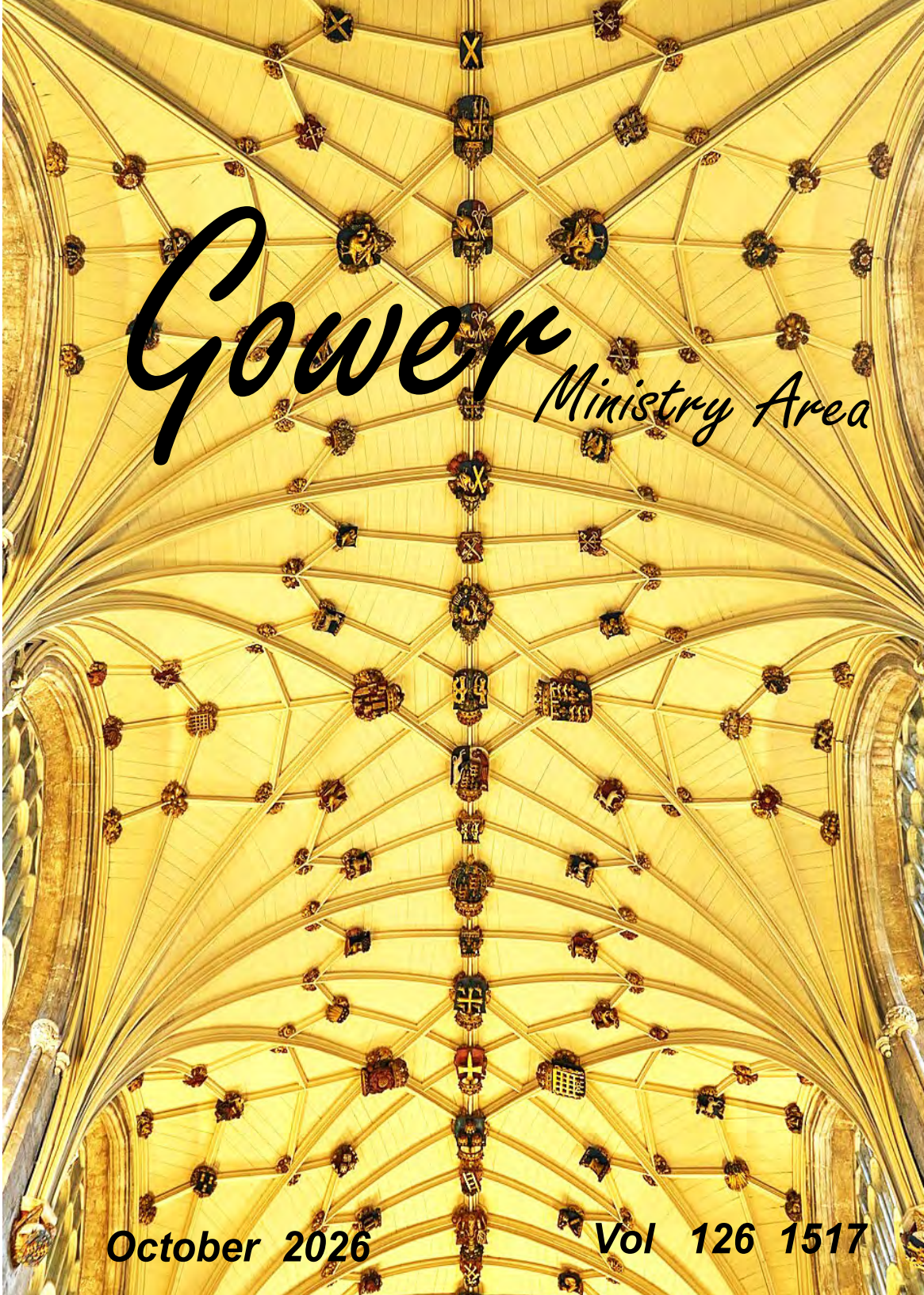

Gower
Ministry Area
October 2026
Vol 126 1517

The Ministry Area Of Gower



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Cover picture: Something to cherish and keep - The roof in Winchester Cathedral

Back page picture: Something to cherish and keep - The Great West Window in Winchester Cathedral

Advertising or Subscriptions

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The theme for September

Gathering In: What To Keep, What To Let Go

chosen by Tim Ardouin

October on Gower is a month of drawing in. The cliffs quieten, the fields settle, and the tides grow heavier with the weight of the year's turning. Farmers gather the last of the harvest; fishers and surfers read the changing waters; hedgerows thicken with berries and birds prepare for their long autumnal travels. It is a season that invites us to pause, breathe, and ask an ancient question shared by both Christian and Celtic traditions: What do we keep, and what do we let go?

The Wisdom of the Land

In Celtic spirituality, the land is a teacher. The early Welsh saints lived close to the rhythms of field and shore, trusting that creation revealed the movements of God. Autumn was never simply a time of loss but a time of discernment. The land keeps what it needs: seeds, roots, and the memory of summer light. It releases what has completed its purpose: leaves, spent grasses and the last warmth of the year.

This rhythm is mirrored in our own lives. As Gower's fields are cleared and its hedgerows thinned by the wind, we too are invited to sift through the year, its blessings, burdens, habits, and hopes, and ask what must be gathered in and what must be laid down.

Christian Teaching: The Harvest of the Heart

Christian tradition speaks of harvest not only as an agricultural reality but as a spiritual one. Jesus often used the language of sowing, reaping, pruning, and storing to describe the inner life. "Gather the wheat into my barn," he says in Matthew's Gospel, an image of God's desire to preserve what is good, true, and life-giving within us.

Autumn becomes a season of holy sifting. What has nourished us? What has grown in us that reflects Christ's compassion, courage, or gentleness? What practices and relationships have borne fruit? These are the things we gather in and store like grain, trusting they will sustain us through winter's quiet.

Yet Jesus also speaks of letting go: pruning branches that no longer bear fruit and releasing burdens that weigh on the soul. The Christian life is not only about growth but also surrender. Trees do not cling to their leaves out of fear; they release them so that new life can come. Autumn teaches us that letting go is not failure but faithfulness.

Celtic Teaching: The Thin Time

In Celtic understanding, autumn is a

"thin time", a season when the veil between the seen and unseen grows delicate. The dying of the year is not a darkness to fear but a doorway into deeper awareness. As the light shortens, the inner light is invited to grow. As the world quietens, the soul is invited to listen.

This thinness encourages honesty. What patterns have become too heavy to carry? What stories about ourselves need to be laid down? What anxieties or resentments have outlived their purpose? What gifts have emerged that we have not yet honoured? The Celtic monks believed that God speaks most clearly when we are willing to unclutter the heart. Autumn is the season of uncluttering.

Gower's Autumn: A Local Blessing

Here on Gower, this teaching feels especially close. The peninsula itself gathers in: marshes drawing birds into shelter, cliffs holding the last warmth of the sun, and the sea cooling for invigorating dips and autumn surf. Communities gather too: churches preparing harvest services, farmers sharing stories, and neighbours meeting at local events and meals.

This communal gathering reminds us that what we keep is not only personal. We keep gratitude, shared labour, kindness offered and received, and the memory of God's faithfulness in our communities.

And what we let go, we let go together. We release weariness, old conflicts, and the pressure to carry everything alone. Autumn teaches interdependence and reminds us of our need for one another.

A Prayerful Invitation

As October unfolds, perhaps on a walk along the cliffs or in the stillness of a church, we might pray: *"Lord of the harvest, show us what to gather in, and give us courage to let go of what no longer brings life. Shape us by your gentle hand until we become people who carry only what nourishes and release all that hinders love."*

Autumn is not an ending. It is a 'gathering and a letting go', teaching us to live lightly and deeply, trusting that God is at work in every falling leaf and every seed saved.

God bless you

Fr Tim



Gower Wonder of Wellbeing

creating inviting spaces for renewal and hope

Creative Conversations at St Mary's: The Creator's Palette



As autumn begins to paint the landscapes of Gower with new colours, we are reminded that change is woven into the very fabric of creation. This season invites us to slow down, pay attention, and look again at the world around us – and our next art exhibition invites us all to do just that!

The Creator's Palette is a journey through the patterns, designs, and mysteries that connect humanity with the natural world. At the heart of this exhibition is a simple question that we're encouraging people to think upon: What if the fingerprints of God can be seen in both the human body and the natural world?

Our hope for the exhibition is that this season of change be an opportunity to pause, reflect and discover anew, the beauty, purpose and wonder woven throughout the world around us at the hand of our Creator.

Bat Detection Evening at St Illtyd's Church

This Summer, an evening of bat detection was put on by The Wonder Of Wellbeing Gower and Gower National Landscape team. The evening was filled with awe, wonder, and discovery, reminding us of the rich biodiversity that surrounds us, often hidden in plain sight.

It was a truly special night, giving us fascinating insights into the bats that call St Illtyd's Church home, while also helping us understand their importance across Gower, the UK, and beyond. Using specialist equipment provided by the GNL team, we were able to hear and monitor Common Pipistrelle and Soprano Pipistrelle bats, as well as learn about the roosting Lesser Horseshoe bats living within the church.

Many church buildings across Gower provide important roosting sites for bats. As a result, local congregations are working alongside the Gower National Landscape team to help protect these remarkable and legally protected creatures, ensuring that both our built heritage and wildlife can flourish together.

Wild Church at Pwll Du Last month, Dan led time reflecting on the account in the book of John where Jesus has breakfast on the beach - whilst those who came also had breakfast on the beach too! People were invited to take part in a creative activity to consider where they had seen Jesus in their lives most recently, and how had He

been meeting our needs. Whilst the children enjoyed this, the adults chose to go for a refreshing swim whilst sharing in their discussions.

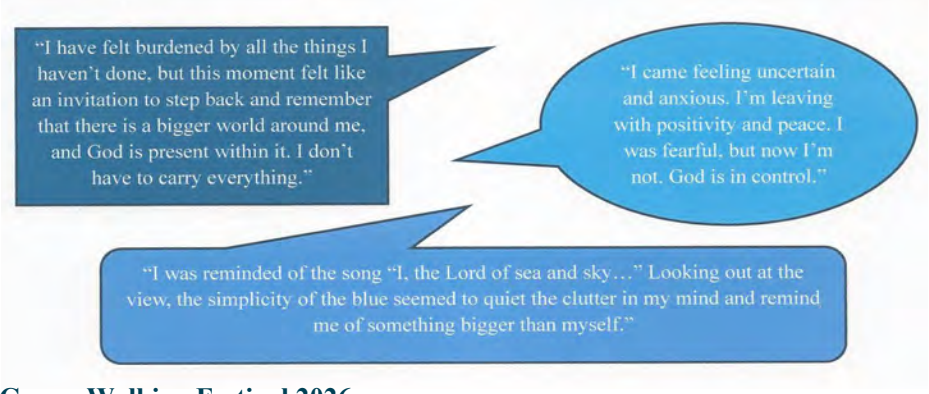


This was a lovely time of community, and thinking back on recognising Jesus in everyday life, trusting his guidance, responding to his call, and experiencing his provision, presence, and purpose in our journey of faith.

Wonder & Water Retreat

We had the privilege of running a day's retreat at Llangasty Retreat House last month for some of the female clerics of the Diocese. Here we offered a gentle day of prayer, reflection, creativity, and community. Participants were invited to consider what they had brought with them into the day, adding prayers and reflections to a prayer tree. Through a series of water-themed activities, including reflective exercises and foot washing, there was space to explore themes of renewal, service, and God's presence.

A session of Lectio Divina led by Rach, encouraged participants to slow down, engage with scripture, and create room for prayerful rest. Reflections were then shared within the group, followed by gentle movement exercises designed to foster relaxation and openness to the Spirit. After lunch, Chloe led participants to explore prayer through watercolour painting, using creativity as a way of expressing thoughts and reflections regardless of artistic experience. The day concluded with breath prayers, personal reflection, and an opportunity to consider what each person would take away from the retreat. Below are a few reflections:



Gower Walking Festival 2026.

This year Dan, Rev. Peter Lewis, Marian Williams and Natalie Evans took part in leading a number of walks along the Gower Pilgrimage Way. Each walk had a different theme to try and attract and engage different people, allowing them to have a space to explore the Gower Peninsular, whilst slowing down, reflecting and having a sense of awe.



Walking from marshland across moorland, through woodlands, over dunes and then the shore, individuals were able to experience what Gower has to offer. Our hope was to create a welcoming space for all people with all abilities. Passing through grazing sheep, horses and being welcomed by fellow walkers and runners, we journeyed together reflecting on how rushing through life can sometimes cause us to miss the beauty and significance of what and who is around us.

An incredibly encouraging message was emailed into us from one participant…

"Hello. I feel I want to reach out & say something after joining Dan on the walk from Rhosilli with the Gower Festival on Friday. I don't know if it was the landscape, or the particular people that attended or Dan's gentle holding or just my own state of mind that day, but I felt like it was more than a walk in a way that I can't quite put my finger on. I feel like it stirred something up or shifted something. I don't know what else to say really except that I wish I could bottle the feeling I came away with or access it more often. I picked up all your leaflets & feel like I want to do the Gower Pilgrimage or possibly a retreat - or both. I'm intrigued by the Wonder of Wellbeing's mix of walks in nature, community, creativity & spirituality & hope I have the opportunity to experience more."

WoW is Recruiting a new Creative Practitioner!

Chloe will be reducing her hours with WoW to one day a week from January to spend more precious time with baby Alaw and Meg finishes her time with us at the end of December while she and her family prepare to emigrate to Australia, where her husband is from.

To that end, we have a new opportunity for someone to join the team on a 4-day a week contract. Please see attached the job description and advert - we would be really grateful if you would share far and wide within your networks, congregations, social media and WhatsApp groups so that it reaches as wide an audience as possible – please see the advert below...

We would also appreciate your prayers as we seek the right person to join the team, someone who will help further the project's vision and contribute to building God's Kingdom through creativity, community, and wellbeing.

HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT WoW?

Contact us: wowadmin@churchinwales.org.uk
Stay connected:www.wonderofwellbeinggower.org
Instagram & Facebook: @wonderwellbeinggower

If you'd like to hear more about what we're offering, please click the link below where you can fill out a short form to let us know your preferences:
https://forms.office.com/e/L6Q67UAr0z
The Wonder of Wellbeing Team

Creative Practitioner

The Wonder of Wellbeing Gower

We are looking for a Creative Practitioner to join the Wonder of Wellbeing Project.

Working in partnership with the project's established Creative Practitioner, you will design and deliver engaging events, activities, and services that support this innovative ministry.

This includes the development of resources for spiritual growth relating to wellbeing, nature and the outdoors to foster meaningful encounters with Jesus and contribute to the growth of the Church.

You will work closely with the Wellbeing Project Lead, Faith & Wellbeing Guide, and volunteers to achieve the project's missional and strategic objectives, ensuring all activities align with the vision and strategy of Gower Ministry Area.



- **28 hours per week**
- **FTE £31,231.20 (£24,985 pro rata)**
- **9% employer's contribution**
- **3.5 year contract**

Application deadline: **5pm on Monday 26th October 2026.** CVs alone will not be accepted.

Interviews will take place on **Monday 2nd November 2026.**

For an informal discussion please contact Revd Peter Lewis: **peterlewis@cinw.org.uk**

For more information and to apply, visit https://www.swanseaandbrecon.churchinwales.org.uk//vacancies

The Gower Ministry Area Wave of Prayer.

The Gower Ministry Area Wave of Prayer.

We believe that prayer works - although it works in God's way and to God's ends - not necessarily ours. The important thing is that God listens to our prayers and he knows what is going on in our hearts.

In this divided world it seems important to bring people together to pray.

On Sept 9th the Ministry Area joined together in a 'Wave of Prayer'. Right through the day one or other of our congregations was meeting to be close to God. The 'Wave' started at the Lamplighter in Bishopston. It was passed from congregation to congregation and finished with a prayer walk at Rhossili on Thursday morning. It was part of a pilgrimage of prayer bringing all denominations in Wales together in unity, prayer, and mission - the 'Seven Cities Pilgrimage'.

The 'Seven Cities Pilgrimage' was a Welsh initiative responding to something that started in 1999 when a simple, student-led prayer vigil went viral and groups all over the world joined in to pray. It turned into an international, interdenominational prayer movement, with a vision to revive the church.

It is now known as "24-7 Prayer" and today thousands of communities take part in it in over half the countries on earth.

It is a small miracle showing the power and relevance of Christianity.





Explore

Life,
faith &
meaning

Alpha

Unpack the
Christian *faith*
together

WHAT IS ALPHA?

Alpha is FREE

We meet 7pm to 9pm,
Tuesdays (from Oct 6th)
The Old Shoe Shop, Beach Rd,
Penclawdd, SA4 3YN.

We start with a meal together at 7pm and then chat.

PLEASE BOOK ON HERE

Info: Vicar Peter ***07944056335***
peterlewis@cinw.org.uk
with Gower Ministry Area churches



THE SOUTH WEST GOWER CLUSTER OF CHURCHES

St Andrew's, Penrice; St Cattwg's, Port Eynon;
St David's, Llanddewi; St George's, Reynoldston;
St Illtyd's, Oxwich; and St Mary's, Rhossili.

Website: gowerma.org **Facebook: South West Churches in Gower Ministry Area**

WORSHIP IN OCTOBER

Every Tuesday	9.00am	Morning Prayer	Reynoldston
Every Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Communion	Llanddewi
Every Thursday	8.15am	Prayerfulness Walk	Rhossili
Sunday 4 Oct	8.30am	Harvest Communion	Penrice
Harvest	9.30am	Harvest Communion	Reynoldston
	10.30am	Harvest Communion	Oxwich
	5.00pm	Harvest Communion	Port Eynon
Sunday 11 Oct	8.30am	Holy Communion	Penrice
Trinity 19	9.30am	Holy Communion	Reynoldston
	10.30am	Holy Communion	Oxwich
	11.00am	Harvest Communion	Rhossili
	4.00pm	Harvest Service	Llanddewi
Sunday 18 Sept	8.30am	Holy Communion	Penrice
St Luke	9.30am	Morning Prayer	Reynoldston
	10.30am	Holy Communion	Oxwich
	5.00pm	Evening Service	Port Eynon
Sunday 25 Oct	8.30am	Morning Prayer	Penrice
Bible Sunday	9.30am	Holy Communion	Reynoldston
	10.30am	Morning Prayer	Oxwich
	11.00am	Holy Communion	Llanddewi
	5.00pm	Blessings Café	Port Eynon

Bible Study Groups
- At King Arthur Hotel, Reynoldston, every Wednesday at 3pm.
- At Highmead, Overton Lane, Port Eynon, every Wednesday at 10.30am for 11.
Further information from Richard Herbert on 01792 390300.

Caffi Cattwg in Port Eynon Church: Saturday 3rd, 17th, 31st October.
Everyone welcome.

REPORTS FROM THE CHURCHES

St David's, Llanddewi

In Llanddewi we shared in the Ministry Area 'Wave of Prayer' day, participating in the global week of prayer. In a beautiful time of prayer, we covered our local communities and others across the world, ending with our weekly communion service.

Harvest Thanksgiving will be celebrated at Llanddewi on Sunday 11th October with a service at 4.00 pm, followed by refreshments. Do join us. Donations of fresh produce, tinned and dried food will be welcome, for Goleudy hostel where homeless young people are housed and supported.

We have much to be thankful for in Gower. However, this has been another challenging year for our farmers and society: we all need to re-think how we best act to provide for the needs of our lives, our land and future.

'What, in our lives now do we keep, and what do we let go?' This month's theme challenges us to consider what we treasure most in material, mental, emotional and spiritual terms, and what really benefits us most in the long term. At times we realize that we need to get rid of clutter: it can be hard to part with things that hold us in emotional ties. If they no longer serve purpose do they actually block the space needed for things we really need? The same applies to our habits and traditions. We can become stuck, unimaginative, depressed, and lose touch with fresh ideas, contacts and possibilities that could bring a fresh lease of life for ourselves and benefit to others. We also need to judge when to hand over responsibilities which affect the lives of others, and what we need to keep going. It's hard to let go of what is familiar and has been valued!

We have seasons, like perennial plants. In spring and summer, there is growth: new shoots, leaves and fruit and seeds are borne; in autumn, fruit and seeds are gathered in, leaves change colour, fade and fall. In winter there is rest: plants keep rooted, protected and nourished by newly-composted soil, preparing for spring, a new season and new life. I want to keep hold of faith in the God who created all there is, yet knows what it is to be human, who gave his life for everyone, and is alive and present with us, always.

Penny Henderson

St Illtyd's, Oxwich

'Gathering in: what we keep and what we let go.' Most of our churches are not exactly bursting at the seams and we would love to see more worshippers in our congregations. Filling the pews 'is not necessarily a sign of success; more important is how our congregations present themselves to visitors. We must be positive and engaging and present our faith with positivity and joy.'

The appeal of most Gower

Churches is their age, the beauty of their situations and the fact that worship has taken place there for many centuries. For many of the present-day worshippers the consistency of the liturgy is of great importance. But on the other hand this perhaps needs to be updated and move with the times in order to be more appealing to today's generations. With so many small churches in this small area it should be quite possible to provide a wide range of services, from the traditional liturgy to services for more recent converts who might prefer more recent worship songs and accessible preaching.

We must adhere strongly to our Christian ethics and not be persuaded to follow what is popular and appealing for the present. Our liturgy has stood the test of time. It might need to be translated into more accessible language but should not change for the sake of change.

The core of our beliefs must be retained strongly for that too has stood the test of time. Newcomers to our congregations may not easily understand the language but our priests will soon be able to preach the relevance at every opportunity so that our Christian community can grow from strength to strength.

Rosemary Wigley

St Andrew's, Penrice

As part of Cadw's Open Doors Festival St Andrew's was open from 10am until 4pm on Saturday 5th September. It was disappointing that despite it being a beautiful autumn day, only eight visitors appeared but all expressed delight at being able to see inside and learn the history of such an ancient church. The Wellbeing team had placed information in the church for visitors to learn more about their activities so although our visitor number was small we felt it had been a success. The church will remain open at weekends until the end of September.

The last lecture for this year was given by the Revd Peter. He spoke on 'Gower Churchyards' and showed some excellent slides of various graveyards in the area. He explained that Llan, often a prefix to a name, means churchyard or sacred enclosure and that the lych-gate was a covered area traditionally used as a resting place for the coffin, before being placed on a bier to be taken into the church. Interestingly there is still a bier in the porch at St. Andrew's which is probably a remnant from late Victorian times. Several visitors enquired about the Monterey cypress in the churchyard. The huge tree was planted in the mid-19th century, probably by CRM Talbot of Penrice Castle. Apparently, the circumference of the tree is the widest in Gower. We are very grateful to the Vicar for such a successful evening and end to this summer's lectures.

St. Andrew's was open for the 'Wave of Prayer' on Wednesday September 9th. Cathy Dorran was in the church but sadly no visitors which was disappointing as the church was opened especially and Cathy was there

to receive anyone.

The celebration of harvest will take place on Sunday October 4th. In previous years we decorated the church with vast amounts of fruit and vegetables but latterly the display has been more modest but the thanks and celebration is no less heartfelt. The Penrice Calendar 2027 will be available soon, further details in the next magazine.

Many thanks to Penrice Castle for cutting the grass in the churchyard throughout the summer. As many of the gravestones are close together and as the grass grows quite high it is a hard task but has to be done to maintain a level of safety and easy access for visitors to graves.

Angela Barnett

St Cattwg's, Port Eynon

St. Cattwg's took a step forward in preparation for sleep-overs in the church for pilgrims on the Gower Pilgrimage Trail. An experimental night was an enjoyable, spiritual experience for the participants, so it seems likely the scheme will start in earnest next spring/summer. The church remained open all night for the Ministry Area 'Wave of Prayer' initiative, shared across all seventeen Gower churches.

'Gathering in: what we keep, what we let go.' Certain priceless gifts of God, given at our conception, we will certainly hope to keep. Life itself, love, family and friends to be prayed for always, our personalities (provided they are good) to be accepted as they are, health and our own responsibility for maintaining it, an increasing faith in God, to be nurtured.

As at Harvest time, there is likely to be much chaff to be discarded, likewise we accumulate undesirable behaviours which could do with an overhaul. Seeing the modern increasing enthusiasm for recycling into new, usable products, perhaps there are traits in our lives and selves which can be repurposed: if we are over-controlling we could learn to give gentle leadership instead; if possessive, make ourselves look after what we have but share it with those in need; instead of being jealous, we could think about all the blessings we do have; some of our self-indulgent wasted time could be devoted to offering help to a charitable cause or needy person. I'm sure we can think of plenty of other ways of making God pleased with how he created us

Susan Morris

St George's, Reynoldston

On August 28th Liam and Evie were married at St. George's. We have got to know the couple well as they have attended many of our services in recent months. We welcomed guests including those from Australia, Norway and Birchgrove. A morning of thunderstorms which cleared just in time for the wedding and the walk to the King Arthur Hotel for the reception.

A large audience at the Village Hall in late August were entertained and informed by the latest films from Sian and Paul of GowerReels. Topics included the Port Eynon Lifeboat

Tragedy, Gower Music and Poets and Gower Estates. Again, it was good to see so many familiar Gower people being interviewed. These, and the other films, will soon be available to view via the internet.

We have been in the process of saying 'farewell' to Valerie Beynon, moving to Chichester to be closer to family. As Valerie lived in Arundel for some sixteen years, she knows the area well and will have many local friends. Valerie came back to Gower and Reynoldston twenty- one years ago. With such deep Gower roots, she soon became involved in so many activities, including being a member of St. George's Church, the Gower Festival Committee and a number of choirs, music and literary groups. Over many years Valerie has been the St. George's 'correspondent' for this magazine, also producing each month the feature One Hundred Years Ago. In addition, Valerie has also been the Commercial Manager for the Reynoldston News, organising its advertisers and donations. We will really miss Valerie, her support for so many Gower activities, her extensive knowledge of Gower and its families and geography and her real interest in the people of the past and the present.

Thank you to Revd Peter for his thoughtful and moving 'Wave of Prayer' service. We were joined by friends from the Methodist Chapel. We were made very mindful of the troubled world we live in as lights, signifying our individual prayers, were placed in so many places across the map of the world, though it also gave us the opportunity to remember our families living abroad.

Eli Wiesel, in the summer of 1944, was deported from Hungary to Auschwitz by the Nazis, along with his father, mother and sisters and later to Buchenwald, where his father, mother and younger sister died. Wiesel was liberated by the Americans and later settled in New York. He was awarded the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize for his numerous campaigns and activities. In 1999 he gave a speech at the White House and its theme was 'Indifference'. I re-read this speech recently and I feel it will influence our prayers and our actions. This wonderful speech highlights the perils of indifference, indifference to the fate of fellow humans, indifference to the need to be involved in the pain and despair of others. Indifference is always the friend of the enemy for it benefits the aggressor, never his victim whose pain is magnified when he or she feels forgotten: the political prisoner in his cell, the hungry children, the homeless refugees. Not to respond to their plight, not to relieve their solitude by offering them a spark of hope, is to exile them from human memory. In denying their humanity we betray our own. His other words include…'The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference.' He further expanded this thought…'The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy, it's indifference. And the opposite of life is not death, it's indifference.' *Hugh Jones*

St Mary the Virgin, Rhossili

St Mary's has seen significant numbers of people visiting the church through the summer months and we are confident that, in the fullness of time, the card reader for donations will reflect this. The 'Wave of Prayer' service drew a small group of people taking up the reins from Penmaen, then passing them on to the next scheduled service at St Gwynor's at Gwernffrwd.

The art displays at the church continue to rotate, and the present one is being changed now for 'The Creator's Palette - a journey through the patterns, designs and mysteries that unite humanity and creation'. The ability to leave thoughts and prayers on the flip board and notelets is well supported. Why not pop in any day between 10am and 3pm to see for yourself?

We are looking forward to autumn and our next service with a harvest theme on Sunday 11th October at 11am.

Roger Button

==========

Eye on ecology

Eco Fact

Trees in the UK hit their peak carbon absorption period in early autumn. During October, many species (like oak, beech, and birch) are still actively pulling CO_2 from the air before they begin shutting down for winter. A single mature oak can absorb up to 22 kg of CO_2 per year, and October is one of its busiest months.

Eco Tip for October

Compost your pumpkin — don't bin it. After Halloween, more than 15 million pumpkins are thrown away in the UK each year, most ending up in landfill where they release methane. If you compost yours (or even just leave it in a quiet corner of the garden for wildlife), you turn it into nutrient rich soil instead. Foxes, birds, and hedgehogs love the seeds too.



Three Cliffs Cluster of Churches

Bishopston, Ilston, Pennard, Penmaen, and Nicholaston

Sunday Services:

Ilston at 9:30 am: October 4 (Eucharist); October 18 (Eucharist)

Bishopston at 9:30 am October 4 (Morning Prayer); October 11 (Eucharist); October 18 (Morning Prayer); October 25 (Eucharist)

Pennard Church at 11:00 am: October 11 (Eucharist); October 18 (Eucharist); October 25 (Eucharist)

Pennard Community Hall at 11:00 am October 4 (Family Worship)

Penmaen at 10:00 am October 11 (Morning Prayer), October 18 (Harvest)

Nicholaston at 11:15 October 4 (Eucharist); October 25 (Eucharist)

Weekday Services:

Wednesdays at Pennard 9:45 am on October 7, 14, 21, 28

Thursday Celtic Communion services at the Lamplighter 9:30 am on October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Three Cliffs Mothers Union

In our readings and prayers at our first meeting after the summer break we reflected upon the blessings and beauty of September. As we notice the signs of autumn all around us it is also a time of renewal. We see children, students and staff returning to schools, colleges and universities. Clubs, societies and other groups are meeting again and welcoming newcomers. Old friendships are rekindled and new ones begun.

Our speaker, Liz, told us about her visits to Bhutan and Nepal and we enjoyed her colourful photos. Our next meeting is on Tuesday 20th October at 2.30pm when we will be entertained by guitarist Phil Fernandez. Please note that meetings will be held in the main Pennard Parish Hall, not the Small Hall, until further notice. We are a friendly group and you don't have to be a member, or indeed a mother, to come along to one of meetings and find out more about us. We'd be delighted to welcome you.

Catherine

St Illtyd Ilston

Jen Griffiths writes: Congratulations to the Furneaux family on their successes in the Flower Arranging category in the recent Royal Welsh Show. Well done Daph-ne, Louise and Connor.

We wish all the students good luck as they start sixth forms or are off to university or beginning

apprenticeship schemes.

Our Harvest Festival is on Sunday 4th October at 9.30 a.m. Gifts of fresh fruit and vegetables, tinned and dried food will be gratefully received for distribution to local food banks. Harvest time has always been a special event in the church calendar and all are welcome to attend this service.

Please pray for members of our community suffering with ill health and continue to pray for the end of conflicts around the world. *God Bless.*

News from Nicholaston & Penmaen

Frances Owen John writes:

Services from October 2026: From October there will be 2 services a Month at Penmaen; 1st and 4th will still be at 11.15 am at Nicholaston. 2nd and 3rd will be at 10 am at Penmaen. The 3rd Sunday, 18th October will be the first of this new service day and will be the commissioning as Lay Worship Leader of Lorraine (Loz). It will also be our Harvest Festival and will be followed by a "bring and share" harvest lunch at Penmaen and Nicholaston Village Hall, to which all are welcome.

Church Book: A book of Collects and Readings entitled "Penmaen Church 1857. Presented by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge" has been discovered in America and has been returned to Peter Brooks and is now back in St. John the Baptist, Penmaen. Grateful thanks to David Shary who made the return of this book.

Easyfundraising: Thank you to those who have registered as supporters of Penmaen & Nicholaston Churches as a Charity on this fund raising site. If you have not yet signed up as a supporter. Please do so if you buy on line. If you have signed up, please remember to click on the scheme each time you purchase on line. To date we have raised £143.00, so it is well worth while and a great way to contribute to our church funds, without having to pay anything yourself! Thank you.

Web Site: Penmaen and Nicholaston Village Hall now have a web site which includes information regarding both Churches.

Congratulations: Congratulations to the Penmaen and Nicholaston residents, Stephanie, David, Catherine, Vicky, Layton, Christopher, David and Frances who have all celebrated their 80th birthdays this year.

Coffee morning Next coffee morning will be on Saturday, 3rd October at Penmaen and Nicholaston Village Hall.

Please continue to pray for the sick, the bereaved and those having and recovering from, operations, and peace to those countries at war.

Pennard Church St Mary's

Catherine Thomas writes: Our architect has carried out an inspection of the church building following the recent renovations. He is satisfied with the standard of the work except for a few minor details about which he has contacted the builder.

We are now looking at our financial situation with regard to a new path all around the church (faculty granted) a new sign for information regarding the Garden of Remembrance (faculty pending) and the installation of our new church signage. Once we have hard figures on Phase 2 we will be looking at how we can fund the next step.

Our (pipe) organ stopped working suddenly while being played. We are waiting for an organ tuner to inspect it and advise us whether it can be repaired and how much this might cost. We will probably have some big decisions to make. Meanwhile Renée, one of our two volunteer organists, has lent us a keyboard, which we are very grateful for.

Funerals
27th August - Conrad James Willoughby Morris
27th August - Iori Evans (Llanelli Crematorium)
28th August -Valma Shirley Jones

Memorial Service
12th September - Gwendoline Mary Watkins

September 100 Club winners – Ian and Gill Colloff

Pennard Church member, Tracy Bishop, has completed 100km of the Camino de Santiago. She set out on her pilgrimage with our blessings and good wishes and a small picture of an icon of the Virgin Mary which is normally to be found in the Mary window. Tracy writes,

"In September 2026, I will be walking 100 km of the Camino de Santiago (Camino Francés) to raise £20,000 for my grandson, Noah. This is a journey of hope, faith and love for Noah. Noah was born with Hypoxic Ischaemic Encephalopathy (HIE) and faces significant challenges as a result of his brain injury. He is an incredibly brave little boy, and his journey requires ongoing treatments, therapies and specialist equipment.

"I am taking on this challenge to help raise vital funds to give Noah access to the support he needs and the very best opportunities for his future. But this walk means more to me than fundraising alone. The Camino is also a spiritual journey, a time for reflection, gratitude, faith and hope. Every step I take will be for Noah, carrying him in my heart as I walk. 100 km. One journey. Countless steps of hope.

"I would be incredibly grateful for any donation, no matter how big or small. Every contribution will help us move closer to our goal and make a meaningful difference to Noah's life. Together, we can make every step count. "



Donations can be made on Tracy's Just Giving page, search for 'A Camino Walk for Noah,' or handed to Eileen Thompson who will pass them on to Tracy.

'**Come ye thankful people come!**' - to our Harvest Thanksgiving at 11am on Sunday 27th September and this year, again, we are asking for gifts suitable for the Food Bank (tins, packets, toiletries, including feminine hygiene items) or, if you prefer, money. The Food Bank staff have arrangements with certain food-stores by which items may be bought at cost price. We will also accept gifts at the Hall Service on Sunday, October 4th. If you are unable to attend either service Ailsa and Eileen are happy to accept your gifts at home. Thank you, in anticipation of your generosity.

There will be a Welsh Language Eucharist/Gwasanaeth Cymraeg in St Mary's, Pennard at 11am on Friday 9th October. This too will be a Harvest Thanksgiving Service, donations as above. Mae croeso i bawb/everyone welcome, whether fluent, rusty (fel fi!) or learning.

The funeral of the late Keith Gwynn will be held in St Mary's Pennard at noon on Wednesday 30th September.



East Gower Cluster of Churches

St. Hilary's, Killay; St. Martin's, Dunvant; All Souls, Tycoch

Worship in October 2026

Every Wednesday	10:30am	Holy Eucharist	All Souls, Tycoch
Every Thursday	11:00am	Holy Eucharist	St. Hilary's, Killay
Sunday Oct 4th	11:00am	Holy Eucharist	St. Martin's, Dunvant
	9:30am	Holy Eucharist	All Souls, Tycoch
	9:30am	Bubble Church	St. Hilary's, Killay
	11:00am	Morning Praise	St. Hilary's, Killay
Sunday Oct 11th	10:00am	Lay Led Service	St. Martin's, Dunvant
	9:30am	Harvest Festival	All Souls, Tycoch
	11:00am	Harvest Festival	St. Hilary's, Killay
Sunday Oct 18th	9:00am	Harvest Festival	St. Martin's, Dunvant
	9:30am	Lay Led Service	All Souls, Tycoch
	11:00am	Holy Eucharist	St. Hilary's, Killay
Sunday Oct 25th	11:00am	Holy Eucharist	St. Martin's, Dunvant
	9:30am	Holy Eucharist	All Souls, Tycoch
	11:00am	Holy Eucharist	St. Hilary's, Killay
	6:00pm	Café Church	St. Hilary's, Killay

Marian Williams writes:

"Gathering In: What We Keep, What We Let Go"

As our wonderful summer has drawn to its close, our thoughts turn to Autumn and the season of Harvest.

In a farming area such as Gower, the devastation caused by the lack of rain and the extreme heat has caused great difficulties for our farming communities. The fields are parched and the harvest has not been plentiful this year. The anxiety expressed at the Gower Show was evidence of the impending crisis to come affected and some of our favourite vegetables have been scarce.

Complaints are heard in supermarkets about rising prices and the scarcity of certain fruits. Perhaps we need to return to old-fashioned values of eating food when it is in season and growing vegetables, not depending on increasing air miles. Collecting blackberries from the hedgerows was something we always did and preserving fruits which grow in our gardens for the winter ahead.

Neighbourliness has come to the fore once again, with baskets of apples, plums and marrows being placed outside houses with the invitation to help yourself.

It always feels good to clear cupboards and clutter, either donating items which are in good condition to charity or nowadays selling them. It can be difficult to let go, but the satisfaction gained makes the time and effort worthwhile. However, it would be better for the planet if we didn't accumulate the clutter at all.

The concern expressed in the media about the increasing number of young people referred to as NEETS, ie those not in education, employment or training, reminds us of the importance of the Harvest of the Mind. The mind has the ability to think and reason and is the gateway to life. It seems clear that the ability to think and work towards targets determines future outcomes. It provides the purpose to life, making us feel valued and able to contribute to society, increasing our self-worth as a result. Invigilating at apprenticeship exams has demonstrated very clearly the work ethic and eagerness to achieve of these young people, proving that practical training could be beneficial, if offered to many more. Our traditional Harvest services will take place this month and I'm sure that our churches will be decorated beautifully using God's bounty in whatever form this takes, as it did last year.

Marian Williams



Mike Powell, Lay Worship Leader writes:

Gower Ministry Area Wave of Prayer – Wednesday Sept 9

After discussion at the recent meetings of the Ministry Area Ministry Team which I attended, Rev'd Peter Lewis agreed that he would create a common liturgy to be used in each church for continuity. Services were to be led by the clergy or by Licensed Lay Worship Leaders.

A world map was displayed at the front of the church and participants would be invited to write any concerns or prayers for the

countries and people of the world on post-it notes, which could be stuck on the map.

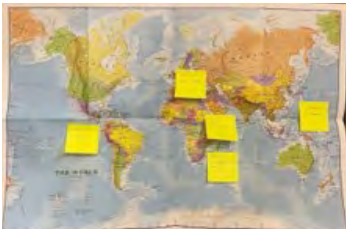
At St. Hilary's, we also decided to display a map of Gower with the position of each church marked on it to focus our attention on the Ministry Area. Rachmaninov's Adagio was used to set the scene with the music playing softly in the background. We thought of the people gathered at St. Cenydd's Church in Llangennith as we followed them in the wave and of those gathered at St. Illtyd's Church in Oxwich who would follow us. As we listened to the liturgy, so carefully crafted by Peter, to reflect the geographical and human features of our Ministry Area, the maps and the words enabled us to visualise its beauty. We were delighted that Rach and Dan from the Wonder of Wellbeing team joined us at St. Hilary's and that Rach read Voice 2 with Marian who read Voice 1.

Anyone who wished to do so, was invited to add a post-it and then move to light a votive candle. This was a time of prayerful silence and contemplation, which was appreciated by all who were present. This was followed by the new Pilgrim's Prayer for the Gower Ministry Area which will be used in our churches and added to our bulletins every week.

I felt it was appropriate to end our service by reading the poem, 'If the Earth were only a few feet in diameter,' and the prayer of St. Teresa of Ávila, before we joined together in the Lord's Prayer. Thank you to all who participated in this service.









Gogledd Gŵyr-North Gower group of churches

St. David's Church, Wernffrwd; Ss Rhidian & Illtyd Llanrhidian

St David's Wernffrwd Church News

Barry Fox writes: Early this year the MAC was informed by the Diocese that each church would have a Goodbox Tap and Go machine to enable visitors to make a donation simply an easily. The initial batch was first given to those churches with obvious footfall like Oxwich, Rhossili and Port Eynon. We were in the second roll out.

Despite some downloading issues to the internet, the system is working, not easily but working!! For the first three months we have received £482 from visitors. People from Hungary and Australia visiting our little church not readily on the tourist trail. It proves that making our church available to visitors is profitable.

There was a meeting recently at St Gwynour's to discuss and agree the dispersal of the contents of the church. This is being carried out sensitively by Derek from the Diocese. Assets not already earmarked are to be vested in the Ministry Area for a possible onward move to other churches on Gower. The lovely Altar clothes have been taken to St David's to prevent them going mouldy.

The very impressive Robbie's cross should move to us in due course. Strangely, it can be taken down and stored but it needs a faculty to be erected at St David's. This has been made out and we await approval. It is the wish of Pam Evans, mother of the late Robbie that it is transferred to us. There will be a service and a blessing of the cross in due course with hopefully Pam in attendance.

In late August there was a talk given in the church about the Rev JD Davies who was an Historian, Tractarian and many other talents. The entertaining talk was given by Judith Doyle who is an archaeologist and her husband Fr Nigel Doyle.

The Rev JD Davies was a true polymath, not only skilled in the way of the church and history but a very talented wood worker. His architectural skills can ben seen at the Swiss style house opposite Llanmadoc church. The current owner was at the talk and spoke about the house. There was a service after the talk and very tasty refreshments provided by Pauline Galey and Sandra Davis.

The local professional boxer Moses Jolly who is Christian and supporter

of the church recently had an excellent match at the O2 in London against the 11th world ranked fighter Guido Vianello. Despite only three weeks to prepare the match was a draw which did his reputation a big lift. We wish Moses the best of luck at his next fight. Moses is co-owner of the Total Body Fitness Gym on the Crofty Industrial Estate.

Our Harvest Service and Festival will be held on the 11th October at 9.30. refreshments will be available after the service. Tinned and dried goods will be accepted for distribution to the North Gower Food Hub. All welcome.

What we keep and what we let go is most appropriate to the dispersal of the assets at St Gwynour's. The assets were either lovingly donated or paid from funds raised by previous parishioners. We thank these people for their commitment to the church. Hopefully most of the items will be passed on to other churches to be used and respected.

Ss Rhidian and Illtyd Llanrhidian

Pam Meakins writes:

The summer is over and most of the visitors to Gower have returned home. In Llanrhidian, we try to keep the church open everyday for all. Many write, in the visitors' book, their thanks that they have access to the peace and spiritual calm they feel within our ancient church walls. As we move into October, it is a time to give thanks for this year's harvest after difficult times for Gower farmers – great heat, drought, baked earth and bone-dry fields. Harvest – a chance to be counting blessings especially in troubled times and to be considering the way ahead.

"Father, as we celebrate this season of harvest, we give thanks for the blessings of food provision and nourishment. Sow a seed of hope within our souls, a seed of peace in our lives and a seed of love in our hearts. May these seeds grow within us, into a harvest that can be shared in abundance by all. We ask this through Jesus Christ, your son, our lord. Amen."

Llanrhidian School Harvest Service – Tuesday 29th September, 10am.

St Rhidian Harvest Service – Sunday 11th October, 4pm.

Llanrhidian Community Hall Jumble Sale – Saturday 3rd October, 2-4pm. A chance to sort things out, make space in our homes and lives and raise much needed funds at the same time.

Llanrhidian Village Supper – Friday 20th November.

Holy Matrimony: 28/8 Cheyenne Williams and Ellis Jones,
12/9 Jess John and Ben Kieft.

Blessing: 27/8 Maria Wallis and Matthew Lewis.

We wish them every blessing for their married life.

Please pray for all who are ill and all who need our prayers.

Llangennith, Llanmadoc and Cheriton Churches

Members of the Gogledd Gŵyr-North Gower group of churches

1st-4th Sundays at 09.30 (Llanmadoc/Cheriton alternate weeks) and 11.15 (Llangennith)

5th Sundays – joint service at one of the six Group churches

St Cenydd's, St Cadoc's and St Madoc's churches are open daily for private prayer and contemplation.

St Cenydd's is a receiving point for contributions to the N Gower Food Hub.

We welcome everyone coming to the sites of all our ancient establishments.

Debbie Lloyd writes:

Looking back

September has hurried by, with weekly services continuing happily in our churches.

The first gathering of Fr Tim's new project, Pints of View, drew a good attendance on 17 September at The King's Head in Llangennith. This discussion group, open to all, continues through autumn on the third Thursday evening of each month.

Looking ahead

Church and community activities this month include:

Saturday 03 Oct at 18.30 for 19.30 start, at Llangennith Parish Hall: Llangennith Film Club shows Hamnet. Admission £6.

Wednesday 14 Oct at 18.30 at Llangennith Parish Hall: Critical Bleed training. Latest techniques in an important area of First Aid, and use of special kits now contained in the villages' defibrillator cabinets. Book through the community council – llangennithcommunitycouncil@gmail.com.

Thursday 15 Oct at 18.00 at the Kings Head, Llangennith: Pints of View. Monthly gathering (third Thursdays monthly) hosted by Fr Tim Ardouin for anyone who has ever found themselves pondering the everyday mysteries that tug at the edges of our attention.

Sunday 18 October at 11.15 at St Cenydd's Church, Llangennith: Harvest Celebration

All welcome. We joyfully receive contributions for this service, and year round, of non perishable foodstuffs and treats to be passed to North Gower Food Hub.

Saturday 31 Oct at 18.30 for 19.30 start at Llangennith Parish Hall: Llangennith Film Club shows Dead of Winter. Admission £6.

Saturday 31 Oct at 19.00 at Llanmadoc Village Hall: screening of Strictly Hallowe'en

Good wishes to you all, from the church congregations of north west Gower,

Debbie Lloyd, Llangennith church committee

07973 759230

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Spotlight on Louise Rigdon

My Statement

"Oh, God, to know you is life. To serve You is freedom. To praise you is the soul's joy and delight." Augustine of Hippo:

What do you do, when you feel God calling you, to serve His people? How do you explore this calling?

Firstly, it takes courage to express that calling. Then, it is the total trust in God, trusting in His calling & trusting in the process.

It has been a privilege to learn, to grow & to serve as a Lay Worship Leader over the past year. God has "prodded" me, sometimes "shoved" me into this training. He has given me the grace to trust in the process, and taught me to learn from the congregations I have had the privilege to serve.

During this process, I have also been lead to train as a Pastoral Assistant. This has given me yet another opportunity to explore & serve in a very different, personal way.

My pastoral work has meant that I developed realtionships in different communities, different churches & within different roles. I took the opportunity & my wealth of experiences to apply to the new Church in Wales Disability Welcome Delivery Group. I was successful, and represent on the committee as a lay church member & a proud parent of a young person with additional needs.



Health and Safety in the 19th century!

a story found by Roger Button



Bethel Chapel Llanelli in the 19th Century

I came across this story in an article written by the Minister of Bethel – Revd. Tregelles Williams for the Gower magazine in 1961.

In the summer of 1854 over 400 children from Bethel, Seaside Sunday School under the direction of their Minister were led to the quayside at Llanelli. The chapel choir accompanied the Sunday School scholars and all were in good voice as they walked together along Marine Street - the short walk from Bethel to the docks. There they boarded the vessel 'Sampson' which was a steam tug built in 1847.

The ship became so full that another ship – the 'Atlas' had to be chartered to take the remainder of those left on the quayside.

Both captains were members of Bethel and in no time the anchors were raised and they sailed away to the cheers of the hundreds who lined the quayside. The voyage took them to Whitford lighthouse and eventually they arrived at Worn's Head. They were all taken ashore in small boats. On landing a prayer was offered, fires were lit and tea was made.

All enjoyed the tea and sea-biscuits provided by the captains. By this time the tide was ebbing and it was possible to cross from the island to Rhossili The villagers, as you will imagine, were amazed to see so many children suddenly appear. Someone went to inform the Rector and he ordered that the Church be opened and the bell tolled to welcome the visitors.

At the end of the afternoon the children and teachers returned to the vessels accompanied by the villagers who bade them a safe return journey. On reaching Llanelli the procession re-formed and returned to Bethel for a short service and to give thanks to the two captains for a wonderful day.

Now that is what you call a 'Sunday School Trip'!



The Chapel today

Cotton Weaving in Penclawdd

by Sandra Davis

This title may cause some confusion but it is true – there was a cotton mill in Penclawdd in the 1950s run by my grandparents, Stella and Frank Wignall (pictured). It is a long story but it all began when Stella and Frank followed their daughters, Dorothy and Muriel from Nelson in Lancashire to Penclawdd. Both daughters had met and married airmen from Penclawdd during WW2 and settled in Penclawdd so in 1947 mum and dad followed their girls to Penclawdd



Stella and Frank had both worked in the cotton mills of Lancashire, Stella as a weaver and Frank as a 'tackler' (a supervisor responsible for setting up the looms for weaving and removing the finished woven fabric)

Unfortunately, there wasn't any work for weavers or tacklers in Penclawdd. Grandad had worked in the cotton mills from the age of twelve and he had cotton in his blood (and his lungs as his death certificate stated !) so he asked his former employer in Lancashire, Clarence Angus of Spring Mills, Fence near Burnley if he would be interested in setting up a weaving mill in Penclawdd.



This photo shows the original Spring Mills in Fence with its tall mill chimney. Fortunately, just after the war, there was a great demand for fabric so Mr Angus was pleased to be offered the opportunity to produce more cloth. He decided to put his faith in Grandad and Spring Mills Wales was born. Now a premises for the mill had to be found. In the Penclawdd area there were many redundant Ministry of Defence buildings. Grandad looked at several on the Point (now Crofty Industrial Estate) but they were small and so unsuitable, as a mill needs to be a tall roomy building so that the dust created by the weaving process has

room to rise up and isn't inhaled by the workers. The largest MoD building nearest to Penclawdd was at Berthlwyd (opposite the now Rake & Riddle). Before the war this had been the site of the Berthlwyd Colliery (worked 1903 – 1937). Incidentally, at the time of the mill, the Rake & Riddle was called the Colliers Arms. There was one large building with a smaller building attached and across the yard two smaller buildings. The large building became the mill, the smaller room attached became the winding room and the two buildings across the yard became the office and the Ladies Rest Room. Thirty two looms, a winding frame (to wind the weft thread on to bobbins for the shuttles) a plating machine (which took the woven cloth from the warp and folded it into bales) were sent down from Lancashire, installed and production could begin but the most important thing was missing – the weavers ! Where were they to find weavers - textile weaving was not an industry in south Wales. Weavers were usually women and fortunately the women of north Gower were traditionally hard working on the cockle beds so they would be ideal employees. Some of the ladies I remember were Iris Jones, Violet Thomas, Annie Jones, Daphne Jones, Renee Bowen, Muriel Thomas all of Penclawdd, Peggy Bennett of Gwernffrwd, Avril Gwyther of the Bryn, Llanmorlais, Dorothy Davies of Llanmorlais and Marian Thomas of Gowerton. All these ladies had to be taught to operate the looms but they were keen and hardworking and soon learned under the tutelage of Grandma and Grandad. Each weaver operated eight looms. Grandma, when her daughters were growing up, had always said 'My girls are not going into the mill' but that was just what they did in Penclawdd – Dorothy as a winder and Muriel as a weaver !



The mill had four 'aisles', each with eight looms. This photograph is an original restored photo of a very similar mill. The weaver bending over the loom is possibly changing the bobbin in the shuttle. Another weaver can be seen in the photo, probably walking along her 'aisle' of looms keeping an eye on every loom to see that there were no broken threads or anything else amiss. The weavers walked miles in a shift watching their looms. Much of the fabric woven at the mill was cotton poplin for Marks & Spencer's shirts so it had to be perfect – no blemishes or marks. The shuttles flying across the warps made a lot of noise and it was nearly impossible to hear another person speak so all workers in the mills soon

learned to lip read using exaggerated lip movements known as 'mee-mawing' and could carry on quite long conversations across the mill. When it was time for a break or the end of the shift Grandad used to shout as loudly as he could and the looms were stopped. The silence then was blissful ! A lorry came down from Burnley every three weeks to collect the finished fabric, bring the new warps which Grandad installed in the looms and anything else that was needed. Sometimes dress fabrics came down on the lorry to be sold from the mill. These were very popular locally as clothes and fabric were still 'on ration' after the war and really the fabric should not have been sold. It was known as the 'black market'. We had some nice new dresses made by a local dressmaker in Crofty ! Ann Nicholls remembers, as a little girl, being told by her mother that they were going to a market to buy material but she had not to tell anyone or they would be in trouble. Ann was terribly disappointed to find that it was not a market at all but a small room in a factory up the road.

The mill was very successful for several years, at one time running two shifts daily. During this period Grandma and Grandad lived in a small caravan on site, only coming home at weekends for a bath, hot meals and a good night's sleep. Unfortunately, Grandma developed arthritis and other health problems and had to give up work.

Grandad, Dorothy, Muriel and other family members tried to carry on, running just one shift but it was just too much hard work.

Obviously, only Grandad could the heavy work of tackling, he was not a young man and had never been a big man so the work was just too heavy - a warp would weigh 300 -600 lbs approximately, depending on the fabric. I have a picture in my mind now of Grandad walking across the mill yard with a warp across his shoulder. He eventually collapsed one evening in the mill, had to give up work and the mill closed.

Mr Angus gave the buildings, looms and other equipment to Grandad and a few years later it did re-open as the Penclawdd Bandage Factory with Grandad in partnership with a person who heard of the mill and thought it would be a good idea to weave bandages there but this venture was not a success. Grandad walked away from the partnership and the mill closed for the final time in the1960s.



Dear Children

Dear Children,

If you go to Winchester Cathedral they will show you the great West Window there and tell you its story. It is a story of decisions made about what to keep and what to let go of.

Long ago they had a problem. Ordinary people had no idea what went on in church. It was all in Latin and the ordinary people didn't understand Latin. What to do? Surprisingly, they *kept* Latin. What they let go of was clear windows! They installed stained-glass ones instead. These had illustrations of the stories of Jesus that everyone could see and understand. It may seem a strange decision but that is what they did. The Great West Window was particularly beautiful.

A couple of hundred years later they changed this decision. They decided it was silly to continue using Latin when no one understood it, so they let it go but for some obscure reason they also let go of the beautiful stained-glass! Oliver Cromwell's soldiers smashed the windows in Winchester including the Great West Window. There were piles of broken glass all over the floor. It may seem a strange decision to you but that is what they did.

After Oliver Cromwell, it was time for a new decision. What to keep and what to let go of? They *kept* the stained-glass but they let go the idea of having it illustrate stories. They put the glass back in the window as a mosaic of glorious colour. This was, I think you will agree, a sensible decision. They had a huge pile of beautifully coloured bits of glass but



it would have been impossible to put all the bits back in the places they had been in.

What should we keep and what should we let go of? We must certainly keep our memories! Memories are most of what a human being is made of. We are nothing without them. But we need to let go of the resentment, hatred and 'feeling sorry for ourselves' that can go with them. And we must keep stories. Stories are the way we understand abstract ideas. But all stories are not equally good. How to sort them so we know which to let go of?

What about our buildings? We should keep our buildings but only if they are useful. We can take a lesson from the people in Winchester who used the coloured glass on the floor of their cathedral but didn't bankrupt themselves restoring past glories.

And, of course, we need to keep our beliefs! But we must discard our reliance on 'words'. Cages of 'words' cannot trap 'truth' and 'beauty'. These die if imprisoned.

Nigel

P.S. Deciding which stories to keep is what growing up is all about. I know you will do a good job.

The Gower Church Magazine
One hundred years ago
October 1926
by Hugh Jones



The magazine contains an *In Memoriam* to the Rev. R.H.Talbot, who died in September. He was for thirty-six years a parish priest in Gower, first at Reynoldston (1890-1910) with Penrice and then at Penmaen (1910-1926). *We are reminded of Tennyson's lines: "How modest, kindly, all accomplished, wise thro' all the tract of years, wearing the white flower of a blameless life. Like Goldsmith's "Village Preacher", A man he was to all the country dear.*

Reports of parish outings continue with the **Bishopston** Choir as well as the Penmaen Choir visiting Brecon but the Penmaen return journey... *was made exciting in a dense fog, but thanks to our careful driver we reached home safely.* **Cheriton** and **Llanmadoc** Choir... s*pent a pleasant day at Barry Island. The many amusements were well patronised by both old and young and the day enjoyed to the full. A word of praise is due to Mr. W.G. Taylor (Vanguard Motors) for the admirable way in which we were catered for.*

Transport also featured in a report from the Parish of **Llanrhidian**... *Gwernffrwd and the environment are becoming less and less isolated and more in advance with the times. To-day we have the buses almost at our doors and even Farmer Hodge has only to cross a field or two, close the gate, step on the bus and straightway off to London or any part or port in England. Messrs Johns and Williams further intend to run direct to Swansea and to have a trailer to convey luggage and marketable produce along with each bus. They are deserving of the best support and patronage as they have not only been pioneers in this locality but have placed their conveyances at the conveniences of many charitable objects, such as the Blind, the Hospital and the Fetes and entertainments in aid of the needy.*

There is much excitement anticipating the Deanery Mission in November, with many clergy

visiting the churches from afar. At **Bishopston**... *Our Missioners both come from the House of the Resurrection, Mirfield, Yorks.* (Trevor Huddleston was a member of this community). *The Lord Bishop of the Diocese has promised to address a Service for Men during the Mission.* Those in the Parish of **Nicholaston** and **Oxwich**... *With great hope, mingled with some fear, we are looking forward to our Mission. We hope for a spiritual revival which should stir every soul in the parish. We fear lest we should fail to be ready to receive such a blessing and so allow it to pass by.*

We are reminded of the severity of influenza and TB with the announcement of the death in Reynoldston of Oliver Ace of Bellevedere House, age 37 years... *The deceased, a general favourite, had served in the Metropolitan Police Force, where through an attack of influenza he contracted the dire disease which caused his untimely death. He leaves a widow and a little son to whom the utmost sympathy is felt.*

The parishioners of **Cheriton** and **Llanmadoc** were given a "rap on the knuckles" from Rector H.J. Evans... *A Whist Drive and Novelty Dance was held recently in aid of the Choir Fund. The attendance was a little disappointing. I am afraid that a lesson yet to be learnt by many church people in these parishes is that the Church in its varied little social activities in our midst ought to come first. Our appreciation of the work of the Church, especially by voluntary workers – like charity – should at least begin at home.*



Cheriton and Llanmadoc Choir at Barry Island.
Ivor Knutson on left. The lady is Mrs. Morgan, with husband David Morgan on rear step. Then Roland Taylor and David Gravelle (Pinged Hill Garage?) seated. The little boy is the Morgan's son, John (Reynoldston Agricultural Stores).

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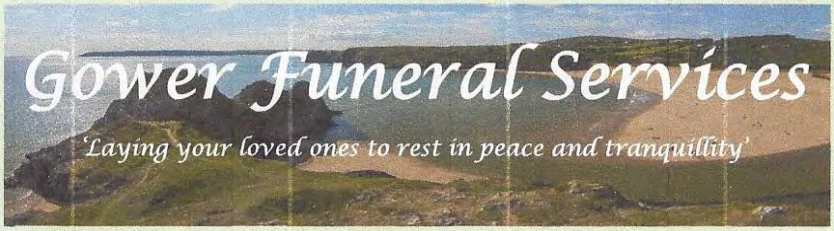



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More about Gower Churches

Ilston St Illtyd's

Ilston Church, is dedicated to St Illtyd, one of the great saints of the Celtic Church, who may have been associated with the original C6 monastic cell on the site. Much of the present building in the Early English style, dates from the early C13 when the Norman John Le Breos, having been granted the Lordship of Gower, built the chancel and the massive embattled Tower with a saddleback roof . The Nave was added later in mediaeval times and is markedly out of line with the earlier structure. The patronage was held by the Knight Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem until the dissolution at the time of the Reformation and after being held by the Crown until C19 it was bought by Thomas Penrice of Kilvrough. Major restoration took place in 1847 but many original features remain. In the north wall of the chancel is a burial niche which probably held the effigy of the founder of the church. There are several windows of different age, size, design and ornamentation, some of which contain stained glass. The porch on the south side of the nave contains a holy water stoop. The Tower houses two bells, dated 1716 and until 1974 there was also a C15 bell.



Because of a crack this is now on a small platform in the nave. A Millennium project which received a Civic Trust award, involved the re-opening of the base of the Tower into the church to reveal a beautiful chantry chapel.

In 1649 John Miles was installed as the Cromwellian Minister but was ejected after the Restoration. He then built the first Baptist Chapel in Wales a mile further down the valley but in 1663 when dissenting assemblies became illegal, he left with his followers and established the settlement of Swanzey in New England. A memorial to him was unveiled on the Ilston site in 1928 by David Lloyd George.

Valerie Beynon

Reprinted from 2021

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4: St Cadoc, Cheriton SA3 1BY 5: St Madoc, Llanmadoc SA3 1DE 6: St Cenydd, Llangennith SA3 1HU
7: St Mary's, Rhossili SA3 1PL 8: St David's Llanddewi SA3 1AU 9: St Cattwg's, Port Eynon SA3 1NL
10: St Illtyd's, Oxwich SA3 1LS 11: St Andrews, Penrice SA3 1LN 12: St George's Reynoldston SA3 1AA
13: St Nicholas, Nicholaston SA3 2HL 14: St John the Baptist, Penmaen SA3 2HQ 15: St Illtyd's, Ilston SA3 7LD 16: St Mary's, Pennard SA3 2EA 17: St Teilo's, Bishopston SA3 3JT 18: St Hilary, Killay SA2 7DZ
19: St Martins, Dunvant SA2 7UL 20: All Souls, Tycoch SA2 9LP



“One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.” – Psalm 27:4