

Wales

3.1 million

Capital Cardiff

Four main areas South West, Bridgend to Pembroke upto Cardigan

South East Bridgend to Caldicot upto Brecon

Mid Wales, Brecon North to Bala

North Wales, Bala North and from Wrexham to Holyhead

Mainly known for inventing Rain

Hi-Tech, (Steel) manufacturing in the South East

Rural, Tourism and Farming South West

Farming Mid

Tourism heavy industry (Chemical) in North

2,466 Cases as of yesterday

141 Deaths, 24 of those on Friday

Roughly 3,000 Churches across 48 different denominations

UK AVG Church size 103, Wales could be half that.

Thanks to Rob James (Chair of Evangelical Alliance Wales)

Andy Hughes Wales leader of Urban Saints

Churches

Many of the 3,000 Welsh Churches are small and Rural, no website so are mothballed while the CV outbreak is going on. Many instances of one minister being responsible for four or five small congregations. Much of the Pastoral work now being done by phone, with ministers under 60 still operating as Chaplains to Hospital and Police

Churches in larger towns that cannot sustain their own internet presence have joined to form regional expressions (IE. Churches across Pembrokeshire which is on Facebook)

Other Churches which are able to run online Sunday services and have a small staff are enjoying a rise in people watching their meetings online, beyond the congregation.

Most Church leaders are report a huge increase in diverse Pastoral help requests, from shopping to trying to arrange funerals, to communion by phone.

One common issue is most Churches don't have sufficient reserves to keep paying all their bills as giving to the Church is down. Spoken to one leader this week who said they paid all wages in March, but only have money for half wages in April, unsure beyond that, staff were told to register for Government support.

There is media interest in the role of Churches and Church leaders in community, with local radio and newspapers running regular positive stories.

Childrens work has become more creative, where in North Wales kids clubs are running via zoom. Several kids club leaders, responded quickly to the isolation news and created a new scheme called Kids Club by Post, which has been very well received with new homes requesting the packs every day. This has led to many new non-Christian families becoming involved, who are looking for things their children can become involved in.

A lot of people are struggling with the change to their lives, new financial pressures, dealing with depression or loss of a loved one. Many families now forced into a very different future.

#### Prayer

For Farmers, who need to tend to livestock and manage with less workers – unsure finances  
For Church leaders who are dealing with huge increases in Pastoral Care and financial pressures

For the opportunity that online Church brings that it remains consistent.

For the engagement of media who are seeing Churches work together like never before

For the Children who miss kids club, interacting with friends etc.

For the grieving who have lost loved ones.

For sensibility in a Nation of Tourism that people would heed advice to remain isolated until the Government deems it safe.

#### ROB JAMES PIECE

For many opportunities with local press who are keen for 'inspiring' copy

Wider many local churches grasping the opportunities offered by social media to maintain relationships and establish new ones (there seems to be a genuine openness to listen and relate)

Give thanks for a Facebook Initiative (The Church across Pembrokeshire) which is proving a real encouragement and a genuine means of strengthening unity

For several key secular leaders who are engaging in a daily reflection on the Psalms (I am providing notes by Whatsapp and email to churches and groups etc)

For Dewryn, a new initiative in the struggle against slavery and trafficking (see the attached mailer)  
There are three of us involved in this and we are seeing the Lord blessing in the most amazing ways

Give thanks for a new Christian who has personally been able to purchase and distribute hundreds of face masks to local care homes and a doctor's surgery

#### ANDY HUGHES PIECE

1. Churches across the region – both English and Welsh language – are rising to the challenge of using digital media in a variety of different ways. Almost every church leader I have spoken to has spoken of people engaging with them through this online presence who have

never (yet) been to a church service. Some are on the fringes but others are just appearing from no previous contact seeking answers, reality and hope in this season.

**Pray that the church will continue to rise to the challenge and find equally creative ways of making disciples.**

2. Many church leaders are struggling to cope with an additional pastoral burden – feeling a keen responsibility to keep in touch with their flock without actually being able to visit and see people.

**Pray that leaders would have God-given energy and inspiration and also revelation to know how to look after people well.**

3. North Wales is blessed with a huge amount of outreach to children and young people – schools ministry, childrens and youth clubs reaching unchurched families, Messy Church/Llan Llanast etc. Many leaders of weekly clubs are rising to the challenge of continuing their mission to the younger generations at this time. Youth groups are meeting on Zoom, children's clubs are sending weekly resources to families etc.

**Give thanks for the warm reception from not-yet-Christian parents to initiatives to support their children and young people at this time. Pray that we would see whole families turn to Christ.**

4. Lastly, as things have changed so fast under God's leading, many are suddenly forced to turn from long-established patterns and habits to new media and a different kind of engagement.

**Pray that the whole Church of God will continue to embrace the opportunities of this season to serve, support and share during this season. Pray too for a deeper personal engagement with our loving Father and that the things we are learning/rediscovering would last long into the future – particularly missionally.**

Not specifically about N Wales regionally but may I add one personal prayer request?

I woke the morning after the Prime Minister's isolation announcement with a strong sense of grieving over the loss of meeting with the children, young people and families in our village as our children's and youth clubs are suspended. I lived with this grief all that day and talked to the Lord about it. I awoke the following morning with the seed of an idea – what about sending our families a weekly 'Clwb Plant Trwy'r Post' (Kids Club By Post). Excitedly, I began to think of content etc. Then there was a 'penny drop' moment: I realised that there are several other Welsh-language youth and children's leaders in the same position in other parts of North Wales. So I rang 3 of them with whom I've worked previously and we began to plan something together. Just a few days later, we released the first of what will be a weekly resource. Each of us sent this not only to our own clubs but to teachers, kids club leaders, other organisations/denominations and families the length and breadth of Wales and beyond. We also generate an English version. The response and feedback from workers and ministers has been great BUT, more encouraging, there has been an overwhelming response from families – especially not-church families who are deeply touched that we would want to help them at this time. The circulation list grows daily as does the list of people willing to contribute in different ways. God is doing something extraordinary here.

**Please pray for real fruit among children, young people and parents through this weekly resource. Pray too for the 4 of us involved in the editorial group – for health, inspiration, discernment and anointing.**