

A message from Stuart, Vicar of St Gwyddelan's

(Please see insert for church services over the Christmas period)

Dear Friends,

This winter season, just at the time when we often look to the comforts of a warm hearth and good food, the prices of food and fuel are spiralling upwards. The Church in Wales 'Food and Fuel' campaign www.churchinwales.org.uk is seeking to address some of these issues. You'd be welcome to join that campaign and sign the open letter to the major supermarkets in asking for fair pricing, appropriate staff wages, a reduction in waste and ensuring deliveries are available to every budget.

It would be too simple to suggest we all heed the ancient wisdom of 'wintering well' in preparation, gathering provision, to wait out the cold earth of winter storms and dark days for the light and warmth of spring that will give new growth. There is an important task here and now to gather and to offer each other warmth and sustenance. Watching nature around us we see the oak trees that have this year created a bonanza of acorns. Few will become trees, most will be food for the natural foragers, squirrels and the like - some that will be, if the evidence on the ground is anything to go by, well fed this year. The oak tree shares her bounty and the squirrels' bad memory for where they hid their acorns may well pay dividends in the coming years.

Food and Fuel. We too need both of these, not just for our physical health, but our mental health as well - spiritual food you might call it - the encouragement to come together and celebrate despite the difficulties. I take comfort in the careful preparations of Advent and in the Christmas story of the Birth of Jesus. Not just because it was difficult in the first century, or because Jesus too was born into a troubled world, but because in the birth of Jesus we can recognise what God is always doing. God comes close, so that we might recognise a little of the divine light. Many may well suggest that there is little in the way of divine light this year. Yet I would say, look a little closer, beneath the headlines. Look to the places where love is being shared, where neighbours and friends are gathering, to where the strangers are being welcomed and offered hospitality. In our own community look to the generous offerings in the Foodbank boxes, to the donations that really do make the difference at a time of hardship. Look to the occasions to gather together and share in stories and song the traditions that we cherish and we will, once again, bring to birth a little of that light and life once again this winter time. Every blessing to you for Advent, Christmas and into the New Year.

Stuart

Services in St. Gwyddelan's are typically every other week on the first and third Sunday. The Church is open for visitors on Saturday, Sunday and Wednesdays during the winter period. Up to date service information is available on the Bro Gwydyr website www.brogwydyr.cymru