

# Blaenwysg Braf



**Gaeaf - 2014 - Winter**

The magazine for the six churches and communities  
of the Blaenwysg Benefice  
in the Upper Usk Valley



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## From the study window

Once again we find Christmas fast approaching.



Many of us may well be caught out and have to rush around for last minute presents and gifts. More and more insistently we are urged to buy the latest toy, technology, fashion. It is easy to get sucked into all the frenzy, but pause and think back to Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day then there was a silence, a pause in our headlong rush - the two minutes' silence. There was silence on that first Christmas day. Silence before the birth, silence in the countryside surrounding Bethlehem, silence referred to in the words of a well-known carol:-

"the world in solemn stillness lay..."

Perhaps we should listen to the words of the carol and carve out for ourselves just two minutes silence and use that silence. Use that silence to recall the birth of Jesus and its importance for us all and to remember the many for whom Christmas will a sad or a lonely time for various reasons.

May the new-born Christ be with you at this joyful season.

*Paul*



### *Confirmation*

*Would anyone wishing to be confirmed please contact the Vicar so that classes may be arranged.*

## Regular Services

Sunday	First	Second	Third	Fourth
9:30 am	Crai	Crai	Rhydybriw	Crai (Mattins)
11:00 am	Defynnog	Llywel (Family Service)	Defynnog	Llywel
2 pm			Traeanglas	
3 pm		Llandeilo'r Fân		
4:30 pm	Llwyel			Defynnog (Evensong)

A combined service is held at 10 am on the fifth Sunday. The next combined service will be on March 29th at St Cynog's Church, Defynnog.

Holy Eucharist is held at Trecastle Community Centre at 10:30 am each Thursday and on the first Wednesday of each month at Rhydybriw.

### Benefice Announcements

There will be an opportunity for stillness and quiet with a short service of Night Prayer (Compline) for Advent at Capel Rhydybriw on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30 p.m.

The Advent Study group will meet at the Vicarage at 7:30pm on Monday 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

## Editorial

A very Happy Christmas to all our readers, and thank you for your support over this past year. It is difficult to believe that it is a year since we first launched the magazine. This issue has news about a local dark skies site and a local initiative to make Brecon a dementia friendly district, where people with memory problems are met with sympathy and understanding. We also try to provide you with all the dates of Christmas events and services, as well as news of what is happening in the New Year. If you would like to contribute an article of local interest, or would like to advertise, please contact one of the editorial team:

John Clifford, tel 01874 638178, [john.migley@btinternet.com](mailto:john.migley@btinternet.com)

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Please note the next copy date is March 25<sup>th</sup>.

Advertisements: For a code of conduct contact John Clifford, tel 01874 638178, [john.migley@btinternet.com](mailto:john.migley@btinternet.com)

### Trecastle Dark Sky Discovery Site

We are really pleased and excited to have achieved Dark Sky Discovery Site status for Trecastle Dark Sky Discovery Site at the Usk Reservoir. The Upper Usk Valley Rural Alliance group has been working hard to not only promote the darkness of the skies in this area, but now that there are two accredited sites in this area of the park (as Crai achieved this status a couple of years ago), it is a great endorsement of yet another reason to visit this beautiful landscape, both by day and by night. It is also a fantastic boost to the local economy with more stargazing visitors being attracted to the area. Maybe it is also an opportunity for us as members of the community to look up at the night sky and see what all of the fuss is about.



## Five things you should know about dementia:

- it's not a natural part of ageing
- it's caused by diseases of the brain (like Alzheimer's)
- it's not just about losing your memory - it can affect thinking, communicating and doing everyday tasks
- it's possible to live well with dementia
- there's more to a person than dementia



**How can we make our community dementia friendly?** In just one hour you can become a dementia friend to improve your understanding of dementia and encourage understanding by others.

Go to [dementiafriends.org.uk](http://dementiafriends.org.uk) or contact the Alzheimer's Society Care Line on 0845 306 0898 or [enquiries@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@alzheimers.org.uk).

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## News from the Pews

### **St Cynog, Defynnog**

The summer and autumn saw many visitors to Defynnog to look at our famous yew tree and this has kept us all busy. The church opened for Cadw's Open Doors in September when we welcomed visitors tracing their family history or enjoying the atmosphere of our beautiful Grade I listed building. The Harvest Festival service in October celebrated another golden summer with the church decorated with flowers and produce followed by a delicious Harvest Supper. We were delighted to contribute to the collection for the Brecon Food Bank.

December will see the church busy with our Advent Craft Fair on December 6th and Christmas Tree dressing on the 7th. Sennybridge School will join us for their Christingle on December 15th. The Carol service will be on December 18th and we will celebrate the First Mass of Christmas.

### **St Ilid, Crai**

This autumn we have been reminded how blessed we are at St Ilid's to have such a lovely organ and someone willing and able to play. We laugh at ourselves remembering the service where we had no organist and, therefore, no one to lead the singing. We really needed a list of hymns and tunes we all knew and could sing in an emergency! Then there was the better occasion when we had Glenys to play and Gwyn to sing but the organ just wouldn't make a squeak, let alone a tuneful noise. Best of all was the wonderful music played at our Harvest Thanksgiving, and the previous Sunday, by Arwel, what a joyful sound. We sang with our hearts bursting with happiness, whatever our musical ability: it is having joy in our hearts that is important.

### **Capel Rhydybriw, Sennybridge**

On Sunday 19th October, Capel Rhydybriw celebrated the last Harvest Festival of the Benefice and we were delighted to welcome regulars and visitors. We will be hosting Compline again on Friday 12th and 19th December and look forward to welcome everyone to the joint service on Sunday 28th December at 10 am.

### **St David, Llywel**

St David's celebrated its Harvest Festival on Monday 13th October where our congregation gave generously to the benefice collection for Brecon Food Bank. We are looking forward to the Children's Nativity Service on Sunday 21st December at 11 am. Please join us!

### **St Teilo, Llandeilo'r Fân**

Thanks to God for a good Harvest were given by a large congregation in the prettily decorated St. Teilo's church in October. There were generous donations to the Food Bank Collection box following the service. We look forward to the 6 pm Eucharist service on Christmas Eve, when there will be warm drinks and refreshments afterwards in the village hall.

### **St Mary, Traeanglas**

As we came to Traeanglas for our Harvest Festival, we were delighted to see the splendid autumn colours. The Harvest service gave us the opportunity to appreciate living and working in this area and to think of farming communities in other parts of the world. The following week we held our annual bingo evening. Many thanks to all who all who made this such a happy evening.

On Wednesday 17th December at 7pm we look forward to welcoming the Trecastle YFC as they celebrate their Carol Service. On Christmas Eve at 9pm we will celebrate the Holy Eucharist with carols.





## The Old School Tea Room

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## Off The Bus Club ...

In August Off the Bus held a summer club to round off our first school year. Mega Makers is a holiday club scheme designed by Scripture Union and provided a really fun range of activities looking at three key stories about Jesus taken from Matthew's Gospel. The overall theme was inventions looking at things growing, strength and depth as our faith grows, becomes deeper and stronger. The children made bread and boats, played games, sang songs and generally had FUN.



After the summer the number of children coming to Off the Bus has grown but we are nowhere near full and would love more to come from other parts of the parish. We understand that transport is an issue but hope that a way may be found to solve this problem.

For more details please contact Liz on 636797 or [liz@abercottages.com](mailto:liz@abercottages.com)

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## Christmas Crackers

What does Santa suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney? Clawstrophobia!  
What do they sing at a snowman's birthday party? Freeze a jolly good fellow.  
Why does Santa have three gardens? So he can 'ho, ho, ho'!  
What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck? A Christmas Quacker!  
What did Santa say to the smoker? Please don't smoke it's bad for my elf!  
Who is Santa's favourite singer? Elf-is Presley!  
What do you get if you eat Christmas decorations? Tinselitis!



Ho ho ho !



## Meeting God in Mark – Rowan Williams.

*The former Archbishop of Canterbury, is noted for his great intellect and learning and if that puts you off this short book, that would be a great pity. The depth of his learning can be glimpsed behind its pages but does not intrude. He skilfully and beguilingly leads us through the Gospel of Mark, giving a clear and coherent overview of that gospel and what Mark sought to do in writing it. He deals very wisely with the problem of the ending in Mark (Mk.16:8) and he says that “his text begins and ends in mystery”. Rowan suggests that Mark is a telling of revelation, of change in ourselves as equally in our world view. The opening words of the Gospel tells us of this:- “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” (Mk. 1:1) and its end is with us, its hearers, its readers.*



### **From the Registers**

We celebrated the marriage of Eleanor Barrow and Adam Sinclair at St Cynog's Church Defynnog on August 30th.

We welcomed Angharad Grace Roderick into the Church on 3rd August in Crai.

We gave thanks for the lives of :

David Harvey	May 24th
Gwynoro Rhys (Slim) Powell	June 23rd
Sandra Loveluck	July 9th
David Massocchi	August 27th
John Roger Williams	September 13th
Sheila Macmillan	October 28th
Emma Abberley	November 12th
Haulwen Mai Thomas	November 15th
James (Jim) Powell	November 27th
Selwyn Davies	November 28th



## Christmas Events



Tues Dec 2 <sup>nd</sup> 7 pm	Sennybridge WI Christmas Wreaths	Maescar Hall
Fri Dec 5 <sup>th</sup>	Bingo in aid of St Ilid's church	Crai Hall
Sat Dec 6 <sup>th</sup> 10 am	Decorating hall and tree	Crai Hall
Sat Dec 6 <sup>th</sup> 11 -3:30pm	Advent Craft Fair	St Cynog's Church, Defynnog
Sun Dec 7 <sup>th</sup> 2 - 4pm	Christmas Tree dressing	St Cynog's Church, Defynnog
Tues Dec 9 <sup>th</sup> 1.30 pm	Sennybridge School Christmas Concert	School Hall
Wed Dec 10 <sup>th</sup> 6 pm	Sennybridge School Christmas Concert	School Hall
Mon Dec 15 <sup>th</sup> 2 pm	Sennybridge School Christingle Celebrations	St Cynog's Church, Defynnog
Tues Dec 16 <sup>th</sup> 2.30 pm	Sennybridge School PTA Christmas Fayre	School Hall
Thurs Dec 18 <sup>th</sup> 7.30 pm	Mulled wine and mince pies	Crai Hall



## Winter Calendar



Tues Jan 6 <sup>th</sup> 7 pm	Sennybridge WI Members' evening	Maescar Hall
Tues Jan 6 <sup>th</sup>	Trecastle Ladies Guild New Year's Dinner	
Fri Jan 16 <sup>th</sup> 7.30 pm	Pentrebach Sports Whist Drive	Neuadd Pentre Llandeilo'r Fân Hall
Sat Jan 24 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm	Sennybridge Show Dinner	Castle Hotel, Brecon
Fri Jan 30 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm	Sennybridge Show Whist Drive	Maescar Hall
Sat Jan 31 <sup>st</sup> 7:30 pm	Noson Lawen	Crai Hall
Thur Feb 19 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm	Quiz night	Crai Hall

## Monthly Diary

First Monday	Community Garden Club	Crai Village Hall
Second Tuesday	Trecastle Ladies Guild	Trecastle Community Hall
First Wednesday	Merched Crai	Neuadd y Plwyf Crai
Last Wednesday	Craft Club	Neuadd y Plwyf Crai
Third Thursday	Worship Meeting	Bronydd Mawr Farm

## Weekly Diary

Mondays	3:45 - 5pm	Off the Bus Club	Neuadd y Plwyf Crai
	7:00 - 8:30pm	Girl Guides	Sennybridge Youth Wing
Mon - Thur	9:30 - 12:30 pm	Cylch Meithrin	Sennybridge Youth Wing
Tuesdays	1:00 - 3pm	Toddler Group	Sennybridge School
	6:00 - 7:30 pm	Brownies (age 7 - 10)	Sennybridge Youth Wing
Wednesdays	1:00 - 3:30 pm	Afternoon bowls	Maescar Hall
	5:00 - 6:00 pm	Rainbows (age 5 - 7)	Sennybridge Youth Wing
	7:00 - 9:00 pm	Short Mat Bowls	Maescar Hall
	6:30 pm	Knitting Club	Trecastle Community Hall
	7:30 pm	Trecastle YFC	Trecastle Community Hall
Thursdays	6:30 - 7:30	Zumba	Maescar Hall
	7:30 pm	Trallong Ladies Choir	Maescar Hall
	7:30 - 8:30 pm	Bell ringing	St Cynog's Church, Defynnog
Friday	pm	Sennybridge Junior Football Club	Riverside Park (football ground)

## **St Teilo's, Llandeilo'r Fan - and at St Fagan's Museum**

You probably know our own St. Teilo's church in Llandeilo'r Fan, but have you been to the beautifully reconstructed St. Teilo's church at St. Fagans, Cardiff?

The church, originally at Llandeilo Tal-y-bont, had fallen into disrepair and the roof had gone. As the rain washed the limewash from the walls medieval paintings and Latin texts were discovered all over the interior walls. Conservators from the National Museum of Wales meticulously labelled each main stone of the church and removed them to the National Museum of Welsh Life at St. Fagans, first carefully removing what was left of the illustrations. The church has been completely rebuilt on the new site and the outside whitewashed as it would have been. Inside the church has been painted with all the figures and inscriptions which would have been seen by congregations in the 12th-15th centuries. The vivid colours and gold leaf decoration brings it all to life. It is believed that the church was particularly well endowed by pilgrims on their way to St. David's, but our own St. Teilo's church would have been similarly decorated. Go along and see it for free, and then come to our own St. Teilo's at 3pm on 2nd Sunday each month and join in the continuing worship of God in this ancient and pretty church.

### **Chapel services 2015**

Jan 4 <sup>th</sup>	2.00 pm Zoar Chapel,	Pentrefelin
Jan 11 <sup>th</sup>	2.00pm Ty Newydd,	Trecastle
Jan 25 <sup>th</sup>	2.00 pm Zoar Chapel,	Pentrefelin
Feb 8 <sup>th</sup>	2.00 pm Zoar Chapel,	Pentrefelin
Feb 23 <sup>rd</sup>	2.00pm Ty Newydd,	Trecastle

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## Christmas Services

Sun Dec 7th, 6pm	Carol service	Zoar Chapel, Pentrefelin
Sun Dec 14th, 2pm 3pm	Children's Service Advent Carol Service	Cwmwysg Chapel St Teilo, Llandeilo'r Fân
Mon Dec 15th, 2pm	Sennybridge School, Christingle	St Cynog, Defynnog
Wed Dec 17th, 7pm	YFC Trecastle Carol Service	St Mary, Traeanglas
Thurs Dec 18th, 7pm	Carol Service	St Cynog, Defynnog
Sun Dec 21st, 9:30am 11am  2pm 2:30pm 6:30pm	Holy Eucharist Children's Nativity Service  Communion Service Christmas Carol Service Carol Service with live manger scene	Capel Rhydybriw St David, Llywel  Cwmwysg Chapel Heol Senni Hall St Ilid, Crai
Christmas Eve, 6pm 6:30pm 9pm 11:50pm	Holy Eucharist & Carols Christmas Service Holy Eucharist & Carols First Mass of Christmas	St Teilo, Llandeilo'r Fân Horeb Chapel, Crai St Mary, Traeanglas St Cynog, Defynnog
Christmas Day, 9:30am 11am	Holy Eucharist & Carols Holy Eucharist & Carols	St Ilid, Crai St David, Llywel
Sunday 28th, Dec 10:00am	Holy Eucharist	Capel Rhydybriw, Sennybridge
2pm	Communion Service	Ty Newydd, Trecastle

