

Dewi Sant Welsh United Church

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Neges gan y Gweinidog. Message from the Minister

May I first and foremost wish every one of you, Gadwyn readers, the very best of God's blessings in this new year and new decade. The only certain thing we know as we enter this new year is the past, and those of us who recall how God has led us in the past need not fear the future.

I have often heard the saying 'nothing in life is free'. I have often thought about this statement and for a long time believed that only a cynical person would think in such a way, but the more I think about it and the more I experience life, the more I come to believe that the statement is true. That there is a cost to everything. Not a price, I wish you to note, but a cost. Let me give you a couple of examples.

The United Nations Charter of Human Rights states the necessity of our having the right to 'free speech'. What a wonderful world this would be if all people were allowed to speak freely, without fear. But with this right comes responsibility. The cost of free speech can be very high, if that 'free speech', wrongly aimed at individuals, is hurtful, spiteful and slanderous. I am certain that most if not all of you have experienced the cost of so called 'right to speak freely' I certainly have, and when I recall such incidents, I can also recall how the cost was high and far-reaching.

Here's another example. We are redeemed. Our sins are forgiven. We have been given a second chance, a third chance, a fourth by a loving, caring and forgiving God, through Grace. What was the cost? Did it come for free? NO. It came about through the greatest sacrifice ever. The highest cost was paid. And how do we react? How do we show gratitude for that payment? I am sure that you can think of quite a few ways you can move forward with your lives into a new decade realizing how much God has done for us, and at what cost.

No, friends, nothing in this life is free.

Bendithion, Blessings,

Deian.

The Thread of Life

I had to brush aside a tear while watching the Sunday School Christmas pageant as I realized that two of our very young soloists, Katie Quesnelle and Keiran Cordy were members of families who are now into the fifth generation of involvement in Dewi Sant Welsh United Church.

My mind's eye could picture Katie's great, great grandparents, Mary and Alf Wilson, and her great grandparents, Brenda and Cliff Kelsall beaming down from above as Katie sang in pitch perfect tones, 'Away in a Manger'. They too must have been singing ...'Thank heavens for little (red headed)girls'. And thank heavens for little boys as well. Keiran's solo, 'Rise Up Shepherds and Follow' was also beautiful rendered. My nain, Emily Hughes, known to all at the church as Nain Hughes was Keiran's great, great grandmother. Nain was the only person who really had a voice of quality in our family. It has taken another four generations to reassert itself. Hugh and Maude Hughes, the great grandparents, were doubtless beaming with pride as well.

It is this thread of life that helps to sustain the fabric of Dewi Sant. Of course it is the intertwining of many such threads, both from old and new spools, that makes that fabric both vibrant and durable.

So the tears stem from vivid memories of times past and from the joyful anticipation of times to come.

Thank heavens too for all the girls and boys in the Sunday School and to the superintendent, Pam Evans, and all her helpers who help to keep the spinning wheel operative making more lustrous new fabric as we move forward into our 51st year on Melrose Avenue.

Submitted by **Betty Cullingworth**

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CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

After witnessing such a spectacular wealth of talent and dedication, presented by the Sunday School on Dec. 13th, no doubt there will be many letters to the Editor, and I would like mine to be amongst them.

Every year we eagerly wait with great anticipation for this special service and each year seems to be more innovated and exciting, in telling the story of the birth of Jesus. What a joy to see the little ones performing, some for the first time, as an angel or shepherd, and the older children portraying the major characters in the Nativity.

We are so proud of you—so many people involved in creating and producing this wonderful event.

Thanks to all who made this possible.

Lyn Jones

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The Annual Christmas Pageant, December 2009

The children of the Sunday School thrilled us all yet again this past December as they showed off their theatrical and musical skills. According to the reaction downstairs after the performance, this year's pageant was "the best ever." (However, the congregation loves the Sunday School children so much that I have probably heard that comment many times before!)

Yes, they were very special this year. They had memorized their parts, acted with conviction and confidence, and learned many new songs for the occasion, including the Welsh carol "Cwsg, fy maban, cwsg". The music was "different" this year as we had found several numbers that had never been

performed at Dewi Sant previously. Who will ever forget Jade Thomas' fabulous rendition of the jazzy "I'm Herod, the greatest king of all"? The congregation burst into spontaneous applause, and so many people came to me later to tell me how wonderful her performance was. In my opinion, Jade has a great future in theatre. Watch this space!

We have other excellent singers in the making: young Katie Quesnell and Kieran Cordy are pitch perfect and delighted us with their solos. Morgan Phillips narrated the pageant like an experienced professional. Nia Contini (who memorizes her part as quickly as I'm able to write it!), played the role of the Child, and Stirling Stroud was her father (the Inn Keeper). Kieran and Tegan Thomas were Joseph and Mary, Stephanie Evans, Kyle Cordy and Meeko Thomas played the three Kings. Ian Quesnell and Louis Contini were delightfully "afraid" at the appearance of Katie, Ava Lloyd-Jones, Madison Freemantle and tiny Riley Christianson, who were angelic indeed.

There was one more cast member – no, not a member of the Sunday School, but the Rev. Deian Evans. The congregation was very surprised to see "the old man" suddenly put in an appearance, and even more surprised when he broke into song with "There's a new kid in town". Thank you so much, Deian, for helping to make our pageant such a success.

Prior to the "big performance" upstairs we had a quick run through all the music. I urged them to "open their mouths" and sing clearly. Suddenly Katie pipes up, "Remember, Hefina wants to see what you've had for breakfast!" And there, in front of me, were two or three rows of open mouthed children, resembling a nest full of hungry chicks. "What did I have for breakfast this morning?" asked Katie. Being pretty sure that I'd be correct, I answered, "Cereal!" "Yes!" she replied, "but which one?"

Pam Evans is to be congratulated for the excellent work that she continues to do with the children. A very big "thank you" to Betty Cullingworth for being ever willing to help with the music. Thank you, members of Dewi Sant, for encouraging and appreciating our children. They are our future.

Hefina Phillips

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BIBLE STUDY

Those of us who have been fortunate enough to attend the Bible Study on Tuesday mornings, would like to share this weekly event with you. It has evolved over the years from a small group in the Minister's office, to sitting around the table in the library.

Rev. Deian Evans has made it such an interesting exercise (we are all so committed, never wanting to miss a session) in guiding us through both the spiritual and historical side of the subject discussed.

It has been a most rewarding experience, sharing our thoughts and beliefs. Over these past few months we have followed the journeys of St. Paul.

Thank you Rev. Deian for giving of your time so generously.

P.S. Why not join us on a Tuesday morning in the New Year?

Anonymous

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At this time Gareth Evans is recuperating at home after a short visit to the hospital . We wish him a speedy recovery.

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One of my Christmas presents this year was a brand new (Folio) edition of Under Milk Wood. I guess that it is to replace my tattered 1954 edition, bought by my aunt for the princely sum of 8s 6d and now plastered with yellow stick it notes on which I have scribbled my thoughts and observations.

Is there anyone in the English speaking world who isn't familiar with Dylan Thomas, this superb Anglo-Welsh writer? Born in October, 1914 in Swansea, Dylan was the only son of Welsh speaking parents. He was given Welsh names, his middle name, Marlais, in recognition of an uncle who was a well known Welsh poet. At first glance this was a proud Welsh family. But while both parents' mother tongue was Welsh, Dylan's father rejected the language and spoke no Welsh to his two children. English was the language of home, school and play.

Why? Many readers of Y Gadwyn will understand why. We are all products of our era and that was the period in the history of Wales when many parents believed that in order to succeed one had to speak English. Education (in English) was greatly revered- but the educated flocked to England to find work. Welsh was regarded as inferior and this attitude was prevalent for the next 50 years.

Did Dylan's father reject Welsh in order to secure a future for his son or from a sense of inferiority? Did Dylan, by osmosis, develop an attitude that the Welsh language and those who spoke it were inferior? That attitude was common at that time and was also true in Ireland and Scotland of Gaelic speakers. From today's perspective it is easy to be judgemental, but we must remember that "we are all products of our era".

"Under Milk Wood", a play for voices, was commissioned by the BBC and first broadcast in 1954. It took the country by storm as Richard Burton (First Voice) led an all-Welsh cast. What were Dylan's true feelings towards this "typical Welsh sea-side town"? Is the town a symbol for Dylan's Wales? Is the fun he makes of the characters gentle or cruel? What of the name he chooses for the town? LLAREGYB. We all know to read that backwards!

The characters in Under Milk Wood are parodies. The Rev. Eli Jenkins, whose morning and evening prayers are the ultimate in bad verse, is a caricature of the Welsh preacher, for whom poetry and winning the Chair or the Crown at the National Eisteddfod is paramount. Dylan would have been familiar with the Eisteddfod even though he might not have attended. He possibly would have had a sneaking admiration for those bards able to write in the centuries-old strict metres. It was they who competed for the greatest prizes in Wales and were regarded as the *crème de la crème* of Welsh intelligentsia. Quite probably Dylan is mocking Eli Jenkins as he gives him such inferior lines to recite. Paradoxically, he then shows the listener that Jenkins is a man who sees only the good in people. Others gossip about Polly Garter, but when Jenkins hears her sing about past lovers after giving birth to yet another baby, he comments, "Thank God we're a musical nation!"

I grew up in a village where nicknames were very common. Likewise in Llaregyb. Organ Morgan, Dai Bread, No Good Boyo, Butcher Beynon etc. All of his characters are likable and Dylan loves the inhabitants of this sea-side town. Wales was in his blood however Anglicized he became. As the First Voice says: "*The contemplative may....find, in its cobbled streets and its little fishing harbour, in its several curious customs, and in the conversation of its local 'characters', some of that picturesque sense of the past so frequently lacking in towns and villages which have kept more abreast of the times.*"

Those are not mocking words but the words of a man who loves his locality.

Dylan Thomas did not speak Welsh, but his language is so influenced by Welsh, both the language and traditions, that Under Milk Wood could not have been written by anyone other than a Welshman. The

structure and nature of his language are Welsh. His imagery, his alliteration and the music of his words are hypnotic.

." *To begin at the beginning. It is spring, moonless night in the small town, starless and bible-black, the cobblestones silent and the hunched, courters' and rabbits' wood limping invisible down to the sloeblack, slow, black, crowblack, fishingboat-bobbing sea*".

Anglo- Welsh he may have been, but he was a true son of Wales. In this play he gives us a feast of sound, imagery, laughter, history and customs. He recorded a way of life that has now long gone. Yes, he is laughing at us-but perhaps we need to learn to laugh at ourselves.

I love Under Milk Wood, and regardless of how often I read it, something new leaps out at me. I hope that I have inspired you to re-read your copy.

Hefina Phillips

Dylan Thomas still arouses great interest. Many not even born during his era are now studying his work and appreciating his magic with words. Now in conversations, Burton, Hopkins and Dylan Thomas are identified as being famous Welsh men. I get great pleasure of listening to the tape of Under Milk Wood with Richard Burton as the narrator. I am nearly word perfect, but it is always, "new and fresh!" M.

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**The Ottawa Welsh Society would like to invite members of the Welsh community in Toronto to join us in our St David's Day celebrations. These include the following:
St David's Day Luncheon**

Date: Saturday February 27th **Time:** Reception 11.30 am-12.30pm. Banquet 12.30 pm

Venue: The Royal Ottawa Golf Club 1405 Aylmer Road, Gatineau, Quebec, J9H 7L2

The event will feature an address by Dr. Elwyn Griffiths, Director General of the Biologics and Genetic Therapies Directorate of Health Canada, and music by Soloist Shawne Elizabeth.

Cost: Early bird tickets \$ 49.00 each, deadline February 13th, \$54.00 each thereafter.

Dress code: Business casual.

RSVP and further details: contact Myfanwy Davies at (613) 526-3019 or email tomyfanwy57@sympatico.ca or visit the Ottawa Welsh Society events web page: <http://www.ottawawelshsociety.com/page3.html>

St David's Day Gymanfa Ganu

Sunday, February 28th 3.pm

Westminster Presbyterian Church, 470 Roosevelt Ave., Ottawa

Come and join us to sing some wonderful hymns in English and in Welsh. It is sure to be a very special occasion. Alan Thomas will be our conductor and Deidre Piper will accompany us on the organ. Our soloists will be John Griffiths and Shannon Mercer. If you have the Welsh hymnbook, please remember to bring it.

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Saint David's Celebration in Toronto.

*The Saint David's Society of Toronto will be holding the annual dinner dance on **Saturday March 6th. The venue is The Thornhill Golf Club. Yonge Street.** There will be a speaker from Wales, a short Gymanfa, which is a must, as everyone has to sing to*

celebrate Saint David! The menu includes lamb and a vegetarian main course. The cost of the tickets-\$75 per person. Alcohol is a moderate price and parking is plentiful and **free**. This location is also on the bus route. Directions will be supplied with the tickets. We are holding an auction and contributions are gratefully accepted.

For tickets please contact Myfanwy Bajaj.905 737 4399. 34 Carrington Drive Richmond Hill Ont. L4C 8A2 myfanwy@roger.com cheques made out to The Saint David’s Society of Toronto. Also Harold Woodey 416 221 9178 and the other Board members.

I have to hand in the final numbers by the 3rd.of March so please book on time. Thanks M

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In Memoriam----Er Parchus Gof.

Olmedo (Orly) Bohorquez.

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of our dear friend Orly.We have no details to pass on to you at this time except the sad news.

Orly was a very much loved member of Dewi Sant and a member of Session. He was a faithful Christian, with strong beliefs. He will be long remembered by us. He was especially attentive to the comfort of older an infirm members of the congregation. Every Sunday morning there would be a fresh glass of water on the pulpit for the Reverend Deian. Once downstairs for refreshments, the ladies with walking problems would find a table and chairs organized for their comfort and tea and coffee, with goodies, would be forthcoming for each one. Orly had taken it upon himself to be their guardian.

When there were funeral receptions Orly would make sure that once things were dwindling down, he would start to collect the “empties.” He always liked to help in any way that he could.

“Yes Orly, you are well and truly missed by the congregation of Dewi Sant.” Sleep easy dear friend.”

Myfanwy.

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John (Jack) Robert Sharpe.

We have been recently notified of the passing of Jack Sharpe at the age of 93.He was a native of Gelligaer and had been in Canada since 1947. Barbara and Jack had lived in Toronto as well as a few other locations before moving to Stratford in 1999.He leaves behind his wife Barbara and a large family of children, grandchildren and great grand children, as well as nieces and nephews in England, Wales and Germany.This gentle, loving family man will be greatly missed by all who knew him. Our condolences go to Barbara and the family.

Thank you for all the support to Y Gadwyn over the years.

Myfanwy

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Our condolences go to the Hastings family on the passing of Mabel's mother in Wales. She was beloved grandmother to Rhys. She is mourned herein Toronto by Mabel, Barry and Rhys and by her two sons and family in Wales. Cydymdeimlad dwys oddiwrth aelodau Capel Dewi Sant.

Our condolences go out to David Jones of Whitby and his family, on the loss of his father in Pwllheli. David has recently had to make that sad, long, trip home to attend his father's funeral.

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Remember Me.

Fill not your hearts with pain and sorrow
But remember me in every tomorrow.
Remember the joy, the laughter and the smiles
I've only gone to rest a little while.
Although my leaving causes pain and grief,
My going has eased my hurt and given me relief.
So dry your eyes and remember me,
Not as I am now, but as I used to be.
Because, I will remember you all,
And look on with a smile,
Understand, in your hearts,
I've only gone to rest awhile.
As long as I have the love of each of you,
I can live my life in the hearts of all of you. ***Submitted by Barbara Sharpe.***

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Gadwyn Donors.

Enyd Floyd : Haulwen Edwards: Rev. William & Janet Hudson: David Jones:
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What a wonderful way to start the New Year. Thank you all of you very much for these donations. Diolch yn fawr i chi gyd.

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Congratulations---Llongyfarchiadau.

The deadline for Y Gadwyn is **February 14th**. . This month we have featured Murray Black. There are many people, worthy of mention. **This COULD be a very interesting monthly feature!** Do you know anyone of interest to write about? I also need recipes!!! Thank you all. I wish everyone a happy, healthy New Year- full of inspiration and enthusiasm!

Myfanwy.