

• M O N M O U T H • Haf • Summer 2019

Grapevine

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YOUR LOCAL CHURCH IN WALES



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THE CHURCH
IN WALES



Grapevine Editorial

This edition of *Grapevine* bids a fond and heartfelt farewell to Bishop Richard as he moves into retirement. Our love and prayers go with him as he moves into this next stage of his life and his ministry.

I was struck by the words Bishop Richard used at his enthronement in 2013 when he said *"I love this diocese."* Flicking through the pages of this magazine, I can see why – and I hope you do too!

From the glorious ordinations service which welcomed 10 new deacons and priests to our diocese, to the wonderful Year Six Leavers' service, to the inspiring missional work being done in Malpas – there is certainly a lot to love about this diocese!

I hope you all have a lovely Summer!

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The Living Room celebrates its 3rd birthday

The Living Room has recently reached its 3rd birthday and there's been a lot to celebrate! Run from the former pharmacy in New Tredegar, this initiative is much more than a coffee shop – even winning first prize in the Caerphilly Business Awards for its contribution to the Rural Economy.

Reflecting on recent developments, project leader Revd Leah Philbrick reported: *"2018 was a year of consolidation. We built on our reputation for hospitality and were again awarded a five star food hygiene rating. Thanks to a grant from the New Tredegar partnership, we were able to purchase a suitable freezer, and begin to develop our own brand of ice cream! Amongst other things, we hosted a training session on mission for recently ordained curates and organised a Thanksgiving Dinner for local volunteers."*

The team decided to use its birthday celebrations to consult about next steps: *"Pioneer ministry involves prayerful listening in order to develop a sense of how God is at work and how we can join in. We find ourselves constantly out of our comfort zone but so very grateful for support from the Diocese and from numerous 'people of peace' in our local community. We wanted to combine our birthday celebration with a consultation addressing key issues going forward,"* added Revd Leah.

After a delicious lunch, Revd Rosie Dymond gave a presentation about the first three years and reflected on Jesus' practice of receiving hospitality: *"If you do a quick page through the Gospels, you find that Jesus spends a lot more time enjoying meals with friends than he does going to church. In fact, one of the most radical things is that he let people do stuff for him. There was only one meal where he was the host and even that one he was only able to prepare with a little help from his friends."*

Guests at the consultation reflected on questions relating to mental health and wellbeing; confidence and aspiration; social capital and sustainability. Revd Leah shared the following observation: *"The notes from this consultation are a rich resource as we move forward. Sometimes when you are in the thick of things, you can lose sight of the progress you have already made. People affirmed the impact of The Living Room in connecting people and contributing to confidence and skills building for young people. We were encouraged to place more emphasis on sharing the good news of what is happening here with others."*



Revd Rosie Dymond welcomed everyone to The Living Room

Some specific outcomes to date are a new publicity strategy, a modified governance structure and the launch of 'Cafe Connect'. The Living Room is registered as a Community Interest Company (CIC) – a special type of limited company which exists to benefit the community rather than private shareholders. The modified governance structure addresses the challenge of enabling local volunteers to build the confidence and skills to serve as Directors. From Autumn 2019 a new board of five Directors will be supported by a group of specialist advisers representing partner organisations with expertise in social enterprise, health and wellbeing, community arts and communications. 'Cafe Connect' is a weekly session with free coffee and a meeting space for local Support Workers. Revd Leah said: *"The experience of consultation has been enormously beneficial to us and we would definitely recommend it to church groups elsewhere – we have discovered that it really doesn't matter if we feel ignorant and inexperienced ourselves, if only we have the courage to ask for advice!"*

Pioneer and community ministry will always be a unique response to the call of God in a particular local context. The team at The Living Room stress that they are not in the business of trying to replicate their project elsewhere! However, they are able to host visits from PCCs, ministry teams, MU groups, etc. who would like to hear more about The Living Room or reflect on mission in your own context. They also have several current volunteer and placement opportunities. Please direct enquiries to Revd Leah Philbrick at thelivingroomNP24@gmail.com

Our farewell to Bishop Richard

"the core motive of service is grounded in love"



More than 450 people from across the diocese packed into St Mary's Priory in Abergavenny for an emotional farewell service to mark the retirement of the Bishop of Monmouth, The Right Reverend Richard Pain.

Bishop Richard was the tenth Bishop of Monmouth and served all his 35 years of ministry in this diocese.

As Fr John Connell, reminded everyone in his opening address: "At Bishop Richard's enthronement in St Woolos' Cathedral on Friday 18 October 2013, he spoke of how he had only ever served in this Diocese of Monmouth, and then went on to say, 'I love this Diocese.'

"Today in this Eucharist, is our opportunity to thank God for + Richard's ministry as our much-loved Bishop and to let him know just how much this Diocese loves him."

Surrounded by friends and family, clergy and laity, representatives from our schools and local dignitaries, Bishop Richard gave his final sermon before 'laying up' the Diocesan Crozier a symbolic sign that his ministry as Diocesan Bishop has ended.

In his sermon, he stressed that "the core motive of service is grounded in love."

He said: "What I like about some scenes of St. John's gospel is how you feel that you are sort of listening in on a very intimate conversation. And you know it's ok because you are supposed to be listening in because it includes you as well. So Jesus and Peter talking about the next step in Peter's ministry is really personal and yet it is for all of us and we also know the outcome. Jesus challenges Peter and we know Peter will come good. He will clearly show that he loves Jesus, even to death. Both Jesus and Peter die for love.

"The scene is particularly associated with clerical ministry but is appropriate for all Christians. As Christians we need to ensure that our motives are right. Why are you attending church or involved in some community work or outreach? The core motive of service is grounded in love...

"So, as I finish as your Bishop I ask you to continue the mission to be people in Christ. To see Christ in others and also to see their humanity in Christ. Our mission is simply to accept others as Christ accepted Peter, Paul, Richard and you. And then in acceptance to allow others to become themselves in Christ, to trust, accompany and help. And then we can say, yes Lord, I love you."

During the laying down of the Diocesan Crozier, Canon Mark Soady, said: "Bishop Richard, you have faithfully kept watch over the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit has appointed you shepherd in this Diocese of Monmouth.

"You have restored the lost and you have built up the body of Christ as our Bishop.

"We thank God for you, and for your ministry amongst us and we pray that Christ the Good Shepherd will guide and guard your path as you lay down the office of Bishop of Monmouth."

Representing the diocesan office, Dr Paul Glover diocesan Secretary, presented Bishop Richard and his wife with gifts, describing him as a "bishop to everyone is this diocese."

Dr Glover talked about the time Bishop Richard has spent with the diocesan team and thanked him for the confirmation classes held at the office.

He added: "It is significant that three members of the diocesan team are in the vocations process and considering ordination."

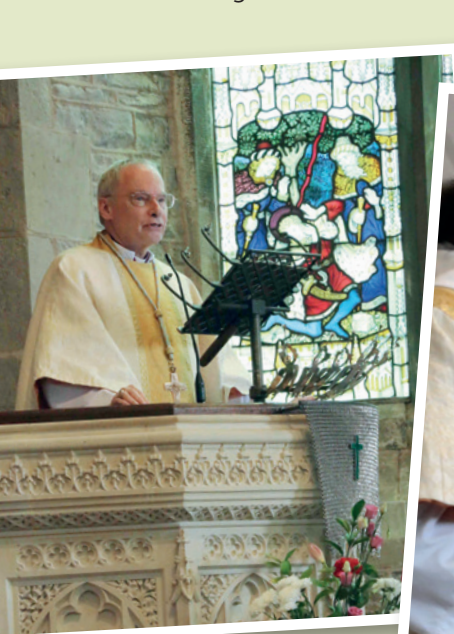
Following the service, everyone had a chance to thank Bishop Richard for his ministry and to wish him well during a garden party held in the grounds of the church.

Throughout his ministry, Bishop Richard held a number of diocesan and provincial appointments with a particular interest in the selection, training and nurturing of clergy and other church leaders. As Bishop, he held the portfolio for ministry matters in the Province, and was chair of the Council of St Padarn's Theological Institute. He has been instrumental in the development of new monastic communities as places of mission and formation for young Christians.

Bishop Richard began his ministry as a curate in Caldicot, having trained for ministry at St Michael's College, Llandaff. He then served as parish priest in Six Bells and Cwmtillery, Risca, Overmonnow and Monmouth. He was Archdeacon of Monmouth from 2008 to 2013, also then serving as parish priest of the Mamhilad group of parishes. He was elected Bishop of Monmouth in 2013.

The election of the next Bishop of Monmouth will be held in September.

* Thank you to Roo Williams for taking the photographs.



Welcome to the 'Class of '19'!

Friends and family filled St Mark's Church in Newport for a special service to celebrate loved ones becoming deacons and priests.

Led by Archbishop John Davis, the annual Petertide Ordination Service welcomed seven deacons and three priests.

Grapevine caught up with them to find out a bit more about them...

Bronwen Summers, Cwmbran Ministry Area

Music was the beginning of my relationship with God. At the age of 14, I lead worship for the first time and I discovered a surge of excitement as I found God in that moment, it was then he became real to me. It was no longer just words to sing but an affirmation of my faith, acknowledging the Holy Spirit working in me. I have found ministry through music to be a rollercoaster of a ride, from doubt, acceptance, back to doubt and many questions - was I doing what God wanted me to do?

As a family we were blessed to be able to work children and the elderly and with fellow Christians from other denominations. I enjoyed praying, teaching and talking about Jesus with children. I thought I would be happy doing this forever, but God had a different plan - directing me to where I am today.



Heulwen Rees, Upper Islwyn Ministry Area

Hi, my name is Heulwen. I'm a Valleys "girl" born and bred. Have you ever experienced a time where you think you have heard your name being called but when you turn around to see who's calling there is no one there? Well, that's what happened to me. After attending an Emmaus Way of Faith session the words you "lay your hand upon me" (Psalm 139) kept reverberating around in my head. I also felt a physical weight pressing down on my head and shoulders. I did try to ignore it, but eventually I realised that it wasn't going to go away. So, after a large glass of white wine, I shared my thoughts and feelings with my husband and then my journey to where I am now began. After 40 years as a teacher, I feel I have served an apprenticeship for what I believe is the "Main Event." So here I am -ready to serve! Dwi'n barod i'n gwasanaethu!



John Thorne, Cyncoed Ministry Area

My experience of Church began when my sister and I were sent to Sunday school. I realised, even at that young age, that I had found something which was important in my life.

I have had some superb ministers, but the most influential person in my life was one of my Sunday school teachers - he had such a wonderful faith and trust in God and Christ, that I realised that he had something which I needed in my life. I was baptised when I was 15, which was an amazing, extremely emotional experience.

I stopped attending church when I was a teenager, when I made the common mistake of not being able to reconcile something which had happened in my life, with an ever - loving God. However, when I started attending again, I believe that my faith was even stronger, and I felt a calling to be ordained some time ago.



Samuel Patterson, Magor Ministry Area

Over the last three years I have been training full-time at St Padarn's Cardiff which has been a joy and privilege. Over my time training and in the years prior I have worshipped and worked in a wide range of spectrum of Anglicanism. This has resulted in people getting confused looks when they ask which part of the Church I 'belong to'. Helping people to meet with and worship God in whatever way works has always been far more important to me than pigeon-holing myself into one particular stream of Anglicanism.

Prior to training I was part of the first intake of the Holywell Community in Abergavenny, and before that was studying Robotics in Reading. I'm very excited to be serving God in the Magor Ministry Area, there is already so much going on, and to see what He has in store for us in the coming years.



Matthew Sellers, Malpas Ministry Area

My dad was an electrical engineer who worked on different projects in Europe and Africa and in 1976 we moved permanently to Durban. It was during our time in South Africa that I became a Christian. We moved back to Wales in the 1980's.

My relationship with Jesus really began to grow in my mid-twenties after a powerful encounter with him through a worship service. I realised deep down his love for me and that he had a plan for my life that I should really get on board with. That led me on a journey over the last 25 years that has taken in short-term overseas missions trips, voluntary and employed youth work, teaching religious education, schools lay chaplaincy and now ordination. I'm really looking forward to the next part of this journey, knowing and trusting that, step by step he will continue to be with me and my family.



Lisa Taylor, Upper Islwyn Ministry Area

I grew up in Hertfordshire and was sent to church from an early age by non-church-going parents. There I discovered a welcoming, loving and nurturing community and developed a passion for children's work, Fairtrade and the homeless which I shared with my husband Paul.

Sixteen years ago we felt called to Wales and have fallen I love with the Valleys.

I was a nurse for 22 years and being called to ordained ministry came as a surprise although many who know me said it was not a surprise to them. They now refer to me as the "vicar of Dibley" not just because I am short, rounder than I should be and have a weakness for Crunchies but also because I am accepting of others, open and honest, approachable and loving, joyful in all I do and have a good sense of humour.



Lea Ryder, Chepstow Ministry Area

I have lived in the Raglan Area for over 20 years as I have pursued my ambitions to be a professional event rider. I managed to get to the highest stage competing at Badminton, Burghley and Pau against the likes of Zara Phillips, Mary King and William Fox Pitt, not with their success I might add!

I have been married to my husband Miles Kennah for 25 years, which always confuses people as I have kept my maiden name because Ryder seemed appropriate with the horses! It was Miles who some years ago planted the seed of my calling when he informed me "he was going to be a vicars wife!"

The blessing of our son brought us closer to God and it was the start of my journey in ministry. This last year I have been studying full time at St Padarns as I endeavour to finish my Theology degree.



Sally Ingle-Gillis, Wentwood Ministry Area

The last year has been a steep learning curve, with one or two mistakes, lots of laughter, and wonderful support from congregations, and team members. I am in no doubt that I have been scooped up and plopped down exactly where I am meant to be. I cannot describe for you how awesome that is.

This year has been made possible because of the support of my lovely family, by my care to pray often, and by remembering to rest. I cannot stress the value of all those things.

I am extremely excited about the next step - being ordained priest will allow me to build on what we have begun, helping to grow disciples through word and sacrament.



Matt Davis, Cyncoed Ministry Area

My first year of ordination has been a rollercoaster of learning and deep enjoyment.

I have been welcomed with open arms into Cyncoed Ministry Area and feel settled in and at home. I have Wednesday morning 1984 service, services in the park, doing my Sunday 'rounds' in the various churches, assisting at school eucharists and the occasional offices.

My family has grown with the addition of my son Orson just before Christmas which inspired the creation of "Little Adventurers" a new baby and toddler group running out of Cyncoed church. It's been fun getting to know all the families that come to play and chat, especially as we have a group of regulars who keep coming back!



Stephen Blewett, Newport East Ministry Area

Will be ordained as priest and will serve Newport East Ministry Area.

Changes to grants means it's easier to get your hands on cash!



Recent changes to the Diocesan Grant Scheme means it is even easier to apply for funding!

The Diocesan Churches and Pastoral Committee operate the **Church Fabric and Church Hall Grant** and the **Churchyard Improvement Grant** to assist parishes with the development and care of their buildings and churchyards

The committee has made a number of changes to these grants to ensure that they are flexible and straightforward.

Grants advisor

Following the advice of the Churches and Pastoral Committee a number of our parishes are also receiving help for a freelance grants advisor to assist with hand-on support researching and applying for external grant funds.

This is a new Diocesan initiative and we will keep you updated for its progress. We hope that it will provide parishes with much needed help and support to get their exciting projects off the ground.

For more information on how to get in touch with the grants advisor or applying for Diocesan Grants please contact Isabel Thompson or Lisa Sheppard.

Isabel Thompson

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Diocesan Office: 01633 267490

Lisa Sheppard

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Tel: 01633 267490

Church Fabric and Church Hall Grant

NEW

The new **Church Fabric and Church Hall Grant** now combines the old Diocesan Church Fabric Repair Grant and the Church in Wales Church Improvement Fund. This means that parishes only need to complete one application to access the money from both funds.

This grant can now offer a maximum £8000 grant for church fabric repairs or a maximum £5000 grant for church halls.

The fund is aimed at parishes undertaking repairs or improvement to the church buildings. Applications that can demonstrate that the works enable and enhance the parish's mission-focused activities will be prioritised by the committee.

To ensure that the money is available to the greatest number of parishes, only one grant from this fund will be available in any two-year cycle for any church building (either church or church hall). Except where the committee considers that there are exceptional circumstances.

Churchyard Improvement Grants

The Diocesan Churchyard Improvement grant continues to offer a maximum grant of £2000 for parishes wishing to undertake improvements to their churchyards.

Only one grant from this fund will be available in any two-year cycle for any churchyard except where the Churches and Pastoral Committee considers that there are exceptional circumstances.

Applications to both funds are decided on a quarterly basis by the Churches and Pastoral Committee. The forms can be found on the Diocesan website here: <https://monmouth.churchinwales.org.uk/resources-support/finance/grants/>

The remaining grant deadlines in 2019 for completed applications to be in the Diocesan Office are 6 September and 27 November.

From Archbishop John

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I'm delighted to have the opportunity to contribute to this edition of 'Grapevine'. I do so following a time of some significant uncertainty and anxiety for all of us. That time is now past, and it's essential that the Diocese as a whole and each one of us as individuals commits to looking forward with vision, and pressing on with courage and commitment to fulfilling our common calling to reflect and reveal the Kingdom of God day by day.

I write these notes about 10 days before I ordain new deacons and priests for the Diocese. By the time you read them, the ordinations will (almost certainly) have happened. Ordination day is one of hugely mixed emotions such as pride, apprehension, fear and joy about what lies ahead. In today's church, we are clear that one of the things that doesn't lie ahead is any notion that it is only the ordained who are called to ministry. No one individual possesses the fulness of ministry; no one individual is equipped with all of the gifts of the Spirit; to each one of us, lay or ordained, comes the call to share in the task of ministry in whatever way we can; and one of the joys of our life at present is the affirmation by the church of the role of the laity.

The availability of theological study at a huge variety of levels has had the effect of enabling any number of people to discover within themselves a vocation which they never previously recognised, and this has led to the enriching and flourishing of many Godly souls. If you are not aware of what is on offer, of the many ways and means through which you can enrich your Christian journey and, through doing so, strengthen the life of the local church, please find out. I am sure that there are opportunities available to suit a variety of needs and circumstances.

I pray that your willingness to explore through prayer and study will lead to your journey being enriched, the life of our church being strengthened and God's Kingdom becoming better known and understood.



Archbishop John

BISHOP RICHARD

Richard Pain and I were ordained deacon and priest together in 1984 and 1985 respectively. We came to know each other in St Michael's College, Llandaff, almost 40 years ago and have remained firm friends and close colleagues since. Richard, I quickly recognised, was a man of significantly deep spirituality, and this great gift, coupled with the ability to lead others to deeper spiritual understandings has always been a feature of his much-loved and widely-appreciated ministry at all its levels. You will, I am sure, understand my personal sadness that, because of ill-health, Richard has stepped down. I am also sure that, with me, you would want to thank Richard for all that, in his formal ministry he has sought to do for the Kingdom and to wish him and Julie peace and increasing strength in the future as they adjust to their new circumstances.

COMMISSARIES

As has become customary in a vacancy in a Diocese, I have appointed the Archdeacons to act as my commissaries for particular purposes in their respective archdeaconries. The Dean has also been commissioned for specific purposes closely connected with the new scheme for future governance of the Cathedral. The appointment of commissaries does not mean that, as Archbishop, I delegate all responsibility; and I want to make it very clear that I am more than willing to be contacted by anyone from the Diocese of Monmouth who wishes to be in touch with me. More specifically, I would be delighted to receive invitations to preside and / or preach in the Diocese, and will try to say 'yes' as often as I can.

I assure you all of my prayers and love, and my hopes for the future.

+John Cambrensis

Leavers from church primary schools – but not from our church family!

We were delighted to welcome over 550 Year 6 leavers from our diocesan church primary schools to our Diocesan Leavers' Services during June. One of the key messages was one of encouragement as our Year 6s prepare for this significant transition – in leaving their primary schools to move to their chosen high schools.

Some are moving with friends, others are going to different schools and may not yet know anybody else. However, they are all taking a step forward in developing more independence in their lives as they navigate the joys and challenges of what is in front of them. Dr Annette Daly, Diocesan Director of Education, urged them to remember that, even though they are leaving their church primary schools, they are still very much part of our church.

The meditative reflection-using stones to reflect on their last seven years and look forward to their next seven years helped them to be assured that Jesus has been with them so far in their lives, and will continue to be with them as they continue their journey.

With a school dramatization of the story of Jesus and disciples in the boat during the storm, the children's prayers for fruits of the Holy Spirit, everyone saying the Lord's Prayer in actions and words and lively singing that almost lifted the roof of St Mark's, the diocese was delighted to celebrate this occasion with our Year 6s.

The children were all presented with an olive wood neck cross to remind them of their faith and their friend Jesus; head teachers were presented with mugs on which was printed the Serenity Prayer. All staff, governors and the wider school community were affirmed and offered sincere thanks by Annette Daly, on behalf of the diocese, for all the work they do with almost 4,000 children across our diocese.

Alleluia hand wave ripples across the church and high fives or fist bumps of encouragement between everyone (yes, even the teachers!) ensured that everyone left feeling a little bit more uplifted.

Our Year 6 school leavers may be leaving our church primary schools, but they are still very much a core part of our church community and we continue to hold them in prayer and cheer them along.

Thank you to Archdeacon Jonathan, Archdeacon Ambrose, Dean Lister Tonge and Canon Mark Dimond for supporting and participating in the service. This year, due to construction work in the Cathedral, the venue was St Mark's Church, Goldtops, Newport. Sincere thanks to Revd Dr Canon Paul Thompson, his wife Amanda, church warden Anne and the other staff and church community members who helped to prepare the church for us and made us so warmly welcome.

All Year 6 pupils were given an olive wood cross to remind them of their faith.



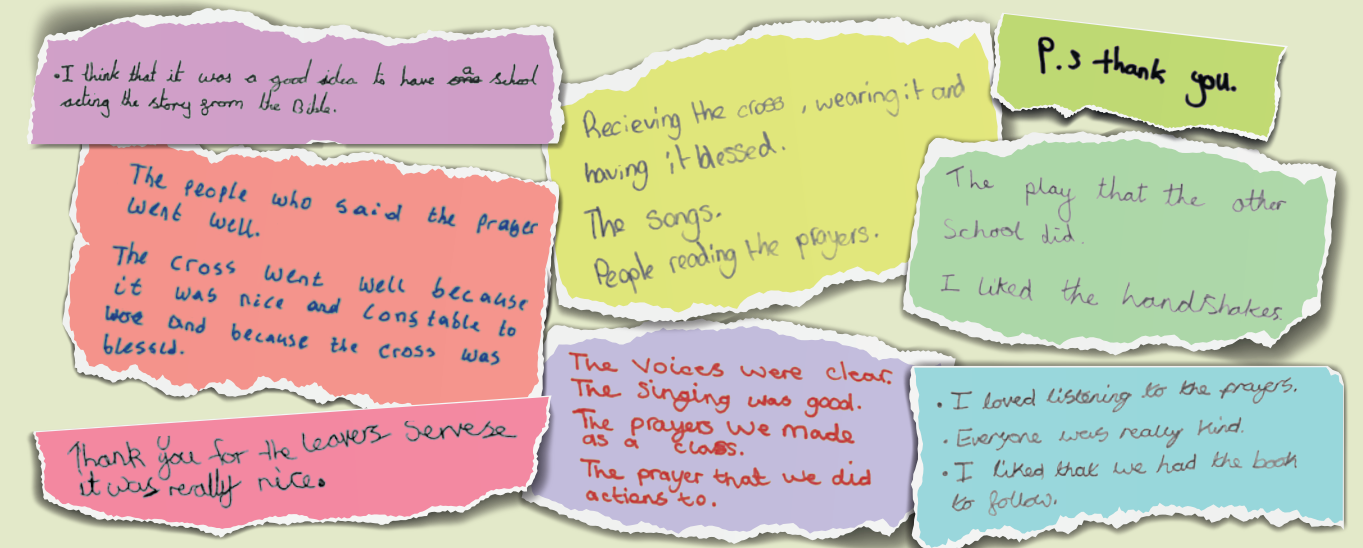
Pupils from Henllys Church in Wales Primary School enjoying the service



Pupils took an active part in the service, encouraged by Dr Annette Daly



Headteachers received a mug to remind them of the serenity prayer



Pupils were asked for feedback about the service. Here are some examples of what they liked.

People and places



Well done to our very own Fr Ross Maidment who featured in the BBC documentary series *Young, Welsh and Pretty Religious*.

Fr Ross took the brave step of allowing the cameras to follow him during his first year as an ordained priest, serving as an assistant curate, at **St Augustine's Church, Rumney, Cardiff**.

The documentary tells the stories of nine young believers from differing faiths.

For those who haven't watched the series yet, try and catch it on BBC iPlayer before it disappears!



When **St James' Church, Rudry** looked at what it means to be spiritually fed and Jesus' command to Peter to feed his sheep in John 21 – they took things a step further – with a live lamb prop!



A celebration was held at **St Mary's Priory in Abergavenny**, to unveil a stunning exhibition re-telling the Gospel parables by **Cantref School**.

Pupils and teachers from the Monmouthshire school have been working hard over the last year with local artist Jez Thomas, Godly Play expert Diane Williams and Lay Members of the Holywell Community, on re-imagining the parables.

As a thankyou for their work, the pupils had a tea party followed by ice cream from the local ice-cream van – yum!



St Sannans Church in Bedwelty has joined forces with Caring for God's Acre to explore ways to tend and care for the churchyard.

Luckily, the project has been selected as one to be supported by Natural Resources Wales, which means lots of advice and support at no cost!

Things kicked off with a visit from wildflower expert Rob who ran a wildflower identification session for local people to get a full species list of what is there and enthuse people about the importance of flowers!



Bell ringers from **St Cadoc's Church, Caerleon** decided to raise the profile of ringing by hiring a mobile belfry for the Caerleon Arts Festival. The belfry was put to good use over the two-day festival under the supervision of experienced bell ringers from Monmouth and Llandaff dioceses. Even Revd Sue Pratten gave it a go!



Ynysddu Primary School and **St Theodores Church, Ynysddu** show their care for creation and give thanks by working together on a litter pick!



It looks like it was another successful annual churchyard tidy-up day in **Llanvapley**!

Thanks to all those who gave up their time to get their hands dirty – they were rewarded handsomely with a cuppa and a slice of lemon drizzle cake!



Reverend John Collier, priest in charge of the **Benefice of Goetre and Llanover**, got the chance to share a joke with the Prince of Wales, during a series of Summer engagements across Wales.

Prince Charles visited the Llanover Estate for a tour of the historic gardens and also visited Llanover village to meet members of the community.



Congratulations to **Christ Church, Ebbw Vale**, which organised its 25th Ladies Prayer Breakfast.

The fantastic outreach event has been running since 2013 and is well supported by various churches and some non church-goers.

In recognition of its logo, 'Open Hearts, Open Hands' the ladies celebrated with a silver, heart-shaped cake! They also received a silver crochet brooch, a "Cross in the pocket" and a bookmark with a Bible verse.



Club Rock, the youth group based at **St Mary's Church, Magor** has finished for the Summer, so a lovely prize giving service was held to celebrate the young people of all ages who take part.

They presented three of their favourite stories which reflected their theme of God Inside. They chose Jonah and the whale, the temptations of Jesus and David and Goliath.

Then finished off with a picnic! Club Rock comes back in September!



Another fantastic Big Breakfast organised by **Usk Ministry Area**! Well done to all those who muck in and make it such a success.



Members of **St Mary's Youth Group** had fun making home-made pizzas; they did everything from measuring the ingredients, to kneading the dough, to choosing the toppings. Here is one group waiting to enjoy the fruits of their labour!



Nine Days of Mission...

From buying an ice-cream for a stranger to delivering hampers to the local services and schools, Newport North Ministry Area marked the time between Ascension and Pentecost with Nine Days of Mission.

They celebrated and demonstrated God's love with acts of kindness to people in their community – underpinning the mission at all time in services with prayer.

Revd Rebecca Stevens, Ministry Area Leader, said: "It was important for us to join together in serving the neighbours that God has given us, to live out our discipleship and vision statement as a ministry area, and that we remembered that we are not to share the gospel by dragging the world kicking and screaming into the church, but by pouring a spirit filled church out of the doors into the world."

Revd Canon Henry Davies, added: "There are two commandments - to love God and to love our neighbour. In the Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy one of the characters said: "Jesus came to tell us that we should be nice to one another for a change." Although that's not all there is to the Gospel, it does sum up what love of neighbour can be - as we discovered for ourselves."

The Mission was launched at an Ascension Day service at All Saints' Brynglas – then the hardwork began!

Day 1 (Friday 31 May) - we held a "Pay it Forward" day. When challenged to do something nice for others, people were very inventive. Someone bought an ice cream in a cafe for someone else, completely unasked, producing general astonishment. Someone else washed all the choir robes, which was very much appreciated by everyone else in the choir.

Day 2 (Saturday 1 June) - we packed hampers for the local services; doctors, police, libraries and fire-station.

Day 3 (Sunday 2 June) - we held mission themed services in all three churches.

Day 4 (Monday 3 June) - we delivered the hampers to the local services and to the nine local schools in our ministry area. We delivered 17 hampers in total.

Day 5 (Tuesday 4 June) - groups of people from all the Churches and the Community ventured out to collect lots of litter. The weather was OK in the morning, but not so good in the afternoon! However, that didn't deter the hardy volunteers! In Malpas a group joined together with Year 5 of Malpas Church-in-Wales School. In Brynglas they joined together with a group of children from Crindau school. In Bettws they joined together with Year 3 of Millbrook school, and the local Pride in Bettws group.

Day 6 (Wednesday 5 June) - there was an afternoon tea for those members of our communities who just needed an extra bit of TLC. A wonderful spread of mouth-watering goodies were provided with lashings of love and fellowship.

Day 7 (Thursday 6 June) - volunteers from the ministry area delivered cakes to two local care homes (Blaen-y-Pant and Millheath) and then spent time chatting with residents. The love of Jesus with cake! What a perfect afternoon!

Day 8 (Friday 7 June) - we held another "Pay it Forward" day across our community.

Day 9 (Saturday 8 June) - our churches (and halls) were open for prayer - at St Mary's thought provoking and prayer provoking stations were arranged around the hall created by different groups in the church family.

Then all the different congregations across our ministry area joined together at a Service of Praise led by St Mary's Worship Group with guests from the Bettws in Bloom Community Choir. It was a wonderful ending to a challenging and joyful Nine Days of Mission.

On the move

Coming

Bronwen Summers (deacon) - Cwmbran Ministry Area

Heulwen Rees (deacon) - Upper Islwyn Ministry Area

John Thorne (deacon) - Cyncoed Ministry Area

Samuel Patterson (deacon) - Magor Ministry Area

Matthew Sellers (deacon) - Malpas Ministry Area

Lisa Taylor (deacon) - Upper Islwyn Ministry Area

Lea Ryder (deacon)- Chepstow Ministry Area

Revd Sally Ingle-Gillis - Wentwood Ministry Area

Revd Matt Davis - Cyncoed Ministry Area

Revd Stephen Blewett - Newport East Ministry Area

Going

Revd Richard Reardon – leaving as Ministry Area Leader (Cwmbran)

Revd Martyn Evans – leaving as Ministry Area Leader (Lower Islwyn)

Revd Canon Mark Dimond – Leaving as residentiary Canon at Newport Cathedral

Movers:

Revd Anne Golledge – left as Area Dean of Pontypool to take up the post of Team Vicar in Bassaleg

Welsh language services in Monmouth Diocese

A Welsh service is held every two months, on the second Saturday of the month, at **St Thomas' Church, Overmonnow, Monmouth.**

The dates for the **next 2 services** are:

14th September

9th November

All services are at 9.30 a.m.

All welcome

What's On

Service of Sung Vespers

Tintern Abbey, Sunday 8 September, 3pm – an ecumenical celebration of Evening Prayer

Diocesan Conference,

October 19 time and venue TBC

OrganFest 2019

The biennial national event will be held in Cardiff and Llandaff in September 6-8. For further details visit <http://www.organfest.org.uk/>

Anglican Monastic Taster Day

St Mary's Priory, Abergavenny, Saturday 5 October, to register contact nunsandmonks@gmail.com



Back Chat

A personal reflection from **Bishop Richard**

Remember the words of Jesus, remember all he has done in our lives. Pope Francis, Easter 2016

As I come to retire as Bishop, it is inevitable that I would want to look back and remember the ministry I shared with you. To many my retirement may seem premature and I think I would agree. There might have been more years ahead of service to the diocese. I have enjoyed my time as Bishop and I have particularly enjoyed the opportunity to meet with so many and to encourage our sense of mission and engagement with God and the community. It has excited me and I have felt aligned with God's purpose. But sadly my health has not been robust. I have been ill due to an ongoing mental illness dating back to when Amy our daughter died ten years ago. It has left its toll and it is time to retire.

Due to my prolonged absence I know the diocese has suffered and I apologise that I have not been around. I am grateful for the support of the Archbishop and for Julie, our family, David Neale and other friends who have made the journey with me during this difficult time. I would like to thank everyone for the countless cards and emails that you sent. It has meant so much.

Inevitably, like all of us, we can look back and see successes and failures in our work. At this most challenging of times, as Christians we endeavour to do our best and with God's help keep the story of faith alive. As Pope Francis said 'remember the words of Jesus'. That is our voice to our communities.

The words of the gospel that bring
joy and light and love. But
we are not just

transmitters. We live in Christ and despite all our weaknesses, the love of Jesus works within us. That's why we are called to 'remember all he has done in our lives'. God is not a manager of our lives - he will recognise our endeavours, our plans and our projects but he will not direct them. God is primarily concerned with who we are and our growth in love and authentic humanity. When we are beginning to grow up and become like Christ then we can see all he has done for us. And that 'doing' is expressed in our relationships with each other in God. In this way God does not judge us as successes or failures: rather he encourages us on a journey of becoming. Personally I take hope in this generosity of God, otherwise I would consider so much in my ministry undone or done badly. What the world sees God sees differently. So to remember the words of Jesus is to counteract our everyday mindset and behaviour which may judge and criticise. The institutional church struggles when it doesn't believe and act on the words of Jesus. It struggles when it does not remember what Jesus is doing.

What amazes me about this Diocese is that in spite of all the difficulties, I have witnessed many who are really trying to discover and rehearse the words of Jesus. Those who do well are those who, as in the parable of sower, hear and act. And their fruits are born in loving and accepting others.

As I now retire I hope to learn of more of us being open to God, remembering what he is doing now in our lives, and attracting others to his love. The work continues and you will always have my blessing and love.

Bishop Richard

