

Dewi Sant Welsh United Church

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Neges gan y Gweinidog.

It's that crazy time of year once again when everyone is rushing about thinking 'What can I get him (or her) that will be a suitable Christmas present?' when really what we are thinking is 'What can I get him (or her) that is good enough to make them give me something even better in exchange?'

We are so busy preparing for the Festival of Christmas we do not give ourselves the time or the energy to sit back and take in the meaning or the spirit of The Nativity, when God came to earth in human guise.

And so, as my message this month, I would like to share with you a story I heard many years ago, associated with the practise of giving Christmas presents. I cannot remember who told me this story, or if it has a basis in fact. All I know is that the story has remained in my memory and consciousness as an inspiration to me.

There were two brothers who were wealthy and tried to get the better of the other all the time, all in good fun. One particular Christmas John got the ultimate 'one-upmanship' on Harry by getting him a brand new shining car for his brother! Being unable to beat that, Harry accepted the gift and called for a truce!

On Christmas day afternoon Harry drove slowly around the neighbourhood so that everyone could see the new car. He stopped to get some gas and as he filled the tank a young boy walked up to admire the machine.

'Is this yours?' he asked. 'It sure is', replied Harry. 'My brother gave it to me as a Christmas present'. 'Wow!' Said the lad, 'I wish ...' In the split second before the sentence was finished, Harry could imagine what was coming - 'I wish I had a

brother like him' – But NO! that is not what he heard, but ' I wish I could be a brother like him'.

Harry was so impressed with this reply that he impulsively offered the boy a ride in the car, to take him home, as it had started to rain.

Stop here, said the boy as they reached his home. He ran quickly inside. 'He's going to show off that he had a ride in my car' thought Harry. But again he was wrong. Out came the boy pushing his invalid brother in a wheelchair. As both boys stared in admiration at the shining new car Harry heard this – 'Some day I am going to get you a Christmas present that will make me prove how much I love my little brother'.

This Christmas, as we prepare ourselves for the celebration of the Holy Birth, let us keep in mind the words of the Apostle Paul in his speech to the Elders at Ephesus – 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'.

Christmas blessing and joy to all readers of the Gadwyn.

Deian.

Don't let your worries get the best of you... Remember, Moses started out as a basket case!

UCW.....Merched yr Eglwys.

The UCW Bazaar held on the first Saturday in November was a huge success. Every stall did exceptionally well. It was such a positive feeling to see everyone working in harmony for the good of Dewi Sant. When I say working, I do not use the word lightly. From setting up the stalls on Friday to clearing up both on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning was hard work.

Our profit was over \$3,000. Thank you very much for all the baking, knitting, sewing, pickling, jam making, etc. It takes real dedication on behalf of the ladies to work this hard for the church.

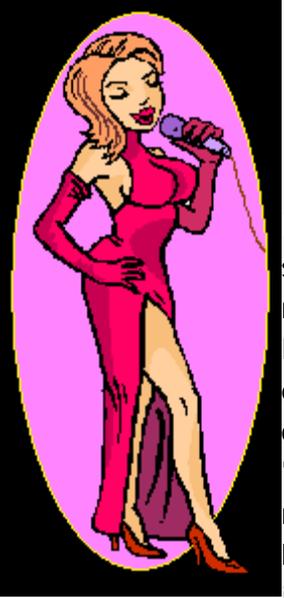
I will not mention the names as I would not like to miss anyone, but a vote of thanks goes to Sheryl Clay and Donna Morris for coordinating everyone and arranging the stalls ready for the onslaught when we opened the doors on Saturday. Thank you all, God Bless. Myfanwy.

My thanks to the Reverend Deian Evans and all the ladies for taking part in the Advent service—"The Symbols of Christmas." It was a peaceful, meaningful way to get ourselves into the mood of the Christmas season with all that it means to us as Christians.

Myfanwy.

Be careful reading the fine print. There's no way you're going to like it !!!!!!! The trouble with bucket seats is that not everybody has the same size bucket To err is human, to forgive....highly unlikely.

Do you realize that in about 40 years, we'll have thousands of old ladies running around with tattoos? This is way scary! Money will buy a fine dog, but only kindness will make him wag his tail. A good time to keep your mouth shut is when you're in deep water.



UPCOMING UCW EVENT, MARK THIS DATE IN YOUR CALENDER:

Murder Plays a Sour Note.

It's New Year's Eve at The Pitz, the city's most famous (or is it infamous?) supper club. The usual mix of customers, some noteworthy and some notorious, decorate the tables that surround the crowded dance floor. Everyone in the gregarious group of rarified revellers hoists a glass of champagne and readies their noise makers preparing to celebrate the arrival of the year 1955. As the clock strikes midnight, Lou Gumbardo and his band, "The Loyal Geraniums," begin the familiar strains of Auld Lang Syne. The moment has arrived - a new year that promises to continue the post-war boom of the Eisenhower administration. Suddenly, without warning, the club is in darkness and, amid the rumbling of the assembled guests, three shots ring out. When the lights go on again, it's deadly obvious that the darkened room provided a killer with the opportunity to put a strategic bullet hole into a surprised victim. Someone had dictated the dastardly demise of an individual whose brief glimpse of the new year proved to be a fatal attraction.

JOIN THE UCW FOR THIS YEAR'S 12TH NIGHT DINNER... A MURDER MYSTERY
SATURDAY, JANUARY 14TH, 2006, 7:00 PM, \$15.00 PER PERSON.

Play it again, Sam! Humphrey Bogart! Casablanca!

Such were the images conjured up by the trip sponsored by the University of Toronto entitled "exotic Morocco". It took little to persuade Ross and I to sign up and to append on both ends of the trip some time in Spain, especially Andalucia, the south of the country so steeped in Moorish history and architecture.

Our first week was spent searching out the history and culture of Seville, Cordoba and Granada, three cities still rich in Muslim architecture reflecting the hundreds of years that were spent there by the Moors until their final defeat during the reign of King Ferdinand II and Queen Isabel. These were the same monarchs who sponsored Christopher Columbus on his voyage to America. In fact, Granada and its fortress, the Alhambra, were taken in 1492, the same year as Columbus' famous voyage of discovery. The Alhambra, one of the world's fabled landmarks and arguably the number one tourist attraction in Spain, is a testimony to exquisite Muslim artistry in tile mosaic, plaster fretwork and painted cedar ceilings. These skills were also evident in all of the major buildings that we would visit in the five imperial cities of Morocco.

The melding of religions and cultures was nowhere more evident than in Cordoba, a city which ten centuries ago was the centre of Moorish Spain. While the rest of Europe languished in the Dark Ages, Cordoba was a centre of culture and learning, was home to the first university in Europe and had a library said to hold 400,000

hand-copied books. Two famous edifices are reminders of those bygone days. The Mezquita is a huge mosque that held up to 40,000 worshippers; in its heyday, a trip there equaled for Muslims a journey to Mecca. After the beginning of the Reconquista, the recapture of Andalucia by the Christians, part of the mosque was converted into a cathedral; the two, though not in active use, still co-exist to this day. The other building of note was the Alcazar de los Reyes Cristianos, the home of Isabel and Ferdinand and from where they bid farewell to Christopher Columbus as he set out to discover the new world; unfortunately the fortress would later become the headquarters of the dreaded Spanish Inquisition for three centuries. Cordoba has recently been made a World Heritage Site by UNESCO to try to ensure that these historical treasures will be preserved.

The trip to Morocco from Spain is at its narrowest point but a few kilometers but the transition in lifestyle can be measured in light years in many parts of the country. Morocco, as is true of many developing nations, is a country of contrasts. Opulent wealth co-exists with alarming poverty. Education does not guarantee work; almost 20% of university graduates are unemployed. In 1956, Morocco gained its independence from France and French is, along with Arabic, spoken by many of the country's inhabitants. The Berbers (of carpet fame) still comprise a large portion of a country that is 97.5% Muslim. We visited Morocco during Ramadan, the holy month in the Muslim calendar, and our impressions were somewhat modified by that reality. Almost everyone (except the very young, the very old or the infirm) fast from sunrise (around 5:00 a.m.) to sunset (around 5:00 p.m. at this time of the year). The work day finishes around 3:00 p.m. and thus the patterns that we observed were not necessarily typical. We were also there at the end of the dry season and the fields that are verdant in April and May were brown and harsh looking. Morocco's main source of income is agriculture but that was difficult to imagine in late October before the arrival of the November rains.

What took our fancy in this fascinating country? Every herd of sheep or goats, whether of six or sixty, was monitored by a goat herder or shepherd. In the rural areas, the scene was reminiscent of Biblical times as fields were plowed by donkeys and hand held ploughs. The imperial cities of Rabat, Meknes, Fes, Marrakesh and Casablanca all have an old walled medina, a nouvelle ville, and a mellah, or Jewish quarter, of narrow streets and charming houses. In the medinas are the souks, the famous bazaars where every manner of goods and services can be obtained. Donkeys vie for space in the markets with the shopper and wait for no man (or woman). Prices are determined by bartering but the poor quality of some goods does not guarantee a bargain even with a reduced price.

Dress varies from strict adherence to Muslim garb to Western clothing. Morocco is the most moderate of the Islamic nations and prides itself on being so. The present monarch, King Mohammed VI, is trying to make progressive changes and still maintain the loyalty of the Muslim nation. Polygamy is being discouraged and the Koranic schools are less in evidence especially in the urban areas. In these

schools, it was common for children to attend for up to six years before being taught to read. The curriculum centred on the reciting of the Koran and this has resulted in a literacy rate that is one of the world's lowest. However, the new educational initiatives are changing the face of the Morocco and young people are being encouraged to stay in school and become more involved in the economy. There are still huge challenges facing the monarchy but the sense is one of optimism.

As we spent our last few days back in Madrid, one other reality became evident to us. Much of the magnificent art work in the Prado reflects the church's patronage over the centuries; such is not so in an Islamic nation. The Muslim religion forbids the drawing of human or animal figures and there is a dearth of traditional art as we know it. The architecture is breathtaking as witnessed in the Hassan II mosque in Casablanca, the second largest mosque in the world. The tile work, the fretwork and painted ceilings are exquisite but are limited to variations in patterns. This is a fundamental difference in the interplay between religion and artistic expression in the two countries.

Both countries offer learning experiences. But Spain with its tapas, its flamenco dancing and its incredible wealth of art and artists from Valasquez to Picasso, from El Greco and Goya to Salvador Dali delights the senses in a way that Morocco does not. However, the former king of Morocco, Hassan II, used a metaphor to describe his country that is most fitting. He said that Morocco is "like a tree whose roots lie in Africa but whose leaves breathe in European air". It is this ambiguity that makes Morocco a most worthwhile travel destination and one to be savoured.

Betty Cullingworth.

Kitchen Corner.....Cornel Fach y Gegin.

With both Christmas and Winter coming soon, I am putting two good recipes in Y Gadwyn. For Thanksgiving I tried a very different dressing (or stuffing as we call it back home) This was very popular. I hope that you try it along side your regular favourite dressing. M.

Ingredients: 2 cups cranberries (fresh or dried) ; 1 cup of dried apricots; ½ cup bourbon (Jack Daniels); 3 Bartlett pears; ¼ cup prunes; 1 cup raisins; 3 large yellow onions; 3 celery sticks; ½ cup of melted butter; 2 cups of walnuts; 1 tablespoon ginger powder; 3 lightly beaten eggs; 1 cup of plain breadcrumbs.

Method: Chop all the ingredients into fairly small pieces. Combine the Bourbon, cranberries and apricots in a bowl, mix gently, cover and refrigerate over night.

When ready to dress the turkey, mix all the ingredients. I had far too much and baked the rest in a covered casserole dish. M.

Holiday Afterthought..... *I enjoy the holiday goodies, but on my post-holiday spree, I see the many "Reduced," signs, I wish--- how I wish!!! They meant ME !*

This next one is a very practical and economical,

A Hearty Winter Soup.

Ingredients: 1 pound ground beef; 3 medium onions—sliced; 3 celery stalks—diced; 2 large carrots; --- sliced; 1 medium potato — diced; 1 parsnip --- diced; 1½ cups cauliflower florets; 19 oz can of tomatoes; 1½ teaspoons salt; ½ teaspoon pepper; ½ teaspoon basil; ½ teaspoon thyme; ½ teaspoon sage ¼ teaspoon rosemary; 6 cups water. 1 cup uncooked macaroni or rice. Rice handles better for reheated soup.

Method: Brown the beef, drain well, add remaining ingredients except macaroni or rice. If using rice add to the soup 15 minutes before the end of the cooking time—or macaroni 7-10 minutes before the end of the cooking time.

This should warm the cockles of your hearts and is a change from traditional cawl !! Be warned. Do not double the recipe unless you intend to feed the five thousand. I did and had to freeze quite a lot.

Enjoy M.

Please "someone" !!! send me a recipe for next month.

The Work Of Christmas.

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and the princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music in the heart.

Christmas is not a time nor a season.
But a state of mind, to cherish the peace,
The goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy.
Is to have the real spirit of Christmas.

A chicken and a pig were walking past a church that had a large sign outside. "Help us Feed The Hungry." As they walked along they discussed ways in which the two of them could help. Finally the chicken came up with what he thought was a brilliant idea. "I know" he said, "let us give them all bacon and eggs." The pig thought for a moment and said, "for you that is a donation but for me it is total dedication."

Have you figured out if you are dedicated to Jesus or merely making the occasional donation?

Letters To The Editor.

I am enclosing a donation to the "Gadwyn". We are keeping well and appreciate receiving the "Gadwyn." We have been living in England since November 2002. We left Canada to be near Maureen's parents who were both suffering from ill health. Sadly both of them have since passed away.

I have managed to find night work at a large golf club in Essex, Maureen had unfortunately to let her bank job in Toronto go. We will probably be over next year to sell our apartment. We will obviously call in to see you all at Dewi Sant.

Give our regards to Geraint and Lyn, Mabel and Barry and everyone else there. Regards to Deian.

I am originally from Pwllheli and I visited Deian at his home in Criccieth with my mother, before he left for Canada. We still go to Caffi Cwrt for a cream te: he will know what I mean Nadolig Llawen a blwyddyn newydd dda i bawb. Ceiri a Maureen Jones.

With Sympathy

Dorothy Gwynne Braund passed away peacefully on Sunday November 13th, 2005 at Bayview Extendicare in her 92nd year. Survived by her loving sisters, Gwen Davies and Betty Crees and brother Edward. Predeceased by her parents, William and Gwendolyn Braund, sister Isobel and brother William. Dorothy will be missed dearly and fondly remembered by her many nieces, nephews, family and friends. Funeral service was held at St. Theodore of Canterbury Anglican Church on November 16th. Interment followed at Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

Goodbye to Good Friends

Over the past three years, James and I were honoured to be a part of the Dewi Sant Family. James came "back" to Canada with me from Cardiff, and we quickly found a church home that we were proud to be a part of. It seemed from the start that we had found a good mix of everything; warm people, great music, and a place to start our spiritual growth as a couple. Plus, it was a perfect fit - James is Welsh, and I was raised in the United Church. . The most poignant memory we hold is the first service we attended, when we were heartily welcomed by Heddwyn Williams and Cerwyn and Nora Davies.

I loved being a part of Merched Dewi, and learned how to get my mouth around difficult "LL" combinations, and the proper pronunciation of "Arglwydd"! Many thanks to Betty and all the ladies for being so great.

James especially enjoyed meeting fellow Welsh expats, and delighted in sharing Rugby triumphs with those brave fans who never did give up hope! For him, being a member of Dewi Sant was a great part of his life in Canada.

More recently, I was asked by Deian to join in with the newly-formed Dewi Sant Youth Group. I was delighted to be a part of such a dynamic group of people, and am genuinely sorry not to have been able to continue with this amazing and intelligent group. I hope that, in years to come, they will build upon the foundation that they've started.. To the Youth Group - thank you so much for the opportunity to spend time with you.

James has been offered a position in Dublin, Ireland, and we moved here on the 23rd of August. We were married by Deian on the 6th of August in a ceremony celebrating both our

Welsh and Canadian heritage, and have started a new chapter in our lives as husband and wife in a new country with new challenges and plans for the future. We are so very grateful for our time at Dewi Sant; for the people we've met and grown to love, to the friendships we have made with the congregation that will last in spite of geography. We promise to hold the flag high at Lansdowne Road this coming February for all the Welsh expats around the world, and hold our time at Dewi Sant warmly in our hearts. Please let us know if you come to Dublin. We'd love to catch up and show you around our new city!

Thank you all so much for being so kind and welcoming to us, and please keep in touch as we'd love to hear from you. With much appreciation and love,

James Ash and Kerstin Baker-Ash.

"My family and I appreciate receiving 'Y Gadwyn' immensely and feel we are part of your congregation. We pray for the continued success of Dewi Sant. The church is the way to a better life and we truly hope that the younger people see the "light" and start to attend regularly and not just expect the Church to be there for weddings, christenings and funerals." Sincerely, Iris Rees, Weirton, WV.

I was very humbled by the presence of all those who took time and effort to attend my investiture as a knight in the International Knightly Order of St George on October 29th 2005

Your and support and love was much appreciated.

Cerwyn.

Gadwyn Donors.

James Ash & Kerstin Baker-Ash, www.bakerash.ca: Mary Aubrey: Anne Boswell: George & Eirys Brobyn: Gwen Evans: Margaret Frampton: Megan Wynne McKee: Mary Morgans: David Pugh : Ceiri and Maureen Jones : David Jones: Trevor and Gwen Jones : Iris Rees from, Weirton W.V : Margaret Reynolds: Glen & Sandy Ross: John & Barbara Sharpe

On The Move.

David Pugh, President of the Ontario Gymanfa Ganu Association: 633 Fennel Road, R#.3, Kirkfield, Ontario, K0M 2B0: Eirlys Barker, Barton Retirement Residence, Suite #231, 17290 Leslie Street, Newmarket, Ontario, L3Y 3 E1:

Dorothy Jones, Tel # 905 472 0803

Welsh Superstitions.

The Welsh are famous for being superstitious. Looking back over the last century there are hundreds of superstitions. Here are just a few for the Christmas and New Year.

Christmas:

Holly is a symbol of eternal life. Other evergreens to bring into your homes include ivy, bay leaves and of course mistletoe. If you are a farmer, don't forget to bring in your plough and keep it under your dining table for the duration of the Christmas season. If you take a candle to church this Christmas, don't bring it home, blow it out and leave it there with the vicar for good luck. Mistletoe is a magical plant. It keeps evil spirits away as well as offering a good excuse to improve your love life.

Keep the Yule log blazing in your open fire. It's considered bad luck to light a fresh fire during the twelve days of Christmas. Two tree tips: don't throw green holly leaves on the fire or cut down an oak tree that has mistletoe growing on it.

New Year:

On New Year's day it's considered bad luck if the first visitor has red hair. Best luck comes from a knock at the door by a man you don't know with black hair carrying a piece of coal. Try to repay all debts and push your bank balance into the black before the New Year. Tradition has it that ending the year in debt means a whole new year of debt! It is considered unlucky to lend anyone anything on New Year's day--even lending a candle is considered unlucky. If you make a "calennig for new year (A New Year's gift.) don't throw it away afterwards. Put it on a stand on your window sill and it will bring you good luck for as long as it stands there. If you burn a Yule Log this Christmas, keep the ashes to bury along with your plant seeds in the spring. Superstition dictates that you'll be assured of a bumper crop. Remember to take down every last Christmas decoration before the end of the evening of January 5th. It's seen as bad luck to keep the trimmings after Twelfth Night.

Don't forget that you can advertise here for \$10 and \$25 or a business card.

British Baked Goods, St Lawrence Market, every Saturday in the North Building.

416 622 4599. Colin Christie. E mail mrcookiemanager@hotmail.com

Cyfarchion cynnes at fy ffrindiau yn EGLWYS DEWI SANT ac I holl ddarllenwyr Y GADWYN.

Bydded I fendithion a neges BABAN Y NADOLIG fod gyda chwi. Blwyddyn Newydd Dda I Bawb.

Sincere best wishes to all at DEWI SANT WELSH CHURCH and the readers of Y GADWYN. May the blessings and the message of the BABE OF CHRISTMAS be with you. A Happy New Year to you all. TOM PINION JONES, 9, Helvellyn Walk, Barrow-In-Furness, Cumbria, Britain, LA14 4PU

Upcoming Events.

December 3rd.

Saint Davids Christmas Dinner.

December 4th.

White Gift Sunday.

December 6th.

Lunch Bunch Christmas Party.

December 11th.

Children's Christmas Pageant.

December 24th.

Christmas Eve service at 8.00 pm.

December 25th.

Christmas morning worship service at 11.00 am.

January 14th.

Ucw 12th Night—Dinner and a Murder mystery.

February 14th.

UCW Valentine's Luncheon.

March 11th.

Saint Davids Society Annual Dinner Dance.

From The Editor. Have a great Christmas and a healthy happy New Year. Nadolig Llawn a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda i chi gyd. Gadwyn deadline December 18th 2005. Please try to send something, myfanwy@rogers.com

