



# Y GADWYN

(The Link)

*News of the Toronto Welsh Community*

Vol. 44 - 1

Ionawr/ January 2013

## Neges y Gweinidog From the Minister's desk

As I write this it is almost the end of January and Christmas seems to have happened a long time gone. And, quite frankly, I am glad for it, because Christmas was hard for me to celebrate this time. The murder of the innocents in Newtown, Connecticut, had a deep impact on me and made me wonder how to have Christmas in the midst of such a senseless tragedy. Christmas, after all, is about new life, God's new life made flesh in a newborn. How to celebrate and affirm that in the midst of a world gone horribly wrong? So on Christmas Eve we invited people in the Dewi Sant congregation to place a small candle on the communion table in our sanctuary in memory and honour of loved ones. One of the candles was for the children and teachers of Newtown and their families. That helped me to get through the service.

Also on Christmas Eve, my new-born grandson and his parents joined us for the service at Dewi Sant. Naturally, I choked up as I welcomed him and his parents by name. I continue to be so very grateful that they graced us with their presence and that they allowed us to behold the new life in our community. Christmas 2012 suddenly had meaning for me and I was able to celebrate joyfully and thankfully.

You see, it is not just that "life goes on" in the midst of great tragedy; it does, of course. More importantly, and, hopefully, with more lasting effect, the baby of Christmas and the murdered innocents in Connecticut and everywhere else give us a marvellous gift in that they remind us of how infinitely precious life is, even as it is so very fragile; how it is given to us to care for and protect all life, to ensure its well-being, to hold it in our hands, ever so gently, full of love and profound respect. That is what Christmas 2012 brought home to me and I pray that it will stay with me always. 2013 will bring a big change to Dewi Sant Welsh United Church. Provided the national church approves and moves in a timely fashion, the congregation will have a new full-time minister this summer. For both the congregation and for me the next few months will be a period of transition, of preparing for new ministry and leave-taking, and I think it is very important to do this process carefully and well.

At this point, and I apologize to my readers in advance, I must wax theological: "ministry is inherently incarnational," as one writer puts it. We must remember that God did not use some ephemeral spirit to bring in his reign of peace with justice, i.e. God's Kingdom. Instead, God chose to become flesh and dwell among us, in the very real person of Jesus Nazareth – that's why we celebrated Christmas. And God does not use disembodied spirits to serve in ministry, either. We may not be perfect and we can't try to please everyone, but ministers are flesh and blood people who form deep and abiding relationships with the people in our congregations. But when a minister leaves a congregation, these relationships, however important and valuable, must come to an end. That is why I believe former







## How did a Welsh Baptist become an Anglican?

From the early nineteenth century, Non-conformist chapels were the centres of religious life in most Welsh villages, and also of social, community, and even some political matters. Sunday Schools played an important part in literary and musical education, and although the teaching was often pedantic, many a fine singer, poet or orator emerged later on. When Queen Elizabeth 1 commissioned Bishop William Morgan to translate the Bible into Welsh in 1588, little did she know that, rather than “convert” the monoglot Welsh to the English church established by her father, Henry V111, the elegant, sonorous language of Bishop Morgan’s translation gave Welsh a linguistic foundation that ensured the continuation of the language to this day. The language became the centrepiece of so much debate many hundreds of years later, when different non-conformist denominations would interpret it in ways that served their own narrow agendas. Most believed that every word was **literally true**, of course.

Nonconformity did offer an alternative to the Established Church (i.e. Church of England) in another important way- it was uncompromisingly Welsh. During my grandfather William Jones’ youth, he was taught in a Church of England school in Wales. Its official British Government mandate was to assimilate the “**natives**”, including abolishing their language by forbidding its use in schools, even during play-time. Punishment was draconian. A child caught speaking Welsh was forced to wear a wooden halter around his/her neck with the letters W.N. (**Welsh Not**) burnt into the wood. If a child heard another play-mate speaking Welsh, he/she could pass on the yoke to that child. The one wearing the yoke at the end of the day was severely caned. Imagine what that has done to the psyche of the Welsh!

When I visited James Bay in 1969 I had the strangest sensation of “déja –vu” on finding the same history of attempted assimilation of Aborigines, and I have never forgotten it.

In addition to rejecting most Catholic or Anglican theology, Nonconformists defined social priorities in their own way. They had clear ideas on what behaviours were acceptable- for example, the Sabbath was to be kept holy, meaning that no work or leisure activity was allowed save for reading “improving” books, walks in the country, hymn singing, and sacred music. Hobbies and crafts were unacceptable, even knitting and crochet for the women, although, of course, cooking and serving meals, including the gargantuan Sunday lunch of roast meat, at least three vegetables, plus potatoes (roast and boiled), and a baked pudding (usually rice) was expected. Strangely enough even activities such as cutting fingernails or washing hair were banned in **Ogmore House** (my home), and in every house like it in the village. God was a stern and rigid judge, and the Devil was very real. It said so in the inscription over the pulpit in my chapel: “Duw a ddwg pob Gweithred i Farn” – God will bring every Act to Judgement.

Behaviour during the week was also rigidly defined. We all doffed our caps to the aristocracy, mine managers, and others who were deemed worthy of “respect” (whilst often criticizing them in private). Children were expected to be obedient and unobtrusive. Many older men expressed strong opinions on what women were allowed to do, even after the partial female emancipation during and after the Second World War. For instance, their clothing was to be conservative-no trousers, short skirts etc, and no make-up, not even a touch of lipstick. William Jones (my grandfather) equated nail varnish with very loose morals, and was heard to say so to my cousin, Myrtle Bowen, whom he saw wearing some in about 1944. (Myrtle later married the Dean of St David’s Cathedral !!) Alcohol was even worse, for both sexes, and William protested loudly about it at every opportunity. He, of course, never touched a drop, although he loved my mother’s home-made ginger beer, which was definitely alcoholic (but was innocuous because it was home-made!)

Such was my narrow view of religion as a member of Bethania Welsh Baptist chapel until left for University in England at the age of 19. I was unused to congregational participation in services, apart from our enthusiastic hymn singing. And there was definitely no need for a separate choir. My former minister, the sanctimonious Rev. Emlyn Roberts, did everything, from reading the lessons, to

long-winded sermons and interminable extemporaneous prayers. I seem to remember more about sin than forgiveness, and about repentance than redemption. As young people we were not allowed to question our elders or betters about any aspect of belief or worship, not even after being admitted to full membership by baptism as teenagers. This took place by total immersion outdoors in November each year, and I can remember mine vividly from 67 years ago when I was 13. At 19, therefore, I had no knowledge or experience of any other denominations. This was to change quite rapidly, as I had already fallen in love with an Anglican! (I discovered much later that her Baptist father had been brought into the Anglican Church by the same means as I would be. ) The very first Anglican service I would attend was our wedding ceremony in 1958.

During my time at Sheffield University I was introduced to an alien world. On my first Sunday morning I attended an English Congregational Church with my landlady, and, naturally, sang the hymns with gusto, only to have a couple of people in the pew in front turn with astonishment and say "Tha can't sing like that in't congregation, lad-tha should be in't choir."

Secondly I was introduced to a significant ethnic diversity, from my professors to fellow students. There were prejudices galore, and for the first time I found myself on the wrong side. I developed a thick skin quite quickly. **And** I retained my Welsh accent!

After moving to Kingston in 1969, the family became members of St George's Cathedral, where we have remained to this day. Our children were raised there, attending Sunday School and singing in the Cathedral choir. As the only non-Anglican in the family I had trouble adjusting to some things, especially the Creed. I could not say with a good conscience that I personally believed in the Holy Catholic Church. But then the Dean and I had a chat about it and he suggested that I say "WE" instead of "I". That fixed it and I found my spiritual home. I wonder what the Rev Emlyn Roberts would say?

The sad news? Bethania Baptist Church no longer exists, just 100 years after it was built.

**Malcolm Williams**

*(Malcolm is a retired ENT specialist, living in Kingston with his wife Denny-a well-known and respected musician. They worship at St George's cathedral. Malcolm is past president of the Kingston Welsh Society.)* Diolch Malcolm

## A plea for help

**We are looking for Welsh items for the Ontario Welsh Festival, if you have any you are able to donate please contact: People are always asking for Welsh items that they can buy. Many of us buy things every time that we go over to Wales. Most of them are put to one side as time goes by. Many of these things are soon put to one side. Trish Stevenson at 905-884-2603 or at [the.stevensons@rogers.com](mailto:the.stevensons@rogers.com) Thank you very much Trisha**

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**A message to our loyal audience:** \_The following is our concert line-up for the Spring season.

**Sat, Feb 9<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 pm** - Trinity St. Paul's United Church, Toronto (Prostate Cancer Charity concert)  
**Fri, Apr 12<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm** - Metropolitan United Church, Toronto (Believe in Kids Charity concert)

To purchase tickets on-line for the Feb 9<sup>th</sup> concert, please go to

<http://www.ticketweb.ca/sn/Action?query=welsh+choir> or order tickets for any concert by telephone at 416 410-2254 or toll-free at 877 410-2254 (in 905/705 calling areas only) or purchase tickets at the door, depending on availability. Also, please check out our website at

<http://welshchoir.ca/> for more information about us, our upcoming performances, and how to become a sponsor of our choir.

Your donations can be sent to TWMVC, 33 Melrose Ave., Toronto, ON M5M 1Y6 We are looking forward to seeing you at our concerts, Al Sadegursky, Director of Publicity, TWMVC

## Happy St Dwywen's Day (Information)

We love Wales, and we know you do too! At the Community Foundation in Wales we are passionate about our nation, and about the role and value of grass-roots organisations which make a real difference in communities across Wales. That's why we have created the 'Fund for Wales' – a truly unique national endowment fund which connects people who care with causes that matter. With HRH The Prince of Wales as our patron, over £250,000 already raised, and our first grants awarded, we are showing that together we really can make a difference. Show a little love for Wales and make a gift to the Fund for Wales on St Dwywen's Day, on St David's Day, or on any day throughout the year! Visit our new website, launching today, [www.fundforwales.org.uk](http://www.fundforwales.org.uk) to tell us why you love Wales and to make your donation. Thank you Liza and Siân FUND FOR WALES TEAM



**Many of us here in Canada celebrate Santes Dwywen as well as Saint Valentine.**

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### **DID YOU KNOW THIS**

Many years ago a young boy would watch coal carts / lorries labour across the English border from Wales with their heavy loads of coal to the villages and outlying districts. He became totally fascinated by the strange looking Welsh names on the lorries. He spent many hours trying to put sounds to the letters. (That's no mean task even today!)

**John R R Tolkien** I am sure that you have all heard of him even if you have not read his books. Tolkien was born in South African January 1892. At a young age his mother brought him and a younger brother to Britain after his father's death.

Soon the two boys became orphans. They were subsequently send to relatives and then to boarding houses. A catholic priest had assumed guardianship.

Tolkien attained a first class degree at Exeter College, fought in the Battle of Somme where he was seriously wounded. Once he had recovered he furthered his linguistic studies and became a professor at Oxford University. He wrote **The Hobbit** and **Lord of the Rings**. **They became the most popular books in the world having sold tens of millions of copies!**

Why am I writing about Tolkien? WELL, he had a deep connection with Wales He was inspired by Wales drew on Welsh toponymy (the study of words of all kinds.) for his fantastical place names.

The Black Mountains have very often been linked with Tolkien's fictional landscapes. **D Fimi** draws on Tolkien's work and Welsh connections and inspirations. Tolkien conceived the relationship between the Shores of Middle Earth as equivalent to the contemporary relationship between England and Wales. Tolkien knew the Welsh language—both medieval and modern. You can see the influences in his writing. He did not “borrow” Welsh words, but the sounds that some of them made. Welsh was extremely important in one of the **Elvish** languages ie: **Sindarin**. Tolkien was attracted to Welsh as a **language of intrinsic beauty, “something ancient that had to be passed on.** He was often heard to say that he loved Wales and the Welsh language.

Some of the thematic elements in The Hobbit can be traced to the Mabinogion. He was truly well versed in Wales, the Welsh language, traditions and mythology.

I have merely scratched the surface here. If you have not read any of Tolkien's work now is the time. Start with The Hobbit. Also many of you might like to read his works in order that you can truly appreciate the Welsh influences and sounds etc as well as the Finnish connections!. As Einstein once said, “**Imagination is greater than knowledge!**” For further reading there is “Tolkien and Wales “by Carl Phelpstead and Dimitra Fimi's “Tolkien Race and Culture.” **Myfanwy.**

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**In Memoriam Er Parchus Gof**  
**Reverend Peter Tucker**

It is with heavy heart that we announce the passing of Reverend Peter David Cecil Tucker, retired minister for the Holy Trinity United Church in Elliot Lake, St. Peter The Apostle Anglican Church and the Faith Lutheran Church in Elliot Lake on December 31st, 2012 at Huron Lodge. He is survived by his loving wife Anne Tucker of Elliot Lake, children Douglas Tucker (Pam) of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Patricia Burke (Joe) of South Carolina, grandchildren Jason Evans of Wales, Donna Evans of Wales, Abigail Tucker of Halifax, Sophie Tucker of Halifax and great grandchildren Lila and Eleanor Evans both of Wales. Dear brother of John Tucker (Rhiannon) of England, Mary Follett (John) of Wales and the late Jean Thomas (Philip) of England. Out of respect for the family wishes, cremation has taken place and a celebration of a life well lived will be held from Holy Trinity United Church in Elliot Lake April 15th, 2013 at 2:00 pm. Memorial contributions to the Holy Trinity United Church in Elliot Lake would be appreciated by the family. Arrangements entrusted to the Elliot Lake Funeral Chapel & Cremation Centre (36 Ontario Ave.,). Expressions of sympathy may be left for the family at

[www.elliottlakefuneralchapel.com](http://www.elliottlakefuneralchapel.com)

**Lynn Jones**

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**GADWYN DONORS -JAN. 2013**

Helen Taylor, Dorothy Wilson , Anita McConnel, Bruce Cherrett, Ray and Mary Batten, Elwyn and Nancy Jones, David Jones, Joan and Brian Hughes, Sybil Mather, Myanwy – Williams Owen. *Thank you to Y Gadwyn Donors. Your donations are appreciated. If you hand in a cheque during the Sunday collection, please make sure that it is clearly marked GADWYN.*

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**IT MAY TAKE A MINUTE FOR THE "LIGHT TO SHINE," BUT THESE ARE CLEVER!.....**

ARBITRATOR: A cook that leaves Arby's to work at McDonalds . AVOIDABLE: What a bullfighter tries to do. BERNADETTE: The act of torching a mortgage BURGLARIZE: What a crook sees with CONTROL: A short, ugly inmate COUNTERFEITERS: Workers who put together kitchen cabinets ECLIPSE: What an English barber does for a living Eye dropper, a clumsy ophthalmologist

**Sunday School** As you know there have been requests for you pennies in Y Gadwyn. These pennies go to buy bed kits for “Sleeping Children Around the World.” What could be a better way to get rid of all those pennies lying around ? I don't know the exact date that pennies will not be accepted as currency, so the sooner the better please.

**Myfanwy**

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**Saint Davids Society of Toronto**

The banquet is on 23<sup>rd</sup> of February at Thornhill Golf and Country Club. **Reception .6.15 Dinner at 7.00 .** We will be presenting **Professor Chris Williams of Swansea.** Specialist Subjects: Welsh History, British History, Modern History, Modern Celtic Studies Chris Williams read Modern History at Balliol College, Oxford before taking his PhD at Cardiff University under the supervision of Professor Dai Smith. From 1988 until 2001 he was Lecturer and then Senior Lecturer in the School of History and Archaeology at Cardiff University. From 2001 until 2004 he was Professor and Director of the Centre for Modern and Contemporary Wales and Co-Director of the Centre for Border Studies at the University of Glamorgan. He joined the Swansea University as Professor of Welsh History in January 2005.He will be presenting us with some of Richard Burton's writings from his diaries. It is said that Richard Burton was as fine a writer as he was an actor—if not even better. Chris is the editor of the newly released Burton Diaries.

The Toronto Welsh male Voice Choir will be gracing us with their presence, (and performance!). **Ticket price is \$80 per person. Due to the constant increase in the price of food etc. we have had to add \$5 to the price this year, I am taking email and telephone orders payable by cheque to The Saint David's Society of Toronto.**

**Also selling tickets are Mabel Hastings, Julie Wenz, Elizabeth Stroud, Peter Lloyd Jones and Reg Trodd.**

**Please order your tickets quickly with your choice of Beef, Salmon or vegetarian.**

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**Wales celebrates 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of David Lloyd George.....** Just a few lines from an article by Dafydd Wigley.....”The only Welshman to have become Prime Minister of The United Kingdom. Born in Manchester of Welsh parents. At the tender age of 27 he won the Caernarfon seat in a Parliamentary by-election. He served the Caernarfon Constituency in the House of Commons for over

