries joined into Associations, again with common interests determining what

happened. Time led to the Welsh Associations recognising that English speaking churches had different priorities. The General Assembly had come into being through work done in the years up to 1897. The South deferred the question regarding whether to change the Constitutional Rule but the North in three Associations approved and the argument that the whole Connexion is in every Association prevailed and so it was argued it was constitutional.

I would argue let local churches run their own affairs co operating locally through presbytery. Association could be the guide, mentor and arbiter in all matters pertaining to the churches. General Assembly would set standards and set up Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The Civil Service works that way and local offices refer to the codes as to what they spend and how to work. No committee sits on their shoulders. General Assembly could also co-ordinate common issues, eg hymn books, relations with other denominations etc. Committees would not be needed, most work being done in presbytery or Association.

A prominent evangelical minister in my area said people have stopped coming to church because it is boring. A daily newspaper columnist commenting on the Diocese of Oxford decree to insert into the traditional pledge made at baptismal services to “strive to guard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the Earth”, added “Their job is to save human souls not polar bears in the Arctic ice caps”.

Why do we go to church? What is a church. It is the gathering of God's people to worship Him and learn more about Him. Isaiah 6 shows

what happens when we see the Lord, high and exalted. Life and worship are transformed, a new energy and the willingness to go and serve. Society is offended by the Gospel, it challenges what they claim to be truth and so the seeds are sown for the persecution of Christians in this land. Jesus said we would be persecuted for His sake. Matt 5.10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Mat 5:11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Church life is not easy in our world but we serve a risen saviour and we are here to glorify him by our walk and witness.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

Presbyterian Church of Wales
'Myrddin' Presbytery
GWENDRAETH AREA
PASTORATE
Ministerial Assistant

Myrddin Presbytery PCW seeks a person to work as a Ministerial Assistant within the Gwendraeth Pastorate in Carmarthenshire.

Hours: 35 hours per week.
Contract: 3 years, with the first six months being a probationary period.
Salary: Points 26-30 PCW scale, (£25,913 - £28,049) plus house allowance, car allowance, expenses, and the opportunity to join the PCW Pension Scheme.

The post is conditional on a satisfactory DBS check and two references (one should be provided by a former employer).

This post has an occupational requirement for the post holder to be

a committed Christian, and to be fluent in Welsh and English.

Closing date: 16:00 Friday 12th of August 2022

It is anticipated that the interviews will be held on Friday 9th September, 2022

Presbyterian Church of Wales
'Myrddin' Presbytery
LLANDEILO AND COAST AREA
PASTORATE
Ministerial Assistant

We invite those interested in promoting Christian Church work to take an interest in the post of Ministerial Assistant to serve the Llandeilo and Coast Area Pastorate.

Hours: 35 hours per week.
Contract: 3 years, with the first six months being a probationary period.
Salary: Points 26-30 PCW scale, (£25,913 - £28,049) plus house allowance, car allowance, expenses, and the opportunity to join the PCW Pension Scheme.

This Post is subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure and two satisfactory references. There is a Christian and Welsh Language occupational requirement relevant to this post.

Closing date: 16:00 Friday 12th of August 2022

It is anticipated that the interviews will be held on Friday 9th September, 2022

For further information about either post, and for an application form, please contact: -
email –
hedd.morgan@ebcpcw.cymru
phone - 02920 627 465
stating - "Ministerial Assistant, Myrddin" followed but the area in which you have an interest.



Margaret Newman's lemon cake was so popular at the City Road strawberry tea that her husband worried there would be none left him! The recipe she uses is by Felicity Cloake. It was originally published in the Guardian.

MAKES 1 LOAF CAKE

175g butter, softened,
plus a little extra for greasing
2 unwaxed lemons
175g caster sugar
Fine salt
3 eggs
100g self-raising flour
75g ground almonds
A little milk
100g demerara sugar

Grease a 2lb loaf tin (ie one measuring about 23cm x 13cm x 7cm) with butter or oil, then line it with greaseproof paper.
Heat the oven to 180C (160C fan)/gas 4.

Zest the lemons - if you haven't got unwaxed (or organic) ones, give them a good scrub with hot water

ZEST IN TIME FOR SUMMER

to remove some of the wax first, because this will give a better flavour.

Put the cubed butter in a large bowl, or in the bowl of a food mixer, with the caster sugar, a pinch of fine salt and half the lemon zest.

Use electric beaters to beat the butter and sugar mix until it's really light and fluffy, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary; this should take about five minutes. You can do this with a wooden spoon, but that will take a while, because you want to get as much air into the mix as possible.

Beat the eggs in a jug, then beat them a little at a time into the butter and sugar mixture, making sure each addition is thoroughly incorporated before adding any more. If the mixture threatens to curdle at any point, beat in a little flour to bring it back to a smooth consistency.

Tip the flour into a sieve and sift it on to the butter and sugar mixture - this step is not vital, but it will help to give a lighter, fluffier result, so I'd recommend doing so.

Use a large metal spoon to fold in the flour gently with a slow, figure-of-eight motion, being careful to knock as little air out of the mix as possible.

Put the ground almonds in a bowl, give them a quick whisk to break up any lumps, then fold into the batter in the same way as the flour.

Gradually mix in just enough milk to thin down the batter to a consistency that will reluctantly drop off a spoon.

Pour the batter into the prepared tin and gently level out the top. Put in the hot oven and bake for about 50-55 minutes, or until the top is golden and risen, and a skewer pushed into the centre comes out clean, or at least without any wet batter clinging to it; a few crumbs are fine. Juice both lemons and mix this with the demerara sugar and the remaining lemon zest.

Leave the cake in the tin, poke small holes evenly all over the top, then pour over the drizzle mix bit by bit, waiting for it be absorbed before adding any more. Leave the cake to cool.



NOTES FROM THE TOWPATH

In 1771 the good people of Chester heard news of a new construction in Liverpool— The Trent and Mersey Canal. Fearing that this new waterway would divert trade from their historic city and its port, the townsfolk published plans for a canal to be built between the city and the town of Middlewich. An Act of Parliament was sought, shares were sold and eight years later the Canal was opened. Since 1771 Chester has seen the arrival of the steam train and more recently the motor car but the good old canal remains drawing holiday makers and continuous cruisers to the area.

Once upon a time there would have been drayhorses walking the towpath. Evidence of them is still around in the raised brickwork on the slopes around the bridges.

Presumably they helped the horses hooves catch hold on the gradient. Today there's no horses but the towpath still has wildlife. Every Spring, a twitcher comes with his binoculars to watch the Peregrine Falcom that nests on the Shot Tower. He tells me every year that the Shot Tower was used to make lead bullets for the Napoleonic War. No peregrines today of course, but I do see a Heron. I take a photo but when I look closely I can see it's a pretty moth eaten sad old thing. Perhaps they malt at this time of year? Frankly I'm much more interested in the couple that walk past with their two children. The son is wearing a Liverpool shirt, the daughter an Everton one Truly a Proverbs 23:33 moment...

As a chaplain with the Waterways Chaplains I am

PHOTO: International Presbyterian Church, Ealing

required to walk a mile a week. Normally I walk the towpath from Telford Warehouse (where the canal boats are brought for repairs) along the city walls to the supermarket on the edge of town. Today though, it's quiet on the canal so I walk an extra mile. After Waitrose the canal meanders out of the city into a more suburban area. Were you to keep walking you'd come to Tanners Wine Merchants and the Cricket Club (where, last season, Jimmy Anderson spent a day bowling for Lancashire) but I don't go that far. Instead I stop at Chemical Lock opposite the Water Treatment works. It's honestly nicer than it sounds.

A man is working on the lock gates. He tells me he's an ex Paratrooper. He laughs when I tell him my son's opinion of Paras: that 'all they do is jump out of aeroplanes'. He's out on the canal boat with his wife but he'll be heading home soon. His parents are housebound and he's looking after them. It turns out that he was born and grew up in Mancot, the village where I live, and his parents live just a few minutes from me. We laugh at the coincidence but immediately my mind wanders and I wonder why God brings these things about. Perhaps one day, if he feels God calling him, this ex paratrooper will remember that he met the village minister and come calling.

Walking home I stop by a boat and say hello to a timid looking 'Mr Tumnus' kind of fellow. I ask him if he knows of the work of the Waterways Chaplains and he says, in a rather noncommittal way, that he does. I ask if he's a Christian and he admits that 'yes, he does sometimes go to church'. Suddenly his wife approaches at a rate of knots on my starboard. 'Yes' she says confidently 'we believe the good

news! We're bible believing Christians!' Mr Tumnus wilts beside her. As live-aboards they're always travelling so they don't have a church but they found worship services online during lockdown so they spend all day on Sunday checking in with different church communities. They tell me they've been moored up for a few days and noticed some Polish men living rough under a tree. They gave them an umbrella ('it was some kind of shelter') and a New Testament.

I find those men later sitting under a tree. One of the men is wringing out his clothes. He's clearly drunk and so I guess he fell in the canal. They don't speak English and I don't have Polish. My neighbour, however, does. I come home, get him to write a note telling them where they can find food and shelter and take it back. The Polish man looks amazed when he realises he can read it. Chaplaincy on the canal is maddeningly transient— you see most people only once. But some days, like the good people of Chester linking the river and canal all those years ago, God brings random people with different backgrounds into one happy confluence.

Revd Jonathan Hodgins is a Community Chaplain working with the Waterways Chaplains. You can find out more about their work, arrange a visiting speaker or investigate how to volunteer with them by visiting waterwayschaplains.org

'Yes' says his wife, 'we believe the Good News, we're bible believing Christians'.

Mr Tumnus wilts beside her.



SHILLONG CENTENARY

What does the year 2022 mean to you?

The Centenary of Urdd Gobaith Cymru (The Welsh League of Youth)? Yours or a member of the family's special birthday? Some other important happening?

Well, 2022 is important in the history of a hospital in Shillong, Meghalaya in north-east India, because one hundred years ago, on 25th March 1922, 'The Khasi Hills Welsh Mission Hospital' was established.

On this great occasion preparations are being made to organise the Opening Ceremony of this programme (officially) on 4th November, 2022. I would refer you to a valuable volume written by The Reverend Dr D Ben Rees, 'The Healer of

Shillong' published in 2016. The book chronicles the efforts of The Reverend Dr H Gordon Roberts, up to his retirement in 1942. He was succeeded by Dr Arthur Hughes and his wife Nancy Hughes. Dr and Mrs Roberts were officially welcomed in 1914. About the same time the local authorities had identified a site for a new hospital, and very soon after his arrival Dr Roberts presented a plan for a hospital, the building work commencing in 1915. For a number of years only outpatients received treatment, with Miss Margaret Buckley a nursing sister from South Wales shouldering the work as well as training women to be professional nurses.

The hospital was officially opened on 25 March 1922. The front page of the programme states, 'Medical Officer in Charge – Dr H Gordon

PHOTO: Revd Ifan Roberts speaking at the Living Room conference

Roberts. Sister in Charge – Miss M E Buckley’.

His Excellency Sir William Marris, a member of the British Civil Service during the Raj period, agreed to perform the opening ceremony. The hospital’s motto is ‘To heal, to teach, and to preach in His Name’.

The 2014 General Assembly welcomed Dr David Tiarang the hospital’s chief Medical Officer at the time, who outlined the plans in hand to celebrate the hospital’s centenary. Following his address the ‘Moderator’s Appeal’ was launched with the intention of supporting the project. Over two years members and churches of the PCW contributed £115,000. On 25 September 2021 the New Nursing Block was opened; The Reverend Evan Morgan, Moderator of The General Assembly and others were present virtually. The two plaques acknowledges the Presbyterian Church of Wales’ contribution. I personally was pleased to see the project which was ably supported by PCW members finalised.

The College of Nursing has started the admission process of the 4-year BSc (Nursing) degree course from this academic session 2022-2023. In addition to the new Nursing College one of the Halls of the Hospital has now been redesigned and named after the pioneer of Nursing Service and Education Miss Margaret Elizabeth Buckley as “MARGARET E. BUCKLEY MEMORIAL HALL” Although we no longer have missionaries in north-east India the people of Wales have the desire and willingness to honour the contributions of missionaries from Wales since 1840 up to 1960’s. I know from experience the high

esteem and love that the local people, from the youngest to the oldest, have for the Presbyterian (or the Calvinistic Methodist) Church of Wales, whom they call the Mother Church, for giving them the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is indeed a thrill to hear the words of a Welsh hymn *Diolch i ti, yr Hollalluog Dduw, am yr Efengyl sanctaidd. Halelwia!, Amen.*

(Translated, this means, ‘We give our thanks to thee, Almighty God, For the Gospel, most holy. Halleluia, Amen), being sung in the Khasi language,

You may be familiar with the work of textile artist Cefyn Burgess, who is well known for his images of chapels using textile. An exhibition of his work ‘Behind the Box’ (the old missionary collection box), was held at Storiel Gallery, Bangor up to 2 July. The exhibition formed part of a project to discover the connections between Wales and the Khasi and Mizo people in northeast India. The collection of his work following his visit to Shillong, included a picture of Dr Gordon Roberts Hospital. If ever you have the opportunity to see the exhibition in another place you will not be disappointed.

Another volume of interest is ‘Bryniau’r Glaw’ (the Rainy Hills) written by the Reverend Ednyfed Thomas. The book is one of three recording the history of the Presbyterian Church of Wales Missionary work in north east India from 1840 onwards. (The three books are written in Welsh).

Trefor Lewis was Moderator of the General Assembly 2013-2014.

The hospital’s motto is ‘To heal, to teach, and to preach in His Name’.



GOD'S STRATEGY FOR MISSION

Below is an abridged version of the sermon preached by David Meredith at the ordination in Llandudno.

We know how the gospel came to Llandudno.

Seeking a place to live out the religious life, Tudno went to the great ancient limestone outcrop of the Great Orme to bring the message of Christianity to its people. He lived as an hermit in a cave which provided protection from the elements, and a source of fresh spring-water. From this base he constructed a church. Nothing remains of this 6th century church building, although the present 12th century church, dedicated to St Tudno, stands on the same site, and has a continuous history.

We also know how the gospel came to Africa. Acts chapter 8 tells us that an Ethiopian Eunuch was reading Isaiah. A man explained it to him, he believed and was baptised and today Africa is home to 631 million Christians.

What a result! So how did this come about? Acts 8:1 shows us a shattered church. Persecution had hindered the Christians but not the progress of the church. Providences are never random!

Though scattered, verses 4-8 show that they brought the gospel to new places. Immediately they were blessed and we might expect God to say to Philip 'carry on'. But instead the action moves to the deserted one solitary man.

Is Philip wasting his opportunity? No. God is at work. The angel speaks to Philip and directs him to go down the desert road where he finds possibly the only African reading the Bible — you could not make it up! And so they talk. About the Bible. Never underestimate the willingness of people to read and talk about the Bible. Never underestimate the power of God to work in the lives of unlikely people. That's God's strategy for mission.

PHOTO: Revd Timothy
Hodgins and Revd David
Meredith



PUNDITS FOLLY

The next time someone tells you they believe in the inherent goodness of man point them to photographs of Mount Everest. Not the epic photos of Earth's highest point glistening in the sun or the black and white snaps of post war explorers conquering it in little more than fur coats and mountain boots but the photos of rubbish strewn paths snaking up from Base camp through the Himalayan mountains.

Reports describe "not just leftover camping meals, beer and fuel cans, but human excrement" strewn along the paths of that most famous of mountains. One more sign of the depravity of humanity.

What with it being summer I've started planning some days out

with the children. Basically, living in North Wales that means beaches or hill walking. While living here we've managed Moel Famau a few times and I'm tempted to try to conquer the Clywdian range over the next few months. As for the big one? Well we've managed Eryri in the past, so maybe this year is the year to take on Crib Goch.

Mountains play a big part in the stories of Jesus. The mountain Jesus climbed with his three disciples in Luke 9 was probably Mount Hermon. Today it hosts a ski resort so presumably has some kind of ski lift that makes ascending it easy but in Jesus' day the only way to make a significant dent its 6000ft was to climb, which is what they did and which probably

explains why the disciples had a decent sleep when they got there.

When they woke they were amazed to see Jesus transfigured, with gleaming white clothes and his face shining like the sun, entertaining two guests.

Those guests were Moses and Elijah and Luke tells us that they were talking with Jesus about his 'departure' or as some translations have it, his 'Exodus'. This is mind bending stuff.

I picture it like those mountain climbers who went up Everest with Hillary and Tensing. A group went with them up the various camps until they came to the final ascent. Surely all those supporting would have given pep talks and words of advice before the conquerors went on alone. I feel like Moses would have done that, after all he had experience of leading an Exodus.

So he would have spoken of the slavery that bound God's people. The wicked, unloving cruelty of Pharaoh, and the power of God that was required to liberate the people from his grasp. He would have spoken of the fear amongst the people as they stood quite literally between the devil and the deep blue sea and the experience he had of trusting God to part the waves and cross from death to life in the promised land. And then, looking at Christ his saviour, eyes wide with awe and wonder, Moses would have confirmed to Jesus that *he* would do something even more wonderful. For Christ would take on the greater pharaoh, Satan. And he would stand not in front of a sea but be hung on a cross. And the promised land to which he

would lead his people would not be Canaan but Heaven itself.

Needless to say I've never climbed Everest (or Mount Hermon) but I did once walk up Garn Fadryn with Meirion Morris. Stood at the top on a quiet afternoon I suddenly heard a noise I can only describe as quietly loud. A second later, the sound was twice as loud as it had been. In the time it took me to look and see what was making the noise, the sound was twice as loud again. Dogs were barking but you couldn't hear them, sheep were scattering. Suddenly a great black fighter jet streaked across the sky right in front of us. For one micro-moment I could see (or I think I can remember seeing) the pilot in the cockpit before the plane was gone again.

It was terrifyingly loud and made me think of what it must be like to be in Syria or Iraq (or, I suppose Ukraine) and to see a jet plane not practicing fly-bys but actually coming to wreak havoc and destruction on a town.

In Luke 9 the disciples heard a sound that must have gone right into their souls. A sound that filled the space and made them think of nothing else. And yet also a sweet, melodious word, not bringing judgment or threatening destruction but a musical sound soaked in affection. A voice that animals would not flee from but turn towards; knowing their masters voice.

The voice is the voice of God and His message is this:

"This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him."

The mountain Jesus climbed with his three disciples in Luke 9 was probably Mount Hermon. Today it hosts a ski resort presumably replete with some kind of ski lift

This is a command and in one sense we should simply hear it, receive it and obey it. It's great news and for the blessing and benefit of every person. But break it down and it's fascinating to see how it is in keeping with what has just happened with Moses and Elijah.

Look back in the Old Testament and see these three verses.

Psalm 2:7 I will proclaim the Lord's decree: He said to me, "You are my son;

today I have become your father.

Isaiah 42:1 "Here is my servant, whom I uphold,

my chosen one in whom I delight;

I will put my Spirit on him,

and he will bring justice to the nations.

Deuteronomy 18:15 "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him."

We hear King David prophesying about the Messiah to come being God's own son. We see Isaiah prophesying that a chosen and anointed servant would come. And we see Moses saying another prophet will come and you must listen to him.

Can you see it yet? A son, one chosen, who is to be listened to. Three great Old Testament prophecies all tied together in the man at the top of the mountain.

Luke tells us that they went down the mountain and spoke of it to nobody. But later Peter would reflect twice on this moment.

Once in Acts 10 where he would say observe that "All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." This is really important for us to understand. The Old Testament is not a book of weird stories and obtuse genealogies. Everything testifies in some way to that great man on the mountain.

More personally in his own letter Peter would observe something else. In beautiful words he wrote: "For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. He received honour and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain."

'Eyewitnesses of his majesty'. They saw something on that mountain that was majestic and divine. May we taste something of that as we reflect on this passage and may we learn the lesson therein. This man on the mountain is God's Son. Let us, in all things, listen to him.

*Revd Jonathan Hodgins is
minister of the Deeside Pastorate*

The Treasury
incorporating Glad Tidings

English publication of the
Presbyterian Church of
Wales. Published monthly

Price 50p

Editor: Revd Iain B Hodgins,
1a Chestnut Grove,
Hawarden
CH5 3HD

iain.hodgins@ebcpw.cymru

Unless otherwise stated the
views expressed are those of
the individual contributor
and are not necessarily the
view of the General
Assembly or the Editor.

Enquires about
subscriptions and non-
editorial matters should be
addressed to:

The Presbyterian Church of
Wales, Tabernacle Chapel,
81 Heol Merthyr,
Caerdydd
CF14 1DD