



**ST MARY'S PRIORY &
ST CHRISTOPHER'S
CHURCH CHEPSTOW
MAGAZINE**

HARVEST 2021

This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. (2 Corinthians 9:12)



PARISH INFORMATION
www.chepstowparish.co.uk

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Associate Priest:	John Waters	
Ordinand:	Dawn Lindsay.	
Lay Readers:	Joyce Amphlett	626445
	John Gale	629753
Lay Eucharistic Ministers:	Susan Amos, Catherine Higgs, Kevin Higgs, Noreen Shaw	
Wardens:	Noreen Shaw	624038
	Kevin Higgs	624026
PCC Secretary	Annabel Dance	
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Distribution of magazine by email only. Please advise the Vicar if you would like to be included on the recipient list.

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SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP IS NOW TAKING PLACE IN ST MARY'S PARISH CHURCH ON THE FIRST AND THIRD SUNDAYS AT 10.00am AND ON SECOND AND FOURTH SUNDAYS AT ST CHRISTOPHER'S CHURCH AT 10.00am.

All 10am services are live-streamed on Zoom. Follow Link below



Join us and be blessed

CHURCH SERVICES - ALTERNATIVE SUNDAYS

Services at St. Mary's Priory & Parish Church

Sundays *(First and Third Sundays)*

8.00.am. Holy Eucharist (1984 prayer book)

10.00.am. The Parish Eucharist (2004 prayer book)

(On the 4th Sunday of the month the Parish music group leads All-age Family Worship at the Parish Eucharist)

(When there is a 5th Sunday we use the 1984 Prayer Book)

6.30.pm. (2nd Sunday) A service of Taize Prayer & music

Weekdays

Wednesdays 10.00.am. Holy Eucharist & address

Celebrations on Holy Days as announced in notice sheets

Services at St. Christopher's Church, Bulwark

Sundays *(Second and fourth Sundays)*

10. 00am. Morning Worship & Holy Communion

Weekdays

Fridays 10.00.am. Holy Communion & address

Every Monday—Vicar's rest day

Contact details for Vicar: Rev'd Philip Averay:
Tel: 01291 680980 or e.mail: revphilipaveray@gmail.com

FABRIC GROUP REPORT OCTOBER 2021

This report summarises the issues on which the Fabric Group is working. Further updates will appear in the Magazine.

ST MARY S CAHURCH

- A. **Ground maintenance.** An application for the future maintenance of the grounds to the south of Church Walk by the Town Council has been turned down by their Amenities Committee. It will be recalled that the County Council withdrew their support for this area earlier this year. Alternatives are being investigated. The unsightly state of the grounds during this Summer must be avoided if possible.
- B. **Car park area.** Work is scheduled soon for work on the east walls from which debris is falling. Repair work will allow the unsightly plastic fencing to be removed. A grant from MCC of £1000 will fund this work as well as clearance of gullies and downpipes as well as removal of damaging plant growth lodged in the Priory walls.
- C. **Trees in Church Walk.** A report on the state of the trees has resulted in a recommendation that some be felled for reasons including their dangerous state. We are liaising with MCC on the report and what they propose for areas which are their responsibility. We need to ensure that the chances of tree fall in high winds is avoided. Replacement trees are being planted courtesy of the Woodland Trust.
- D. **Woodworm.** Following a report on the presence of this pest in the south transept, a survey of the extent of the infestation has been recommended by the Architect before we rush into expensive and inappropriate action. Contact with an Advisor has been made and a quote sought.
- E. **Cracking in North door wall area.** The Architect reports that there has not been an alarming widening but action to remedy the problem is required. He has been in touch with Contractors and explained the problem. A survey cost quote is to be obtained. This problem it is anticipated relates to foundation shortcomings: underpinning and bracing may be needed.

Continued:

ST CHRISTOPHER'S ISSUES. Roof leak issues have re emerged and permanent repairs are being completed currently.

CAVILL HALL. Electrical systems have been upgraded and the Hall is now fully functional again. Some hall hirers who transferred to St Christopher's may return and new clients can now be sought.

The above is a brief outline of current issues.

For further details please contact John Gale - Chair of Fabric Group.



(Psalm 91 NIV) ¹Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.¹

²I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Whom I trust."

(2 Kings:18 vs 19 & 22 NIV) On what are you basing this confidence of yours? ...We are depending on the LORD our God

(Psalm 20 NIV) ⁶ Now this I know: The LORD gives victory to his anointed. He answers him from His heavenly sanctuary with the victorious power of His right hand.

⁷ Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.

⁸ They are brought to their knees and fall, but we rise up and stand firm.



How quickly we organise our lives around human advice while we neglect God's eternal promises. When choosing between God's Word and someone else's, whose will you believe?



Gracious God, in times of anxiety and stress, teach us to wait in quietness for Your protection and defence, made known to us in Jesus Christ our LORD. Amen

COMING EVENTS AT ST MARY'S



October 10: 6.30pm Taize Service

October 16: 2pm-5pm Launch of Friends of St Mary's Family Fun Day

October 17: Harvest Festival. Come and share a bacon butty before we celebrate our Harvest Festival. **Food at 10am, Service 11am.**
Donations of toiletries for Chepstow Hospital would be appreciated.

October 25-31: 10am-4pm **Hunt the Church Mouse** For more information speak to Karen.

October 31: 4pm **Remembrance and Thanksgiving Service**

November 9: 11am **Pet service.** All pets welcome.

*St Mary's Church is open for quiet thought or prayer from
10.00am -4.30pm Monday—Saturday*

*Each Wednesday there is a said Eucharist at 10.00am and
Each Friday at St Christopher's said Eucharist at 10.00am*

Pastoral Care Group

On Thursday 30th September a group of 7 parishioners of St Mary's met with the aim of starting a Pastoral Care Group. Enthusiasm was high and the idea we are hoping to pursue in the first instance is to offer one to one support to people connected in some way with the church. Other ideas such as starting a drop in centre were discussed but it was felt that we need to get well established before undertaking such a venture, and it's best to start small. A further idea we wish to pursue is the design and making of cards to send to the sick and bereaved.

If you would like to support this group in any way, if you or someone you know would appreciate support from us or you would like to join us, please email me on annabelbowker@hotmail.co.uk, or phone 07938511658.

We will be having our next meeting on Thursday 14th October and hopefully we will then be in a position to start in earnest. Thank you for your best wishes and prayers for this work.



The Chepstow Branch
of the RNLI invite you
to a

**TOMMY COOPER
NIGHT**

TRIBUTE ACT

at the **CHEPSTOW RUGBY CLUB**

on **Friday 22nd October 2021 at 7.30 pm**

Raffle Buffet Tickets £12

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea.



Saving Lives at Sea:
Behind the scenes with Mike Chant



Mike Chant tells us about poignant moments, honest interviews, and how we're all in it together in [this behind-the-scenes interview](#).

Continued...

Do you watch the episodes that you're in? How do you react to seeing yourself on TV?

It's funny – people in your local area see these things and say: 'I saw you on the telly the other night!' I used to be the Mayor of St David's, and I appeared on a programme called *Britain's Smallest City*, which was more tongue-in-cheek than *Saving Lives at Sea*. I wasn't embarrassed of that one, but I was prouder to be on *Saving Lives at Sea* – occasionally I was cringing at the other one!

My mum died between the first series I appeared in [series 4] and the second [series 5], which makes it **a poignant experience for me as it was something she was very proud of**. She died in the June and series 5 didn't come out until September.

It makes you realise how precious and important life is.

What's it like filming the interview segments?

There was a sense of excitement in the station about the idea we'd be involved with it. The interviewers made us feel so relaxed.

You go into a studio setting and there are a few props behind you. You are looking into a reflective camera so you can talk to and see your face – once you get past that it's alright!

The interviewer was brilliant – a good interviewer draws things out instead of leading, and that was how it was. You spend couple of hours there and it's surprising how quickly time passes.

It's also nice to have a chance to reflect and hear the reactions from the TV audience. I never got the sense from the programme that they were milking it or it was contrived – **it was all heartfelt and genuine, with people being honest**.

We don't feel we have to be on our guard in the interviews. We're all human and have our own outlooks on life. I liked that you could see **a full range of people involved being interviewed**, newer additions as well as seasoned crew members, which will hopefully inspire more people to get involved.

It's also striking when you see bits taken from another shout used in other episodes. One example was a discussion of when people don't make it, and what goes through your head – I was quite moved by the fact that they'd taken a bit from my interview and brought it out for this poignant moment.

Continued...

Can you think of any 'outtake' style moments that didn't make it into the programme?

No! There were perhaps a few moments [on a shout] that got a bit swear-y ...

I tend to ramble on: once I get onto a train of thought it triggers another thought! The interviewer kind of let me run with it. It's easy to edit things down when you've got lots to work with! So I'm happy with that idea, just to ramble on.

If the audience took one thing away from watching *Saving Lives at Sea*, what would you hope for it to be?

Probably the thing for me would be I hope they recognise that **we do it because we love it.**

We're happy to help: don't ever think that we're going to judge you for a mistake you may have made. Stuff happens to us. The sea will catch you out.

I've had the lifeboat called out to me twice, and both times it probably could have been avoided. I didn't hesitate because I know what it's like being in the crew. We're not thinking: 'This is an inconvenience!'

People can often be ridiculed for mistakes and **I think we need to be kind to each other.** I've noticed a change in the RNLI in how focused people are on wellbeing and looking out for each other – it's always been important but it's a really highlighted thing now. We make mistakes, and maybe that one little thing that went wrong, we can learn from.

We're all in it together – that's how I like to look at everything. If we get our heads around that it becomes easy to help people, to give and not receive: it keeps flowing.

Does anything else stick out from your experience with *Saving Lives at Sea*?

One of the things we've done in training is working with local A&E departments, going into hospital to train alongside them. As well as the confidence building, you get a sense of 'the afterwards', which is something that *Saving Lives at Sea* also gives you. 99 times out of 100 you don't know what happens to a casualty unless they make a particular effort to say thank you, which does happen sometimes. But we don't see them, we don't see their response.

Continued.....

That was a really nice thing about *Saving Lives at Sea* – **it fills in some of the gaps in the story** of what we do. That's really positive for us – to see that they felt that the experience changed their life, or gave them life. That's what happened with the kayakers [in series 5] – after the shout, that's it: we went home. If it wasn't for *Saving Lives at Sea* we wouldn't have seen or heard from them again. It was the same thing with the yacht in series 4. So it's nice to see them, hear them and get that perspective.

Watching *Saving Lives at Sea*, you really get a sense that it's a big family – the ethos is solid across the board, and **we're all doing it for the same reasons**. From conversations I've had with other crew members, there's the sense that being out there and getting people safe is the bottom line, which comes across really well in the programme.

We've all got the same heart. The sense that 'this is in my care and it really matters'

Don't forget to keep up with the new series of Saving Lives at Sea on BBC Two on Tuesdays at 8pm, as well as being available on BBC iPlayer to watch afterwards. Previous series have also been broadcast by RTÉ at a later date, so in the future it will likely be available to watch there too.



Mental Health Awareness Week

Sunday 10 October marks World Mental Health Day, recognised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) every year. This year's theme, set by the World Federation for Mental Health, is 'Mental Health in an Unequal World'.

WHO says: 'The overall objective of World Mental Health Day is to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and to mobilize efforts in support of mental health.' It also provides an opportunity to empower people to look after their own mental health and provide support to others. Please see the below links where you can find resources and information about the support available to you at the RNLI in the Wellbeing section of the Volunteer Zone.

<https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-mental-health-day>

<https://wfmh.global/2021-world-mental-health-global-awareness-campaign-world-mental-health-day-theme/>

<https://rnli.org/support-us/volunteer/volunteer-zone/learning-wellbeing-and-benefits/wellbeing>

Continued ...

Write your will for free this October

As a volunteer, you know that our lifesaving work is only possible thanks to the generosity of our supporters. But did you know that over 60% of our income – that's 6 out of every 10 lifeboat launches – comes from gifts left in Wills?

Those special gifts provide 60% of the training, equipment, maintenance and kit that our crews need to stay safe – and save lives – 365 days a year. And you know just how important that is.

So this October, we're offering you the chance to write or amend your Will for free.

For more information please head over to [your Volunteer Zone](#).

Fundraising Roundup

Inspired by the RNLi's lifesaving mission, our supporters and volunteers are constantly pushing their limits when it comes to fundraising.

As the weather turns more autumnal, take a moment to look back on some of the inspiring challenges from around Ireland and the UK from this summer.

Please head over to [your Volunteer Zone](#) to read the full story.



Those who go down to the sea in ships,
Who do business on great waters,
They see the works of the LORD,
And His wonders in the deep
For He commands and raises the stormy wind,
Which lifts up the waves of the sea.
They mount up to the heavens,
They go down again to the depths;

Their soul melts because of trouble
They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man,
And are at their wits' end.
Then they cry out to the LORD in their trouble,
And He brings them out of their distresses.
He calms the storm, So that its waves are still.
Then they are glad because they are quiet;
So He guides them to their desired haven.
Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness,
And for His wonderful works to the children of men!

(Psalm 107:23-31)



**Do you know any older people
who could do with some help?**

**Would you like to help others
and do something interesting
in your spare time?**

Age Cymru's HOPE project needs your help to support older people (50+) and their carers in your community.

HOPE is making a huge difference to the lives of many older people who currently don't know how to deal with their concerns or don't have the confidence to speak up about what they really need.

Our trained Independent Volunteer Advocates help older people and their carers access services like utilities, GP, housing and benefits. We're also helping people to reconnect with their community now Covid restrictions are easing.

If you know anyone who could use the help of one of our Volunteer Advocates, please let them know about our project. People can get in touch with us via email or phone. If you would like to join us, we'll train you to provide support to local older people and carers so they can help shape the key decisions affecting their lives and avoid getting into a crisis situation.

HOPE works across Wales and is a partnership between Age Cymru, Age Cymru local partners and Age Connects Wales partners.

For general enquiries please email advocacy@agecymru.org.uk or ring Janet Ellard on 07943 186766. If you're interested in becoming an Independent Volunteer Advocate, contact Carl Pugh 07944 995603 or carl.pugh@agecymru.org.uk



FROM THE POTTING SHED AT TREDEGAR HOUSE

Since the end of June, and during July, August and September I have been planting a lot of vegetables for the beginning of autumn.

In July I planted Cauliflowers into modules. I also potted on French Marigolds from modules to 1 litre plant pots which are planted all around the flower beds in the polytunnel to keep the whitefly from eating the tomatoes, peppers and lettuces. I have been planting many varieties of lettuces, and sowing marigolds seeds which hopefully will be ready for planting out next Spring.

At the beginning of August I was still transferring Anthuriums from 1 litre pots into 2 litre pots, and Verbena Bonariensis into 1 litre pots. I also had to put wallflowers into 2 litre pots as they had become pot-bound.

The laundry garden is still looking lovely but as all gardeners we still have to keep them looking tidy.

GROWING SPACE SHOP:



The shop has been redesigned and is now looking bigger and brighter. There are lots of lovely items on sale, some hand-crafted.. A chance to pick up an unusual Christmas present

Over the past few months I have been planting very large grasses into very large pots, medium pots and into small pots. and putting dried lavender and seeds into packages, for selling in the shop.



Continued....



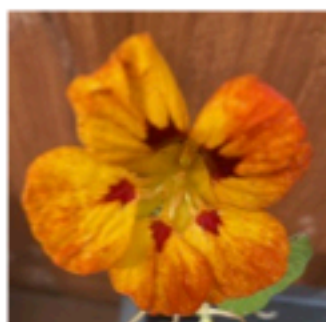
In one corner of the shop there is now a **SEED SWAPPING** stall. If you have at home a packet of seeds left over from this years sowing, you can take it to the shop and swap the packet for another packet of seeds, (i.e. packet of flower seeds for a packet of vegetable seeds **provided they are in date**).

Please try and visit the shop when you are next in the area. Your support would be greatly appreciated.



GROWING SPACE NEW COOKING CLASS: On 6 September, Growing Space started a cooking class in the Tredegar House kitchen. Some of the new clients have cooked apple pies, apple crumble and soups, using the produce from the gardens. And of course delicious cakes. The class will be held every two weeks.

Margaret



CHRISTMAS EVENTS AT TREDEGAR HOUSE, NEWPORT

Twelve Days of Christmas trail

Explore the festive gardens with our Twelve Days of Christmas trail

Dates: Fridays – Mondays, 26th November – 17th December. Then daily from 17th – 22nd December. 11am – 4pm. .

While you're wandering through the trees and wintery borders, look out for our trail markers and join in with the activities to get you in the holiday mood.

This event is free, but normal admission charges apply for the venue

Children are welcome. **What to bring and wear:** It's chilly outside, make sure you wrap up warm! **Accessibility:** The gardens paths are flat and level. The house is not part of this trail, but you can still explore it when you're done. Due to the historic nature of the house, we have created alternative accessible routes for the State Rooms and Below Stairs rooms. Please ask a member of our team if you need assistance

Self-led Christmas Craft

Stop by the orangery for some festive Christmas craft!

Dates: 27th & 28th November, 4th & 5th, 11th & 12th, 18th & 19th December, 11am – 4pm. We'll provide everything you need to make your own creations, all you need to do is have fun and let your imagination run wild. This is a self-led activity and adult supervision is advised.

This event is free, but normal admission charges apply for the venue.

This activity is aimed at children, but everyone is welcome to participate.

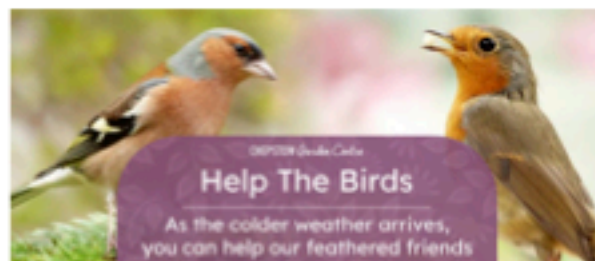
Meeting point The orangery (in the formal gardens)

What to bring and wear It's chilly outside, make sure you wrap up warm!

Accessibility There is a ramp into the orangery from the stable block.

Please ask a member of our team if you need assistance.

Please note: We're open Friday - Mondays until 17th December. We're then open daily from 17th - 22nd December, before closing until 19th February 2022. Info:
[Celebrate Christmas at Tredegar House | Newport, South Wales | National Trust](#)



Providing natural food for garden birds and keeping bird feeders topped up can make a huge difference to birds' survival in the winter weather ahead. Whilst a lot of animals 'fatten' themselves up in summer so they have stores of energy for winter, birds have to be careful to maintain their body weight and live on a day to day basis. Many birds struggle to make it through the winter months when food is harder to find.

Luckily, there is a lot you can do to help our feathered friends. Our team are sharing their top 5 tips for helping birds have an easier winter in your garden.

1. **Top up bird feeders** - if you have bird feeders make sure they are topped up with a variety of oil-rich seeds and suet over the winter. If you do not have a bird feeder, there is a huge range of functional and attractive feeders you can add to your garden.
2. **Place a nest box in your garden** - winter is the perfect time to put up nest boxes and allow them to blend into their surroundings. Birds often choose boxes that have been in place a season or two, familiarising themselves with the environment and site before they move in. They need to ensure that it provides a safe place to raise a brood. In winter, nest boxes are also used for roosting by some small species.
3. **Get a birdbath** - over the winter water freezes over, making it hard for birds to find a drink. A birdbath with a shallow bowl regularly topped up with water and checked to make sure ice is broken will really help birds find a source to drink from.
4. **Plant berry-filled bushes, shrubs and trees** - on top of giving birds seeds, you can also opt for plants that are full of berries over winter. Not only will this give birds food to choose from, but it will also look beautiful in your garden! We recommend pyracantha and berberis.

Continued ...

5. **Keep everything clean** - bad weather can mean that feeders get clogged, birdbaths get dirty and everything stays very wet! Wet seeds can go mouldy, which is not very appetising to birds! Try and keep everything clean by checking it regularly.



**Bamboo Double Suet
Cake Feeder**

Said the sparrow to the robin, "I should really like to know
why these anxious human beings rush about and worry so."

Said the robin to the sparrow, "Friend, I think that it must be
that they have no Heavenly Father such as cares for you and
me."





SAVE ENERGY, SAVE CASH, SAVE THE PLANET

OCTOBER 2021

As we say goodbye to summer, we need to consider the increased cost of darker nights even before the cold weather comes along with higher fuel bills. And with climate change at a critical point according to a recent report from the United Nations, it's more important than ever to consider ways to cut down our energy use. Read on for some savvy tips to help you protect the environment and save money.

Are you on the best energy tariff for your needs?

There are loads of comparison sites available online for you to check the different energy prices so it doesn't need to take long to do some research. Invest five minutes using a site like moneysupermarket.com/gas-and-electricity or the Cheap Energy Club via moneysavingexpert.com and you could easily see some quick savings. It pays to stay on top of your energy bills, so why not set a regular date in your calendar to review the tariffs you're paying for your utilities? You might also consider getting a smart meter installed to help you keep an eye on your energy usage, cut costs and cut emissions.

Does switching off and turning down really save money?

The Energy Saving Trust has done a lot of research and found that, yes, you can make significant savings by switching off appliances rather than leaving them on standby – as much as £35 per year. Think about things like mobile phone chargers, microwaves, TVs and laptops – all of these can be switched off at the plug and cause less damage to the environment.

The same goes for turning down the temperature on your washing machine. If your load is only lightly soiled, try setting the wash to 30 or even 20 degrees. You'll save cash in the long run and cut down emissions caused by running your machine at higher temperatures.

If you're thinking of replacing big household items like washing machines, dishwashers or fridge freezers, it's worth waiting and saving up for the highest energy rating appliances that you can afford as this is better for the environment and more cost effective in the long run. Check out sust-it.net for more information on energy efficient products.

Could you try a bit of low cost DIY to keep the draughts out?

Now is a great time to get your home prepared for the winter weather by draught-proofing windows, doors and skirting boards. The less you need to rely on radiators to keep the room at the right temperature, the less energy you'll use. You can make your own draught excluder by stuffing the leg of an old pair of trousers with rice or bubble wrap!

Heat reflective panels behind radiators are an effective way to prevent precious heat from escaping – you can pick up a roll of radiator reflective foil for less than ten pounds from your local DIY shop.

And if you can't afford double-glazing, there's a special film you can buy for your windows, attach with double-sided tape and fix with a hairdryer! For more tips on DIY draught-proofing see energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/draught-proofing.

Are you eligible for financial help with energy saving?

There are many different schemes available which you may be able to apply for depending on your circumstances. Check if you're eligible for support on the energysavingtrust.org.uk website.

Remember, winter bills are always more expensive than summer bills so try to budget throughout the year. Consider setting up a Direct Debit and paying the same amount each month to balance out your bills, or set up a savings account to build up a buffer and cover the higher costs in the winter.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) is a UK charity with over 580 services across the country delivering debt counselling, money management education, job clubs, life skills groups and more. Visit capuk.org to find out more.

CHEPSTOW & DISTRICT MENCAP

Welcome to The Board School

LIGHT LUNCH BUNCH

The Light Lunch Bunch are a team of adults with learning disabilities who volunteer in pairs on a rota basis to, with the support of our staff, prepare, cook and serve a light lunch to members of the local community at **Bulwark Community Centre in Chepstow (Laburnum Way, Bulwark, Chepstow NP16 5RF) every Wednesday lunchtime.**

[Light Lunch Bunch – Chepstow & District Mencap \(chepstowmencap.co.uk\)](http://chepstowmencap.co.uk)

The team start the day by shopping for fresh food supplies. Then they cook up a nutritious home-made soup, prepare healthy rolls with salad fillings and make a delicious seasonal pudding. Regular customers come back to be tempted by a home-made, reasonably priced lunch in good company – everyone is welcome.

The Light Lunch Bunch can also provide an outside catering service, serving up sumptuous homemade buffets for local meetings and functions in Chepstow and outlying villages.

[Contact Us – Chepstow & District Mencap \(chepstowmencap.co.uk\)](http://chepstowmencap.co.uk)

Email: reception@chepstowmencap.co.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/chepstow.mencap.9>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/chepstow_mencap





From the Editor's Desk

The beautiful season of Autumn is upon us when we watch the trees turning into flames of red and brown. God 's Word never lets us down. In Genesis 8 verse 22 He promises *"As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease."* So global warming should not really be an issue for those who believe in God's Word, and trust in Him. For His Word tells me that He is still in control of His creation and always will be.

Reading Margaret's article on Growing Space at Tredegar House, has brought back memories of this summer when I went with my grandchildren to Tredegar House for a picnic and to look around the gardens. (I have been there on several occasions with the children.). It was a beautiful sunny day, and we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. On entry to the park we were offered to take a bat and ball from a box to use in the grounds to entertain the children. We had great fun playing French cricket. It was a little bit windy to play normal cricket as the ball was very light. We also went into the House and explored a few rooms. And, Of course, we couldn't end our perfect day without treating ourselves to an ice cream from the café! A great place to go, whatever age.

John Gale's Fabric Report has reminded me of the book of Nehemiah in the Holy Bible, How Nehemiah was called by God to repair the wall of Jerusalem. Before going to Jerusalem Nehemiah prayed, (Neh14-11, Neh 2:4). How important it is to pray before we set out to do work for God. Otherwise we will drift off track. As you look further into this book you will note how most of the people of the city rallied round to help build the wall. (Could this happen for our Church today I wonder, or would health and safety restrictions be put in force!.) It definitely was not an easy task for them, with lots of opposition, but with Nehemiah's faith in God and his encouragement to the people, they completed building the wall. Four principles stand out to me as I read the whole book of Nehemiah. Firstly,

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before venturing out Nehemiah PRAYED for God's guidance Then he CONFESSED his and the nations sins Next he went into ACTION, stepping out in faith, and lastly, he and all the people PRAISED – Listened to the Word of God being read and praising God for what He had done for their forefathers, and what He had done for them.. May be we can all learn something from the book of Nehemiah. How God will help those who sincerely put their trust in Him I appreciate that the walls of St Mary's Church aren't anything near the size of Jerusalem, but God can answer prayers for small things as well as large!. How seriously do we take God?! I have to ask myself that question many times!

I often get reports of Christians who are being persecuted in many countries around the World. It is happening more often now. Afghanistan is facing terrible persecution. Women's rights are being taken away in many countries. And terrible atrocities are being carried out.. However, I have heard said that the greater the persecution the faster the Church grows.

Lord Jesus said: "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated Me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own . As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also...' (John 15:18-25)

Please remember all these dear people in your prayers who are being imprisoned and tortured for their Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ .

PRAY that God would comfort all those bereaved by these brutal killings. For physical and emotional healing for the injured.

For housing and provision for all whose homes were destroyed.

PRAISE That despite the seemingly endless attacks on their lives and property, Christians in northern Nigeria continue to trust and hope in God and still witness for Christ. **What we've got left is God and hope'**

GOD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU AND GIVE YOU PEACE.



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