

DEWI SANT CHURCH NEWS

MOMENTS FROM THE SERVICES OF JANUARY

In Epiphany Sunday, January 8, we remembered the star which the Magi followed to find Jesus. In early Christian thinking Jesus Christ became known as “the bright morning star” (Revelation 22: 16). The question is, “What guiding star do we choose that does not seek possessively to control us or warp our lives? What guiding star gives us the freedom to find the way that is true for each one of us?” In our New Year’s resolutions we are called to meditate and reflect on the star that we are following. Where is it leading us?

On January 14 we considered how in the season of Epiphany, when the bright star is revealed to us, we can nevertheless feel compelled to ponder the failings of humanity, and the imperfections of our own lives. What can we do with such winter, spiritual blues and how shall we respond to those anxieties? The blues call us to recognize that we are children of the *More Than*. How often Jesus said, “Even more, shall God...” “How much more shall God...” “Still more will be given you” (Luke 11: 13; Mark 4: 25). Jesus said he had much more good news to bring, about remedying our human ills, news that summoned people to a new year blessed by the Lord. That’s why we are here today, because we know that we are children of the *More Than*, more than just what we experience in our January blues.

For January 21, we considered the response of the fishermen to the call from Jesus to come and follow him. It was as though someone was knocking on the door of the lives of Simon Peter and Andrew, James and John, summoning them to open it and walk through. If they opened the door they would see a vision of a kingdom that was different from the kingdoms of their world, and they would be invited to share in a life that was different from the life they were living. “Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you...” (Revelation 3: 20).

On the final Sunday we celebrated the Christingle service. The whole service reminded us how we wish to live in the light, from the gospel hymn “Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning” to the Christingle song about “the candle of the Christingle with shining flame so bright reminds us of the loving God who is the world’s true light”.



Teagan and Theresa Thomas distributing Christingles

Sheryl Clay-Newall sang the Shaker hymn *Simple Gifts*. The homily was based on Jesus’ recognition of the hidden talents of Peter. When he was told by Jesus to “Go out into deeper water and let down your nets for a catch”, and then caught a great shoal of fish. Peter realised he was in

the presence of someone greater than himself who was seeking a hold on his life. Jesus went on to tell Peter what he could become. "Do not be afraid, Peter; from now on you will be catching people." Jesus treated Peter according to what he was capable of becoming, and Jesus acted to call forth Peter's potential. Peter was one who caught the light and became more than he was. Don't be afraid. Catch the light.

The Editor



Daniel Thomas examining the Christingle

BIBLE STUDY

Since my coming to Dewi Sant a few people have asked me if I would be offering any Bible study. I would be happy to do so if there is really a group who wants to come. I am willing to offer a study that will explore the ways of prayer for today. Such a study will certainly make use of Scripture but it will also use traditional and current understandings of prayer from the universal church.

In such a study we will look at prayer as conversation, as listening, as meditation and as adoration and contemplation. Some of our time together will be devoted to understanding the theory and practice of prayer. But there will also be room for personal experiments and experiences, which will always be very personal to each person in the group, and so private.

I would start the group towards the end of Lent and carry it through into the Easter season. We would meet every second week on a day to be decided by the group, and each meeting would last for one and a half hours.

As I do prepare quite a few materials for such a study it is important that we know how many people want to attend. I understand that the Session of Dewi Sant are telephoning their lists of contacts and letting people know about the possibility of such a study group. But please, before the 15th of March, let Fiona in the church office know if you want to attend.

Shalom!

Don

BIRTHDAYS

Several members of the congregation had birthdays in January. Ava Lloyd-Jones turned 14 (!) and Myfanwy Bajaj turned 39 again (!). Olwen Dunets turned 99 on January 9!



Olwen and her daughter Anna (the Editor in person)

ATTENDANCE AT DEWI SANT

Dewi Sant Welsh United Church continues to worship and serve its Lord, Jesus Christ. You are important to our friendship and community. Here are our attendance numbers for January. Attendance is a good gauge for us to see into our future. We would love to see more of you!

Jan. 6th: 23

Jan. 13th: 28

Jan. 21st: 24

Jan. 28th: 31 (Christingle)

The Session

UPDATE YOUR GIVINGS

Many of you use the PAR system to donate on a regular basis to Dewi Sant. For those who don't, you may have noticed forms in many of the pews for you to read and complete, if you wish to contribute in this manner. For the church it allows for long term planning since donations are equally spaced throughout the year. For those already on PAR, remember that you can change it at any time and that means you can increase your givings! You can use the same form that is in the pews to make this change. Tick the box at the top left of the form where it says "For banking changes for existing donors" then fill in the "Donor name" section and the revised amount in "Gift amount \$" and the revised split of the amount between the church and the M&S. You do not have to submit a void check if your bank account remains the same. Hand this form in to the PAR Administrator which in our case is Fiona Boyd, our church secretary, info@dewisant.com.

LETTER FROM CAROL CHRISTIAN

Carol sent us this moving letter this past December about her and Dylan's traumatic experience escaping the fire which consumed much of Fort McMurray in 2016 (lasting until 2017). Due to

formatting issues and so many events at Dewi Sant over Christmas (and our paper limit) we had to wait till this edition to include it.

The Editor

Hello to all at Dewi Sant.

First, I must apologize profusely about the length of time it has taken for us to send this thank you card as follow-up to our initial thank you expressing our heartfelt appreciation for your most thoughtful donation. The past 17 months have been incredibly trying; an emotionally draining time. Going through something like the fire last May really does leave lasting emotional and mental impacts. It even took our cat, Clawed, about six months to return to his normal personality.

I know many of you saw the news coverage of the fire. I can't begin to tell you what a nightmare it was to basically run for your life. The disbelief that it really is happening. Then to sit in bumper to bumper traffic while watching the fire creep closer to your homes and your vehicles, and as afraid as you were, you had to stay calm in all that traffic. The hopeful optimism that your home escaped the fire then learning it didn't and everything was lost. All the treasured mementos like the pasta and paper heart necklace Dylan, now 30, made me when he was in daycare; a photo of my dad when he was 17 taken sitting on the plow being pulled by two horses on the family farm; the Christmas decorations that you've spent years collecting; the much loved books and favourite pieces of jewelry; the souvenirs picked up on travels, and the gifts you've received over the years from family and friends, some of whom are now passed. All those sentimental pieces that make up your life that can never be replaced.

I wouldn't wish that experience on anyone. It is difficult to explain the feeling that all you want to do is go home and be surrounded by everything that is familiar and that you hold dear, but you can't.

The next few months were incredibly challenging; mentally, emotionally and financially. We did have an opportunity to sift through the ashes to see if we could find anything, but the fire burned so quick and hot, there wasn't anything to find.

The financial struggle after the fire while waiting for insurance monies to start being paid for living allowances was horrible. Paying a mortgage, rent, home insurance and condo fees was an incredible burden. The amazing generosity of the Dewi Sant congregation was so gratefully received. It made me cry. It was a tremendous help. We need you all to know that it was a wonderful gift at a time of desperate need. Just to say thank you seems such an inadequate response in the face of such giving. I did contact the church immediately and leave a message of heartfelt thanks.

Both Dylan and I were told we have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. It would explain why for the longest time we could only manage what we needed to, to make it through the day. We are still up to a year out of our home as our rebuild was frustratingly slow in starting. With some optimism we are hoping to be home in time for next Christmas.

Dylan and I are currently living in a little townhouse. Dylan had just started looking for a place of his own and was preparing to move when the fire struck. He is in the process of making his own plans for the future. I was very proud of Dylan the day the evacuation happened. It was he who drove us out of Fort McMurray, staying calm and collected the entire time.

I remember on that day, when I yelled upstairs to him that we were evacuating, he was on the phone to his girlfriend who was in Ontario. He also didn't believe it was happening; telling his girlfriend his mum was losing her mind because she was taking things down off the walls. Hahaha. I had grabbed a couple of paintings mum and dad had given me years ago.

People, myself included, always say they know exactly what they would do and take when something like that happens; but you don't. You never know how you're going to react. I will always regret not listening to that little voice in my head and loading the car with my most important belongings in the couple of days leading up to the evacuation. Instead, we had a panicked 10 minutes to grab what few things we could.

Again, thank you all so very much. Your kindness was truly appreciated. I have enclosed a cheque for \$110 to mark the 110th anniversary for Dewi Sant. Here's to another 110 years.

*God bless
Carol and Dylan.*

LETTER FROM IONA REES

Thank you so much for Y Gadwyn which is so well researched and interesting. Thanks also to my friends who haven't forgotten me. It means a great deal. What a surprise it was to have Don Bell turn up at my door. It was a lovely visit and his blessing meant a lot. You have no idea how I miss the Sunday morning service, the Christmas dinner and cups of tea – it's what makes us so Welsh.
Sincerely, Iona Rees

DEWI SANT 110TH ANNIVERSARY

I am delighted to tell you that the 110th Committee of Dewi Sant raised \$8,850 from our Anniversary donations! This has included Risti Jensen's idea of "\$110 for our 110th" and a generous donation from the Toronto Welsh Male Voice Choir. Our Home Coming Weekend concert cleared \$1,549 - so Dewi Sant is now better off by \$10,399! What a marvellous achievement by all of us who have helped to celebrate our Welsh heritage and history.

Our Souvenir Sales of mugs, notelets, pins, and stamps, all with our specially designed 110th logo, is unfortunately \$384.97 in the red. Please would you consider ordering any of these items from me (lynettej@scaw.org or 416 281 8758) to help us put our "sales" in the black?

My grateful thanks go to all the Committee members, families and friends of Dewi Sant who have ensured that we can still proudly fly our red dragon over the church in 2018. As we have been saying - we are the ONLY Welsh church in Canada.
Lynette Jenkins, Chair 110th Anniversary Committee

OUTREACH

OUTREACH DURING LENT

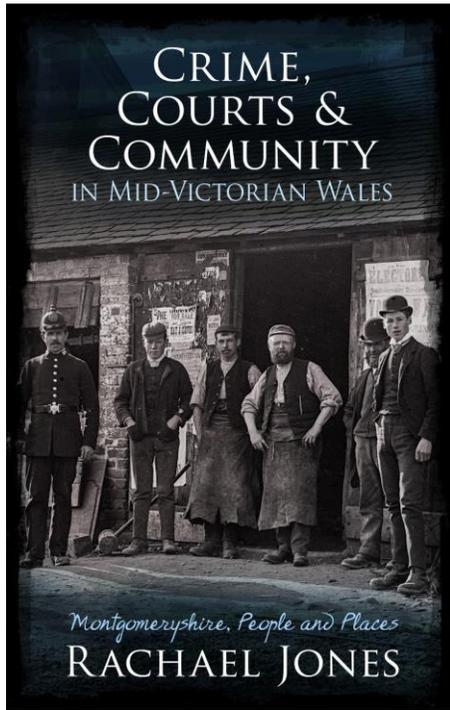
The Dewi Sant community was very generous with their support for the food bank and gifts for teens during Advent, and the need for food-bank support is ongoing, of course. As Lent approaches, perhaps we may consider giving up a luxury during this time and use that money to donate to an outreach initiative to an abused women's shelter in North York?

For many years, the Lunch Bunch regulars donated items to the shelter, but for the past few years, since our programme finished, we have not donated anything to the shelter. One of their basic needs was for new socks for women and children. I am suggesting that during the weeks leading up to Easter, we hold a "Sock Drive". Should you wish to participate, I will place a basket in the Narthex to collect your donations. I hope that many of you will like this idea and I look forward to being able to deliver a basket of socks to this worthy cause.

Gaynor McConnell

Crime, Courts and Community in Mid-Victorian Wales: Montgomeryshire, People and Places

This new book of local history by Dr. Rachael Jones is to be published in spring 2018. It is a detailed look at life during the 1870s as seen through a study of the criminal justice system. Fascinating



details such as the chief constable's campaign against brothels in Newtown, a raid on the Waggon and Horses public house and the pursuit of thieves along the Kerry Ridgeway provide a vivid picture of life. Dr. Jones looks at the whole community, and discusses how people's lives, townscapes and countryside were interlinked. There are particular focuses on women's experience, social relations and how people used the law to stand up for themselves. The voices of individuals are read in extracts from their testimonies, and local speech including thee and thou is heard. The book is available for advanced purchase from Amazon or the University of Wales Press website. If your family is from Montgomeryshire you may find your ancestors mentioned!

The Editor

WELSH TV - THE NATURAL HOME OF DARK DRAMA IS WALES

This article in the Guardian by Sarah Hughes discusses the growing Welsh TV industry and how the landscape attracts shows needing a background of mystery and the supernatural. Some of these shows portray Wales as very bleak which perhaps is true if shot in the winter. *Hinterland* is based in Aberystwyth and the episodes I have seen are very dark and wet indeed, because they were done in winter.

The Editor

A haunting [BBC One](#) series is being heralded as the latest evidence of a boom in Welsh drama and television. [Requiem](#), which starts early next month, tells the story of a young cellist (Lydia Wilson) who becomes drawn into a decades-old mystery involving a small Welsh community and a missing child. Its unusual blend of horror, crime drama and supernatural chills could only have been achieved by shooting in Wales, said its Australian creator, Kris Mrksa. "The Welsh landscape (countryside near Newport) was so inspirational and so otherworldly that I realised this was the only place this kind of story would really work."

Nor is the six-part drama the only series to be making the most of Wales's combination of otherworldly landscapes and experienced on-the-ground production crews. Sky Atlantic's historical epic [Britannia](#) used Gower's Rhossili Bay and the Henrhyd Falls in Powys to stand in for Celtic Britain; the BBC sci-fi thriller [Hard Sun](#) was filmed in Anglesey; and Channel 4's adoption drama [Kiri](#) was filmed in Cardiff. Wolf Studios Wales, a vast new production studio in Cardiff Bay, is home to both Sky One's new fantasy series [A Discovery of Witches](#) and the BBC adaptation of Philip Pullman's [His Dark Materials](#). The global success of series such as [Hinterland/Y Gwyll](#), recorded in Welsh and English, has led to a growing interest in Welsh drama.

“I think there’s a real confidence here right now,” says Ed Talfan, co-creative director of Severn Screen, the production company behind *Y Gwyll* and *Craith*. “*Hinterland* has shown that you can think local and hit universal, which is really liberating.”

The Welsh assembly has lent Wolf Studios Wales £4m in exchange for increased investment in the country from television companies such as Sky, the BBC and HBO. The Bad Wolf deal is intended to revitalise the Welsh economy as much as attract new talent, allowing Wolf Studios Wales to employ local people in everything from costume design to carpentry. “The aim is to make people aware that working in television is not simply about being in front of the camera or holding it,” she says. “We have the chance to put in place a long-term programme that isn’t just about attracting talent to Wales but also about developing skill sets from a young age that could benefit both the community and the local economy.”

UPCOMING EVENTS

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY!

This year, for the third time, we will celebrate Family Day with a special service. Families will be invited to participate and all members of our Dewi Sant family (and friends) are urged to join us on Sunday, February 18th, 2018.

Hefina Phillips

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This meeting will be held on March 11, 2018 after the church service, starting at 12:30. Please attend so that important matters in the life of the church can be discussed and implemented. Also, for those responsible for writing articles in the Annual Report please submit them to Fiona by February 14.

The Session

ST.DAVID’S SOCIETY

Mark the date! The Annual St. David’s Day lunch will be held at the Old Mill on Saturday, February 24.

ONTARIO WELSH FESTIVAL

Please join us in historic Kingston for a very special weekend on April 27-29, 2018 celebrating our Welsh heritage, music and culture. The Festival headquarters will be the **HOLIDAY INN WATERFRONT**, at the bottom end of Princess Street. Kingston is situated at the eastern edge of Lake Ontario. It’s been a while since the Festival was held here, and I’m sure you will all look forward to attending and visiting there again.

There’ll be the usual favourites of Welcome Tea on Friday afternoon, with Mary Muckle at the harp, and the evening Noson Lawen followed by informal singing. Hefina Phillips’s workshop on “Say it in Welsh” was so popular last year in Stratford that she will once again host a similar workshop on Saturday. What a wonderful opportunity to practice and learn new conversational words...and let’s not forget the Marketplace – always well-liked. A tour of the Royal Military College (RMC) is also planned. Further details will become available with your registration package and on the web-site.

Saturday evening there will be the Banquet with a presentation of the annual Gold Award, followed by the Grand concert featuring CÔR Y GLEISION from Cardiff, Wales. Established in 2006, the choir has continued to grow and develop, and in 2016 won the First Prize in an Open Choir Competition. They have toured Spain, Scotland and Belgium, and of course are really looking forward to singing for us. Check out their web-site www.corygleision.co.uk and listen to them on YouTube. The afterglow of informal singing will follow, back at the hotel. The concert and the Sunday Gymanfa sessions will be held in the **Sydenham Street United Church** – now also known as **The Spire**.

We look forward to seeing you all, plus new friends. **Call to secure your room: 613-549-8400 direct OR 1-800-315-2621** Festivals rates for the hotel are: **\$139.99 per traditional room and \$149.99 for King rooms.**

www.ontariowelshfestival.ca www.facebook.com/ontario.welsh.festival
Mairwen Thornley

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Please contact the Editor if you wish to receive Y Gadwyn by email. If you want to keep using paper we are also looking for donations to cover the postage. Please contact Anna Dunets at adunetswills@gmail.com.

CONTACT US AND SUBMISSIONS

Anna Dunets, Editor. Email: adunetswills@gmail.com or 416-485-4074.

Please send in your contributions by February 28 which is the cut-off date for submissions to the next issue.

