

Diocese of Monmouth

Esgobaeth Mynwy



This email has been sent to all Clergy, PTOs, Churchwardens, Secretaries, and all those on our Friday email list.

Friday Update from Bishop Cherry

Theology for Life

Becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ is not about making a one-off decision but about signing up to a way of life; a way of life in which we never stop learning – about ourselves, about God and about that life in all its fullness that Christ came to open up for all of us.

Theology for Life course is exactly what it says – developing an understanding of God that shapes the whole of our lives and leads us more and more into Life. Here's what one student says:

'Theology for Life' has allowed me to understand scripture in a whole new way and see my journey in faith in a different light.'

Theology for Life draws local groups of people together. It is a journey of discovery to share and enjoy with one another. One of our local course tutors writes:

I think my group members would readily agree that involvement in Theology for Life has given them new and valuable insights into their faith and discipleship, enabled them to contribute more fully and confidently to the life and work of their parishes, and that meetings have become one of the highlights of their week.

More comments can be viewed [here](#) and a video [here](#). A promotional leaflet with more information about the Open Day (zoom) and how to sign up is [here](#).

RIP

We were very sad to hear the news of the sudden death of Lyn James, treasurer at St Mary's Priory and St Christopher's Chepstow. As well as being a faithful and long-standing treasurer at his local church, Lyn was a Trustee of the Representative Body and a dedicated member of both the Investment Committee and the Ethical Investment Group. He served the national church with great distinction and will be greatly missed. We pray for his son, Gareth and his daughter, Sarah and their families as well as the church families in Chepstow.

Area Deans

I am delighted to announce that the Revd Kevin Hasler has accepted my invitation to become Area Dean of Raglan and Usk, and the Revd Julian Gray, my invitation to become Area Dean of Abergavenny. Both of them come with the clear support of their clergy colleagues. Please pray for them as they take up their roles and for the deaneries they will serve.

Monmouth Enquiry and Review

The Bench of Bishops of the Church in Wales and the Representative Body have established an Enquiry into the events surrounding the retirement of the Rt Revd Richard Pain as Bishop of Monmouth, and to review the procedures followed and decisions made by all those involved. Further details can be found [here](#).

Please hold our diocese as well as all those involved in your prayers.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Gray', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Live-streamed Services & Reflections:



Catch up on Bishop Cherry's Tuesday Reflection [here](#). And her Ascension Day Service [here](#).

Watch this Sunday Eucharist from Bishopstow at 11am [here](#).

And watch a Sunday evening Reading & Homily with Ven Jonathan Willaims at 5pm [here](#).

Important Updates

Churches remain closed

Plans for re-opening church buildings were discussed at the Bench of Bishop this week. There is considerable work to be done by the Church in Wales, to ensure that, when we are permitted to open by the Welsh Government, any phased re-opening is done safely to protect public health.

At present, as there is no change in the law, churches must remain closed. No date has been set for the re-opening.

Survey sent out to Treasurers

A big thank-you to the Treasures who have completed the survey, this will help us to better understand how we can support parishes and MAs through this difficult time. There are still 42 surveys outstanding and these Treasurers have been emailed separately. We will keep you posted on any financial support packages, when we know more.

Covid-19 Rate Relief

For churches which operate church halls used for the assembly of visiting members of the public and where non domestic rates are paid to the local authority for the hall, you may have been notified by the local authority that it should be possible to seek relief from rates under the scheme called Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief in Wales – 2020-21. This also applies to any shops or cafes operated by churches where rates are paid. You should contact your Local Authority rating department to make the claim. More details can be found [here](#).

Please note that places of worship are exempt from rates so this does not apply.



#BeTheLightChallenge – Nuturing Creation

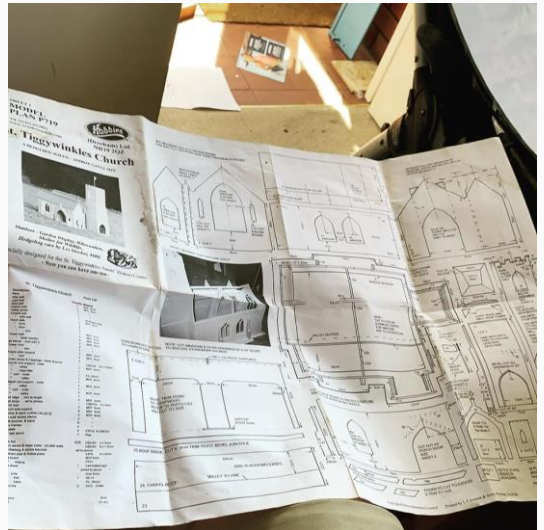
We saw a lot of green thumbs this week as you all answered the challenge theme! Well done everyone! Here are a few highlights:



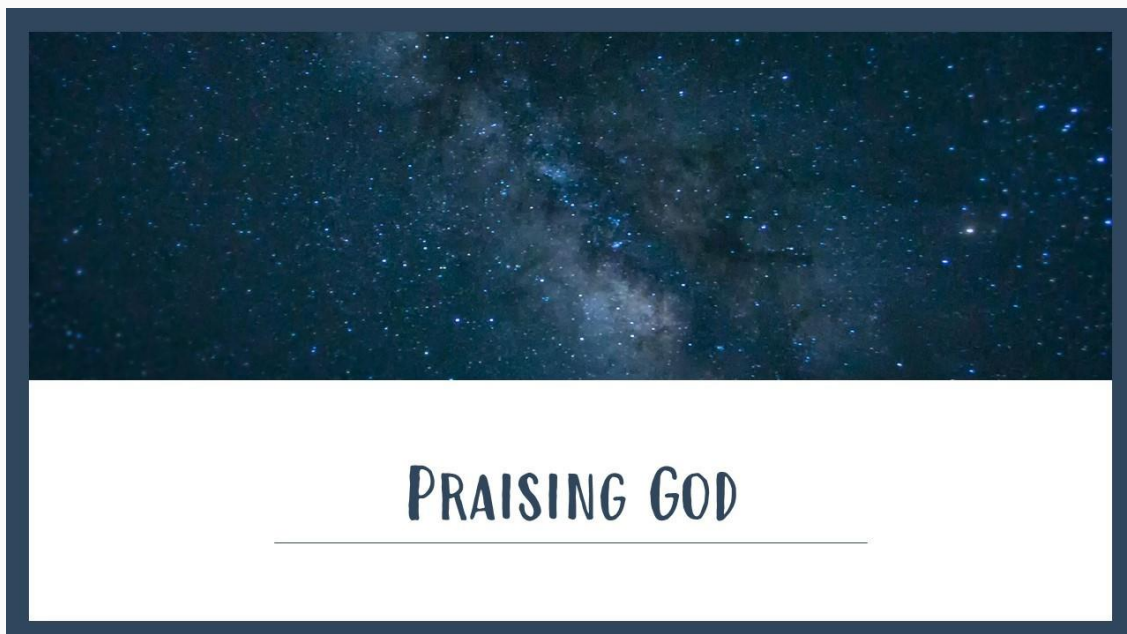
Parishioners in Newport North MA got to work sowing seeds, caring for fruit and vegetables, and feeding the birds



Rev Matt Davis has begun construction on St Tiggywinkles Church - a hedgehog haven in his garden. We can't wait to see the finished project!



Thank you all for contributing to our #BeTheLightChallenge! We hope you'll join us for next week's theme: Praising God



We'd like to close out this month with a week devoted to the glory of God and His love without limit. Whether with an extra prayer, or simply by being the

person He calls you to be; let's take a moment to offer gratitude and share what He has done for us.

On that note, we invite you to join the Thy Kingdom Come prayer movement.

Thy Kingdom Come



Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus.

During the 11 days of Thy Kingdom Come, it is hoped that everyone who takes part will:

- Deepen their own relationship with Jesus Christ
- Pray for 5 friends or family to come to faith in Jesus
- Pray for the empowerment of the Spirit that we would be effective in our witness

If you're interested in taking part, more information and resources can be found following this link: <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/resources/taking-part> – resources are available in both English and Welsh

If you're hosting any group prayer sessions via Zoom or other mediums, please let us know.

However, this is not the only way to participate in the #BeTheLightChallenge this week. Some other ideas are:

- Sharing your faith journey – write a letter to yourself and think about all the gifts you have received
- Thanking someone who has inspired your faith – many times those who are most influential have no idea how much they have been a light in our lives

- Private prayer – deepening your own relationship with the Lord
- Continuing to 'Be the Light' each day

#HereIAmLord

Keep your eye out in the coming weeks for a series of posts and videos about vocations and discernment under the heading #HereIAmLord

#goodnewsworthsharing

Facebook Live Quiz in support of Christian Aid

Archdeacon Sue raised a fantastic £750, £400 more than the original target!

It's still available on her Facebook and the link to donate will be live until the 29th May if you'd like to challenge yourself.

<https://www.facebook.com/archdeacon.pinnington>



EIG Movement for Good 2020 - There's still time to keep nominating your charity!

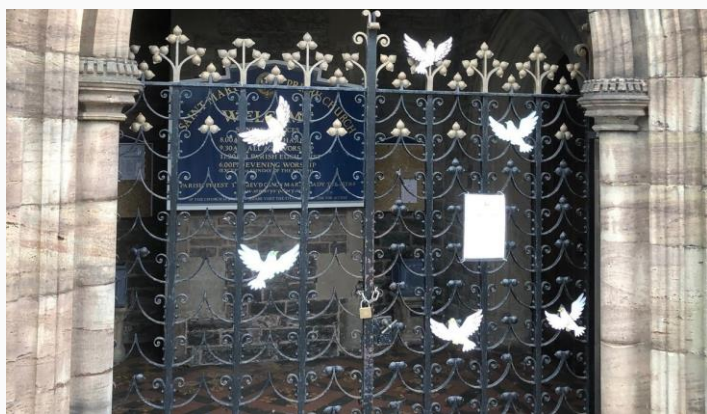
Ecclesiastical is launching its giving programme – the Movement for Good awards. It's designed to give eligible charities financial assistance they to keep making a difference, and in the first phase will be awarding 500 charities £1000.

To nominate a charity just go to [movementforgood.com](https://www.movementforgood.com), and click 'nominate now' to enter

your chosen charity's details. The closing date for nominations is Sunday 24th May and the more nominations your chosen charity gets, the greater its chance of winning, spread the word!



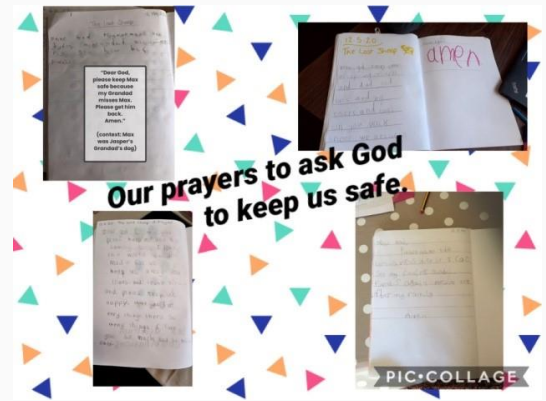
Caerleon Ministry Area were joined at their 11am Eucharist service, held via Zoom, on Sunday 17th May, by Stevie Ancient, their link representative at All Souls, Northmead, Benoni in the Diocese of the Highveld. Following the service parishioners were able to 'meet' and welcome Stevie and hear how our link parish in South Africa is coping during the pandemic.



The **Doves of Hope** are spreading across the Diocese, read all about them [here](#), and you can follow them on Facebook [here](#).

Some Splendid School Stories

All of our schools are working tremendously hard during these difficult circumstances to ensure our children continue to grow into the beautiful people God calls them to be. Here are some highlights from this past week.



Malpas Church in Wales Primary School have been keeping very busy, Revd Becca created some story videos and the response from the children was amazing. Revd Becca inspired the teachers to create their own assemblies, every Wednesday an assembly will be uploaded [here](#) for the children to enjoy.

Revd Becca has also been attending the Malpas Hub on a Thursday. She has delivering Mindfulness sessions for children and staff. The sessions are to support everyone in their emotional well-being during this unusual time. The children found them to be very calming and relaxing.



Usk CiW Primary – Mental Health Awareness Week

Usk CiW Primary challenged us all to tackle mental health through kindness this week. On

Monday they issued a 7-Day challenge and continued to share positive reminders throughout the week.



Rainbows

Rainbows have become a symbol of hope for many during this pandemic. Many of the pupils in our church schools have been crafting rainbows in support of all our key workers.



This beautiful tribute to the NHS was made by a Year 3 pupil at Osbaston CiW Primary.

These fun rainbows were made by Reception pupils at Blaenavon Heritage CiW Primary.

Rainbows

For the past couple of weeks we have been learning about rainbows. This week we created our own rainbows..



Used flowers from my garden

I used paint to create hand prints with my brother.



If you have images of some more creative rainbows, we'd love to see them! Send your rainbows to monmouthadministration@churchinwales.org.uk

Add your story to #goodnewsworthsharing

Please send anything you've been doing to debragoddard@churchinwales.org.uk or share on social media with #goodnewsworthsharing

Children, Families & Young Peoples Resources



Cyncoed Ministry Area - Online Sunday School

Jonah

<http://cyncoedministryarea.org.uk/jonah-17th-may/>



St Teilos High School are providing weekly services for young people, you can catch up with previous services and watch this week's [here](#).



Charles Williams Church in Wales Primary School have lots of child friendly services available [here](#).



Mainly Music

Bring along a scarf and get ready to make a few cups of tea.

Vimeo <https://youtu.be/YmDS4jvexlw>

YouTube, <https://youtu.be/YmDS4jvexlw>

There are lots more amazing resources for children and families available on our website [here](#).