

## HARVEST 2022

# CIRCUIT NEWS

## LIFE IN THE BANGOR & HOLYHEAD

### METHODIST CHURCHES

#### 'Renewing the Wonders of Egypt'

September 2022

At the end of our summer holiday in France in August we caught a ferry back to Poole. This was a route that we had never taken before and on our final night abroad we went into Cherbourg town centre to see what it was like.

Just in front of the famous Basilica of the Holy Trinity, originally built by Saint Ereptiole in 435 AD, we came across a striking statue of Napoleon Bonaparte made in 1858, honouring the man who built the military port. Sitting astride Marengo, the Arabian horse he rode at Waterloo, Napoleon gestures dramatically with his right hand towards the sea.

This was not, as some believed at the time, an indication of his desire to invade England, but rather a reference to his plans for developing the harbour area in Cherbourg itself, as is explained by the quotation that can still be seen on the base of the statue:

*'J'avais resolu de renouveler a Cherbourg les merveilles de L'Egypte.'*  
(*'I had made up my mind to renew in Cherbourg the wonders of Egypt.'*)

Napoleon had planned to erect a pyramid-like gun battery in the port and to create a large lake reminiscent of Lake Moeris, the famous reservoir of the ancient Pharaohs. Neither of these projects actually came to fruition, but I was rather taken by that sentiment of 'renewing the wonders of Egypt' and thought it worth pondering for a moment in a different context: what would it mean for you or me, as Christians in 21<sup>st</sup> century North Wales, to pronounce: 'I have made up my mind to renew in this place the wonders of Egypt'?

In the Bible the land of the ancient superpower Egypt is, of course, the setting for some of the most important events in the history of the Jews and, at the start of a new Connexional Year, I want to mention just a couple of principles that the Bible speaks of in relation to Egypt that might give us cause to wonder, in every sense of the word.



The phrase 'with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm' (uncannily like Napoleon's statue) is used in the Bible to talk about God's great power displayed in divine acts of history, whether that be the creation of the world (e.g. Jeremiah 27) or the return of the exiles from Babylon (e.g. Ezekiel 20).

But the phrase is most often used in reference to the Exodus from Egypt, when, despite being pursued by the armies of Pharaoh, the Israelite slaves were led safely by Moses through the Red Sea into the wilderness to learn what it means to become a free people. To this day the Exodus is seen and celebrated by Jews as the event above all others that demonstrated that God was their God and they were God's people. We notice this most especially in the way that the Passover each year requires Jews to recall the events of the Exodus and in each generation to learn the lessons that it teaches.

Hence we read verses like this from Deuteronomy:

*'Remember that you were slaves in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.'* (Deut. 5.15)

So if we are thinking about what it might mean for us to 'renew the wonders of Egypt' in our own context, we are first of all reminded of the principle that God is an almighty God and nothing is beyond his capability. When we face an autumn with so many difficult situations, most notably the cost of living crisis and the war in Ukraine, this 'wonder of Egypt' gives us cause to reflect that nothing is impossible with God and, despite all the obstacles, we should move forward in faith buoyed up by this belief.

The second principle that comes to my mind is captured in this biblical verse from Exodus:

*'You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.'* (Exodus 22.21)

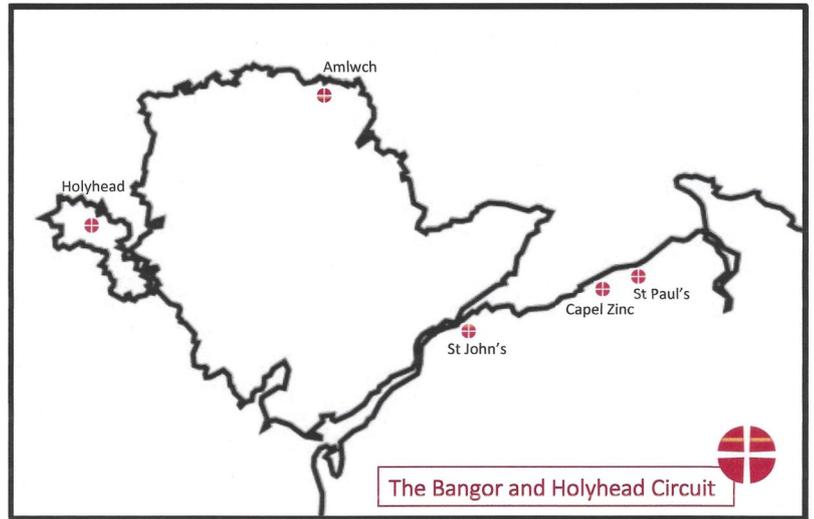
When times are hard it is natural and instinctive for each of us to turn in on ourselves and look after our own interests. This verse reminds us that God calls us to do better than that. We have to think imaginatively about how we would want others to treat us if we were cold, hungry, naked and alone. There is going to be a lot of talk in the weeks to come about Warm Spaces, Warm Banks, Warm Welcomes and the like. Many people are going to be living on the edge this winter and God asks us to look back on our own lives and remember what the difficult times were like, when we needed help and others came to our aid, when we were the ones without money or power and people supported us, when we didn't know how we were going to cope and others stood by us until better times arrived.

One of the greatest 'wonders of Egypt' is how experiences of suffering can help us open our hearts to others going through similar experiences. The story of Joseph, the boy sold into slavery in Egypt by his brothers, who rose to become second in power only to Pharaoh himself, reinforces both principles when Joseph tells his brothers, 'God sent me before you to preserve life.' In other words, God can work through situations that seem to us to be hopeless and desperate and bring life out of them. So if we are to be true to God then all that is asked of us is that we place our trust in God and never lose heart, but go out to love and care for all those who need us at this time. May that be the life-giving experience of us all this autumn.

*Nick Sissons, Superintendent Minister*

## Our Local Churches

The Methodist Church is connexional. We are all linked together across the country and then more locally in Districts (or a synod in our case – the new bilingual Wales Synod Cymru) and finally in local Circuits (ours is called Bangor and Holyhead). All this is to remind us we are never on our own. Of course, we have each found a place to belong in a local church and we like to get involved in what happens at the local level. But Church is bigger than that and so we are encouraged to work together where we can, whether we are a large or small congregation, even if we are geographically separated, and we are encouraged to care about each other, pray for each other and share matters of celebration and concern with one another.



To do this well, of course, it's really important that we know what is going on in each of the churches around the Circuit. To aid this, at the Circuit Meeting in July, our churches were asked to bring a report answering three simple questions (and this will become a regular practice from now on at each Circuit Meeting):

- 1: What is happening in your church that you want to celebrate and for which you want to give thanks.
- 2: What are the particular difficulties you face in your local situation (either within the congregation or within the community)?
- 3: What steps have you taken or are you proposing to take to try and meet these needs you have mentioned under 2).

The full reports are available from Heather, our Circuit Administrator, but below is a summary of some key points that churches reported to the Meeting in July. We invite you to read them and make them the basis for your prayers, that the churches in our Circuit may continue to be bold in mission, encouraged in discipleship and equipped to deal with the issues that they currently face.

*Rev'd Nick Sissons*

### Amlwch Methodist Church



- 1) We have beautiful and well-loved church premises. We have a very forward-thinking leadership team willing to explore other ways of being church. We have taken a table at The Amlwch Festival in the park to publicise our presence with a craft tent for free children's activities. Liz and David's Garden Parties for the Methodist development charity 'All We Can' have begun again.
- 2) Sadly because of the situation of the chapel (up a steep slope and with steps to the worship area) anyone with any physical disability finds it very difficult to access. We have an elderly congregation with no new people and with numbers having fallen drastically during Lockdown for various reasons. We do not feel it worth considering spending money to improve the premises and so are exploring the possibility of an alternative venue for worship.

3) We are actively looking around for alternative places for worship and are experimenting with being a "mobile church" and taking worship to different venues e.g. one Sunday each month we will now meet as "Cafe Church" at Anglesey Good Gifts or another venue, and one Sunday a month we plan to take worship to Hafan Cefni - a sheltered housing complex in Llangefni where there are a number of folks who have expressed an interest to join us.

We hope the arrival of the new Welsh Superintendent minister, Ian Morris, will lead to more shared bilingual services.

### Bangor, St John's

1) We have a lot to celebrate both in terms of established activities and in terms of newer initiatives. Since the end of lockdown we have gained a number of new worshippers, some of whom have become members. We have been fortunate in having a number of very loyal students from the University. Some have taken over the provision of hot drinks for people waiting at Plaid Cymru's food bank on a Sunday morning. We continue to offer the Money Course written by CAP (Christians Against Poverty) to help people budget effectively. It's been hard to get people to join but after one course someone declared that the course had changed their life. Besides the return of regular church meetings the church is actively supporting those hosting Ukrainian guests, engaging local school children with Open the Book, and becoming an Eco Church.



2) We do face a number of problems though, perhaps the greatest of which is simply our location – at the wrong end of High Street and north-facing making the interior quite cold. We also have a disadvantage in that we are not a community church. We draw our congregation from a very wide area and simply getting people together to meet is problematic. The site is not very accessible either.

3) One way we try to counter our disparate locations, and do our bit to address environmental issues, is by using zoom whilst still having the occasional live gatherings for the sake of establishing a sense of community. As described above under CAP we are also trying to do more things outside of the church building and Sunday mornings and making better use of Mason's Yard, the public space right by the roadside.



### Holyhead Methodist Church @ St David's, Morawelon

1) We have finally moved our Sunday service times back from the afternoon to the morning for the service on a Sunday. The church is celebrating its 100th Anniversary; this has had to be delayed due to COVID and the plan is to

extend it to other friends within the circuit. Our important Friday fellowship programme has been re-established. We have received a few extra worshippers from the local Presbyterian church which closed during lockdown.

2) It has taken us a while to re-emerge after COVID, although our congregation is very loyal in its attendance. We need to re-establish our working relationship with the Anglicans of St David's whose building we use. We are the furthest east of all the Circuit churches so physically joining with others in the Circuit is not always easy.

3) We joined in the Platinum Jubilee celebrations with St David's congregation and are looking to formalise a shared meeting to discuss how we can work better together for the benefit of the local community we both serve. In November we plan to work together to make a dazzling display of poppies for Remembrance, which we hope local people will appreciate and possibly join in with. We have taken part in the Circuit Songs of Praise on Zoom and in the Easter Offering live service at St John's. We are interested in the Circuit's Anna Chaplaincy work and may wish to look into what a dementia friendly church is all about.

### Llanfairfechan, Capel Zinc

1) With the arrival of Spring and the relaxing of all Covid restrictions we have seen an improvement in the size of our congregations with one or two regulars returning to worship in the church and new arrivals, with one mother bringing her four young boys, keen for them to develop an interest in the church; in addition we have welcomed a young man from the village with his son and also two or three Ukrainian



ladies who are now resident locally. We are thankful for this positive improvement in attendances.

2) Finances suffered all through the pandemic whilst services stopped or resumed with smaller congregations and reduced collections, meaning a possible exhaustion of funds within a couple of years. This is a main focus of concern for us.

3) We have taken steps to return to a viable financial situation: in June we restarted our "Ploughman's Lunches," the Knitting Group has moved from the

Town Hall to the chapel and prefer their new home on Wednesdays, whilst Bible Fellowship, Flexercise and Brownies all continue on Tuesdays. North West Wales Cancer Research group have also held committee meetings and coffee mornings in the church very successfully and all of these groups are swelling our income and building up our contacts. It does seem that "Capel Zinc" has become a recognised asset in the town, indeed a local pub raised funds at a "Fancy-Dress" event and we were one of the three beneficiaries in the town receiving a substantial donation.

### Penmaenmawr, St Paul's

1) The Church is years old this year in July and there will be a community fun day re-building our links with local families. Some new people have worship since we re-opened following the Some of our organisations are now back the building. A number of people with the church are asking questions about faith looking towards some sort of faith explorers' complement the Bible study which in the spring. We are taking part in the URC's Celebrations this autumn.



been attending pandemic. regularly using connections to and we are group to recommenced Jubilee

2) There is a general lack of people with up the roles and to staff additional events at church, which limits what we can undertake. We have a good set of rooms on our premises but there are some problems relating to walls and decoration that need to be attended to. We also need to establish a fence in the garden to make the area more secure and usable.

3) We are planning to restart some of the youth activities in the autumn, with a meeting planned for this month to look at this. An Easter Community engagement day along with the Anniversary fun day will help towards re-establishing links with adults and children in the community who may be willing to support our events in future. The Property committee is currently considering the practical issues related to the building and garden so our premises can be made best use of.

## **“Getting to know you” Kathy Taylor, Holyhead Methodist Church**

Many of you do not know me but my name is Kathy Taylor and I originate from Christleton, a village three miles from Chester City. Dad had his own greengrocery business and Mum was a Clerk. My parents had a small holding on which we had cows, hens, ducks and geese. One of the cows allowed me to ride him until he got fed up and threw me in a ditch!

The smallholding was sold after my dad’s death at the age of 41. He died of kidney failure. I have a brother, Graham, who I haven’t seen for over 20 years.

At school I was very sporty especially netball, hockey, athletics and swimming. My school was lucky enough to have its own pool. I learnt to swim in half an hour and went on to obtain various certificates and medals including a teaching qualification for swimming whilst still at school.

After leaving school, I wanted to join the WRAF but Dad said “You are not leaving home” - I was 18 at the time. Reluctantly I went to college but hated it so left and got a job. I spent a few years working in various offices to find something I was interested in. In 1976 I was working as a Secretary for a Partner in a Solicitor’s office in Chester. At last I had found it. I loved the law.

My Boss, Robin, called me into the his office one day and asked if I would like to take some law exams and his firm would pay. After many examinations, in 1984 I became a Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives and became a fully qualified Lawyer. During my time as a Lawyer, I have run a legal department for a Local Authority, have audited files for Solicitors around the country, including Scotland and Northern Ireland until head-hunted by one the firms to carry out internal audits on their own files - some journey!

I was brought up in the Church of England and my then local vicar, Rev. Leonard Skipper, takes the credit for my initial interest in the Church. As part of my confirmation, our group was taken to stay at a retreat in Kettlewell, Yorkshire. Whilst there, I found God. I don’t know what happened but I came away not really wanting to leave. From those few days in Kettlewell, I have always believed in God.

I have been married twice, first to Dave in 1975 for fifteen years. Early on in our marriage I was informed I could not have children. Over the following years our respective lives went in different directions and we divorced in 1989.

My second marriage was to Mike who I met on a blind date in February 1995 and married that same year in December. Sadly Mike died in July 2018. Mike was my best friend as well as my husband. Sue Altree officiated at Mike’s funeral and has since become a good friend.

During 1975 and 2018, I had lost what I had found in Kettlewell. Not sure why - it happened. After Mike’s death I started to attend Holyhead Methodist Church. I was made to feel welcome and everyone was friendly and it just “felt right”.



I changed my faith from Church of England to Methodist and have never looked back. I became involved in Church Life by helping with "Open the Book" and later taking on the role of Safeguarding Officer, initially for Holyhead and later for Amlwch also.

After Mike's passing I lived through some very difficult years and only survived by being led by the Lord. He was there to guide me all time and it was Him I spoke to if questions needed answers. I have always been a loner and very wary of saying the wrong thing but He was always there when I needed Him.

My Life has been a bit like the Snowdonia Range. Very much up and down but there are a number of people who have helped me unknowingly or has had some influence in how my life, so far, has developed. They are:-

Rev. Leonard Skipper, a lovely man sadly no longer with us, who I will always be grateful for including me in the Kettlewell trip and understanding how I felt when my Parents did not.

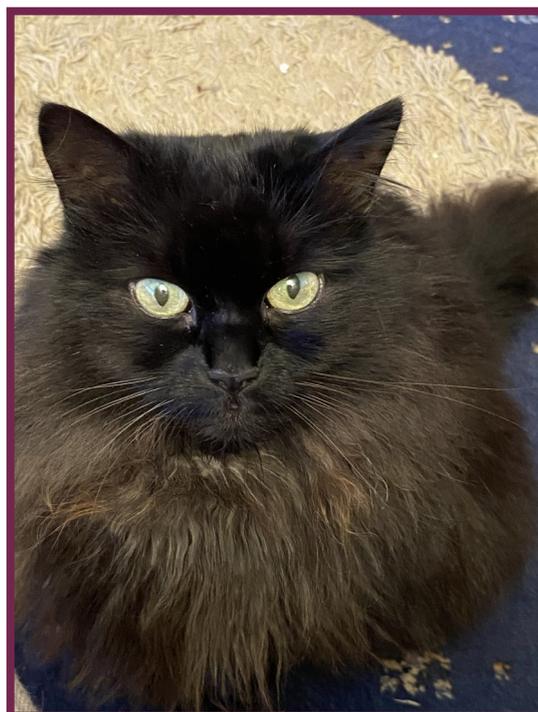
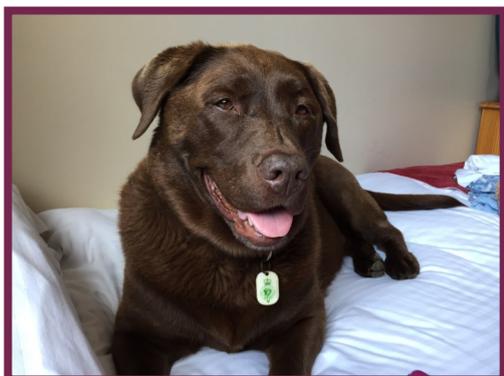
If Robin had not believed in me and given me the chance to become a Lawyer, I may not have ever found my vocation.

Next is Sue Altree for her kindness, easy going nature and understanding of life. Thanks Sue for being there.

In 2014 Mike and I were lucky enough to move into a house next door to Neil and Verna Johnson. There are many things which Verna has helped me get through. I will be eternally grateful for her kindness and thoughtfulness.

I must include my "Holyhead Family", members of Holyhead Methodist Church. At last I can be myself and no longer feel judged. Thank you.

I now live in Llanfachraeth with Fudge my beloved Chocolate Labrador and Coco my adopted cat with a view from my lounge window of that Snowdonia Range.



# Name that church!

I have once again ben enjoying the delights of visiting churches within the general boundaries of our Circuit and a little beyond, and have taken some more photographs to test your ecclesial knowledge. See which of these you can recognize, and once again there is a small prize for the first person who can correctly identify all four. Email answers only will be accepted, after the Newsletter is officially published on September 5<sup>th</sup>. Please send your suggestions to [revdncsissons@gmail.com](mailto:revdncsissons@gmail.com) Good luck.

Church 1



Church 2



Church 3



Church 4



# Bangor and Holyhead

M	C	C	S	L	Q	S	A	B	A	P	T	I	S	M	Z	D	S
Y	O	J	I	T	K	M	T	Z	C	M	V	H	J	E	P	E	T
D	M	O	V	R	E	N	E	D	P	A	L	O	Y	T	R	C	J
C	M	F	S	O	C	W	E	T	A	R	P	W	X	O	A	C	O
K	U	F	T	R	W	U	A	T	H	V	E	E	C	B	Y	B	H
B	N	E	P	G	H	E	I	R	A	O	I	A	L	H	E	R	N
I	I	R	A	A	N	W	J	T	D	B	D	D	C	Z	R	G	S
B	O	I	U	N	F	O	N	T	L	N	L	I	S	H	I	Z	G
L	N	N	L	I	G	I	N	S	Y	J	B	E	S	W	E	N	H
E	A	G	S	S	C	P	U	L	P	I	T	X	B	T	V	R	C
T	F	B	P	T	C	T	B	L	E	S	S	I	N	G	Y	I	E
N	Z	K	H	Y	M	N	B	O	O	K	R	P	H	D	N	Y	W

Find the following words in the puzzle.

Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘ .

AMLWCH

BAPTISM

BIBLE

BLESSING

CAPEL ZINC

CIRCUIT

COMMUNION

FONT

HYMNBOOK

METHODIST

OFFERING

ORGANIST

PRAYER

PREACHER

PULPIT

ST DAVIDS

STEWARD

ST JOHNS

ST PAULS

TABLE

**Sian Lister-Owen is the brownie leader in Llanfairfechan and here she tells us what the brownies have been up to during the last year.**

It has been wonderful to have the Brownies back together after having our meetings on Zoom for so long and we are very grateful to have a lovely new meeting place at Capel Zinc!

It was good news at the start of the year as we found out we had been successful with a grant application to the Transport for Wales Community Fund via CVSC for £500. We used this grant to buy every Brownie a welcome pack that included the handbook, badge book and stationery as well as a neckerchief that the Brownies designed themselves.

Our meetings this year have been full of fun activities, but we've also learned lots of new things at Brownies this year.

We had a visit from Laura from Plastic Free Llanfairfechan for a talk and some games about plastic waste and recycling. During one session we explored the stars and the solar system in a space themed evening and for Remembrance Sunday the girls' decorated pebbles with poppy designs and some were placed at the Cenotaph. The Brownies had a fantastic time decorating the Christmas tree for the Christmas Tree festival at the church and decorated some Christmas biscuits – and the decorating theme continued later in the year when they all made rocky road for world chocolate day – the leaders had to taste each one... The girls earned their 'skills for my future' badge by learning about different tools and how to use them safely.

There have been lots of opportunities to join up with other local groups this year, including a first aid session with Penmaenmawr Guides where all the Brownies gained their first aid badge. Penmaenmawr Rainbows invited us to join their jubilee afternoon tea which was delicious. During Parliament week we joined some of the other Girlguiding members in the county on Zoom to learn about how the government works and got to ask some questions to our MP, Robin Millar.

It was lovely to start having a few trips this year too! We joined Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers from across the County for a Fun Day at Felin Bach near Caernarfon for a busy day of crafts, games, tree planting and adventures!

We finished the year with a trip to Felin Bach for a 'Camp in a Day'. The girls put up a tent together, learned how to light a fire safely and cooked on the fire (and of course toasted some marshmallows!), explored the woods and played games on the field, made some giant bubble wands and had lots of fun with the bubbles! At the end of the day some of the Brownies made their Brownie Promise in the sunshine in front of their Brownie friends and their family.

A lot of badges have been gained this year. We have awarded 23 interest badges, 61 skill builder badges, 12 theme awards, 1 Gold Award, 2 Silver Awards and 5 Bronze Awards.

We ended the year with some fabulous news – Girlguiding in Llanfairfechan and Penmaenmawr have been awarded a grant of over £6000 from the Comic Relief Community Fund in Wales via CVSC to help us recruit new leaders to open additional units as they are all currently at capacity, we will also have a uniform fund to assist local families during the cost of living crisis by being able to offer uniform for each girl, run trips at minimal cost to local families as well as ensuring that each new girl that joins the unit will be given a Brownie handbook and Badge Book.

Next year should be full of even more fun and adventures!



St John's Bangor Brownies enjoying their meetings.

Girlguiding takes place in Penmaenmawr, Llanfairfechan and Bangor. Following on from Sian's article on the previous page here are some photos of the girls in action. The photos are from Bangor and Llanfairfechan Brownies



Christmas tree at the Capel Zinc



This was taken at Felin Bach, Girlguiding Caernarfonshire's amazing camp site near Caernarfon. We have 2 wonderful hostels, a camping field as well as this wonderful woodland with the play park and fire pit.



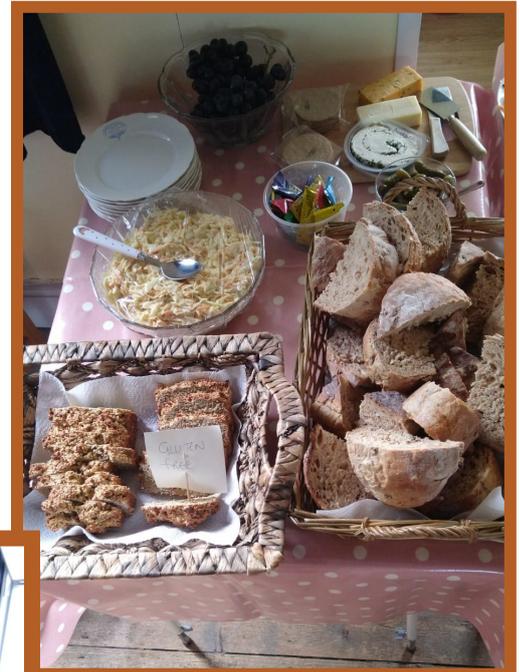
## Ploughman's Lunches are back at Capel Zinc, Llanfairfechan

The third Thursday of July saw Capel Zinc's first "full on " Ploughman's Lunch starting at 12.30. The first for 2 years

We are happy to say it was nearly a full house, and guests were queuing for homemade soups (British and Ukrainian) breads, salads and of course CAKES!

It was so lovely to see retuning guests and new faces too, as well as several children who all enjoyed themselves.

It is a week of hard work, but very enjoyable and brings in much needed funds for the Church. There is no Lunch this August but the 3rd Thursday in September will be our next one. Do come and join us - there is no fee but donations always welcome



**By Barbara Tottle  
Capel Zinc  
Llanfairfechan**

## St Paul's United Church Penmaenmawr celebrates 50 years of the United Reformed Church

Do you know that St Pauls as well as being a Methodist Church is a LEP (Local Ecumenical Partnership) with the Methodist Church and United Reformed Church are taking part in the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the URC this Autumn with a Celebration weekend planned for the beginning of October.

United Reformed Church North Wales Jubilee Pilgrimage from Wrexham to Penmaenmawr 16th July to 2nd Oct 2022 for walkers, passengers, drivers and pilgrims at home for the faithful, the explorer, the doubter and the bruised for the young, the old, the lively and the peaceful for churches, denominations, neighbours and friends...

A Jubilee is a time of celebration. To celebrate the 50th Jubilee of the United Reformed Church, the URC and linked churches in North Wales have decided to share a pilgrimage from Wrexham to Penmaenmawr. Each Saturday we will travel by foot, bus, train or car from one church to the next. When we arrive at a church we will have refreshments and a time of prayer together. The next day, a special service of Sunday worship will focus on God's faithfulness to us in providing us with the Water of Life. When we are on pilgrimage, we leave behind the everyday and set time aside for God. With it comes the joy of simplicity, nature's beauty, achievement and fellowship. But a pilgrimage also has an element of struggle. When we are away from our usual comforts we can become weary and long for rest. Yet God is still there alongside us, our pilgrimage offering us insights into the highs and lows of everyday lives. Refreshment comes in realising that God is always present with us and will sustain us. Rebalance comes in realising that much in our everyday lives is a distraction from what really matters to us. We have commissioned Andrew, a young URC member, to hand-carve this bowl for us to take the on the walks as a symbol of both refreshment and unity. Whoever you are, wherever you live, whatever you believe, look through this booklet and find a journey or two that suit you. Maybe grab a friend or neighbour to come along too. Become a pilgrim for the day!

The last leg of the pilgrimage is from Conwy to Penmaenmawr on Saturday 1st of October. The route goes over Conwy Mountain using the higher coast path. If you would like to join this walk get in touch with Heather or Julian Bonnebaigt for details.

On the Sunday we have visiting preachers from the United Reformed Church who will be joined by Rev'd Nick Sissions to lead a service of thanksgiving and praise.

Preacher  
visit from  
local  
United  
Reformed  
Churches  
each moth



## St Paul's Church Penmaenmawr Anniversary Weekend.

The Church Anniversary at St Paul's in Penmaenmawr was celebrated one very hot weekend in July.

On the Saturday afternoon we had a garden party. We had invited people from our community and were encouraged by the number of people who came and spent time chatting and enjoying the afternoon.

We had gathered the week before to make sure we all were prepared and you can see us here chatting and getting organised. It was a real team effort with lots of people from our church family getting involved.

Members of the Beulah brass played for us and many folk could be seen tapping their feet and singing along to the familiar tunes.



We were supplied by a constant supply of tea, coffee, juice, Pizza and hot dogs thanks to Millie and Eileen in the kitchen. Outside we were toasting marshmallows ( what else would you plan to do on a hot summer afternoon!) This did however give some church members an opportunity to try and enjoy toasted marshmallows for the first time in their lives.

We also had lots of crafts and games. Pauline and Zoya are here making bug hotels, we had some junk modelling going on and rock painting.

The children enjoyed playing with the various games and sitting chatting in the play tents.

We then all cooled off with ice lollies.

The celebrations continued on the Sunday morning with the Rev'd Chris Gray leading worship to give thanks and celebrate the 132 years that St Paul's Church has been in Penmaenmawr.



## Anna Chaplaincy

**With a rapidly ageing population older people's ministry has never been more crucial. Anna Chaplaincy for Older People helps volunteers and church workers develop their confidence, practice and impact, as part of a supportive and respected national network.**

Here Rev'd Joan Warner updates us on the Anna Chaplaincy work within our circuit

At the last Circuit Meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> July, whole-hearted approval was given to establishing the ministry of *Anna Chaplaincy*. This initiative of Debbie Thrower (BBC presenter over many years) began in 2012 as a pastoral ministry to ageing people, reaching out to people of faith or no-faith, and grounded in the work of the BRF (Bible Reading Fellowship). We are delighted that from August 2021, we here have the support and encouragement of the Rev'd Sally Rees, coordinating *Anna Chaplain* for Wales.

From January 2022, for a six-week period, Jan Brightman, Anne Jackson and Ellie Jones, engaged with Sally and others on zoom, learning more of what was involved. From that time, there has been an unbroken weekly prayer meeting, at 9.00am on Thursday mornings, on zoom, and lasting 15 minutes. In the work with elderly and vulnerable people, they are joined by Sue Eckersley for Plas Garnedd Care Home on Anglesey, Joan in one of the homes she visits in Llandudno, and Royce with elderly people in farming families.

Our prayerful search is for someone (Methodist or Ecumenical) to act as Co-ordinating Chaplain, for 1 day a week, for example, and for other people to *be Anna Friends*, across Anglesey and in North-West Wales.

If you have questions about this, or if you would like the zoom link to the 15 minute prayer meeting on a Thursday morning, please contact Joan or Royce Warner, either on 01492 621024, or by email on [jrw-rtdpen@uwclub.net](mailto:jrw-rtdpen@uwclub.net)

Joan and Royce Warner

### **The Anna Chaplaincy Prayer**

Faithful God, you have promised in Christ to be with us to the end of time. Come close to those who have lived long and experienced much. Help them to continue to be faithful and, within the all-age kingdom of God, to find ways to go on giving and receiving your grace, day by day. For your glory and your kingdom.

Amen

Taken from the BRF Anna Chaplaincy Website



## Amlwch without walls

Many of you will have heard that things at Amlwch are on the move. Post Covid, as in other congregations, we have found our numbers attending church have dropped.

After Stewards meetings, long discussions and much praying, we decided to try Cafe Church in Anglesey Good Gifts Shop and Café.

Our congregation mostly enjoy café church which we've done for many years in our schoolroom, but in a real Café it's much better.

Friends from the shop have joined us each Sunday that we've done it, and John Hay gave the talk this month.

Then Heather Parry, one of our members who can no longer join us, asked David if he would do a service at Hafan Cefni, a large complex of apartments for older folk in Llangefni (next to Lidl's)

So, we have week 1 in our shop, week 3 in Hafan Cefni, 2 and 4 in our lovely chapel and when there's a week 5, we're going to Eddy and Margaret Birchall's barn in Tynyngogl, Benllech!

These are all very experimental- not everybody likes it –but we're giving it a go and trusting in God for future guidance.

## Afternoon Teas at the Jones's

Again, this year we had afternoon teas through July and August.

Last year, when we were still keeping our "Covid distance", we had four people at a time, but this year, we have been very brave and had six.

On 16<sup>th</sup> August, (sister Sue's birthday) we had nineteen- the weather was on our side, and we were in the garden.

We have really enjoyed doing this for ALL WE CAN because we have got to know so many people from the circuit.

For number of years pre- Covid, we had a Garden Party for everyone- while we were stuck in the kitchen and didn't know everyone who had been!

Thankyou to all of you who came.

We have made an amazing £1000 to send to ALL WE CAN, (The Methodist Relief and Development Fund ) around the world.

Thank you everybody

David and Liz Jones



## Getting to know each other

My name is Michael Barker, I live in Menai Bridge with my wife Emma and our 3-year-old son, Owen. Emma is pregnant and so there will be a new addition to our family in the not-too-distant future!

I work as a GP in Bangor and have a special interest in teaching and medical education and my wife works as a Health Visitor on Anglesey. We have lived in North Wales for 6 years and on Anglesey for 5 years but having only discovered St John's Church coming up to a year ago, we have recently become members.

Our family has kindly been asked to contribute to the Circuit Newsletter, so here we go.

Psalm 89

*'Lord God Almighty, none is as mighty as you; in all things you are faithful O Lord. You rule over the powerful sea; you calm its angry waves.'*

Psalm 121

*'I look to the mountains; where will my help come from? My help will come from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.'*

These passages from Psalms 89 and 121 have always struck a chord with me. When I first came across them, whilst living in the Midlands, an interest in climbing and a love of water sports was probably at least partly to play in this.

When we moved to North Wales and Anglesey, they took on even more significance. Living in this beautiful part of the world, it would be out of the ordinary for me to go through a day without seeing either the Menai Straits or the mountains of Snowdonia or more likely, both. As someone who grew up in the landlocked Midlands, the sight of these always makes me feel incredibly lucky and like a tourist on holiday in a beautiful place.

Sometimes the sea is glassy, still and calm, but at other times it is not. Before my wife's current pregnancy, we experienced our second miscarriage. At this time, it felt like we found ourselves holding on amid a stormy and turbulent sea and the significance of these Psalms increased further.

In Psalm 89, God's calming of the powerful sea's angry waves is a reminder that at times everything feels in turmoil, whether in your own life or in the world at large. A wild and stormy sea with crashing waves illustrates vividly how this can feel at times, but this will pass. With God's support, the sea will calm and settle and with this, so will our own individual worries and challenges.

The message of Psalm 121 connects well with this, when looking at the majestic mountains it is always hard not to be moved by them and is an awesome reminder of God's architectural vision. When we do take a minute to look to the mountains, this demonstration of God's power also reminds us that when we need help and support, we should look to God who will provide the help we need and will calm the stormy sea.

Michael Barker

# St John's Summer Holiday Club – Diary of a Disciple (Scripture Union)

“Our God is a great big God and He holds us in His hands “

Scripture union did not have a “Club” song for this year as it was designed as an outreach to the 95% of children in the UK who have no contact with church and , therefore, no experience of hymn singing .

We love our singing so we chose this song after Julian used it in a Service at St John's . It could not have been more appropriate !

Twenty five children aged from four to thirteen attended at least one of the five weekly sessions . The theme was all about Jesus – “ Who is He? What did He say / do” . While the stories were available on video we also used drama to teach them . The children were encouraged to explore the stories themselves through the use of “ zones” . With several languages being spoken and a wide variety of backgrounds I have to say that the Lego zone was very popular !

The last session included a presentation to the parents and a pizza lunch which went down very well . All those who do not attend other churches have been invited along to Family Friendly worship at St John's .

I would suggest the following points for us all :

We can become social media obsessed ! . The brilliant numbers (which of course aren't everything ) were children who had previously attended , word of mouth and Anne and Howard's excellent posters in the wonderful Mason's Yard, plus God of course!. It is rare that I pass that someone is not either sitting there or looking at posters.

This club was at times very challenging in terms of behaviour and exhausting for the leaders.

We need to be very flexible in our planning in terms of children who's first language is not English or Welsh

I am more convinced than ever that Holiday Clubs are a brilliant way of spreading the Gospel and meeting the needs of the community.

Thanks to all who helped in any way with the Summer Holiday Club . Thank you also to all who supported the club with much needed prayer.



**THE MISSION OF THE BANGOR & HOLYHEAD CIRCUIT IS TO LIVE OUT GOD'S WORD AND SHARE THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS CHRIST BY LOVING AND CARING WHOLEHEARTEDLY THROUGH SERVICE AND WORSHIP WITH FUN, FELLOWSHIP AND JOY FOR ALL THE CHURCH FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY.**

**Editorial team: Rev'd Nick Sissons and Heather Bonnebaigt**