

St. Gwyddelan's

On Tuesday 17th March 2020 St. Gwyddelan's closed its doors, as did many other churches and public buildings. We had to adapt our church life around the regulations to counteract the pandemic. Old ways of connecting were resurrected - appropriately at Easter with a paper letter (remember those?). Our weekly online Newsletter continued and now incorporated a weekly video with recorded prayers, readings, hymns (often with the St Gwyddelan's Singers), and a 'sermon', often recorded outdoors from different parts of the Bro Gwydyr Ministry Area. We embraced the online tools to share news and ideas and to support one another.

A weekly online meeting enabled our Churchgoers near and far, to catch up with one another. As we slowly emerged from our summer hibernation, outdoor Coffee Mornings took place in private gardens around the village. Several walking groups were established to maintain health and friendships with local walks from our homes.

Our longstanding collections for the Blaenau Ffestiniog Food Bank were transferred from the Church to the Village Shop where, thanks to the generosity of the whole village, it continued, even more successfully. To continue the work of the Church, online giving was encouraged to avoid the need to handle money.

Richard Griffin organised a "Lockdown" photographic competition which raised a much needed £70 for Church funds, the winner being Connie Brewer's photo of bluebells [shown on the front cover of this newsletter].

All these things and more are testament to a community prepared to be adaptable and not give up hope.

So we look forward in hope to Christmas as Advent begins this December. There will be services for Christmas, though of course seating will be limited (yes even in the small St. Gwyddelan's Church), on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day as we welcome once again the Christ child into our hearts.

Stuart Elliott

