

YOURS FAITHFULLY

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Sunday Schedule
09:30, 11:00 & 6:30pm

Wednesday Schedule
10:00am

Morning & Evening
Prayer at
8am & 7pm Monday to
Thursday via Zoom

Please see detailed
service schedule for
dates, times and
Churches

Please email, phone or
request Zoom meetings
and chats as you wish,
but please note that my
day off is Friday **and I'll
be taking Christmas
week off, returning on
2nd January.**

Rev'd Maggie Thorne

Please send any
information for the
January newsletter in to
mapenybontinfo@gmail.com
by 15 January 2023.

Dear friends

As you can see, the newsletter has been transformed to a much easier-to-read format, and will now serve as the up-to-date information for the whole of the Ministry Area. To that end, please note that if you have any events to advertise or notices to give for any of our 8 churches, please send them to the designated email for this: mapenybontinfo@gmail.com

I will continue to hold a database of anyone who would like to be included on the mailing list and if you know that you're not already on the list and are receiving this through your local rep forwarding it, just send me a message and I'll add you straight away.

I hate to be the bearer of bad news as we approach Christmas, but as a result of our weeks of advertising in the Church Times for a new incumbent in the West End of the Ministry Area (i.e. Laleston, Merthyr Mawr and Pen-y-fai), sadly there were no enquiries or applications. Furthermore, Fr David (Newcastle) is still on sick leave. This means that I am having to spread myself across all of the churches. From January there will be some radical changes to our service plan and I'll publish this in January's Yours Faithfully which will be available in a couple of weeks. As I've mentioned before, these changes are partly due to my being on my own (with the help of some wonderful Retired Clergy and Lay Ministers) and partly due to the ever-rising cost of heating. Domestic fuel bills are eye-wateringly high, and this extends to our church buildings. All churches will be involved in having a reduction of services and I will endeavour to be as fair as possible to everyone. The new-look newsletter should make it more obvious that the wider team is trying to serve you all as well as we possibly can through these unforeseen circumstances. I very much hope that these will be interim measures for the colder months, ensuring that we're good stewards of our resources whilst managing the crises. There will be several services to choose from every week, so I invite you to embrace the changes, travel to 'new' churches to worship and make new friends across the MA. Since the New Year is going to look different, you'll see that Christmas itself will definitely be well and truly celebrated in every church and I'll aim for the same through Holy Week and Easter.

As we begin the journey through Advent 2022, perhaps we should all start by putting our disappointments and anxieties aside and set our hearts in the right direction. Take some time to sit quietly and focus on the coming season, not on all the busyness of what needs to be done, but on the spiritual significance of what we're preparing to celebrate. Having a good Advent means recognizing that although there are dark shadows in the world around us the light is coming into the world again and the darkness will not overcome it.

Finally, stay safe, stay well, stay in touch, walking hand in hand with God.

*Love and every blessing
Maggie.*



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Services Schedule

Date	Time	Church	Service	Vicar / Lay Minister
Sunday 4 th December (Advent 2)	09:30am	Coity	Holy Eucharist	Maggie
		Brackla	Café Church	Pete
		Laleston	Non-Eucharistic	Penny
		Pen-y-fai	Holy Eucharist	Tim
	11:00am	Nolton	Morning Prayer (Matins with hymns)	Huw
		Coychurch	Holy Eucharist	Tim
		Newcastle	Holy Eucharist	Edward
		Merthyr Mawr	Holy Eucharist, followed by baptism 12:30	Maggie
6:30pm	Zoom	Evensong	Maggie / Chris	
Wednesday 7 th December (Eucharist)	9:30am	Laleston	Eucharist	Stephen
	10:00am	Coity	Eucharist	Maggie
	11:00am	Newcastle	Eucharist	Maggie
Sunday 11 th December (Advent 3)	09:30am	Coity	Holy Eucharist	Edward
		Brackla	Holy Eucharist	Maggie
		Laleston	Holy Eucharist	Mike
	11:00am	Nolton	Holy Eucharist followed by baptism 12:30	Edward / Maggie
		Coychurch	Holy Eucharist	Maggie
		Pen-y-fai	Holy Eucharist	Mike
		Merthyr Mawr	Non-Eucharistic	Penny
		Newcastle	Non-Eucharistic	Lay Rep
	4:00pm	Newcastle	Service of 9 Lessons and Carols	Maggie
6:30pm	Zoom	Taizé Service	Maggie / Pete	
Tuesday 13 th December	6:00pm	Coychurch	WI Service of 9 Lessons and Carols – All welcome	Maggie
Wednesday 14 th December (Eucharist)	9:30am	Laleston	Eucharist	Edward
	10:00am	Coychurch	Eucharist	Maggie
	11:00am	Newcastle	Eucharist	Edward

Services Schedule cont..

Date	Time	Church	Service	Vicar / Lay Minister
Saturday 17 th December	10:00am – 12:30pm	Brackla	The Christmas Experience	Maggie / Andrew
	2:30pm – 5:00pm	Nolton	Community Carols	Maggie / Andrew
Sunday 18 th December (Advent 4)	9:30am	Coity	Holy Eucharist with Baptism at 12:30	Maggie
		Brackla	Cafe Church with carols	Chris
	11:00am	Nolton	Holy Eucharist	Maggie
		Coychurch	Family Service	Pete
		Newcastle	Holy Eucharist	Edward
	4:00pm	Pen-y-fai	Christingle	Penny / Maggie
	6:00pm	Coity (with Nolton)	Service of 9 Lessons and Carols	Maggie
Tuesday 20 th December	6:00pm	Pen-y-fai	Community Carol Service (Old Nursery Yard if dry, if wet in Church)	Penny
	7:15pm	Laleston	Community Carols	Maggie
Wednesday 21 st December	9:30am	Laleston	Holy Eucharist	Edward
	11:00am	Newcastle	Holy Eucharist	Edward
Thursday 22 nd December	7:00pm	Coychurch	Community Carols	Pete
Saturday 24 th December Christmas Eve	4:00pm	Coychurch	Christingle/Nativity	Pete / Maggie
	7:00pm	Newcastle	Christmas Mass	Maggie
	11:00pm	Pen-y-fai	Midnight Mass	Maggie
	11:30pm	Coychurch	Midnight Mass	Edward

Services Schedule cont..

Date	Time	Church	Service	Vicar / Lay Minister
Sunday 25th December (The Nativity of Our Lord) (Christmas Day)	09:30am	Coity	Holy Eucharist	Maggie
		Brackla	Holy Eucharist	Tim
		Laleston	Holy Eucharist	Edward
	11:00am	Nolton	Holy Eucharist	Maggie
		Merthyr Mawr	Holy Eucharist	Mike
Sunday 1st January 2023 (Naming of Jesus)	9:30am	Coity	Holy Eucharist	Graham
		Laleston	Holy Eucharist	Edward
	11:00am	Coychurch	Holy Eucharist	Graham
		Newcastle	Holy Eucharist	Edward
Wednesday 4th January (Epiphany)	9:30am	Laleston	Eucharist	Stephen
	10:00am	Coity	Eucharist	Maggie
	11:00am	Newcastle	Eucharist	Maggie
8th January 2023 (Epiphany 1)	9:30am	Brackla	Eucharist	Maggie
		Pen-y-fai	Eucharist	Tim
	11:00am	Nolton	Eucharist	Maggie
	6:30pm	Zoom	Taizé	Maggie / Chris
<p>Morning and Evening Prayer at 8am and 7pm, Monday to Thursday via Zoom Please contact Rev'd Maggie Thorne for the Zoom links you need.</p>				

Collects and the Sunday readings for the month

Date	Collects	Readings
4th December (Advent 2)	<p>Father in heaven, who sent your Son to redeem the world and will send him again to be our judge: give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his first coming that, when he comes again, we may be ready to greet him with joyful love and firm faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.</p>	<p>Isaiah 11. 1-10 Psalm 72. 1-7; [18, 19] Romans 15. 4-13 Matthew 3. 1-12</p>
11th December (Advent 3)	<p>O Lord Jesus Christ, who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you: grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready your way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in your sight; for you are alive and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.</p>	<p>Isaiah 35. 1-10 Psalm 146. 5-10 James 5. 7-10 Matthew 11. 2-11</p>
18th December (Advent 4)	<p>God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son: grant that, as she looked for his coming as our Saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.</p>	<p>Isaiah 7. 10-16 Psalm 80. 1-7, [17-19] Romans 1. 1-7 Matthew 1. 18-25</p>

Collects and the Sunday readings for the month cont...

Date	Collects	Readings
25th December (The Nativity of Our Lord) (Christmas Day)	Almighty God, you have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin: grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit: through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.	Isaiah 9. 2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2. 11-14 Luke 2. 1-14, [15-20]
1st January 2023 (Naming Jesus)	Almighty God, whose blessed Son was circumcised in obedience to the law for our sake and given the Name that is above every name: give us grace faithfully to bear his Name, to worship him in the freedom of the Spirit, and to proclaim him as the Saviour of the world; who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.	Numbers 6. 22-27 Psalm 8 Galatians 4. 4-7 Luke 2. 15-21
8th January 2023 (Epiphany 1)	Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit: grant that we who are born again by water and the Spirit may rejoice to be called your children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.	Isaiah 42. 1-9 Psalm 29 Acts 10. 34-43 Matthew 3. 13-17

For your Prayers

Please pray for:

Please pray for:

Janet Lindley-Dalton,
Kath Shenton,
Michael Rees,
Fr David Lloyd

and all who are sick whether in body, mind or spirit

Baptisms

Please pray for those who are preparing for baptism, including:

Isaac Evans,
Blake and Eli Turner,
Eleanor Merchant-Lloyd and Eliza Flisher



Weddings

Please pray for Gemma Pain and Gary Phillips who are getting married.



Please continue to pray for Ukraine

God of all people and author of peace, we pray for all who are involved in the current confrontation in and surrounding Ukraine. May the nations of the world, their governments and leaders base their decisions upon your wisdom in all that makes for peace. Loving God, we recognise that conflict brings tragic loss for all involved, and so we pray that eyes and hearts may be opened to those things that unite us in our common humanity.

At this time of fear and tension, we pray for your beloved children; that they may know a de-escalation of fear and threat, which would enable them to live in peace and dignity. We pray for a longed-for restoration of tranquillity in Ukraine.

Lord, we recognise that prayer is a privilege and the responsibility of each one of us; and so we hold in our hearts this situation, its context, and the future, secure in the love shown for all people through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen



Ministry Area Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the opportunity to work together as a Ministry Area. May we engage with each other with faith and encouragement and manage each situation with wisdom and mutual respect. May we serve with integrity, creativity and purpose and speak with openness and gentleness. May we offer our gifts, time and finances with generosity and face each challenge with courage and the desire to grow through it. May we all be drawn deeper into our relationship with you and be known as your disciples. Help us to tell our joyful stories, increase our capacity for good and extend your kingdom in this place. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

RIP:

Liz James,
Sandra Foley,
Joyce Lawless,
Gwyn Williams,
Ellis Williams,

Ken Shillibier,
Tom Turner,
John Evans,
Fr. Stephen Ambarni,
Alice Fortey

Anthony Evans



May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace and rise in glory.

Amen.



Eco Church news

COP27 News - COP27 is seen as the world's last chance to prevent global warming of more than 1.5C above historic levels, but progress since last year's summit in Glasgow has stalled.



Projections now show that we are heading for between 2.4 and 2.8 C because new plans by countries have been too weak.

The more than 120 heads of state gathered in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, will address more than just emissions, however, with reparations for the global south, biodiversity and deforestation to be discussed until the end of the conference.

On Tuesday 15th Nov, World Energy Day, the UN countries continued to call for an end to fossil fuels. The troubling expansion of oil, gas and coal projects, despite science telling us that fossil fuels must stay in the ground to avert the worst impacts of climate change, has been a stark reminder that urgent action is required.

We hope and pray that strength and support can be provided to the nations afflicted by climate change and that God be among world leaders, campaigners and clean industries.

Amen.

Forest Church news

HUT 9



At our October Forest Church, we collectively wrote an autumn psalm.

We met at [Island Farm](#) where the old POW huts are and had an inspiring walk through the woods.

Autumn Psalm:

On our walk through the woods,
the story of Island Farm unfolds.
We stand where POW huts once stood
where their escape was so very bold.

On our walk between the mystical trees,
we meet owners and their dogs.
Sharing something of the escapees
the information so carefully logged.

On our walk amongst the autumn palette,
you remind us of our Christian ethos:

PROTECT, SHARE, VALUE LIFE, NEVER FORGET.
You bring order from chaos and make straight our paths.
On our walk amid the mud and leaves,
we acknowledge and reflect on your creation,
the shrubs, the berries, the colour, the peace
and beyond, the cold, grey rainclouds.

God bless.
Philippa

Recipe for meat-free Monday: Squash, Stilton and Walnut rolls

1/2 a butternut squash (cut lengthways)	1 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp chilli flakes	4 sprigs fresh thyme
100g Stilton	50g walnuts
50g breadcrumbs	1 large free-range egg
500g puff pastry	1 tsp sesame seeds

Preheat the oven to 200C.

Deseed the squash and place on a roasting tray, drizzle with the oil, scatter over the chilli flakes and strip over the thyme leaves. Roast for 45 mins, or until soft. Allow to cool a bit, then spoon out the flesh and discard the skin, then place in a bowl. Crumble the Stilton and chop the walnuts, then add to the bowl along with the breadcrumbs. Mix to combine, then set aside to cool. Beat the egg. Roll out the puff pastry to 18cm x 60cm, then cut into 2 long thin strips. Lay half the squash mix down the centre of each strip and brush the long edges with beaten egg, then fold over lengthways and press together to seal. Turn the rolls so the join is underneath, then cut into 5cm pieces and place on baking sheets lined with parchment. Brush the tops with beaten egg, sprinkle with sesame seeds and bake for 35 mins, till puffed up and golden.

General News

Cafe Church News

We are excited to be working with the Diocesan Growth Enablers who have been to Cafe church services. We discussed ways to raise awareness of our existence in the local community by being more visible and providing some means of support wherever it is needed.

To enhance links with Archdeacon John Lewis primary school we will be hosting an event at the school on the morning of **Saturday 17th December where The Christmas Experience will be on display** and open to the community.

Gaynor Coles, Brackla Local Rep

Panto

If you'd like to join in the fun of the panto, a trip to the New Theatre in Cardiff is being planned for January 3rd at 2.30 to see Snow White.

If you're interested, please contact Jean Rees on 654609.

Ministry Area news

We recently hosted an Archdeacons' visitation in Nolton Hall. The conference was led by Archdeacon Rod and Archdeacon Michael with the purpose of considering the state of development of our Ministry Areas and the way forward. All our Churches were well represented and we were joined by other Ministry Areas from around our deanery. No mighty decisions made but it was good to meet with and share the experiences of others in looking to the future.

As the first year of our Ministry draws to an end we can look back on a largely successful start to the enterprise. With a certain willingness to cooperate, one with another, becoming more evident, and positive progress being made in most of the formal areas of management we can look forward to even greater progress together in the New Year. Financial management has not been without some hiccups but our latest efforts have been centred on the development of uniformity of practice across all our churches and by all our treasurers. With good will and prayer we will succeed.

So, with the season of Advent nearly upon us, whatever you and your congregations plan to offer to the Lord in praise, be it carol services or concerts, Christmas Fayres or communal worship, I and all the Ministry Area Council wish you a very Merry and Joyful Christmas with family and friends.

Regards,

Andrew Dix Lay Chair

2nd Sunday Foodbank collection

Thank you so much for your very generous donations.



There are now no restrictions on beans and pasta and anything will be gratefully received.

A date for your diaries

Following the highly successful jazz concert in the summer, on 29th January, there will be another jazz concert in St Mary's, Nolton at 6pm, this time given by Toby Hay (guitar) and Aidan Thorne (bass).

The musicians will be playing in aid of Guide Dogs for the Blind. More details to follow.



Pilgrim Course:

We're giving the course a breather through December. Why not join us in the New Year?



General News cont...

Giving:

For details on how to give,
please contact Sandra Arnott
(Treasurer to the Ministry Area)
on 862211.



For your interest, there's also a card reader in church, linking to the same page.

Please be as generous as you possibly can in your giving as we are very worried that with escalating fuel costs, the Church might be affected detrimentally yet again.

Those in CNB who are used to giving through the envelope system will find envelopes in Coity Church.
Please contact Karen Phillips on 651338 or 07944 627519 if you'd like to be included in this scheme.

Thank You

Finally, thank you to all the local teams, retired clergy and lay ministers who are making Christmas a very special one this year and who are constantly working behind the scenes to effect the Diocesan Vision across the Ministry Area.



May the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the perseverance of the wise men, the obedience of Joseph and Mary, and the peace of the Christ-child be yours this Christmas.

Pob bendith a Nadolig Llawen bawb!

Yours faithfully

Maggie