As a fitting end to the Year of Pilgrimage, more than 170 parishioners travelled to Glasgow on a chartered train on Bank Holiday Monday to visit the spiritual home of our Diocese. Bishop Gregory led pilgrims to the home of St Kentigern (Mungo) who is buried in Glasgow. Kentigern founded the Diocese of St Asaph around 560AD. It meant an early start for pilgrims – the train left Llandudno at 7.00am before arriving into Glasgow at lunchtime. On arrival, Bishop Gregory and the pilgrims were greeted at the station by Bishop Gregor Duncan who is Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway. They then walked to St Andrew’s Roman Catholic Cathedral to be greeted by Archbishop Philip Tartaglia. During the afternoon, pilgrims visited St Kentigern’s tomb in Glasgow Cathedral for a guided tour and prayers with its minister Revd Laurence Whitley.

Commenting on the journey, Bishop Gregory said: “It really is like a trip to our spiritual home. Kentigern was Bishop of Strathclyde – which was a Welsh kingdom at the time – and from Glasgow he came to evangelise North Wales so in a sense we have come back to our roots. I hope people have enjoyed Glasgow and I hope they have had a fun time but I also hope they’ve got in touch with their spiritual heritage.”

### Bishop Gregory: “God is with us on the Journey”

Bishop Gregory encouraged pilgrims to remember God accompanies us on the journey of life after a final service at St Asaph Cathedral to bring the Diocesan Year of Pilgrimage to an end. For 12 months – from St Asaph’s Day 2013 until St Asaph’s Day 2014 – parishioners across the Diocese have taken part in all sorts of pilgrimages. On Sunday 4 May, pilgrims journeyed to the Cathedral again – this time to draw the celebrations to a close. The service took place in the round and different items to signify pilgrimage were placed on a special Cairn in the centre of the Cathedral. Among them were crosses placed by local schoolchildren, the Bible, the pilgrim’s staff and a candle. The Cairn also included other items used by pilgrims including rucksacks, scallop shells and even a bicycle.

In his sermon, Bishop Gregory cited The Rime of the Ancient Mariner where the poem finishes with the author saying he was “a sadder and a wiser man”. The Bishop said he hoped at the end of the Year of Pilgrimage that the Diocese is wiser but not sadder. He said: “What has your experience of the Year of Pilgrimage been? Would you want to say you are sadder and wiser?"
I hope you are wiser but I hope you are more joyful as pilgrimage is all about discovery of wisdom and wisdom that brings fullness of life.

“Pilgrimage is a journey with a purpose and that purpose is to discover truth.

**A pilgrim’s poem to reflect on the year**

Olwen E Roberts from Llanarmon yn Iâl has enjoyed the Year of Pilgrimage and has written us a Welsh poem as the celebrations draw to a close.

Olwen said: “Thanks to the ones who have arranged our pilgrimages in north Wales – some lovely, picturesque places and areas with churches and chapels standing proudly in our parishes. We are grateful for the privilege of attending them.”

**The Final Journey**

In the Christian life we have a companion and God gives Himself to join us on the journey.”

Children from schools in Bala had baked special scallop shaped biscuits for the service which were given out to the congregation before each parish was handed small tubes of water and sand to take back to their churches.

They are symbols of journey and refreshment to mark the Year of Pilgrimage in every parish.

Towards the end the schoolchildren were involved again – this time singing a special pilgrim’s song that had been written by Cass Meurig from Bala.

At the end of the service the pilgrim’s staff was handed by the Dean to Revd Phil Atack who took it with him ready for the pilgrimage by train to Glasgow – the home of St Kentigern, founder of the Diocese – on Bank Holiday Monday.

**Taith y pererin**

_Cerddwn ymlaen gyda’n gilydd_  
_Yn llon ac iach ar ein taith_  
Pob cam gyda diolch am gymdogaeth –  
Ein bro, gyda chyfoeth ein hiaith.

_Seiniwn ein clod yn yr awel_  
Gyda mwyniant yn yr awyr iach  
Cydgerddwn yn gryf gyda gobaith  
Bob dydd hyd y bore bach._

_Pob ysgol, eglwys a chapel_  
Fe gofiwn am addysg a chân  
Paratown i fynd heibio yn ddiwyd  
A chofio am yr Emynydd glân._

_Pob milltir a gerddwn cawn fendith_  
A diolch am ein haddoliad glân  
Godidog a bywio a lliwgar  
I’n harwain i’n nefolaid gân._

_Ymgrymwn, penliniwn yn Sanctaidd_  
Wrth orffwys yn Eglwys y Llan  
Cydgerddwn yn syth at yr allor  
I ddiolch i Dduw am ein rhan._
Same sex marriage, assisted dying and the code for women bishops were all on the agenda at the April meeting of the Governing Body of the Church in Wales in Llandudno.

One day one, the GB heard two presentations – one in favour of assisted dying and one against – before spending time discussing the issues in small groups before a short feedback session.

On day two the same groups discussed same-sex marriage with note-takers feeding back the views and opinions to the bishops.

Also discussed was the bishop’s code to enable women to be ordained to the Episcopate. Seven months on from the historic “yes” vote, there was discussion on what the code should and shouldn’t contain. The bishops didn’t take part in the debate but this was their final listening exercise before finalising the code which will mean women can become bishops from this September.

Bishop Gregory welcomed Revd Richard Millree Hughes to his new ministry in the Parishes of Llansilin, Llangedwyn and Llangadwaladr during a special service at the end of April. In his sermon the Bishop spoke of the different meanings the word ‘home’ has for people at the different stages of life. He noted that Richard was very much coming home to the Diocese of St Asaph where he had been ordained in 1958 and where he served in the early years of his ministry in Mold, St Asaph and Towyn.

Commenting on his new role Richard said:

“The Holy Spirit has taken me to the strangest of places. On one occasion I found myself skirting the remains of dead tanks and guided missiles in the Judean wilderness, detritus of the 1967 Six Days War. At the age of eighty I have now come to Llansilin.”

In late March, Bishop Gregory also welcomed Revd Canon Sue Huyton and Revd Dr Richard Hainsworth to their new ministries. Sue is now Mission Area leader for Dee Valley while Richard serves in Northop alongside his role with Exploring Faith.

St Asaph Cathedral welcomed three new Canons in March – each with a specific role within the life of the Mother Church of the Diocese. Revd Pam Powell is now Canon Chancellor and takes responsibility for education at the Cathedral. She said: “I am hoping to develop opportunities for families visiting the Cathedral; continue to develop the good work done with schools and offer the Cathedral as a place where Church leaders can come to receive ministry.”

Alongside Pam, Revd Quentin Bellamy will take responsibility for fundraising – vital at the moment as the Cathedral looks to its redevelopment project. Quentin will look to strengthen the work of the Cathedral Friends and said:

“When I was first ordained in 1990 I spent £40 on a life membership subscription to the Friends of the Cathedral. It has stung my conscience that in all that time, I haven’t taken an active role in the life of the Friends. I want to change that by helping to raise the profile of this fabulous or-
ganisation both in our diocese and beyond.”

Revd Kathy Collins also became a Canon to acknowledge her work as Senior Health Chaplain across the Diocese. She works in hospitals in the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and said:

“For the wider benefit of the health service Chaplains are essential to nurture and encourage the spirit of care so that compassion and dignity for patients and staff are not lost in the wider political agenda.”

Bishop Gregory added: “I am delighted to honour their work.”

Church launches Mediation Service

During the second day of the Governing Body meeting in Llandudno in April, a new mediation service was launched for the Church. Presented by Bishop Gregory, it is designed to help clergy or parishioners involved in a dispute to try and resolve it positively. Those in the dispute will be able to apply for a mediator to organise a series of joint and private meetings in which both parties can talk and listen to each other. Mediators have been specially trained and will be supported by the Church’s Human Resources team. The new service does not take away an individual’s right to formal grievance procedures. Launching the mediation service, Bishop Gregory said: “The Church is a human society like any other, and sadly conflicts do arise. However, Jesus did teach us that we should be a people who seek reconciliation and forgiveness. Our new mediation service will help people in dispute to find ways of settling differences.”

Sarah helps Church to Engage

Sarah Wheat is our new Engagement Officer and will take over the brief of the Engaging Steering Group from Revd Mike Harrison. With a background in working with Communities First and Families First in deprived parts of the UK, Sarah is on hand to offer advice to churches and Mission Areas about outreach. Her plan is to spend as much time as she can out and about in the Diocese finding out what is already happening and encouraging churches to consider new projects.

Sarah’s vision is to see churches meeting needs in their local context and making creative use of their church buildings. She said: “We need to be more welcoming, opening our doors a lot more and offering different things within a church building so it’s not just used for worshipping on a Sunday. We need to give people a positive experience of using the church. It could be anything from helping people with debt problems or running foodbanks to mental health problems or even something like a cookery course with low-cost cooking. So we want to increase people’s awareness of the Church and what the Church can be doing for their community.”

If you are interested in meeting Sarah to see how she can help your church or Mission Area, contact her on sarahwheat@churchinwales.org.uk or on 01745 582245.
An artist who has sat on the committee of the Greenbelt festival and who came up with the name of Christian youth camp Soul Survivor will be ordained as a Deacon in St Asaph in June. Jonathan Skipper will serve as Assistant Curate in Llanfyllin, Bwlch-y-Cibau and Llanwddyn and the dad-of-three will bring his experience as a counsellor, a teacher and a trainer to God’s Church in north Wales.

It was at school that Jonathan first secretly wondered about God’s call to ordained ministry but he drifted away from the Church for many years. “When I was around 22 I was seriously ill and needed help,” Jonathan said. “At that time I had an amazing reawakening and turned back to God which turned my life around. My grandmother played a major part in this and I attended St Andrew’s Church in Chorleywood – a charismatic but firmly grounded church that helped me to grow and sustain an active and vibrant faith.” Since then Jonathan has worked as a designer and illustrator and run a night shelter for homeless people, which in turn inspired him to train and work as a counsellor and art therapist. He has also worked with Christian festivals, served God with nightclubs and other creative church initiatives in London, and most recently set up a training and networking organisation to help people in the caring professions in North Wales. Jonathan has also become a father of three and added: “My inspiration and love has grown beyond imagining as I join in the delightful lives of my three little girls Maybelle, Rosalea and Lilyanna. They are a precious gift for which I give thanks each and every day.”

On Saturday 28 June, Jonathan will be ordained at St Asaph Cathedral and says he is really looking forward to becoming a Deacon and bringing his creativity to the Church: “I’ve had a wonderful experience of being in the Church in Wales and had support from all people locally, at a diocesan level and at Saint Michael’s College in Cardiff. Creativity is what I am passionate about and I’m always looking for opportunities to be creative. I want that to continue into ministry.”

Jonathan will be ordained alongside Revd Sam Erlandson and Revd Lorraine Badger-Watts who will both become priests after being ordained as Deacons in 2013.

At the Chrism Eucharist on Maundy Thursday, Bishop Gregory asked clergy and laity from across the Diocese to “persevere” before encouraging prayer for persecuted Christians. The service at St Asaph Cathedral saw clergy and laity renew their ordination vows or their commitment and service to God. The fairly traded Chrism oils for healing the sick were then blessed by the Bishop before the congregation shared the Eucharist. Referencing the Oscar-winning film Gravity in his sermon, Bishop Gregory explained how he had been moved by the perseverance of the heroine Dr Ryan Stone. He said: “Most of us would be tempted to give up but Dr Stone fights for her life and her return to earth – she is determined to keep on going and not to lose hope. Jesus calls us to persevere to the end and he gives us an example in his own life. Having loved his disciples, Jesus loved them to the end, going to the furthest extent, to the very end. He calls us to persevere as well.”
Welcome to our 8-page 2020 Vision pullout. Here’s an introduction from Bishop Gregory:

Jesus offers us “life in all its abundance” (John 10.10). It is a life to be discovered in our hearts by repentance and faith, and explored by participation in the life of God’s people, the Church. Such a life should, by God’s grace, be passionate, exciting and powerful. 2020 Vision seeks to reclaim this vision for us as disciples of Jesus, and for our churches in the diocese of St Asaph as we move into the twenty-first century. It does so by saying that we should become partners together, in order to unlock our potential under God’s Holy Spirit. As Anglicans, we can sometimes become too rooted to our pasts. We become loyal to a particular building, nourished by an unchangeable liturgy, which we understand, but which shuts most people out. However, we genuinely still want our churches to be welcoming, and we want to see them flourishing. 2020 Vision says that we are stronger together: that churches in a given area need to co-operate more closely together, that lay people can do as much (or more) in ministry and witness as the clergy, that the clergy’s role is to liberate and empower the laity, that clergy are stronger working in teams. 2020 Vision is NOT about managing decline or coping with fewer clergy. It IS about recapturing our vision of the Church as a movement with a message to share; it is about all of us as disciples, saying and praying: What next, Lord? May God stir us up.

Growing our Mission Areas

At the heart of 2020 Vision (The Church in Wales Review) was a recommendation that the Church in Wales should move away from the traditional system of parishes and deaneries and create Ministry Areas or – as we are calling them in St Asaph – Mission Areas. The parish system – where one priest served one church – was put in place when people lived and worked in the same parish. That is no longer the case. People belong to varied communities and Mission Areas help to reflect this new reality. A Mission Area is a group of churches working together to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with a particular geographical area. By working together, these churches can share resources and leadership teams to fulfil our mission and calling. Mission Areas will grow out of our existing Deanery structure but don’t have to be confined by Deanery borders or traditional parish groupings. For example, some Deaneries may split into several Mission Areas, others may work with churches in a neighbouring Deanery. Different ideas will work in different contexts but doing nothing is not an option. At the heart of any Mission Area is a strong team of lay and ordained leaders who will be licensed to the Mission Area, rather than to individual parishes and churches. Mission Areas are about us looking out rather than looking in and this ministry team will grow and encourage the mission of the whole people of God. A 2020 Vision tool-kit will be in churches by the end of June, answering some key questions about the process of forming Mission Areas – including finance, logistics and legalities. Here we’ll show some examples of what is already happening to help you on your way.
Life on the hub of the wheel

The Deanery of Dyffryn Clwyd has been operating as a Mission Area since 2013 and its journey has been aided by its geography. Not all deaneries can transition to Mission Areas like Dyffryn Clwyd, but the reason it has worked so well there is because of their “Minster model”. All the churches in the deanery naturally look towards St Peter’s Church in Ruthin, traditionally the Collegiate Church which Dyffryn Clwyd now consider to be their hub church or their Eglwys Hwb. St Peter’s Church hosts a monthly informal service called Jigsaw which brings together people from the entire Mission Area, while other churches around the Eglwys Hwb have started to partner on joint services. Revd Stuart Evans is Warden of Ruthin, we asked him what life is like on the hub of the wheel: “It’s both a joy and a challenge because its very nature is to be a place that offers hospitality and welcome but also it gives us that challenge of ‘what is of the parish?’ and ‘what is of the Mission Area?’ Should there be a difference or should it all just happen? I think it’s important to offer that gift of hospitality to the wider Mission Area – it’s such a biblical principle – and that openness both to new ideas and the prompting of the Holy Spirit. It’s one thing for me to have that idea but I think the challenge is helping other people to knock down those mental walls – if not the actual walls – between parish and Mission Area.”

Mission Areas should also help to lead our Churches into growth – has this been going on in Ruthin?

“It depends how you identify growth. In terms of the people involved – particularly those involved in the planning, execution and sharing of the worship – I would say tremendous growth in discipleship and working together. Green shoots is how Philip (Revd Philip Chew, Mission Area leader) describes it so we keep letting them grow and let the Spirit enable them to grow further.”

Facts and Figures

13 x Churches

3 x Stipendiary Clergy
2 x Retired Clergy
5 x Readers
7 x Worship Leaders
1 x Pastoral Assistant

Eucharists: Every church gets a Eucharist once a month. Some of the bigger churches get up to three Eucharists a month. Most Churches get a service of morning or evening prayer on the other Sundays. No Church has less than two Sunday services per month.

Weddings and Funerals: The Mission area is currently split into three groups. Ruthin Town Parishes, Llanbedr Group and Llanfair Group. Any enquiry for Weddings, Baptisms and Funerals come in the first instance to the group leader for that particular group (group leader = the Incumbent). If that Leader can deal with that enquiry and provide the service then all well and good. If that particular group leader cannot provide the service required then one of the other group leaders will step in.
Two and half years ago when Mathrafal Deanery was formed, little did we know that in 2014 we would re-configure the deanery again – this time in response to 2020 Vision. Due to the large geographical and rural area covered by the Deanery we have decided to form 3 Mission Areas here, of which the Vyrnwy Mission Area that I look after is one. Our Mission Area takes in the parishes of Llwydiarth, Llanfihangel yng Nghwynfa, Llanwddyn, Llanfyllin, Bwlch-y-Cibau, Llanfechain and Llansantffraid yn Mechain. The basis we are using to re-configure the Deanery into a Mission Area are people’s natural associations for things like shopping and schooling. For example, people travel down the valley to Llanfyllin (and beyond) for shopping more frequently than they would go over the mountain to Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant.

The Vyrnwy Mission Area covers some significant area and population, from isolated farms to the town of Llanfyllin, and accompanying villages. It’s in an area where farming, game-keeping, light industry and commerce are all to be found, alongside the schools in Llanfyllin and Llanfechain. We live in an area where people from different communities know each other well, as was demonstrated by the welcome everyone gave each other when we met to explore working together as a Mission Area.

Our churches here are made up of faithful, yet predominantly aging, disciples of God – people who have served their communities and churches well, and who desire to see growth and development through the continuation of God’s family in this beautiful part of Wales. As a Mission Area we are sharing personnel – lay, clerical and retired – as we seek to provide a comprehensive and varied pattern of worship, encouraging each other in our faith and mission in the places we live.

We are excited and challenged in exploring how the Mission Area will develop, and about implementing our thoughts and answers to prayer. We look forward to journeying on with God and each other, as we continue to witness to the saving love and presence of God.

Eucharists: Varies from once a month to every week
Weddings and funerals: The stipendiary clergy cover for each other, and we call on retired clergy as necessary.
Extra services: 1 retired cleric and 1 Reader can provide Welsh language services.

Llanfihangel church building is currently closed and has no regular services - people are going to Llwydiarth or Llanwddyn. Over the summer there will be an evening service each Sunday in a different church across the area.
The Rectorial Benefice of Wrexham has always had a Rector and group of Team Vicars. Now, as it considers how best to become a Mission Area, Transition Missioner Revd Canon John Lomas is looking at how it can build a more sustainable future. Instead of a Rector who will run the large town centre Church at St Giles and be the Mission Area leader, these two roles will be split up. There will also be four PCCs for the seven churches and a Mission Area Conference to ensure everyone can work well together.

“That means breaking up the Benefice and responsibility falling more on to all the clerics rather than just the Rector,” he said. “So we are moving the task of Area Dean (Mission Area Leader) to another cleric within the group and each of our clerics will have job profiles that will be permeable. This means the work won’t just be for the churches the clergy are actually in but instead their job profiles will be among all the churches in the Mission Area. What we are trying to do is reach the whole of Wrexham and not just our congregations. So I think with clerics having specific profiles – for instance youth and education or social justice – we can begin to work across the congregations rather than just in patches. It will mean we are more co-ordinated.”

John also hopes that the new model will bring some stability to Wrexham and enable the Mission Area to be more outward focussed. He added:

“It will mean that if a senior cleric leaves there is not a huge gap and there will still be another senior cleric in post. The Mission Area Leader will be one of the senior clerics and then the other one will be the Rector. I think that, at the moment, there is too much for certain people to do within the group and this will devolve power so we will be able to look out more than we look in.”

**Eucharists**
Each church has at least one Eucharist every week led by one of the clergy or retired clerics.

**Weddings and Funerals**
Weddings and funerals will take place within the area as they have always done and we envisage no real change to the system in place at present.

**Facts and Figures**

- **7 x Churches**
- **5 x Clergy**
- **2 x Retired Clergy**
- **4 x Readers**
- **7 x Worship Leaders**
- **5 x Pastoral Assistants**
Training for shared ministry

The front page of Teulu Asaph invites us to “unlock our potential” – everyone has a part to play in the life of the Church community. We want to walk with you every step of the way and help you and your church to grow as disciples and to see if your gifts can be used in a particular way.

To start this process, a short and simple course called “Living and Learning” has been written for use in churches and parishes across the Diocese to help us to think about how we can all play our part in 2020 Vision. Any church group can run the course with their congregations and it’s available bilingually. It’s in three parts called “A Church for the Future”, “Living Scripture” and “Called by God”.

It’s the first step in training for any sort of ministry in the Diocese of St Asaph. To run the course in your parish, speak to your Vicar and then call Revd Dr Richard Hainsworth on 01352 840842 or rich_hainsworth@yahoo.co.uk. If you have always wondered about training for a ministry role but didn’t know where to start, speak to your Vicar and read about some of the training commitments below. Meanwhile, Training Together will get a make-over later in the year to reflect our aspirations for Shared Ministry. A prospectus will outline all the training available in 2015 and the biggest change will be that all training will be available to anyone in the Diocese.

Previously only clergy were able to attend clergy training days, and many clergy felt that the old Training Together was only for the laity. From January 2015, anyone who has an interest in the subjects on offer will be able to book onto any course – allowing people to learn about the aspects of faith which excite them.

Keep an eye out for the prospectus which should arrive in your church in September and let us know if there is any training you think would be especially useful. For more information or to suggest your ideas contact traceywhite@churchinwales.org.uk or 01745 582245.

How can I train to be a Pastoral Assistant?
Pastoral Assistants help with a church or Mission Area’s pastoral ministry. They might visit the sick or spend time with people who are grieving. Here’s a guide to the training process:

• You will be offered training on dates to suit you. As part of the training you will normally be offered a chance to take part in a service – for example by leading intercessions.
• There are usually eight sessions for an hour a week over eight weeks. Sometimes a group will choose to have four longer sessions on a Saturday but the training is flexible around you.
• At the end of this process the PCC commissions you as a Worship Leader – ideally to work across a Mission Area.

The person responsible for Pastoral Assistant’s Ministry is Revd Chancellor Pam Powell: 01691 828244 or pampowell@microplusmail.co.uk

How can I train to be a Worship Leader?
Worship Leaders are trained to take a service but don’t preach. They help to shape the worship in a church and the way that it’s put together. Here’s a guide to the training process:

• You will enrol on the Exploring Faith Course which is a 2-4 year course and can lead to a degree. Studies begin in September.
• The learning takes place in local groups and involves a placement in a local church.
• You will spend three weekends and a week’s summer school every year at St Michael’s College, Llandaff.
• With study, local groups, essays and placements the commitment is around 10-12 hours a week.

Although all potential Readers study the Exploring Faith Course, you don’t have to be doing Reader training to join Exploring Faith. In fact, many parishioners take part in Exploring Faith and discern their calling to a specific ministry along the way. If you are interested in Exploring Faith or Reader ministry, please contact Revd Dr Richard Hainsworth (details above) or Revd Steven Green: 01244 836991 or sgdgreen1957@gmail.com

How can I train to be a deacon or priest?
Deacons and priests are called to a ministry of both sacrament and word, of leadership, pastoral care and empowering others for God’s service. The church of the future will need a variety of different ordained ministers as Mission Area leaders, local priests and deacons, to part time and full time ministers, paid and those who minister alongside their employment. It normally takes up to two years to go through a discernment process to see if you are suitable for the ordained ministry. Once you have been recommended for ordination, the process is as follows:

• Every Ordinand (full-time, part-time or self-supporting) does the same training which normally lasts 3-4 years but can be less if a candidate has done prior learning.
• The training can be residential at St Michael’s College, Llandaff or distance learning.
• People can train alongside their current employment.
• Distance learning involves a weekly evening group, essay writing, 2-3 weekends away at St Michael’s College, Llandaff and a residential summer school at St Michael’s.
• An Ordinand is ordained as a Deacon and if they are called to the Priesthood will normally be ordained as a Priest a year later.

Our Diocesan Director of Ordinands is Revd John Harvey: 01745 856220 or revjohnharvey@googlemail.com
How Shared Ministry can lead your church into growth

Revd Paulette Gower explains how shared ministry – something that is at the heart of 2020 Vision – has helped St Francis’ Church in Sandycroft double in size.

Six years ago the 12 regular members of the congregation in Sandycroft had an average age of 77 and felt very dispirited. They had a fantastic Church Hall that wasn’t being used. Now, in 2014, there are more than 20 adults on a Sunday morning with between six and ten children in Sunday School. That growth has come through prayer, using the gifts in our congregation and creative use of our Church Hall. Our new Community Cafe officially opened in April (pictured) and is a place not only for a bacon butty, a homemade cake and a coffee but also a place for fellowship and a place to be prayed for. It’s a place to come and do some craft on a Thursday or collect your food co-op fruit and veg for the week. It’s a place where people are being fed not just physically but spiritually too.

To enable this growth to happen in St Francis’, I have to be a facilitator and not worry about leading everything or being present at everything. I want people to recognise that Christianity is about a 24/7 lifestyle and to experience it to the full. This means encouraging experienced Christians to walk alongside new Christians and to use the talents and gifts God has given to each person in our churches.

G IS FOR GOD
Prayer is at the heart of what has happened at St Francis. We prayer walked the community, have held a 24 hour prayer vigil and pray for different streets and areas of the community each month.

R IS FOR REACHING OUT
We are “a church for you, serving your community” and this is at the heart of all we do. We have a vision for how we would like to see the community transformed and how the things we do fit into that vision.

O IS FOR OPPORTUNITIES
We have looked for opportunities to make connections with others and have spent time with the local school, helped the Brownies to restart in our Church Hall and encouraged people from other churches in the Benefice to help with our vision.

W IS FOR WELCOME
People have been welcomed and encouraged to share their gifts and skills and to feel a valued part of our church. They are made to feel welcome by older members of the congregation and are not pressured into making a commitment to attend every Sunday service.

T IS FOR TEACHING
We invite people to attend seekers courses like ‘Start!’ to explore the Christian Faith and give people the chance to make a response. We have other prayer and Bible study groups helping people to support one another and be rooted in faith which transforms lives and encourages Christians to gossip the Gospel.

H IS FOR HOME
Everyone at St Francis’ Church needs to feel that they are part of a family and be encouraged to take on roles and responsibilities to reach out to share with others. Just as everyone helps in the home, so we want everyone involved in church life.
The answers to your questions on 2020 Vision

In the last edition of Teulu Asaph we invited you to “ask us anything” about 2020 Vision and Mission Areas. We canvassed opinion from across the Diocese and sent your questions to Julian Luke, the Review Officer for 2020 Vision in Cardiff and Bishop Gregory. Here’s the result...

Q  At pew level we are only really interested in our church. What will make us think differently once we are a Mission Area?

A  Mission Areas will re-energise church life locally and that should be of interest to everyone at pew level. We want our boundaries to match up with the communities they serve and our churches to be places where we’re all involved in a ministry team. Even after these changes the Church will still have congregations meeting in local church buildings but there should be more excitement about church life and, of course, a growth in congregation numbers.

Q  Are there any exceptions to the objectives of 2020 Vision and if so who decides on the pros/cons of any claims for “special treatment”?

A  There shouldn’t be any need for exceptions because the whole point of 2020 Vision is to provide new energy to our mission and ministry. That said, there were 50 recommendations in the Church in Wales Review and there is flexibility in which of these are taken forward in different parts of the Church. Our priority from these 50 recommendations is to form Mission Areas and to provide training for a new model of ministry here.

Q  My church has a shared vicar with three others and we operate in a cluster. Will Mission Areas replace our cluster, Benefice & Deanery or is this another layer?

A  It’s not just another layer. Eventually, Mission Areas will replace clusters, deaneries and benefices. A Mission Area is all about partnerships and relationships with our neighbouring churches and about sharing our resources so that we can offer more in our mission and ministry. Together we are stronger. So the main difference is not about structures but rather about the way we do ministry. Mission Areas will be served by mixed ministry teams including full time vicars, NSMs, retired clergy, Readers, youth workers and other lay ministers. Each church will be served by more than one member of the team.

Q  The Church in Wales Review document is huge. Is there a smaller one which encapsulates 2020 Vision more succinctly? If not, will one be produced and when?

A  The original report isn’t short but at 35 pages is pretty concise. That said; there is a short summary which Bishop Gregory has produced which can be found on the diocesan website: http://bit.ly/1j2gZb6 We are also producing a 2020 Vision toolkit which will be sent to every church in the diocese in June. There is more general information at www.churchinwales.org.uk/review

Q  Isn’t it all about changing parish boundaries?

A  Yes and no! Yes because we want to lower parish boundaries so that we partner together in mission and ministry and not fight to preserve our own corner of God’s kingdom. No because this is about changing our approach to the way we do ministry rather than focussing on moving the structures.

Q  Some clergy have indicated that they don’t think the move to Mission Areas applies to them. Just how committed are the clergy to 2020 Vision and has its implementation been made clear to them?

A  Well, 2020 Vision is not going away and Mission Areas will be implemented. All the clergy have been told about the plans and they are a call to action for both the clergy and the laity. All of us have a responsibility to help make these changes and we all want to see a Church that is passionate about worship and witness. We want our local leaders to take the initiative but there will be a consultation process.
Who starts the process of moving towards a Mission Area if a parish is comfortable as it is?

No Church is called to be comfortable. We all have a responsibility to look at new ways of taking God’s mission forward, not least because we have so many more people outside our church communities than inside them. If we claim to serve the whole community (as the Parish system suggests) we must take that seriously and be prepared to consider change. So if the process has not started in your parish, why not be bold and take the first step?

Have we thought ecumenically when it comes to considering Mission Areas?

That’s the plan. As part of the move to Mission Areas we are looking at a community’s resources and then considering how best to use those resources to serve local people. Church buildings are a big part of that. For example, if other church traditions have buildings nearby we can talk about the possibility of working with them to help our mission and ministry.

The 2020 Vision Implementation Group is also meeting with the Commission of Covenanted Churches to make sure the work of both groups is complementary.

Are there examples from Anglican Churches elsewhere of other reorganisations or refocusing that has taken place? If so is there useful feedback we can learn from?

Don’t forget that the original Review was written by experienced people from outside the Church in Wales who brought insight from other church traditions and organisations but yes – there are examples we can look at and learn from.

Several Anglican Churches around the world have done reviews of their structures and resources and although they are in different contexts to Wales we can learn lessons from them – that’s one of the reasons the Anglican Communion is so important. Each diocese in the Church in Wales will take forward Mission Areas in a different way and we can learn good practice from each other in this process too.

What actions will 2020 Vision take to ensure a ‘green church’ culture and encourage low carbon energy thinking in practical and spiritual terms?

A better question might be: “What opportunities does 2020 Vision provide for the Church to use its resources more wisely?” Planning for Mission Areas should encourage less use of fossil fuels in terms of how buildings are used, how they are heated and how clergy and ministers travel around a Mission Area. At a Provincial level the 2020 Vision Implementation Group have made contact with CHASE (Church Action for a Sustainable Environment) to ask for guidance on this issue.

How will a PCC work in a Mission Area? Can one PCC really represent all the interests of many different churches?

Each church in a Mission Area will need a council to care for its building and to order its worship but the strategic planning will take place at a Mission Area Conference. It’s here that churches will plan to work together, pool their resources and support new initiatives. A Mission Area Conference is big enough to do more but is still rooted in a local context amongst friends.

Isn’t this all about having fewer priests?

No. If anything 2020 Vision should lead to more ministry, not less - it’s just that some of those ministers will not be full-time paid priests. In St Asaph we have the number of priests we can support for the future but we want to see self-supporting priests, deacons, Readers and evangelists as we move to this new way of working. 2020 Vision is about re-energising Church life and that means we want the level of participation by Church members (particularly the laity) to increase. It’s not about the ministry we receive but the ministry we share.
Ysgol Llanbedr referred to Welsh Minister

The decision by Denbighshire County Council to close Ysgol Llanbedr – a Church school near Ruthin – has now been referred by the Diocese to the Welsh Government. It means the final decision on the school’s future falls to Huw Lewis AM – the Minister for Education and Skills. As part of their objection, the Diocese of St Asaph sent three box files full of information to Cardiff. These documents set out why the Diocese feels strongly that Ysgol Llanbedr is a flourishing school with a bright future.

The Governors, staff, parents, children and the wider community of Llanbedr have joined with the Diocese in supporting the school. Rosalind Williams Director of Education and Lifelong Learning said:

“We remain committed to Ysgol Llanbedr and its future; the submission to the Minister sets out very clearly why we feel that the decision to close is the wrong one and we very much hope that the Minister will recognise this. I would like to extend our grateful thanks to all those that have shown support for the school during this time.”

The process will take several weeks with a final decision expected some time in the summer. Please keep the school in your prayers.

Church schools enjoy pilgrimage event

Twenty-six Church schools took part in a special event in St Asaph to mark the Diocesan Year of Pilgrimage. The Education Team organised the day called “Against the Stream” and it saw school groups take part in a number of different workshops and activities with a pilgrimage theme.

From learning about monasteries at the Parish Church to doing maths in the Cathedral; then experiencing prayer labyrinths and pilgrimage songs, the programme offered various activities to our primary school children.

The schools also gathered for worship in the Cathedral with Bishop Gregory where they heard about his favourite animal before singing action songs led by Urban Saints.
When Revd Nia Morris moved to Newtown, people wondered how she would get on in a very English speaking part of the Diocese. Well, on Good Friday she was delighted to host a bi-lingual service and a meal with 16 Welsh speaking children at St Gwynog’s Church.

Here’s the full article in Welsh:

Dydd Gwener Y Groglith eleni cefais wahoddiad i ymuno a chymryd rhan mewn gweithgaredd arbennig ar gyfer plant yr ardal yn Aberhafesp. Roedd swyddogion a aelodau Eglwys Sant Gwynog wedi bod wrthi yn ddiwyd yn paratoi gwahanol weithgareddau o ran dysgu’r plant am stori a phrofiad Y Pasg. Fe gyrhaeddais yn edrych ymlaen i gwrdd pawb heb wybod be wir i ddisgwyl pan gyrhaeddwn yr Eglwys. Wel, roedd 16 o blant oed cynradd wrthi yn brysur yn paratoi Gardd Y Pasg, fffram Y Pasg ar gyfer yr allor, bara croyw a gwain - gwasgu grawnwin!!! A phob math o weithgaredau eraill.

Pan gyrhaeddais cefiws fy nghyfarch gan un o’r plant… roedd yn cofio imi fod yn Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd - Ysgol Gymraeg Y Drenewydd, ychydig wythnosau yn gynharach, ac imi son, plis fyddde nhw yn dweud helo wrthai tasa nhw yn fy ngweld ar y stryd ac yn fy nghyfiwyno i’w teuluoedd - gan mod i yn newydd ac yn unig a awydd gwneud rhagor o ffrindiau yn lleol.

Wedi cychwyn sgwrsio gyda’r plentyn, daeth rhagor a sgwrsio yn Gymraeg… a wyddoch chi be… roedd yr 16 o blant yn gallu’r Gymraeg! Cefais fore wrth fy modd yn sgwrsio yn Gymraeg a chael gwahanolol dwyieithog, gan bod y plant a minnau yn gallu newid o un iaith i’r llall mor rhwydd.

Fyddwn i byth wedi disgwyl y fath oedd mewn ardal a ystirir mor Saesnigaidd - nid mod i yn honi hyn ond dyna maeystategau yn dangos! Peidied neb a chymryd dim yn ganiataol! Pleser o’r mwyaf oedd y canfyddiad a’r profiad a gefais yn Eglwys St Gwynog, Pasg eleni, 2014! Diolch i’r aelodau a baratodd mor drwyadl a physyrac ac wrth gwrs i’r plant.

This weather vane pictured here has been re-gilded and now sits proudly on top of the tower at Christ Church again. Here’s the full report in Welsh:

Ar ol misoedd o golli gwel y ceiliog gwynt ar dwr Eglwys Crist, hyfryd oedd cael ei weld yn dychwelyd yno yn ei ysblander. Cafodd ei ail euro ac erbyn hyn mae yn ddisglair ac ysbennydd ym mhelydrau yr haul. Roedd hen son a siarad amdano. Yn ôl rhoi roedd “yn fawr, hyd dwy fraich ar led, gyda thyllau bwled ynddo!”. Wel pan ddaeth i lawr roeddem yn gallu ei ddal mewn un llaw. Cafodd plant Ysgol Beuno Sant, hwyl a phrofiad o’i weld wedi ei ail euro. Doniol yn wir oedd gwel y ceiliog yn cael ei yrru lawr ac i fyny mewn bag Tesco. Doedd ddim i fod wrth gwrs, ond dydy pethau ddim yn gweithio fel maent i fod bob tro-hyd yn oed mewn Eglwys!! Profiad bythgofiadwy oedd cael mynd i fyny i gopa y twr a gweld Y Bala o safle anghywfrin iawn. Roedd yn dddwnod clir, gwyntog a oer, ac felly bu yn bosib gweld yr holl ardal hardd hir o’u cwmpas.

Yn anffodus nid oedd yn bosib i Rheithor Nia a Wyn fod yn bresennol i weld y ceiliog yn cael ei ddychwelwedi i’w briod le y diwrnod hwnnw. Ond cafodd y ddau y fraint o’i gario i lawr yn ei llaw- a ddim mewn bag Tesco.

Special services have taken place in Connah’s Quay to mark the 100th anniversary of St David’s Church. Revd Bryn Parry Jones led a Service of
Thanksgiving exactly 100 years after the laying of the commemorative stone. This was followed by a special Sunday service attended by many clergy who have served in the Parish.

The clergy pictured are Revd John Evans, Revd Kathy Trimby, Revd Stuart Evans, Revd David Pryce Morris, Revd Margaret Harvey, Revd Ron Evans and Revd Ray Billingsley who didn’t work in the Parish but now worships there.

Sandra Mellor from St David’s said: “There was an atmosphere of great warmth, joy and celebration on both occasions with St David’s living up to its reputation as ‘a happy little church’.”

Hidden treasure found in Newtown

Parishioners at All Saints Church in Newtown have found an ancient copy of the 1620 Welsh Bible – thought to be worth £2000 – locked in a wooden cabinet. The 1588 William Morgan Bible was the basis for the 1620 version, revised by Bishop Richard Parry and Dr John Davies. Despite not being as rare as the 1588 Bible, the Parish have been told it is still considered an important piece of history. The National Library of Wales have looked over the book and say it’s in fairly good condition although there are six pages missing at the front. Revd Nia Morris, Rector of Newtown said: “Soon after my Induction, I was informed that there was something very precious locked up in a wooden cabinet at All Saints Church – it was believed that there was an ancient Bible inside. Having asked and searched for a key to open the wooden cabinet, with no success, there was only one option and that was to carefully force the lock. What a discovery! “As a parish we pray for discernment as to where this treasure of a Bible ought to make its new home.”

The Parish is looking at a number of options to display the Bible which include a glass cabinet in church, in the county archives or in a local library.

Holy Week for all ages in Towyn

St Mary’s Church in Towyn hosted activities for all ages during Holy Week. 3 - 13 year olds learnt about the events leading up to the first Easter through Godly Play, story and activities. There was even a Pesach meal where 20 children sat down for lunch with nine adults. The Easter garden was build inside the nave altar and a service of light was held early on Easter Sunday morning.

New stained glass for Prestatyn’s birthday

Parishioners from Prestatyn Parish Church have spent the day at Pendle Stained Glass in Burnley after commissioning a new window to celebrate the 150th birthday of the church.

It depicts Christ in Majesty and many have donated towards its cost in memory of loved ones. It’s been installed to the right of the High Altar to mark 150 years of the church in Prestatyn bearing witness to Christ.

St David celebrated in Llanbedr DC

At a special family service for St David’s Day in Llanbedr DC, everyone made a daffodil before Welsh themed refreshments in the Village Hall.
Bishop Gregory has given Warden Emeritus status to Elizabeth Hewitt from St Deiniol's Church in Hawarden to mark many years of dedicated service. Elizabeth was sub-warden for the last six years but has also served in a number of other ministries including as a Sunday School teacher, Pastoral Assistant and PCC member. The photograph shows Revd David Lewis – Rector of Hawarden – presenting the Bishop’s certificate to Mrs Hewitt with her daughters, grandson and other church members.

Members and volunteers at St Cystennin’s Church near Mochdre have held two all-age work mornings to help care for the Churchyard. Led by an organisation called Groundwork, they have planted a summer wildflower meadow while half of the churchyard is managed as a spring meadow. This means it is not strimmed until late June, giving a display of spring flowers such as primroses, violets and celandines. Lynne Davis from St Cystennin’s Church said: “We now look forward to areas of summer colour too. The churchyard has been much improved by rebuilding of the boundary wall, carried out by local stonemason and church member Nick Davies, with funding from a central boundary wall grant for which we are very grateful.”

The Toyota Landcruiser pictured here has been a faithful servant to Milo hospital in our linked Diocese of South West Tanganyika for more than 12 years. It’s been well maintained but the state of the dirt roads in SWT has had its impact. During its life the vehicle has been used both for transport of patients and for trips to Njombe and Iringa for wages and supplies. Norbeth Mwalongo is the Clerk in the HIV clinic and is pictured with the van above.

Dr Adrian Murray has just returned from a visit to SWT and Milo hospital and recommends that we support the raising of funds for a new vehicle. Revd Mike Harrison has contacted the other friends of Milo Hospital and the South West Tanganyika Association in St Asaph has agreed to co-ordinate the funds and arrange for sourcing and shipping the vehicle. If you would like to contribute towards the costs of a new van please contact Revd Mike on mikeonorme@gmail.com

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Diocesan Under 25’s Officer Tim Feak will tour around the Diocese in his classic VW Camper Van in the summer, visiting as many volunteers, clergy, children and young people as he can. He wants to hear about the great work being done across the Diocese, as well as being available to offer help and advice about children’s and youth work. Tim will be available to speak to people about the challenges of this ministry and about how 2020 Vision can help bring new ideas and support to churches and communities.

The tour takes place for a week – beginning on Monday 14 July – and you can follow his progress via our Twitter feed @StAsaphDiocese.

Tim said: “I know it’s a bit of fun touring our beautiful diocese but it’s also really important that I support as many people as I can who are involved in children’s and youth work. I just hope that my 33 year old van doesn’t break down!”

For Tim’s Tour to come to you contact: timfeak@churchinwales.org.uk

St Mark’s Church in Caia Park welcomed a Welsh rugby star during the Easter holidays as children on the Wrexham estate met Scott Williams. Scott – who plays centre for Wales – met with children from Wrexham Rugby Club as well as Vicar Revd Eric Owen and Curate of Llay Revd Sam Erlandson who is a qualified rugby coach. The picture is courtesy of the Daily Post who covered the event.

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There was a double celebration at Guilsfield Church in March for “two church superheroes”. Revd Bethan Scotford and her husband Ron were marking their 31st wedding anniversary on the same day as Joshua Bird (aka Spiderman’s) 4th birthday. Roy Turner from the Parish said: “The congregation helped these two church superheroes to celebrate! Everyone sang Happy Birthday to Joshua and the Anniversary Waltz to Bethan and Ron and then shared some delicious cake brought in by Bethan.”

More than 40 people gathered in Rhyl Events Arena for a sunrise service on Easter morning. Parishioners met at 5.45am to listen to readings from John’s Gospel about Jesus’ burial. Silence was kept until sunrise and then there was a reflection on John’s account of the first resurrection morning. Revd Andy Grimwood reflected on what that means for us and said it was very moving as the sun rose and reflected on the sea. He added: “Lighting the Paschal candle and singing together ‘Thine be the glory’ was a beautiful way of starting the Easter celebrations in Rhyl. Will it be repeated next year? Definitely, and the good news for the parishioners of Rhyl: sunrise is an hour later next year!”

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Saturday 7 June - St David’s Church, Connah’s Quay’s Annual Summer Fete. 2pm.

Saturday 7 June - Celebrity Organ Concert by Ian Tracey. St Giles’ Church, Wrexham. Wine and soft drinks afterwards. Tickets £10 at the door, from the Church Office (01978 355808) or email stgilesmusic@gmail.com

Saturday 14 June - Summer Fair at Northop Parish Church. 11am until 4pm before a concert with the St Celia’s Singers at 7.30pm. Concert tickets are £7/£5 on the door or from Revd Rich Hainsworth on 01352 840842

Wednesday 18 June - A concert by Ysgol Cae’r Nant to celebrate St David’s Church, Connah’s Quay’s centenary. At the School Hall on Mold Road starting at 9.30 a.m. followed by a service at St David’s Church.

Saturday 21 June - Midsummer Twmpath at St Mary’s Church Hall, Mold. An evening of Ceilidh Dancing and entertainment. 7.30pm, £8. Proceeds to TCC.

Sunday 22 June - Summer Music Concert at St Giles’ Church, Wrexham. Organist Gerry Howe and Friends offer a programme of popular classics and light music. 3.00pm. Free entry followed by refreshments.

Sunday 22 June - A Eucharist with Thanksgiving for Anniversaries of Ordination. St Asaph Cathedral 11am.

Saturday 28 June - The Petertide Ordination at St Asaph Cathedral. 10.00am. See page 6 for details.

Wednesday 9 July - Mizoram Synod Choir from India who are competing in the International Eisteddfod will perform at St Giles’ Church, Wrexham. Lunch from 12.00pm and the concert (free) at 1.00pm.

Saturday 26 July - An Evening with Ruth and the Ranters. 7.30 pm at St. David’s Church, Connah’s Quay. Tickets £4.00 from Sandra on 07917 225465.

Sunday 27 July - Summer Music Concert at St Giles’ Church, Wrexham. Cymanfa Ganu - favourite hymns and choruses to join in with dynamic young conductor Kris Emmett. 3.00pm. Free entry followed by refreshments.

Monday Lunchtime Organ Recital Series 2014 – St Giles’ Church, Wrexham. All recitals begin at 12.30pm. Admission free. Two-course luncheon is served from 12.00pm.

2 June – Gerry Howe (St Giles’, Wrexham)
9 June – Philip Underwood (St Bartholomew’s, Wilmslow)
16 June – Colin Porter (Mossley Hill)
23 June - Glyn Williams (Shrewsbury Abbey)
30 June – Bob Jones (St Francis’, Chester)
7 July – John Hosking (St Asaph Cathedral)
14 July – Gerry Howe (Request Programme)

Model Railway exhibition shows St Bart’s on track
St Bartholomew’s Church in Sealand welcomed more than 240 people over a weekend in May for a model railway exhibition. There were five working layouts as well as trains and accessories on sale with experts on hand to offer advice and guidance for anyone interested in building a layout. The church’s reordering project is now underway to upgrade the lighting and heating as well as installing a kitchen and toilet. Churchwarden Ann Hughes said. “It’s a beautiful building and we want people to see it at its best.” Work should be completed in time for the next major event which is Bart Art, an exhibition of works of art by local artists which runs from 19 - 22 June.