

Parish & Community Magazine

For the communities of Coed-y-Go, Llanyblodwel, Nantmawr,



Porth-y-Waen, Treflach, Trefonen and places in between and beyond

Produced by All Saints and St Michael's churches

Free of charge - please take one

Vol 36: No.2 March 2026

Border Group of Parishes



Llanyblodwel, Llanymynech, Morton & Trefonen

Rector: Currently vacant

Benefice Administrator: Helen Parish, bordergroupadmin@hotmail.co.uk

Helen will be in the office (the church office in All Saints Trefonen) each Thursday, 9.30am–2.30pm. Address for mail: The Administrator, All Saints' Church, Oswestry Road, Trefonen, Oswestry, SY10 9DG.

Benefice website: borderparishes.org.uk

Church services

See p.4 for the times of church services in March. Please note services are subject to change at short notice sometimes. Please check the magazine Facebook page and local church noticeboards for updates.

Church opening

All Saints Church Trefonen is open daily from 10.00am to 4.00pm, and St Michael's Llanyblodwel is open daily from 10.00am to 4.30pm. Please feel free to visit your local church to pray, reflect, enjoy the quiet, or just experience an ancient building. You are very welcome.

Principal church contacts:

All Saints Trefonen:

PCC Secretary: Helen Parish, helen-parish1@hotmail.co.uk, 01691 670979

Churchwardens:

K Kimber, bobnkkimber@btinternet.com, 01691 679646;

Malcolm Kirk, malcolm.ref1170@gmail.com, 01691 688595

Safeguarding: Jeanne Bradley, jeannemccarley@hotmail.co.uk

St Michael's Llanyblodwel:

PCC Secretary: Sioned Lindsay, sioned@gmail.com, 07775 437101

Churchwardens:

Roger Taylor, roger@blodwell.com, 07967 652217

Alec Gordon, alecgordon@btinternet.com, 07970 544945

Safeguarding: Sioned Lindsay, sioned@gmail.com, 07775 437101

Bookings and events: St.Michaels.Llanyblodwel@gmail.com

From the Editor



After a long, wet and cold winter, I think we are all glad to see the back of February and move into March, which can of course also be cold, wet and windy but during which there is some hope of sunshine, the clocks go forward to Summer Time, and of course the early spring flowers emerge!

Our theme this month is 'Making Sense of It All' – how we as human beings make sense of the world around us and its sometimes bizarre and baffling aspects – and how that meaning-making influences how we live our lives. In an age of global information it is all too easy to become overwhelmed by world events and the myriad of comments on them, but most of us have found philosophical, humorous and/or spiritual ways of finding pattern and meaning to help us through. Thought for the Month finds Peter Woollam musing on social media (p.12); Chris Kirk looks forward to Spring(p.34) and Ann Hindley extols the virtues of winter home pursuits (p.22); Sam Rushton, Lichfield Diocesan Secretary, asks whether we control our money or our money controls us (p.8) - a question perhaps we all need to ask ourselves!; while Harriet Carty considers carbon (p.32). On p.9 I've shared a picture Betty Steele showed me, which represents life as a piece of embroidery.

Also this month we have more on the Trefonen WI centenary (p.36), news from Bryn Offa school (p.17), the strange story of what was found beneath the aisle in All Saints Trefonen (p.15), and a weather poem/song, chosen by the Poetry Group for our enjoyment (p.30). Puzzle pages include some pictures for colouring which double as a 'spot the difference' game (p.10), and our usual Sudoku puzzle (p.11), with answers on p.40.

Events this month include Trefonen WI's AGM on 5th March; the Garden Club talk on the 19th; the two Lent group discussions – weekly on a Monday and a Wednesday, starting on 23rd (see p.42); Film Club on the 28th (film to be confirmed); and the Benefice service at All Saints Trefonen on Palm Sunday (29th March, see poster p.5). Don't forget to check out our Facebook page for updates on local events.

Lastly, thanks for all the positive comments on the December/January colour issue. We are hoping to increase the number of colour issues each year. Watch this space ...

Janey Fisher

(Images: cover, pp.8, 12, 13, 31, and 33 are from Freepik, used by permission; spot the difference puzzles on pp.10 and 40 © biblecartoons.co.uk.)

Church Services in Trefonen and Llanyblodwel, March 2026

Date	All Saints Trefonen	St Michael's Llanyblodwel
Sunday March 1st Genesis 12: 1-4a Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17 John 3:1-17	10.00am Holy Communion Rev. John Tranter With K Kimber	11.00am Morning Worship Abie Tudor
Sunday March 8th Exodus 17: 1-7 Romans 5: 1-11 John 4: 5-42	10.00am Morning Worship Peter Woollam	11.00am Holy Communion Rev. John Darch With Rebecca Colpus
Sunday March 15th Mothering Sunday Exodus 2:1-10 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 Luke 2:33-35	10.00am Morning Worship Chris Kirk	11.00am Morning Worship Rebecca Colpus
Sunday March 22nd Ezekiel 37:1-14 Romans 8:6-11 John 11: 1-45	10.00am Morning Worship K Kimber	11.00am Morning Worship Rebecca Colpus
Sunday March 29th Palm Sunday Isaiah 50:4-9a Philippians 2:5-11 Matthew 21: 1-11	10.30am Benefice Service Rev. Linda Cox With Linda Gladman and Rebecca Colpus	Benefice Service No service at St Michael's



PALM SUNDAY FAMILY WORSHIP

Benefice Service

Sunday 29th March 10:30am

All Saints' Trefonen

10am Walk with a donkey from
the village hall to the Church

All Very Welcome

**Don't forget the clocks go FORWARD at 2.00am Sunday
29th March - Ed**



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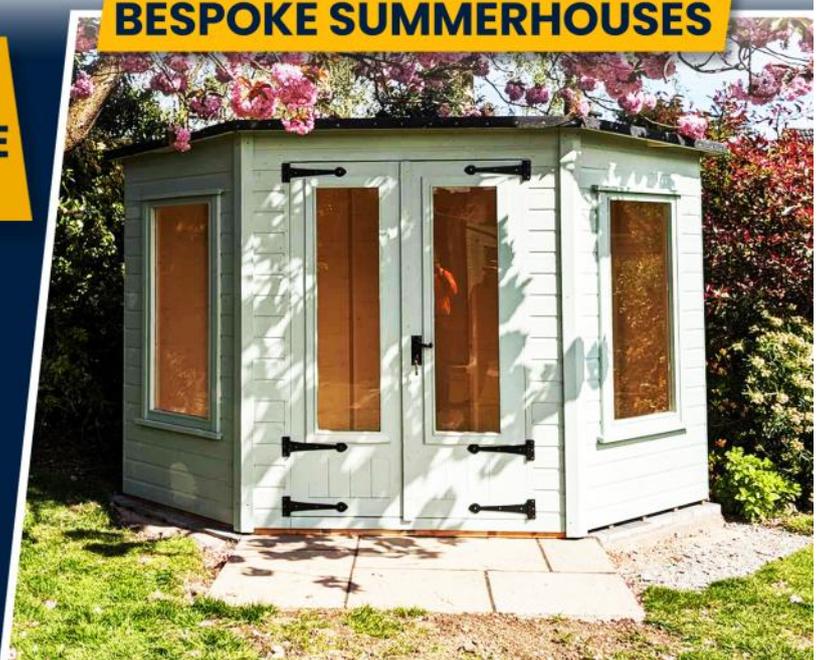


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Prayer Pointers for the Community

We pray:

For clarity and your guidance when the way ahead is uncertain;

For times when we are not sure how to respond to another's needs.

As all around us the earth is waking to new life and fresh hope, help us care for the natural world. Amen

~~~~~

A poem written by Ann Shephard, a Deacon in the Methodist Church, living with dementia, when she lived in Shifnal:

*Lord, as doubt and the perplexity of daily life  
become even more confusing and uncertain,  
thank you for being always present  
and gently guiding and protecting me.*

*Thank you for family and friends who continue to love,  
support and encourage me  
without judgement or disdain.*

*I pray that I may always be aware  
of your loving, guiding presence in this life  
and that I will come to meet with you in the next. Amen*

## Flicks in the Sticks

### February 28th - Don't forget!

As advertised in the magazine last month, the Film Club is showing *Black Bag* (2025) on February 28th.

Venue: Trefonen Village Hall, Time: 7.30pm (doors open at 7.00pm). Entrance fee: £5.



## From the Registers

St Michael's Llanyblodwel

*27th January:* Funeral of Mrs Jennifer Mary Owen of Llansantffraid, followed by interment in the churchyard.

## Gratitude, Opportunity and Hope

What is it to be rich, and what is it to be generous?

Ten-million-pound coins on a desert island would be as useless as a tissue paper canoe. Less useful, because burning the canoe would at least keep you warm.

Physical money on its own has no value – you can't eat it, you can't build a shelter out of it, you can't easily use it to keep warm or dry, yet it has a peculiar hold over us.

Why? Probably because of what it represents. Bankers say that money serves three basic functions: it is a medium of exchange, a unit of account and a store of value. It makes buying and selling things easy; we can use it as a way of keeping count of our wealth, and it is a way of holding onto wealth.

For example, if I tie up my wealth in cabbages, it wouldn't last very long. Two or three weeks after cutting the cabbages, they'd have no value because they'd be mushy and revolting. However, if I sell them when they are fresh and green, I can earn £100 to put in the bank to use whenever and wherever I want.

These very useful things about money are also at the core of our worst temptations. If I use money to buy and sell, I am distancing from the thing that I am buying, and it makes it easier to do things that I wouldn't do if I were close up.

Once, if I wanted to swap my cabbages for your wheat, I'd have to meet you to do that. Today, if I want to buy cheap clothes, I don't have to take my vegetables all the way to a sweatshop in the far east. If I did, I would see first-hand the conditions the children found in those sweatshops work and live in. Instead, I can use my £100 in the bank to pay for clothes in a shop or online without worrying where they came from. Or if I send my struggling, widowed sister £100 every month to help with living costs but never visit her, I never see that she needs company as much as she needs food.

If we have stored up our wealth, we don't rely on God meeting our daily needs. In the desert, when the Israelites tried to store the manna they were given every day by God, it went off. In the wilderness, the Israelites learnt how to trust God for their daily bread – money helps us not to have to trust.

Counting my wealth leads me quickly into the sin of pride – I'm somehow better than you because I have more money in the bank. Pride leads to anxiety – worrying about what will happen if we lose our wealth and our status. In a number of places in the Gospels, Jesus talks about the anxiety that accompanies money and things. He knows that pride and anxiety are the enemy of hope - they lead us into ungenerous lives, holding on to the things we have instead of opening our hands, letting go, and living simply so that others may simply live. Jesus said, "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money,"

As you think about your life, do you control your money or does your money control you? Do we hold onto more than we could ever spend in our lifetime when others in the world have so little?



Can we be more generous with our money and our time?  
How can we use our money to bring hope to the hopeless  
and renew our own faith in the God who is always faithful?

Sam Rushton,

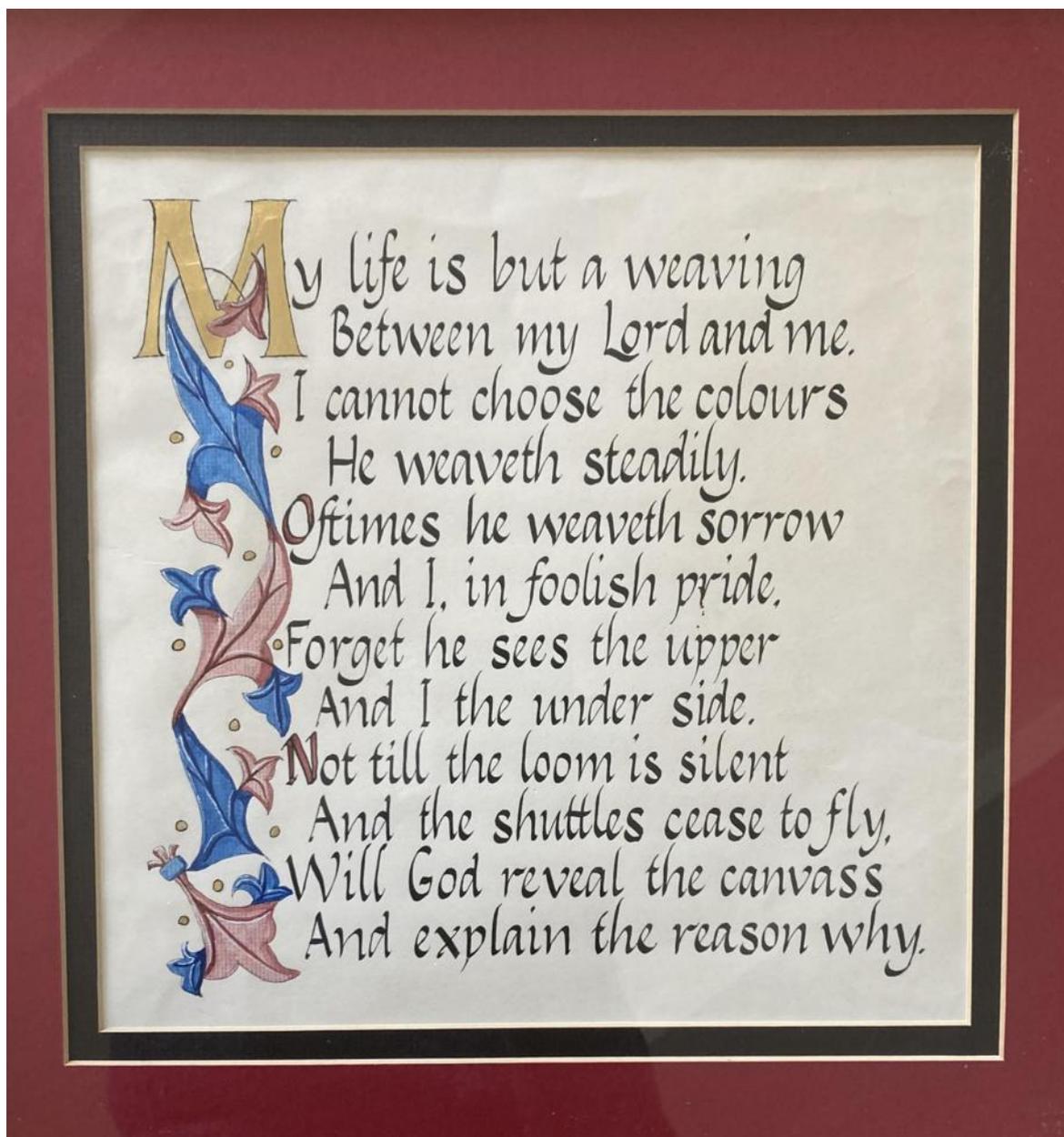


Chief Executive Officer and Diocesan Secretary of Lichfield Diocese



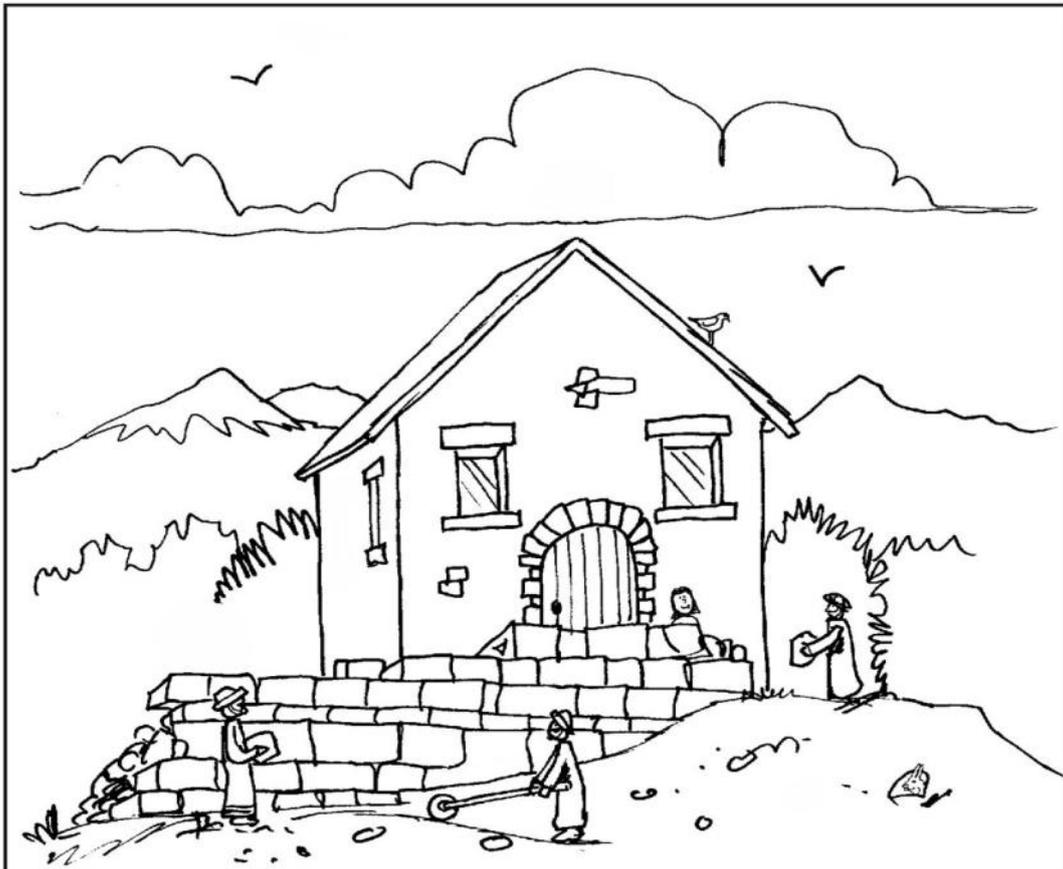
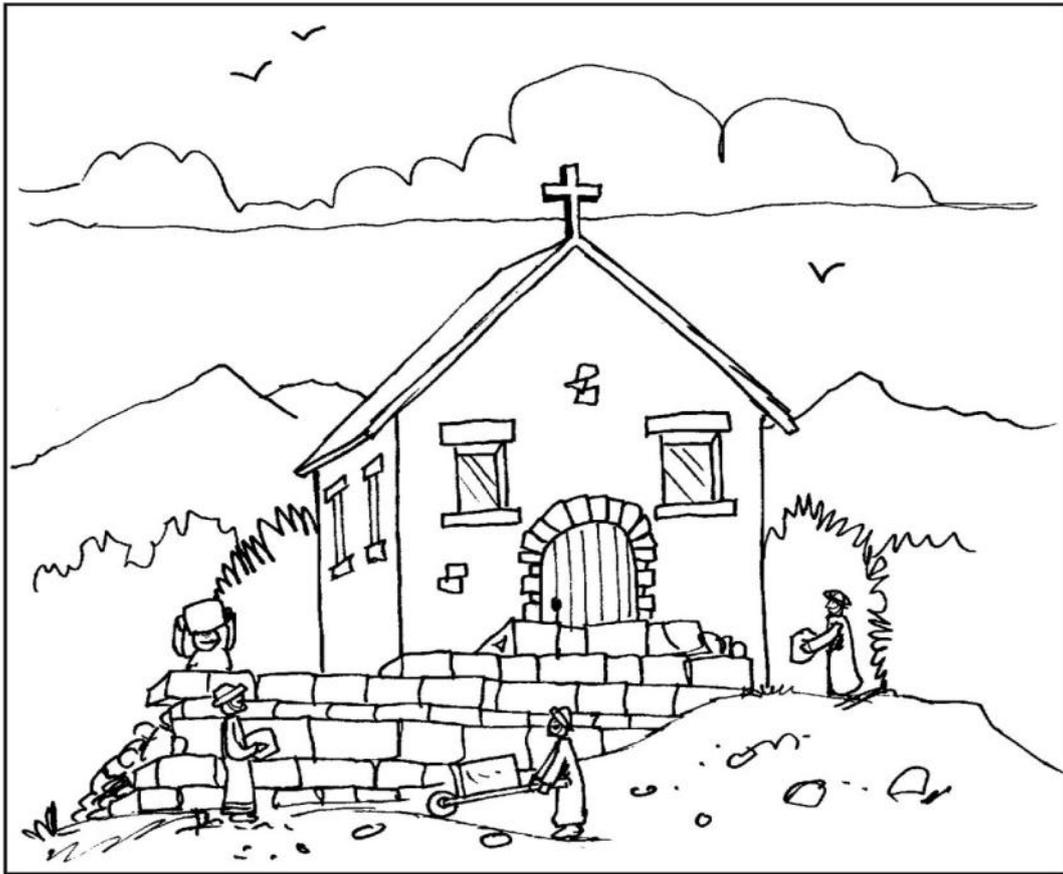
## The Weaving of a Life

Betty Steele showed me this picture when I was having coffee with her recently; and it perfectly illustrates the idea that all too often we don't, in our current circumstances, see the whole picture (or at least the right side of it!) - Ed.



# Spot the Difference/Colouring Page

Can you spot the 12 differences between the two pictures?  
Answers on p.40. Colouring the pictures in may help!



# Puzzle Page

## Sudoku

Fill in the blank squares so that each row, each column and each 3-by-3 block contain all of the digits 1 to 9. Use logic and solve the puzzle without guesswork - it's an easy one this time. Answer on p.44.

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   |   |   | 6 | 9 |   |   |
| 9 |   |   | 8 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 7 |   |
| 7 | 3 |   |   | 5 |   |   | 6 |   |
| 3 | 7 |   |   |   |   | 2 | 5 | 9 |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2 | 4 | 8 |   |   |   |   | 1 | 3 |
|   | 1 |   |   | 3 |   |   | 9 | 6 |
|   | 6 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 1 |   |   | 8 |
|   |   | 3 | 9 |   |   |   |   |   |

Difficulty: Easy © 2025 KrazyDad.com

(Thanks to Krazy Dad for allowing us to reproduce this puzzle. For puzzle solving tips, and more puzzles, visit Krazydad.com. )



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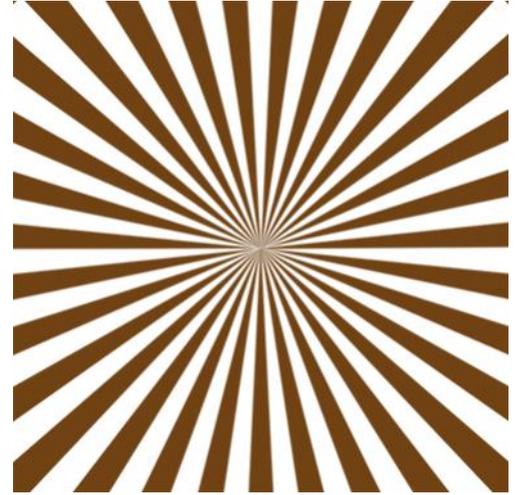
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## Thought for the Month

### *Sunshine or darkness?*

Turn on your radio or TV at the moment and you won't have to wait very long before there's an article on the concerns surrounding 'screen time' – people spending several hours each day looking at stuff on their mobile phone, tablet or computer. The biggest worries surround the young, but there's no shortage of dangers for adults as well.



I recently read a Consumers Association article titled 'The most important tech of the 21st century'; here's an extract:

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** Almost half the global population actively uses Facebook, owned by parent company Meta. Three billion people uploading photos, joining clubs, selling unwanted items and organising gatherings. In its purest form, it connects people and offers a platform to share thoughts, jokes and art. At its worst, it's a tool used to spread dangerous disinformation, test scams, prey on the vulnerable and spread vitriol under the protection of anonymity and free speech. Facebook is wonderful and terrible – as is all social media.

While Facebook morphed from catching up with friends to a source of news, Twitter was always designed to be a hotbed of discourse on current affairs in a bite-sized format. When Elon Musk took over, he said Twitter (renamed X) was 'the digital town square where matters vital to humanity are debated'. His tenure has seen a spike in hate speech on X, with problematic voices seemingly welcome in the square.

Social media sits at the heart of our always-online culture. It's intrinsically linked to so many important aspects of modern life; it's no wonder so many people use it every day and will continue to do so.

Other social media sites are available, of course. When I asked Google for a list, it returned over 30 names of those with more than 100 million active users across the globe.

So where do we as individuals fit into the picture? Have we no choice but to be innocent victims of the dangers – worried about keeping our children safe, alert to the prevalence of misinformation and scams, and sickened by the vile stuff? We might hope that the owners of these platforms will 'smell the coffee' and take a different view about their responsibilities in controlling the content, but frankly, at the moment, that seems unlikely. Governments are responding to the concerns, introducing legislation to impose a degree of control, and many who haven't yet done so are thinking about it. We must hope that effective measures can be found to minimise the harm that we know is out there.

So, is that it – we're powerless, and just have to let others deal with it? Or can we, in our own small way, make a difference? I read something else recently – a 'saying' that I hadn't come across before:

'The happiest people in the world are those who make others happy.'

For some, *not* using the anonymity of a false name to post comments online that they wouldn't be prepared to repeat face-to-face might be a place to start. Perhaps we should all stop and think before we write anything and ask ourselves, is this going to spread sunshine or darkness?



Perhaps that's not a bad maxim for other parts of our lives.

Peter Woollam

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## The Root of All Evil ...

The congregation at All Saints had often wondered why there was a strange irregularity in the left hand aisle leading down to the front of the church. In late January, churchwarden Malcolm Kirk and PCC member Barry Evans went to investigate.

This is what they found ...

Malcolm says: 'We now have a flattish aisle to walk and move coffins. The Root comes from one of the trees in the old rectory garden, so it's travelled about 60ft and it's not the only one.'

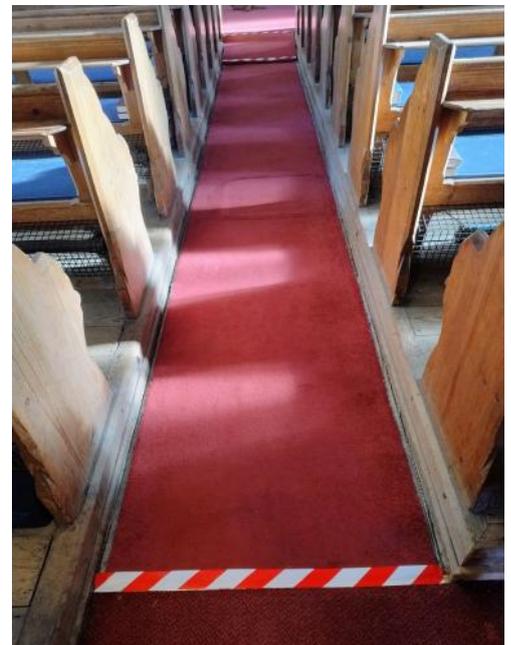
They have repaired the floor and relaid the carpet, and the aisle is now safe to walk across.

The Bible has many verses about roots - the most famous is probably 1 Timothy 6:10, which tells us that the love of money is the root of all evil.

But others are more positive. Here are a couple:

'Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.' (Jeremiah 17:7-8)

'Let your roots grow down into Christ, and let your lives be built on him.' (Colossians 2:7)





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# Bryn Offa CE Primary School

## Signs of Spring and Joyful Learning at Bryn Offa



As we move through the early months of the year, we are delighted to be seeing all the hopeful signs of spring appearing around our school and local area. Snowdrops are standing proudly, daffodils are beginning to pop up, and crocuses offer a peeping promise that warmer days are on their way.



The children have been enjoying spending time outdoors, looking closely at the changing seasons

within our school grounds and local environment. They have taken part in the RSPB Big Schools' National Birdwatch. Much to their delight, Mr and Mrs Robin, as they are affectionately known by the children, made their regular appearance in our Forest School area! Children regularly make bird feeders and some were placed around school to encourage our winged friends. Magpies and pigeons were also spotted and carefully recorded as part of the challenge.



Did you know that 2026 is the National Year of Reading? At Bryn Offa, we are passionate about helping children grow a genuine love and pleasure in reading. Children practise their reading skills every day, but they also enjoy reading in many different ways...

through one-to-one reading, whole-class stories, buddy reading and our new lunchtime Reading Cafe, which has begun in the Cottage and Hub and is guided by our Reading Ambassadors. As part of our World Book Day celebrations, we will be holding a book sale led by our ROTA



Kids, as well as a fun competition to see who can find the most obscure place to read. We wonder who will win!

We have also recently raised money for the NSPCC during our Number Week. Children dressed as a digit or a number rock star and enjoyed competing across

*(Continued on p.18)*



the classes to find our Number Champions using Times Tables Rock Stars. The focus of the week was on money sense, helping children to understand saving, and the difference between wants and needs.

We love to share what we are up to through the magazine but you

can also follow us on Facebook by searching for *Bryn Offa CE Primary School* to see regular updates and celebrations from school life.

As always, visits from prospective families are very welcome. If you are looking for a school place, please do pop in and see first-hand what makes our school such a special place to learn, grow and shine.

With warm wishes from  
Celine Keleher – Headteacher



## Prayer Chain

If you would like prayer for an immediate need, e.g. an emergency situation, you can ring any one of the people below. Your message will be passed to each person in the chain (who is available at the time) and we will pray for your need in complete confidence.

Betty Steele 652170

Carol Pickering 238561

Rita Mathias 657934

Chris Kirk 688595

Jill Ferguson 656456

Linda Gladman 07582 808588

We have a small Pastoral Care team at All Saints Trefonen. Members of the team are happy to offer prayer, a friendly visit, or practical support. If you, or someone you know, would welcome some help or support in this way, there is a Prayer/Visit box just inside the church (open daily between 10.00am and 4.00pm). Just write the details on one of the cards provided and pop inside the locked box. The box is checked at least weekly. Someone will then be in contact or we will pray for the need. Any queries, contact [linda.jgladman@btinternet.com](mailto:linda.jgladman@btinternet.com).



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*We look forward to seeing you soon*

## **OPENING TIMES:**

|           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| Monday    | CLOSED    |
| Tuesday   | 5pm-10pm  |
| Wednesday | 5am-10pm  |
| Thursday  | 5pm-11pm  |
| Friday    | 3pm-11pm  |
| Saturday  | 12pm-11pm |
| Sunday    | 12pm-8pm  |

## **FOOD SERVED:**

|                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| Monday         | N/A      |
| Tuesday        | N/A      |
| Wednesday      | N/A      |
| Thursday       | 5pm-9pm  |
| Friday         | 5pm-9pm  |
| Saturday (Day) | 12pm-3pm |
| (Evening)      | 5pm-9pm  |
| Sunday         | 12am-4pm |

**NB Please check The Barley Mow's Facebook page or phone them for opening times and facilities, etc. as some details may have changed. - Ed.**

## Music at All Saints Trefonen

Trefonen Church needs a talented musician to lead our music – age is not a barrier.

Can you play an electronic piano? (plus an organ, if desired, but that's not a requirement). We have an ad hoc group of three or four musicians – two guitar-players, a flautist, and someone who plays the violin and accordion amongst other instruments. The flautist plays at most services and the others during specific services.



The congregation meets weekly, normally at 10.00am on a Sunday for about an hour and we sing four or five hymns at each service. Could you accompany the congregation at least on two of the Sundays each month? – if you could do more, that would be very welcome.

If you are unfamiliar with Church of England services or do not attend church, don't worry; we can provide the support and help to guide you through the services. In time you could help those leading the services with the selection of hymns and other music.

So do you think you can help us and take the congregation forward in its celebration of music and lead the other musicians in time? If so, we would love to hear from you and to help entice you, we will even offer a small honorarium.

We would like to meet you, at a time to suit you, and discuss this opportunity, so please contact Christine Kirk on either [kirk.garden@btopenworld.com](mailto:kirk.garden@btopenworld.com) or 01691 688595.

We look forward to hearing from you.

### Planning a children's party or a family celebration?

Why not book Trefonen Village Hall?  
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## 2026 Planning!

 I wonder how many of you are spending these cold, wet, feet-numbing days (which are, in actual fact, WINTER), wondering how to keep yourself amused? You might find yourself batch baking, although this may be contrary to all your New Year's Resolutions to lose weight! 

 In our house, there is a large jigsaw on the go. Maps are spread out on the dining table, where Ray and I meet every now and then with a cup of coffee to plan this year's Camper Trips. Who knew there were so many interesting and very lovely places we have yet to visit. Edinburgh Tattoo is booked again, and this time we're hoping there's no cancellation due to stormy weather! 

In the spare room – why are they labelled 'spare' when they are clearly not!? In my experience, that room is for storing Hill Walk info, Arty Group projects, books and musical instruments, which I sometimes kid myself I can play!



Do you remember Les Dawson -- well, I'll say no more except I enjoy it and the door on the room fits snugly!

Now is the time to start thinking about Hill Walk again. We've had 'THE' meeting and Julie and Dom made a cracking start to their first year 'on their own' with Ex Hill Walker Helen now on the end of a phone for consultation duties! Do we believe she can do it? We will see!! We will be having another ARTISAN market this year, so if anyone would like a table, please let me know (Facebook, WhatsApp, email or phone).

My seeds arrived yesterday for the vegetable garden, despite the fact I'd made up my mind to plant less this year, so that's more planning to do.



When am I going to fit in my ancestry Research, reading my book club books, crosswords, family, friends and housework? (Just joking about the last one!!!) 

Seriously, this is such a busy village to live in. If I weren't so old, I might consider going back to work. NOT!

Well, enjoy the rest of the winter, everyone and if we get any more snow, do go out and play in it after all the clocks change in March!

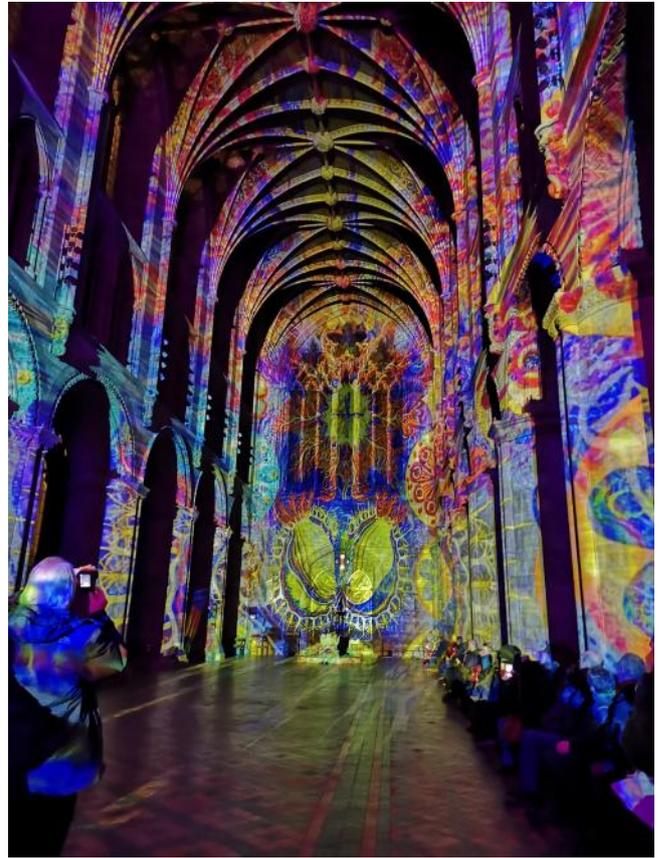


P.S. on next page!

Ann Hindley

PS!

I recently went to Hereford Cathedral with my daughter, a lovely bonus as I don't get to see her that often. The Sound and Light Show was amazing and we came away feeling inspired. Wonderful colours and story!



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## St Michael's Llanyblodwel

Café Blodwel and Llanyblodwel prayer meeting and bible study meet as usual this month. The bible study group are following the Benefice lent course (see p.46).

### Llanyblodwel prayer meeting and bible study



We meet on second and fourth Wednesday afternoons each month, 2.00 -3:30pm at Sharneyford, Coopers Lane, Porth-y-Waen, SY10 8 LY.

All are invited whether you attend church or not.

Rebecca Colpus

## Café Blodwel

at St Michael's Llanyblodwel  
First Wednesday in every month  
10.30am-12.30pm  
All welcome



## Porthywaen Silver Band: Striking a Chord in 2026

The hills around our parish have long been filled with the resonant sounds of brass, and 2026 is already shaping up to be a resonant year for the Porthywaen Silver Band.

We are delighted to report that our musical calendar is officially under way. On February 6th, the band performed its first concert of the year to a wonderful audience. It was a fantastic opportunity to shake off the winter chill and share the music we've been working hard on in the practice room.

While the February concert was our 'opening note', we are only just getting started. The band is looking forward to a busy schedule of performances throughout the remainder of the year, including:

- Local fêtes and festivals: Bringing the classic silver band sound to our community summer events.
- Seasonal concerts: Developing a repertoire that ranges from traditional marches to modern favourites.
- Community engagement: Continuing our tradition of making music accessible to everyone in the Shropshire borders.

Whether you are a long-time supporter or have never heard the power of a live silver band up close, we invite you to join us at our upcoming events



## Join the Band!

We are recruiting new players across our three ensembles, Beginners, Training, and Senior bands. Whether you are a complete beginner looking to pick up an instrument for the first time, or an experienced player who has been away from the stand for a few years and would like to return to playing, we would love to see you.



**When:** Every Friday night

**Time:** 7:30 pm

**Where:** Porthywaen Band Hall,  
SY10 8LS

**More information:** Facebook  
or [www.porthywaensilverband.co.uk/](http://www.porthywaensilverband.co.uk/)

Come along and join a friendly, vibrant group of musicians. We look forward to welcoming some new faces to the Porthywaen family!



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# The Community Café

## Trefonen Village Hall

### Tuesday mornings, 10.00–11.30am

A place to meet with friends and enjoy a cup of tea or freshly brewed coffee and homemade cakes.



If you have never been before or are new to the area we would love to see you.

## Regular Events at Trefonen Village Hall

**NB** *There is an entry charge for some of these events. Contact the organisers for more information.*

The Community Café is open every Tuesday morning from 10.00 to 11.30am (see above).

Trefonen Football Club run a bingo session in the village hall every Monday evening except bank holidays starting at 7.30pm.

Trefonen & District Garden Club meets 3rd Thursday most months - this month 19th March, starting at 7.30pm (see advertisement p.35).

Whist Drives take place every 4th Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm.

Dog training classes are on Saturday morning (booking required).



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At the bottom of  
Candy Woods

## Poetry Group

We met on 9th February at Carol's, and read poetry on a theme of 'Snow and Ice'. We included a wide variety of poets, including Wendell Berry, John Betjeman, Emily Brontë, John Clare, Michael Flanders, Janet Freme, Robert Frost, Maurice Rollinat, William Shakespeare, Robert Service and Katri Vale.

After much discussion, we decided on Michael Flanders' comic poem 'Song of the Weather', set to music by the other half of the duo, Donald Swann, to share with you (see opposite page). It's better with the music, but perhaps some of you know it and can sing along!

Next meeting is Monday 9th March at 2.30, venue to be confirmed. The theme will be 'Spring'. Contact Carol (07946263824) or Eiluned (07539469413) for more details.

Martin Fisher

---

## ***Guard Alba and the Ardanach Wedding***

Announcing the publication of Alec Gordon's new book, *Guard Alba and the Ardanach Wedding* (details below). We hope to include a book review of this lovely piece of humorous writing in the next issue.



Alec Gordon's new book,

### ***Guard Alba and the Ardanach Wedding***

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# **Song of the Weather**

By Michael Flanders



*JANUARY brings the snow,  
Makes your feet and fingers glow.*

*FEBRUARY'S ice and sleet  
Freeze the toes right off your feet.*

*Welcome MARCH with wintry wind -  
Would thou wert not so unkind!*

*APRIL brings the sweet spring showers,  
On and on for hours and hours.*

*Farmers fear unkindly MAY -  
Frost by night and hail by day.*

*JUNE just rains and never stops -  
Thirty days and spoils the crops.*

*In JULY the sun is hot.  
Is it shining? No it's not.*

*AUGUST, cold and dank and wet,  
Brings more rain than any yet.*

*Bleak SEPTEMBER's mist and mud  
Is enough to chill the blood.*

*Then OCTOBER adds a gale,  
Wind and slush and rain and hail.*

*Dark NOVEMBER brings the fog -  
Should not do it to a dog.*

*Freezing wet DECEMBER, then  
Blood JANUARY again!*

[I'm sure these sentiments will resonate with many of us after this wet, cold and grey winter. - Ed.]

## Thinking about Carbon

It seems fitting this month to focus on larger issues, such as trying to make positive changes to tackle the global crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. For those of you who care for our churchyards, chapel yards, and cemeteries, there is much you can do for wildlife, and hopefully, these monthly articles have already inspired you to take some steps.



But how about climate change and carbon? Is there anything we can do about that on a local level?

Well, yes, there is, for those of us who manage a piece of land, whether it's our own garden or the local burial ground, there is a great deal that we can do. Firstly, care for your trees. Trees and shrubs store carbon in wood, in their trunks, branches, and roots. Trees store more carbon than other plants owing to their size and long lifespan. Hedges, too, can store carbon for a long time. Many churchyards and cemeteries contain ancient trees as well as trees planted in Victorian times, often they are conifers which have a shorter lifespan, as well as the longer-lived native broadleaves. These conifers may be coming toward the end of their life, so keep an eye on them, carry out an annual inspection using 'The Caring for God's Acre' sheet on inspecting trees, as well as having professional surveys done by a skilled arborist (see [www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk](http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk) - Individuals and groups in the diocese receive a 20% members' discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code diomem22). The life of a tree can be prolonged by care and prompt action as problems arise (which can save money too). Perhaps you can think about planting young trees to replace those nearing the end of their lives.

Is there room for a sapling now?

Young trees grow quickly, laying down carbon-based wood as they do so. Secondly, think about your grassland. Rather surprisingly, grassland is great at storing carbon, with most of it out of sight. Whilst carbon is stored in the visible, above-ground plants, it is within the soil that most is held; in fact, it is estimated that up to 30% of the earth's carbon is stored in grassland soil. Soil carbon comes from decomposing plants, animals and fungi. When things die, they are broken down and used as food by insects, invertebrates, fungi, bacteria and other microbes. Whilst some carbon dioxide is released, most carbon is incorporated into the soil. The more mature the soil, the better for carbon storage. A mature, complex, undisturbed soil has a wide range of life within it, all of which contains carbon. Church and chapel yards, as well as cemetery grasslands, are usually mature and full of varying grass species, flowering plants, fungi and lichens. This richness above ground leads to a corresponding richness below the surface.

What about the length of the grass? Does that have an effect?

Yes, it does, taller grassland as opposed to short lawn has a deeper zone of active soil due to deeper plant roots. This active soil is full of carbon-based life. So, look at your local churchyard with new eyes, viewing it as a carbon store and seeing if you can improve this. Care for your trees, plant replacements, and when trees need to be felled, try to leave some deadwood on site, or maybe keep the carbon locked away by using the wood for timber or woodturning.



Ask yourself if there's scope to increase the grass length in some areas to increase the depth of active, carbon-rich soil? Can you reduce the use of petrol machines such as lawn mowers and strimmers, replacing them with electric ones or perhaps using them less often? All of these actions will benefit wildlife too, so it really is doubly worthwhile. All the best, Harriet.

Harriet Carty,  
Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor  
harriet@cfga.org.uk

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## Trefonen Garden Club

As I write this, gardeners are getting somewhat twitchy, eager to get out in the garden and planning for the months ahead, but with the ground saturated and weather forecasts not looking promising, we are going to make do with what we can get on with. By the time you read this, catalogues will have been browsed, plants and seeds should have been ordered with the anticipation of future crops and flowers.

This year, the club will be holding another potato competition after the success of last time. So it was off to the Potato Fest again to collect not one but two varieties, just to spice things up a bit. Both are main crop potatoes; one being Bambino, a late salad variety, the other Sunset, a good all-rounder. Potatoes will be distributed at the March meeting for those wishing to take part, whether you are a member or not.

Talking of the March meeting, we will be welcoming back Dr Wolfgang Schaefer, owner of Cwm Weeg, who this time will be giving a presentation on 'How to create and preserve a wildlife meadow' on Thursday 19th March.

Cwm Weeg is open to the public under the National Gardens Scheme (NGS). This year's NGS guides are now available, with a number of new and interesting gardens added. Copies can be obtained from the library or viewed online at [ngs.org.uk](http://ngs.org.uk). Many serve teas or sell plants, which makes it a pleasant afternoon out, knowing too that you will be supporting a number of charities.

Mothering Sunday is on 15th March, when vast quantities of flowers will be bought to give to mothers. Before buying, give some thought to where those flowers have been grown; could you buy British, how sustainable are they, or perhaps buy a plant instead of flowers that would last longer and bring longer-lasting pleasure and memories.

Finally, a plug for our annual plant sale in May. Donations to the plant sale would be very welcome of any surplus plants after lifting and dividing them, from propagating or if you have extra young flower or vegetable plants to spare.

March is the time of year when nature really springs into life, with birds beginning to nest, fresh green shoots, buds swelling and the cheerfulness of daffodils all around, enjoy the moment.



Chris Kirk



## Trefonen and District Garden Club

### **MARCH MEETING**

The Trefonen Garden Club meets on Thursday 19th March, welcoming back Dr Wolfgang Schaefer following his much-appreciated talk last year on the gardens at Cwm Meeg.

This time he is talking on

### **How to create and preserve a wildlife meadow**

**Thursday 19th March, 7:30 pm**

at Trefonen Village Hall SY10 9DY

Everybody welcome at Trefonen Garden Club!

# Harry Roberts

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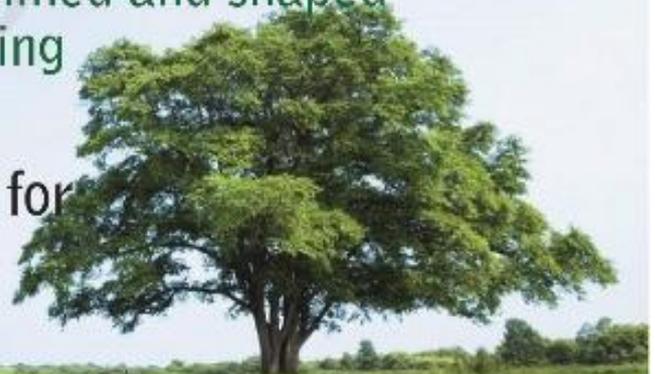
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## Trefonen WI

We are still celebrating 100 years of friendship, learning, and community spirit. This month, we're remembering how the local group began.

Just over a century ago, in January 1926, the women of Trefonen decided it was time to form a WI. According to our original handwritten minutes, almost 100 people gathered in the Trefonen Schoolroom on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 1926, to discuss forming an Institute. Miss Webb, the County Organising Secretary, attended, and under the chairmanship of Mrs Drew Woodhill, the vote was unanimous: Trefonen would have its own WI.

A committee was elected that very night — with Mrs Drew Woodhill as President — and plans were set in motion for monthly Friday meetings. Those early members wasted no time. At the first official meeting on 5 February 1926, 61 women enrolled, and the evening featured a Singer sewing machine demonstration by Miss Bell from Chester, followed by a reading of the rules and a flurry of suggestions for activities, improvements, and community involvement.

The minutes from those first weeks show a group of women full of energy and purpose: planning jumble sales, arranging craft demonstrations, organising courses, encouraging members to share patterns, recipes, and ideas, and even debating the timing of meetings around Good Friday.

They were practical, organised, and ambitious — qualities that have clearly carried through the generations.

At the party held in Trefonen village hall on Thursday, 5th February 2026, members shared supper and a glass of bubbly with a slideshow of photographs from the 1950s to the present day. There was even a display of Singer sewing machines to represent that first meeting a century ago.

Current president, Deana Parsons Jaeger said,

And now, 100 years later, here we are: still gathering, still learning, still supporting one another, and still contributing to the life of this village. The world has changed in ways those first members could never have imagined, but the heart of the WI community, creativity, and connection remains exactly the same.



Tonight, we honour the women who came before us: the founders who filled that schoolroom in 1926, the committees who kept our WI thriving through war, social change and modern challenges, and every member who has shared her time, skills, laughter, and friendship.

And now we celebrate the current members of Trefonen WI, who carry this legacy forward into a new century.

Here's to the next 100 years — may they be as bold, warm, and inspiring as the first.

Let's raise our glasses to Trefonen WI!

If you'd like to join us or find out more, our next meeting is on Thursday, 5th March at 7.00 pm in Trefonen Village Hall. It's the AGM with music from Celtic Dawn. For more information, please contact Victoria 07773 364982, or [v.gemmell@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:v.gemmell@hotmail.co.uk).



Another picture of the WI party is printed on the back cover of the magazine - Ed.]

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# Trefonen CofE Primary School

## **Minute Taker/Clerk to the Governing Body** **This is a permanent Role**

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The Governing body at Trefonen CE Primary School are seeking to appoint a Minute Taker or New Clerk for the official Governor meetings. The post is flexible, so we will consider appointing a minute taker for the meetings. The ideal would be to appoint a qualified clerk, or someone who is willing to undergo the clerk training provided. The two different job descriptions summaries are given below to indicate how they are different.

### Minute Taker

- Need to be available for normally 4 meetings a term between 3.30pm and 6pm normally on a Thursday. There may be some meetings that take place between 1.30 and 3.30pm. The dates for the meetings are agreed at the start of the school year. Future dates can be flexible for the right candidate. Additional time is allowed after the meeting for writing up and distributing minutes.
- Complete accurate minutes for the meeting to a set template.
- Time allocated after the meeting to complete minutes and email out to Chair and Headteacher.

### Clerk (summary of role in addition to tasks described in minute taker role)

- Possibly undergo clerking training and provide legal and procedural advice to governing body.
- Assist in the preparation of the agenda to ensure statutory compliance.
- Keep update records of committee membership, attendance at meetings and terms of office.
- Maintain a record of governor training.

A full job description of the clerking role can be forwarded with other details. Training for full clerking role could be provided for the right candidate. In both roles any applicant must be able to work using Microsoft and its various applications.

If you are interested please email the Chair of Governors at - [kirk.m@trefonen.shropshire.sch.uk](mailto:kirk.m@trefonen.shropshire.sch.uk). An interview between the Chair and Head of the School would follow for any suitable candidates.

Trefonen School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment and we follow all safer recruitment processes and checks.

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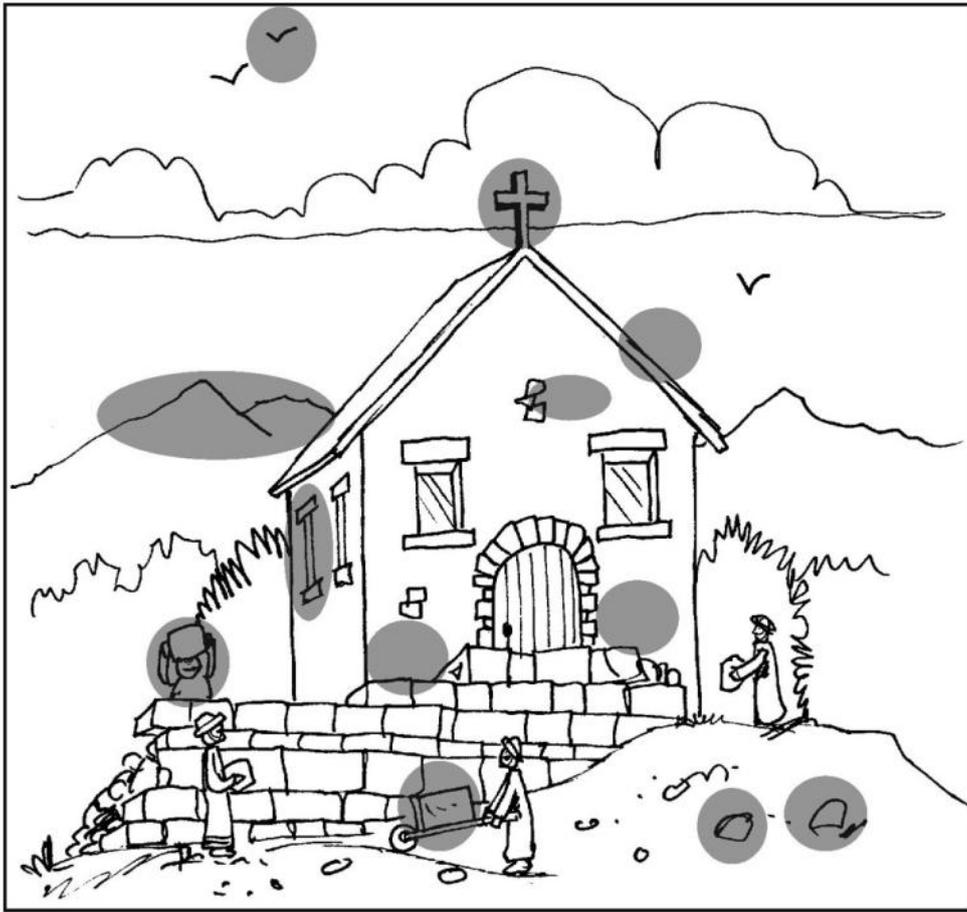
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## Puzzle Answers

The grey circles show where the differences lie between the two pictures on p.10



## Sudoku

The completed Sudoku

Puzzle on p.11 should look like this:

### SUDOKU Answer

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 5 |
| 9 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 2 |
| 7 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 4 |
| 3 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 9 |
| 6 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 7 |
| 2 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 3 |
| 4 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 6 |
| 5 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 8 |
| 8 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 1 |

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Everyone is welcome; you don't have to be a regular church attender. The sessions will be led by our worship leaders.

The course will start on Monday, 23rd and Wednesday, 25th February. If you have any queries, please ring 01691 679646.

[Did you try the Spot the Difference puzzle on p.0? - Ed.]

## Trefonen Village Shop

### OPENING TIMES:

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## TREFONEN INDOOR BOWLING CLUB

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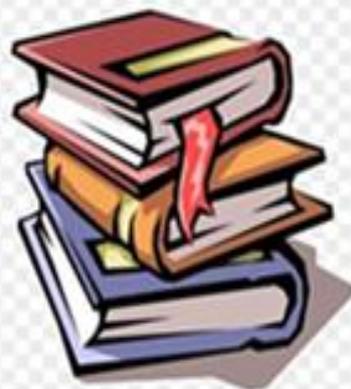
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## **Notes to contributors**

***NB IMPORTANT! Deadline for copy for the magazine is the 10th of each month (i.e. 10th March for the April issue).***

The deadline allows time for the editorial team to compile the contents and the proofreaders to check it, followed by printing in time for publication towards the end of the month.

We warmly welcome all your contributions, but please be aware that on occasion these may need to be edited for length, syntax or to ensure relevance to our readership. I will always consult with the author if any substantive changes are needed, but in these cases please note that the editor's decision is final.

Also, please remember that if you do send photographs showing people for inclusion in the magazine (particularly where faces are visible) **you need to have obtained their permission**. Please also check the copyright for any images you collect from the internet for publication here - the source needs to be acknowledged if necessary.

Lastly, can I ask that you check your facts carefully and if you are quoting from a book or article, make that clear? Plagiarism is not allowed!

Editor

### **Magazine team:**

|                           |                                 |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Content editor & layouts: | Janey Fisher                    |
| Assistant editor:         | Georgia Cunningham              |
| Proofreading:             | Martin Fisher and Isobel Fisher |
| Facebook page:            | Janey Fisher                    |
| Advertiser contact:       | Barry Evans                     |

For all communications relating to the magazine, use the email address:  
*trefonenparishmagazine@gmail.com*

### **Distribution:**

The magazine exists in b/w print, and is available from the Trefonen Village Shop, the Barley Mow Inn, Trefonen Village Hall, and both All Saints Trefonen and St Michael's Llanyblodwel churches. It can also be read online and downloaded as a pdf file (in full colour) at either [www.trefonen.org](http://www.trefonen.org), [www.borderparishes.org.uk](http://www.borderparishes.org.uk), [www.st-michaels.uk](http://www.st-michaels.uk).

## Local contacts

|                                                              |                                                                    |                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Bryn Offa CE Primary School                                  | Celine Keleher (Head Teacher)                                      | 830621               |
| Jubilee Club                                                 | Alwena Martin                                                      | 650607 [NOTE CHANGE] |
| Jubilee Field                                                | K Kimber                                                           | 679646               |
| Llanyblodwel Parish Clerk                                    | Amy Jones<br>llanyblodwelpc@gmail.com                              | 829571               |
| Llanyblodwel & Porth-y-Waen Village Hall (Sec. Bethan Cross) |                                                                    | 829368               |
| Oswestry Rural (Trefonen) Parish Clerk                       | Kathryn Lloyd<br>clerk@oswestryrural-pc.gov.uk                     | 07534 687663         |
| Pre-School:                                                  | 07817 641528 or Shropshire Council                                 | 01743 254452         |
| Shropshire Councillors:                                      |                                                                    |                      |
|                                                              | Andy Davis (Trefonen) andydavis@shropshire.gov.uk                  |                      |
|                                                              | Duncan Borrowman (Llanyblodwel) Duncan.Borrowman@shropshire.gov.uk |                      |
| Trefonen Garden Club                                         | Chris Kirk                                                         | 688595               |
| Trefonen Indoor Bowling Club                                 | Kath Barkley                                                       | 828587               |
| Trefonen CE Primary School                                   | Cathy Dunleavy (Head Teacher)                                      | 65296                |
| Trefonen Village Hall bookings                               | Val Smout<br>valsmout@btinternet.com                               | 657011               |
| Trefonen Village Hall Caretaker                              | Clive & Kath Roberts                                               | 671360               |
| Trefonen Village website                                     | www.trefonen.org                                                   |                      |
| Trefonen WI                                                  | Gill Buckeridge                                                    | 653172               |

| Some useful services         |               |                                     |               |
|------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Electricity (Scottish Power) | 0800 027 0072 | Citizens Advice Bureau              | 0800 144 8848 |
| Severn Trent Water           | 0800 783 4444 | West Mercia Police                  | 0300 333 3000 |
| Shropshire Council           | 0345 678 9000 | Childline                           | 0800 1111     |
| National Rail enquiries      | 03457 484950  | Samaritans                          | 116 123       |
| HOSPITALS:                   |               | Drugs & Alcohol Helpline            | 0800 776600   |
| RJ & AH Orthopaedic          | 01691 404000  | National Domestic Violence Helpline | 0808 2000 247 |
| Royal Shrewsbury             | 01743 261000  | Wales Domestic Abuse Helpline       | 0808 801 0800 |
| Wrexham Maelor               | 01978 291100  | Victim Support (National)           | 0808 168 9111 |
| Princess Royal Telford       | 01952 641222  | National Missing Persons Helpline   | 116 000       |

## OUT AND ABOUT

Right: A cheerful picture of early daffodils, courtesy Ann Hindley. Daffodils are the emblem of St David, whose commemoration day falls on March 1st.

Below: Trefonen WI held a party to celebrate its centenary in February – more details inside the magazine.

