**Reports from Church Officers presented at Dyffryn Clwyd Mission Area**

**Annual Easter vestry Meeting 2021.**

1. **Gift Aid Secretary**

The past twelve months have shown the value of Direct Giving through Cardiff. Not only has it maintained a regular income for our churches, but it has much simplified matters for the treasurers. Mark Hudson has also been a great help in his role as Gift Aid secretary for the Mission Area. By concentrating it under the guidance of one person it has made the recovery of tax both from other Gift Aid and money put in the plate, so much simpler, efficient and quick.

**Jonathan Major on behalf of the MA Gift Aid Secretary**

1. **Youth and Families Chaplain**

Since lockdown began in March last year, my role has shifted slightly out of necessity. Some of my time has been working to benefit the Mission Area by working with the Diocese to develop resources for use in schools. I worked with Jon from Aled MA on in the first lockdown to create a resource for families, signposting them to prayer activities, educational tools and worship activities that they could do together during lockdown.

Taste & See also did not stop during lockdown! However, we have changed our style and now our services are posted out to families in ‘takeaway’ bags! They contain a ‘menu’ (order of service), Bible story-time and wondering questions, craft activities, a snack and suggestions for creative prayer, accompanied by a video that can be watched on You tube.

I also designed a bilingual Lent Calendar earlier this year which was distributed to our church schools. Each day of Lent had an activity that pupils could do, such as memorising a Bible verse, creative prayer activities or making an animal out of a toilet roll tube!

I helped to lead our Mission Area initiative at Christmas and Easter to partner with Home-Start in creating hampers for local vulnerable families, filled with treats, toys, toiletries, vouchers, and a card for each family, written by a young person from the Mission Area.

I was absolutely blown away by your generosity as a MA in participating with this project. Over Lent, I worked with Tad Huw to create a Virtual Pilgrimage based in Clocaenog, centred around the narrative of Holy Week. I have kept in touch with our church schools and sent each a Hannah Dunnett card last autumn to encourage them in the amazing work they are doing.

**Esther Andrews Chaplain**

1. **Church Wardens and Treasurers Reports received.**

**St Garmon’s Church Wardens Report**

It goes without saying that 2020 was a difficult year. During the two lockdowns contact was maintained by phone, email and by chance meetings around the shop in Llanarmon. Some people were able to access the online worship however Zoom is a problem for many so that meant they were unable to join meetings and courses. Others without internet used televised services.

St Garmon’s Church closed in March and was among the first to reopen at the beginning of July for private prayer, a couple of times a week, stewarded by volunteers from the MA. Regular services recommenced on Saturday mornings as a Pilgrim mass which the congregation embraced slightly nervously but we were pleased to be able to worship together again. Risk assessments were produced for the Church and for the Old Schoolroom so that activities could restart there. Discounts were given to local organisations to help after the lockdown and the requirement for social distancing necessitating fewer numbers.

It’s too early to be able to give a verdict on the new service rota, some of the more elderly people find 9am too early but we’ve had 9.30am services for more than 10 years. Some people do have a problem with having to book in advance either forgetting (did I book this week or was it last week?) or deciding to come to church depending on how they feel when they get up. I think that there is still some nervousness in attending church but hopefully if the infection rate continues to be low this should decrease.

Charitable activities were curtailed by the pandemic, but we still managed a donation of food for the food bank following the Harvest service, a donation to the Royal British Legion following the outdoor service of Remembrance during the fire break lockdown. Our customary donations to the Bible Society, the Church Missionary Society and St Luke’s Hospital for the Clergy were maintained.

**Sue Hanahoe Churchwarden**

**St Garmon’s Treasurers Report**

As with other churches St Garmon’s Church had a very challenging 2020 Year, with most of the time no church services except online, streaming, however some parishioners did send cheques through the post to me and any monies received banked as soon as possible. The 2020 accounts were submitted on time and were ready for discussion with the Church Council. They were also entered on the Finance Co-ordinator on time and ready for review by the Auditors.

**The following is a resume of the 2020 accounts.**

**Income £12,650.15; Expenditure £18,944.77; Shortfall -£6294 62.**

However, if we had received the £2,000 requested as discussed with Fr Huw Bryant and also received the Gift Aid back of £737.44 from HMRC, by Mark Hudson, via MA Office to St Garmon’s Church bank, there would have been an extra £2,737.44 in accounts 2020, instead of the monies rolling over into year 2021 accounts.

St Garmon’s Church regularly supports 4 Charities every year, British Legion,

Church Missionary Society, Bible Society, and St Luke’s Hospital for the Clergy.

St Garmon’s current assets at the bank as of 2020 are £12,457.58 with restricted funds of £15.

**St Garmon’s Brief Overview of 2020**

This last year has been a very difficult year for Churches, they have been partly closed, then closed all together. This has a direct effect on the income, although we have some parishioners who very generously do Gift Aid, Direct Debits, envelopes, or even pass envelopes or cheques to myself for banking.

Going forward in 2021, will mirror image 2020 if Covid restrictions continue i.e. church closures, no fundraising, increased charges Parish Share, Mission Area, Utilities etc etc, plus the most worrying declining congregation. The future does not look bright. However on a positive note, we will do all we can to overcome these challenges in these very worrying Pandemic Times.

**Sheila Flanagan Treasurer**

**St Hychan’s Church Warden’s Report**

St Hychan’s church community was delighted to welcome Father Huw Bryant as Mission Area Leader at the beginning of 2020.

For a short period during the coronavirus lockdown restrictions our small church opened for Sunday worship. Six households could be safely accommodated, and all the services were well attended.

In December, the outdoor service of Advent lessons and Carols was a great success with 30 worshippers attending. A collection was made at the service in aid of Ty Gobaith Hospice for Children.

In November St Hychan’s church members also contributed to a special collection for Remembrance Sunday which was donated to the Royal British Legion.

All church members received the weekly newsletters by email and kept in touch with one another throughout the year.

We are all very grateful for the huge effort made by Father Huw and all the clergy and ministry team to enable us to continue to worship together in church and online.

**Judith Davies and Evelyn Weyman Churchwardens**

**St Hychan’s Treasurers Report**

Our giving was down just under £1000 which in the circumstances could have been a lot worse. Thankfully our investment income remained the same. Expenditure was also slightly less than normal due to the church being closed for much of the year  resulting in a loss of around £1000

**Overall position**

This is not as good as it looks as the figures are distorted due to a number of factors. We obviously used much less electricity and there were generally less maintenance costs.

The major factor was that the Church in Wales gave a rebate via the Dioceses of 60% on 6 months of our Parish Share. This amounted to £2489. Withoit this we would have had a loss of over £3000.

Unfortunately our position for 2021 is potentially going to be worse. Assuming the day-to-day expenditure will increase and another rise in our Parish share we could be looking at a larger shortfall.  Obviously, some of this will be mitigated a long as we can do some fund raising and have regular services.

**Jonathan Major Treasurer.**

**St Peter’s Church Llanbedr Church Warden’s report.**

We have been very blessed over the last year to have Tad Huw at the helm in what could have been a very grim period. His ideas, imagination and energy have kept us buoyant.

In the Autumn major improvements took place in the churchyard. Overgrown trees were pruned, and graves rescued. The community joined in to help with clearing and to plant bulbs in a new wildflower area. Throughout we have been rewarded by Reico’s delicious cakes, she has also been raising money for the church by selling them in the church porch.

Our usual lighting of the Christmas tree and procession up to old St Peter’s changed a little but was quite magical. We had torch flares to light the way, a beautiful travelling crib in the church with live music and refreshments. Christmas was celebrated with the nativity and lots of candles, then Epiphany with our wise men arriving.

Easter was particularly special this year. On Maundy Thursday following a Eucharist in church at 8pm, we were led out to the garden of Gethsemane (Tad Huw had built a beautiful outside altar and seating). Oil candles fluttered round us, and we listened to meditative music until nearly midnight.

Easter Saturday church wardens were invited to Llanfair for a candle blessing service. On Easter day we gathered round a tomb, surrounded by a flower garden which had been constructed in the church yard.

Charitable giving has been limited to donations to the food bank and to Esther’s hampers. Formal giving to charities this year has given way to other ways of giving to the community. Gwenda has excelled in her role of parish communicator working tirelessly to send out weekly news bulletins to keep everyone in touch. She has phoned those not on the net and chatted with all who passed her garden! In November she rallied us all to make poppies out of plastic bottles having herself made over 100. These were duly planted in the church yard. In her spare time she has managed to keep a firm and very skilled hand on the church finances, encouraging everyone to part with their money to keep us afloat.

Throughout the year the Clergy have worked hard to take and record services not just on Sundays but through the week. These services during lock down periods were invaluable, until the time when we were able to go to church, the limited number allowed. The need to book and people’s fear of mixing with others has resulted in a reduced attendance. On a more positive note the regular service times have been welcomed and the updated, beautifully produced service sheets, have enhanced our worship. We have also been blessed with expert flower arrangers, Brian, Hazel and Gwenda who have given generously of their time and talents.

Last year our church was the first in the mission area to achieve a bronze Eco church award, we hope to achieve silver in the future. Following the Lent courses we face the future with optimism, and a belief that our church has much to offer the community and the mission area.

**Fiona Calver Churchwarden**

**St Peters Llanbedr DC – Treasurer’s Report 2020**

The year 2020 has been a challenging year for all churches, here at Llanbedr we had major works on renewing/updating the wiring system and lightening conductor updating, donations /grants covered part of the cost the balance paid from our CCLA deposit Fund account. The organ also needed major repairs costing £6500.00.

The end of year balances was not good showing we had spent much more than we had taken in, partly owing to the repairs. Without the Covid relief grants/funds from the Mission Area we would be in a worse financial situation.

Looking forward to 2021 we feel hopeful we now have 10 church members paying by Gift Direct/standing orders and with church services on Sunday and Tuesday that our income will increase.

Our expenditure during 2020 on average per month insurance/oil etc was £150, maintenance cost boiler service etc £40 plus Clergy cost/Church share £1331.00 should be similar during 2021. Our average income per month £400.00, therefore we will need to find a large sum of money to break even. We are looking to do more fundraising as soon as we are able to.

The accounts are now on Financial Co Ordinator, as a new treasurer to the church I have found it reasonable to operate and look forward to the rest of 2021 and the future of our church and mission area.

**Gwenda Williams Church Treasurer**

**St Cynhafal’s Church Report**

Many thanks to Tad Huw for managing to keep the Church open for services when Covid restrictions have allowed this past year.  
At other times, we have been blessed with the online service followed by a virtual coffee & chat with the wider Church community.

The highlight of the year was hosting the amazing travelling outdoor nativity which many families from our community came and enjoyed the fellowship, followed by a hot drink & a mince pie

This year’s World Day of Prayer on the 5th March was for the people living on the scattered Islands of Vanuatu in the S.W. Pacific Ocean. As we could not hold the service to pray together as we do every year in Capel Gellifor, we prayed in our own homes, all starting at the same time, sending a wave of Prayer around the world. We thank Janet Killow for organising this together with the donation from our Church.

Building Work has just started on the internal refurbishment to create a kitchen & toilet area & comfortable Worship & meeting space to Welcome both those in our community & those on pilgrimage. We hope to reopen the Church mid-summer with a chance for everyone to come & have a look.

In the meantime we are truly blessed with the other Churches that we can Worship within our group here in Dyffryn Clwyd.

**Mair Ansell Churchwarden**

**St Cynfarch & St Mary’s Llanfair DC Church Warden’s Report**

The 2020 church year began with the church having been closed since 24/03/20 following instructions from the Church in Wales in response to the global Coronavirus pandemic.

To help our church community stay in touch with each other Martin King organised virtual coffee mornings on Zoom every Wednesday during Lockdown; these have been well received with attendees from the wider Mission Area as well as Llanfair

We had hoped that 2020 would see us holding coffee mornings for real in the new facilities in church however the pandemic has not only prevented us from meeting in person it has also delayed the final work needed to be able to use the kitchen & toilets, namely the connection to the sewer! The original legal papers to authorise the connection were mislaid at the Church In Wales’ Cardiff office and we have had to resubmit them; hopefully we will soon receive confirmation that we can proceed.

Zoom has also allowed us to continue to hold Church Committee meetings and to discuss the outcome of the November 2020 Quinquennial inspection; the main item needing attention being the guttering which will need replacing.

From 02/07/20 the church was allowed to re-open for private prayer on Sunday & Thursday afternoons before we were finally allowed to hold our first Holy Communion in four long months on 26/07/20. The new service pattern, introduced in March 2021, has now bedded in and, whilst not all our pre-covid congregation have yet returned, it has been nice to welcome some new faces to our services.

Whilst Covid restrictions mean that all our congregation must now reserve a place through the Mission Area website the booking system is working well, and we have not had to turn anyone away because they hadn’t booked.

Despite the difficulties posed by Covid we have been able to hold two marriage ceremonies in church this year as well as holding our annual pet blessing service in the churchyard.

The 75th anniversary of VJ day was marked by Rev Richard & myself with a short reflection from Rev Richard followed by the ringing of the church bell 75 times.

As we were unable to hold a Remembrance Sunday service due to the Welsh Assembly Government’s ‘firebreak’ Lockdown the first service held afterwards was an Armistice Day service held in church by Fr Dylan. Separately from the church service, Rev Richard held a small service at the War Memorial with pupils from Llanfair school.

Collections for Ruthin Foodbank were presented at our Harvest service in October and further donations from our congregation to the Foodbank were collected in November. As Rev Richard is also Chaplain to 208 Liverpool Field Hospital, we contributed toiletries & other non-food items to their Christmas appeal of items for the Liverpool Foodbank.

For Christmas 2020 we organised an Advent Calendar competition for Llanfair School & the village community and, following its success, we launched an Easter art competition with six prizes of Real Easter Eggs which include an Easter story activity book.

The Mission Area Travelling Nativity arrived at Llanfair on Monday 14/12/20 and, whilst rain restricted numbers, approximately 40 adults & children attended. The hot drinks & biscuits were well received but the stars of the evening were the oil burners & the tree lights with nearly everyone commenting that they would love to see the lights become an annual event for our Christmas evening services.

In October we registered as an Eco-church and are now working towards our Bronze award. Our plans for 2021 include creating a wildlife area within the churchyard and in preparation for this a group of volunteers, ably assisted by Tad Huw with his chainsaw & strimmer, spent a morning in October tidying up the churchyard. As part of this aim, we are signed up to Caring for God’s Acre’s initiative for N E Wales and will begin a series of training webinars in April & May.

Whilst 2020 has been a challenging year due to the pandemic there have been several positive outcomes, most notably the daily on-line services for which we thank Tad Huw, Rev Stuart, Rev Richard & Fr Dylan.

**Mark Randall Churchwarden**

**St Cynfarch & St Mary’s Church Llanfair DC Treasurers Report**

The everyday operational fund for the church is the General Fund for which there are no restrictions on use other than for charitable purposes. There is an annual transfer from this fund to the Graveyard Maintenance (Designated) Fund to subsidise the costs of maintaining the graveyard, which are not fully met by fees and donations. Typically this is between £1,500 and £2,000 each year.

In 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic had a dramatic effect on income. Compared to 2019 planned giving was down £625 (7.8%); unplanned giving and donations were down £2,750 (88%); wedding and funeral fees were down £472 (36%) and tax refunds were down £2,100 (59%). Overall our operating income was down nearly £6,500. This was greatly relieved by the Covid Relief grant from the diocese of £4,233. Expenditure compared to 2019 was less affected and overall up by £1,400 (6.9%) as no transfer was made to the Graveyard Maintenance Fund in 2019.

The budget deficit for 2020, prepared before the pandemic, was expected to be £6,250. In reality this would have increased to over £11,500 were it not for the Covid Relief grant from the diocese which reduced the actual deficit to £7,400.

At the end of 2020 the balance in the General Fund was £33,000.

**Outlook for the future**

The future financial sustainability of the church will depend on the sustainability of the General Fund. The budgeted deficit for the General Fund in 2021 is expected to be £7,400 provided the MAC agree to the whole of Llanfair’s share of the Diocesan Covid Relief Grant to the MA for quarters 1 and 2 of 2021, amounting to just over £2,750, is passed on the church accounts. This will leave a balance at the end of 2021 of just over £25,000. Since the routine expenditure has already been decreased as low as possible then this trend shows that without a substantial increase in income the General Fund will reach a zero balance by mid-2025 and the church will no longer be financially viable without MA assistance. However, it is hoped that when Covid restrictions are considerable eased the church may be able to gain some growth from the new housing development and the opening up of our new facilities. It is estimated that this could bring an increase of £1,000 per year to the income of the General Fund. Together with further efforts to increase regular congregational giving it is hoped to reduce the annual deficit to £5,000 per year by the end of 2022. This would prolong a positive balance in the General Fund to the end of 2028, by which time it is to be hoped new funding structures at Diocesan and MA levels would enable the church to secure a financially sustainable future.

**Martin King Church Treasurer.**

**St. Michael and All Angels – Efenechtyd Church Warden’s Report**

St. Michael and All Angels had a quiet year in 2020. It was used for a few of the recorded (online) services and a very memorable occasion was when Father Dylan came to Efenechtyd to celebrate Eucharist – two of us were invited to join in a very moving service.

We were so grateful to be allowed to open the church in October, after a long period of closure. With Covid restrictions and safety measures put in place, the church once again became a place of quiet reflection and prayer. The church resumed its importance as a spiritual centre for the community.

We have continued in our caretaking role in Efenechtyd. The church and church yard have been lovingly cared for and we are currently organising work to begin on the woodworm problems in the roof after carrying out a professional survey last autumn.

We continue to remember and mourn Olivia. Flowers, in her memory, are changed each week inside the church and placed in the ancient door knocker. Friends, family and neighbours visit the grave regularly. Having our two graveyard benches has been a joy. They are used by local people, walkers, and visitors. The graveyard is a place of tranquillity and beauty – so important over this difficult time. It has often been our place of meeting with members of the community.

The burial of someone from Ruthin, in one of our very few remaining plots, has brought into sharp focus the change from the old parish system to the new Mission Area. We had no understanding that anyone in the MA can request burial in any of the (open) churchyards. People from Efenechtyd parish will have to look elsewhere for their final resting place! Hopefully, everyone in the MA is now aware of this change.

We look forward to the day when we can gather in the church, once again, with friends and neighbours. What a celebration that will be!

**Marion Henshaw Churchwarden**

**St. Michael and All Angels – Efenechtyd Church Treasurers Report**

Please see audited accounts for 2020. The investment looked after by Efenechtyd Church Committee increased in value by just over £22.5k over the year to £451.685 on 31/12/2020. Despite reduced income from church service collections, ongoing costs including full payment of the Efenechtyd part of the mission area share, and a contribution towards Covid costs of the MA, the overall position increased by £21k to an asset valuation of £482.596.

Looking forward to 2021, a significant cost is expected for woodworm treatment of in particular the church roof structure to protect the building fabric. This cost is expected to be at a similar level to the recent receipt of the final payment of £7.350,87 from a legacy from which Efenechtyd already has benefitted so much over the years.

**Jaap Vaarkamp church treasurer**

**St Foddhyd Church Wardens reports**

**Charitable Activities, has your church been active at all in the last year?**

We‘ve been active by having an outside family service in November and we were full. It was a very blessed service with the children really enjoy the toasting of marshmallows.

The travelling Nativity was very successful with Christingle in the Park and many people attending from the Community.

Then we had an Easter Service and we‘ve continued to have our service fortnightly and have had new worshipers attending.

**How have you responded to Covid, when our churches were closed?**

We shared the online services with the local community by sharing on the Playground Facebook group. We had a lovely Family video from Tad Huw and Esther for the Easter online Service.

Continued with service online with the Ysgol Carreg Emlyn pupils – Easter service and Remembrance Service.

Children from the Urdd group have been having online lessons.

The whole community were very emotional when the church bells were rung on the Thursday nights clapping for Key workers.

**How have you responded since the churches re-opened?**

Service have been very well attended since opening at Easter, new service pattern is supported. We’re all excited to start our Forest Church outside in May. I have started a Forest Leadership course and the diocese has supported her training with £500. We will try 9.30 am fortnightly and see how we get on!

**Heledd Rees Churchwarden**

**Llanynys Churchwarden and Treasurer’s report**

Despite circumstances being very different from March 2020 onwards due to the Covid-19 situation church life carried on even if digitally at times and events still took place at Llanynys during 2020- 2021.

It has been positive, moving and inspiring that we continued to have regular Sunday 10.30am weekly services at Llanynys from July to October( except during strict lockdowns) and have also been able to include members of other local churches including Llanrhaeadr who have been unable to hold their own services due to social distancing confinements or maintenance work being carried out, and as such Llanynys Church came back into its own as Mother Church in the centre of the Vale of Clwyd once again reflecting how Llanynys has been a significant  church throughout the centuries.

As Churchwarden, I would like to thank everyone who has attended and participated in services at Llanynys during the last year, it has been heartening to see St. Saeran’s Church well used and supported and to hear the bell rung once again!

Although we were not able to sing our favourite Harvest hymns during these Covid-19 related times, our Holy Communion and Evening Prayer services for Harvest at Llanynys were perhaps even better attended this year. I would like to thank everyone involved with preparations for their help especially Gwenda, Hazel and Brian from Llanbedr Church for being so supportive growing and arranging the flowers so spectacularly and Reiko for making the lovely Harvest loaf as well as everyone who brought their items to donate to the Food bank. The Christmas Eve Service and three Easter services were well attended this year.

I would also like to thank Father Huw and Meugan for their helping to arrange and light the candles in church for our Evening Prayer service in August, our Harvest Evening Prayer and the Service for All Souls something which made each of these services all the more memorable.

On Sunday 6th December we had the Travelling Nativity placed in the church for people to visit together with refreshments outdoors in the open air in the churchyard which was spectacularly lit by torches and lights.

The purchase of a section of car park for church use and development of a community garden on the former site of the Cerrigllwydion Arms together with joint working with the new owner of the building will, it is hoped be another constructive move to help the promotion of Llanynys Church as a centre of Pilgrimage not just in DCMA but far more widely while at the same time restoring a sense of hope, motivation and wellbeing to local residents who have become very despondent over the years since the closure of the former public house at the heart of the hamlet which has fallen into a state of decline.

Llanynys is represented on almost every one of the Dyffryn Clwyd Mission Area Conference committees.

As part of the DCMA Pastoral Network our Llanynys Churchwardens continue to play an active part of the team currently communicating by phone with people in DCMA who need pastoral support.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Financially, Llanynys operated with an approximate £7ooo loss, this was sustained by reserves and generally our investment returns were good.

The Quinquennial Inspection was carried out at Llanynys on 23/11/20 with no serious problems being found.

**Rhian Edwards Churchwarden and Treasurer.**