

**Wrexham**  
**Mission Area**  
**News**



**No. 28**  
**Summer 2021**

***Jonathan Smith writes ...***

Hello Everyone

Hopefully, life is beginning to feel a little more like normal. It's certainly good to be able to report that all our churches are now open for worship and coping with the necessary measures in place to prevent further outbreaks of the virus. Online worship also continues across the Mission Area in various forms. It's a good way to sample other churches from the comfort of your own home! You can compare and contrast worship from Hope Street and St Giles, make a visit to St John's or All Saints or sample the virtual choir at St Margaret's. Opportunities to engage with new people in our town or across the globe is now a reality which all our churches hope to continue into the future in some shape or form.

Ordinations take place on Saturdays June 27: priests and July 4: deacons. As a Mission Area, we offer love support and prayers to Jo Mackriell, curate at St Margaret's and St Mark's and Luke Bristowe, curate at Hope Street to be ordained priests. Also, to Chris Lawton, previously lead evangelist with the Centre of Mission and Patrick Williams on placement at St Margaret's and St Mark's to be ordained deacons. Chris will serve in Bodelwyddan and Rhuddlan in the Abermorfa Mission Area and we ask God's blessing on the new home he will share with Ruth and Rhiannon in Tywyn. Patrick will serve a short curacy in Mold Mission Area before returns to his native Rhos where he lives with his wife Jane.



Timepiece at St Giles'  
Photo by Sara, St Mark's

All our churches have recently been visited by the Diocesan Secretary, Diane McCarthy, John Lomas, Archdeacon and Michael Plane, Church Buildings Officer as part of the ongoing Mission Area Reviews. The key question asked was how everyone was feeling and where did each church see its place especially as we edge away from the pandemic. There was much positivity alongside issues to be tackled mainly related to buildings and finance. After 6 years plus of the present configuration of the Mission Area, there are changes afoot as to how we are constituted and administered. Hopefully, these will be for the better and will not adversely impact on our mission. We await the review document with interest.

Yours in His service.

Pob Bendith

Jonathan

# ***All Saints' and Holy Trinity***

## ***Learning to live with the walls down: Father Dylan writes***

I have been asked to share something of the work I did before ordination. For five years I worked at the Anglican Communion Office in London, working on a project called *Continuing Indaba*. *Continuing Indaba* was an official ministry of the Anglican Communion aiming to enable Anglicans worldwide to live out reconciliation by facing their own conflicts, celebrating their diversity and difference, and so becoming agents of God's reconciling mission in the world.

*Continuing Indaba* helped people to learn to really listen to one another and gain deeper understanding of one another's context and perspectives. This was done through a series of cross-cultural encounters that sought to test the application of the African practice of *indaba* more widely within the Anglican Communion.

Rather than give you a dry description of what the work involved I would like to share with you two encounters that give a flavour of what the work entailed. Both experiences contributed to the development of my PhD work on reconciliation. The first was with the diocese of Mbeere in the Anglican Church of Kenya and the ongoing learning that came from the integrated work done in resolving a clan dispute. The second was with congregations in Milpitas, California, in the Diocese of El Camino Real in the Episcopal Church. This second encounter was not a reconciliation of 'fixing' something that was broken in the sense of a dispute or conflict but in breaking down cultural and language barriers between two groups and those two groups learning to live with those barriers down.



### **Mbeere**

The diocese of Mbeere is situated in an arid and semi-arid area in the Mount Kenya region. Several peoples or communities lie within the diocese but the vast majority are the Mbeere; the others are Kamba, Embu, Kikuyu, with Somalis in the north-eastern part. Crop farming is the primary economy along with keeping animals, such as sheep and goats, where possible. Following the withdrawal of colonial powers in 1963 and the violent elections of 1964, the Mbeere people of the Mount Kenya region had been blighted by a clan dispute. Those from one side would not buy from, marry, or even speak to those on the other. Significantly an oath was sworn to cement the division, a traditional ritual that is taken very seriously by the Mbeere people. The situation escalated and was exploited by politicians, and divisions within the Mbeere people grew affecting the economic situation of the people as well as health and education.

In 2009 the Rt Revd Moses Masamba Nthuka and the diocese of Mbeere began to explore involvement in the *Continuing Indaba* project. In beginning to think about the issues that divide the Anglican Communion and how churches might work together in mission across lines of difference, Bishop Moses began to think further about the divisions and hope for healing within his own people and diocese. This put Bishop Moses and the diocese in a position to begin to ask questions, and he was approached by the Mbeere council of elders to facilitate conversations across the clan divisions. This culminated in a service of penitence in December 2011 and the celebration of breaking the oath sworn in the 1960s. This was held to coincide with the *Continuing Indaba* Encounter in Mbeere, with the diocese's conversation partners from South Africa and Ghana being asked to officially bear witness to the event. I had the privilege of being one of those who witnessed this event and in 2014 I visited Mbeere again and met with the council of elders, chiefs, the local governor, and diocesan and community bodies to discuss the changes in Mbeere since the end of the clan dispute. There was a consensus that life in Mbeere was significantly better since the end of the dispute, and the lack of violence in the area during the 2013 elections was seen as a sign of this change, as were improvements in the area's economy. Credit was given to Bishop Moses and the Diocese of Mbeere as the facilitators of the end of the dispute.

Continued ...

Building on the work begun in 2009, the theme of breaking down barriers and keeping them down became integral to the identity of the diocese, and this work of reconciliation was seen as an integral part of the work of the diocese in their part of God's mission. The desire as a people and a church to be a stronger Mbeere people was firmly tempered by the narrative that this would not mean the exclusion or domination of the other peoples around them, such as the Kamba and Embu. Bishop Moses explained that to keep quiet about the dispute was not an option and described the mission of the Church as being on the frontline of reconciliation: 'Living Reconciliation that is a witness not only to us but also to our neighbours, which allows us to do many things together for Christ.'

Living with the walls down is the continuing work of reconciliation that is in its essence profoundly relational, which requires the creation of space for diverse voices to be heard. It is not about isolating and fixing a problem but about asking together how we live together. It is not a finite process, with each barrier broken down comes the ongoing work of recognising the barriers and learning how to live together with the barriers down. The elders of Mbeere were candid in their reflection that although the dispute was resolved, they are still working out what it means to live with the 'walls down' and the church is seen as having a continuing role in facilitating that discussion.

### **St Joseph and Holy Child Milpitas**

The congregations of St Joseph and Holy Child in Milpitas, California, made a covenant together in June 2011 to work together to grow into being one community. St Joseph the Worker described themselves as a fairly affluent, ageing and shrinking, 'Anglo' congregation. Holy Child is a growing Filipino congregation. There had been discussions within the diocese for some time about the possibility of the two churches sharing a building and facilities. This initiative was resisted initially by both congregations, but in 2009 a process of relationship building began. There were many apprehensions and fears, particularly on the side of Holy Child, about how they might lose their identity as a Filipino church and be swallowed up by the Anglo congregation. St Joseph's congregation heard this fear and responded by taking the time to discover what being a Filipino American meant: not to ape or adapt Filipino culture and customs, but to discover their meaning and worth to a Filipino American Episcopalian and in turn discover more of what it meant to be Americans and Episcopalians together.

What was initially envisioned by the Diocese of El Camino Real as a sharing of resources was in some ways subverted by the two churches, who did not want to be parallel communities sharing a building but wanted to become one congregation that was both Anglo and Filipino. This desire emerged from a joint bible study around the topic of unity among God's people and discernment of what they were called to do in response. Building relationships was seen as the heart of the process. They imagined together a 'united fellowship that shares God's love, honours the different cultures of the two churches and forms a loving community committed to living out the Gospel', which they then committed to working together to make their shared reality.

The notion of reconciliation found in the relationship between St Joseph and Holy Child is not a reconciliation of 'fixing' something that was broken in the sense of a dispute or conflict, as with Mbeere and a more conventional understanding of reconciling. However, in this relationship, deepened by breaking down barriers between two groups and their learning to flourish with those barriers down, we find a further dimension of the concept of reconciliation. The working gospel partnership between these two churches, within the context of their diocese, came about by prioritising relationships: particularly the corporate relationship of the two communities. This prioritising took the sacrifice of time, which created the space to build deeper, respectful relationships. Identifying and challenging inequalities of power and finding ways for all voices to be heard were an intrinsic part of that sacrifice of time.

Fr. Dylan Parry Jones

Photo: Beryl Edwards

## St. Margaret's

### Booking in for worship

Members at St Margaret's have had to get used to booking a seat at the 9.30am worship service. With the 'covid capacity' of the building much less than the regular congregation, this has become a necessity and thanks go to Helen as warden for running the booking service (better than Eventbrite!). Individual singers have been digitally mastered together to form virtual choir recordings which have done much to enhance worship at this time and we remain grateful to David as organist and choirmaster for stepping up to the challenge. On Easter morning, three communion services were on offer (one from reserved sacrament) enabling over 70 worship that day.



### The Prayer Course [www.prayercourse.org](http://www.prayercourse.org)

A good number are taking part in this course online with Peter Greig. It is freely available on the internet and highly recommended. Based on the Lord's Prayer, it helps unpack the various types of prayer available to us from intercession to contemplation and how we might use them. A 20 minute video presentation is followed by discussion based around prepared questions. Each session ends with some practical suggestions for prayer.



### Candle of Hope

Church members are being encouraged to produce a simple piece of artwork which can be added to a 'Candle of Hope', a large candle on the wall. It might be a poem, a verse of scripture, a piece of needlework or a drawing designed to bring hope and inspiration as we emerge from the various lockdowns.

## St. Mark's

### New Warden

At the Annual Vestry Meeting, Pauline Borgerson stepped down a vicar's warden having served as both people's and vicar's warden for around 10 years. Art Ellinson has taken her place. Everyone is very grateful to Pauline for all her hard work. The church hopes to show its appreciation once covid restrictions lift further. We welcome Art to this role. Art was a founder member of Christ Church in Wrexham but has always felt called to serve the church on Caia Park. He has been a regular worshipper at St Mark's for nearly 10 years and supported many initiatives including Foodbank, the Holiday Hunger Scheme, Mark on the Park Prayers and Caia Friars. We pray God's blessing for him in this office of the church.

### Building Project

We all eagerly await the latest plans from our architect, Geoff Stott for the development and refurbishment of the church building which is long overdue. The pandemic has slowed down our progress but there is still a determination to get this job done. In the meantime, we are grateful to provide 'hospitality' to Parkcity, contractors working on reroofing many properties on the estate. The rent they are paying us is going straight in the building fund.

### Social Supermarket

Plans are at an early stage to develop a Social Supermarket to support those on low incomes on Caia Park. A social supermarket runs a little bit like a co-op. People pay a certain amount a week to belong and are entitled to an allowance of food and other items. Stock is purchased in bulk or sourced from end of line items. Members can play their part in running the supermarket which also provides a safe space to chat, offload and network. The hope is that some volunteers will be trained to offer mental health support and signposting through 'Kintsugi Hope' [www.kintsugihope.com](http://www.kintsugihope.com)





## ***A message from Patrick Williams***

On Sunday May 23, I finished my official placement with the Rev Jonathan Smith in St Mark's and St Margaret's churches, and I started to prepare for my curacy which was to be in Mold Mission Area. A phone call out of the blue however changed all that, and I am happy to say that I am now staying in the Wrexham Mission Area as curate to Rev. Sarah Errington in St James's and St John's.

My journey to ordination started in about 1970 when I was 16 and it has been a long road to finally reach this point. There have been many twists and turns along the way and it would take far too much space to tell you everything but I am finally in the place where God wants me to be. I was born and bred in Johnstown but I have lived most of my life in Rhos. I have been a worship leader for many years and was People's warden in St David's, Broad St. I have been married to Jane for 47 years and have two daughters and three grandchildren. Prior to my placement in Wrexham I was on placement in Coedpoeth, Minera, and Bwlchgwyn.

I don't think anyone could have foreseen what was about to happen eighteen months ago. We did not, even in our wildest dreams, think that we would see lockdowns, social distancing, everybody wearing masks, many people being told to shield at home, empty streets, shops and pubs closed. We were very fortunate to be able to celebrate Advent and Christmas services before we had a rather lengthy lockdown, but, even in adversity, we have been able to reach out to others. Services have been held on zoom and Facebook. In St Margaret's and St Mark's we managed to have prayer meetings, a lent course, and even regular coffee and chat sessions all on line. We have managed to stay connected and a part of our churches even in these challenging times. Technology has given us the means to carry on and it can help us open our doors for those who are still worried about covid or who are housebound through illness or infirmity, we can still say 'we are there for you'.

The pandemic has been a great tragedy for everyone and we remember in our prayers all who have suffered because of it, but there is hope. We have hope that the vaccine programme will be successful, hope that the economy will recover soon, hope that we will finally return to some sort of normality. For those of us in training for holy orders it has thrown a huge spanner in the works and the lock-down and the regulations have stopped us doing so much more than we have been able to manage. I think we would all have loved to do so much more, but as we look forward to what life will be like as we try to come out of lock-down, God *will* have a plan for us.

As the time for my ordination as deacon draws closer, I have to confess that I am both excited and a little nervous, and I would be really grateful if you would pray for strength and energy not just for me but for everyone who will be ordained at this time and we especially think of Rev Jo Mackriell who will be ordained priest at the end of June.

I often feel that life is like a bus journey, in fact, it's more of a mystery trip. We get on the bus not really knowing where we are going. The bus will stop at various places and other people will get on and share the journey with us. Our journey sometimes takes us through beautiful countryside where we have an open road. At other times we go through built up areas where the traffic crawls and the journey is not so pleasant but each stop will make its mark upon our lives. Our fellow passengers will also get off the bus at different stops, and, at some point, we will have to get off the bus ourselves, but we trust in the driver to get us to our destination safely.



*Continued ...*

God decides when we get on the bus and when we get off it, all we can do is enjoy the journey and treat our fellow passengers with love and respect. I am certainly very glad that the bus that I got on has taken me through Wrexham and I am grateful for the stops made at St Mark's and St Margaret's. I'm just sorry that I didn't get to meet you all in person at that time but now I am staying in Wrexham and remaining part of the team there will be more opportunity to make new friendships. Strange, just when I expected my journey to leave Wrexham we reach a "road closed" sign and we are detoured back into the town. As I said earlier, life is a mystery trip and only the driver knows exactly where we are going.

I am looking forward to us continuing the journey together.  
God bless you all.

My very best wishes.

Patrick.

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The GroWrexham story began about a year ago, when I was thinking about the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on people who might find themselves out of work, or with a reduced income but possibly more time to spare, at the same time as food prices may increase. The idea was to inspire and support people to use their own garden space to grow food.

I shared the idea with Sarah Wheat (St Asaph Diocese Engagement Officer), who was very enthusiastic. We realised that the benefits of such a project would be far more than just helping people to produce cheap, nutritious food: there would be benefits for their physical and mental health, and benefits for the environment. In fact this project would deliver on three of 'Five Marks of Mission': to respond to human need by loving service; to seek to transform unjust structures of society; to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Towards the end of last year, a small group began to plan for a launch event in April 2021. A parallel project was set up in Rhosymedre and Plas Madoc, and together we planned to supply up to 200 participants with a 'starter kit' of a planter/grow bag with compost, some simple tools, seeds and instructions for planting and growing them. The Wrexham end of the project planned for up to 50 participants.

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In the end, our launch event was held on Saturday 1 May (delayed to take advantage of the easing of Coronavirus restrictions earlier that week). We held the event at the Tin Can, and as well as collecting their kits, participants were able to talk to some experts to ask questions and get some tips. We were lucky with the weather, a good number of people came along, with others receiving their kits delivered to them afterwards.

If you want to know more, visit the GroWrexham Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/GroWrexham>.

There are some photos from our launch event below.

Rev. Sarah Errington





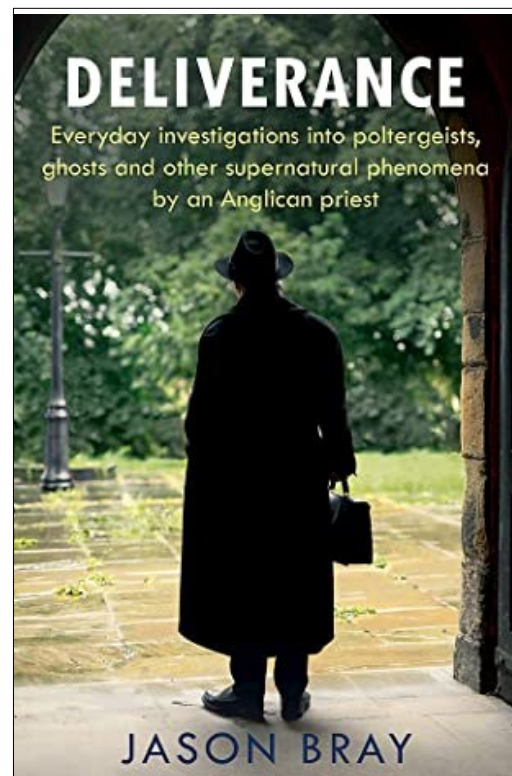
## ***Deliverance: Everyday investigations into poltergeists, ghosts and other supernatural phenomena by an Anglican priest.***

The first thing to say is that I am a reluctant author, and never had any intention of writing a book about the Ministry of Deliverance which I have been involved with for over twenty years. However, after a presentation at a conference, in January 2019, I found myself in the Sunday Times (and other new outlets), and the following day a literary agent called and contacted me, and after months of indecision - and I could do indecision for Wales! - I agreed to write it, and Hodder and Stoughton kindly published it in February this year.

For me, Deliverance was an opportunity to write for the widest possible audience and to explain what deliverance ministers deal with - poltergeist activity, hauntings, and people who believe they are either oppressed by evil or possessed by a demon, and so on, but also how we go about it, and what the church believes about such things. However, at the same time, I wanted to explain some of the ordinary things that priests and clergy do (taking services, conducting baptisms, weddings and funerals). I also talk about what it is like to work in various contexts in different parts of Wales, and the sorts of pastoral encounters clergy are likely to have. And despite the 'heaviness' of some of the material, I've tried to introduce an element of humour to leaven the lump.

Since publication, it appeared briefly at number 7 on the Amazon bestseller list, and is currently in its fourth impression. I have also made a couple of media appearances, including with Holly Willoughby and Philip Schofield on This Morning, which was quite an experience, although sadly I did it from the Glass Room in St Giles' rather than getting the full studio treatment. But then, with the paperback out next year, there may be another opportunity! But more than anything else, it has given me an amazing opportunity to show how the love of God affects real people, and how his power can make a difference in their lives.

Jason Bray







## *St John's*

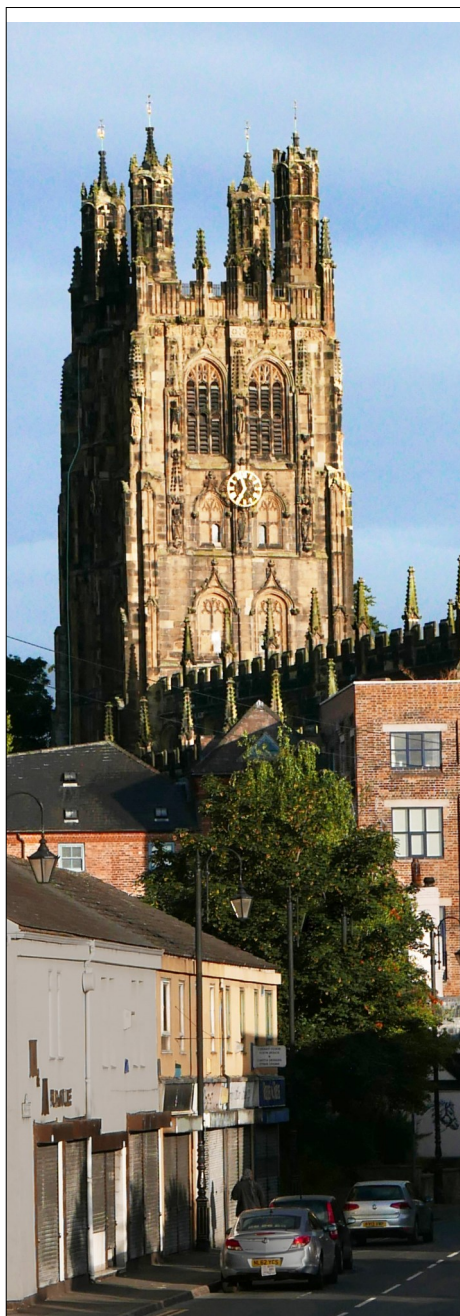
St John's Church reopened for in person worship two weeks' before Easter. We'd been working on the technology required to record the services in Church ready for broadcast later. We managed to do that for the first time on 28 March, and have done so every Sunday since, with the exception of 16 May, when the computer crashed at the beginning of the service! Once again, we are very grateful for Joel's technical know-how, and willingness and ability to learn what he doesn't already know. At the same time as switching to recording services in Church, we set up a Youtube Channel for St John's and St James', and now post our online material there.

After Easter, we were very pleased to see the work begin on refurbishing the toilets in Church, and also the conversion of the old boiler room to an accessible toilet. While the work is in progress, the Church is not available for midweek services or activities. This project has been a long time in the planning, so we look forward impatiently to having it completed!



*Rev'd Sarah Errington*

## St. Giles'



St Giles' is usually one of the busiest churches in the Diocese, but, of course, just at the moment, things are relatively quiet. We are, however, looking to restarting some things, to starting new things, and to having a festival in the autumn.

### Cymun Bendigaid

The thing that we are restarting is the Cymun Bendigaid, the monthly Eucharist in Welsh. This will restart on the first Sunday of every month at 6pm as before. I know that this was well-supported by people from across the Mission Area. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please let them know.

### Bereavement Café

This is a new venture for us. We were going to launch one on 23 April 2020, but things got in the way. Now, however, the need is much more acute. So, after an initial conversation with Nightingale House, we are looking to hold this on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays between 2pm and 4pm, and we will start as soon as the restrictions are lifted, and we will, of course, be open to everyone.

### Angel Festival

After the success of the Poppy Festival and the Mouse Festival which was featured in the Woman's Weekly no less, we are looking to mark the end (we hope) of the pandemic with a festival of crafted angels, one for each Welsh victim of the pandemic: these will then be suspended from the nave, and from the ringing chamber inside the tower. The festival will run from the end of October (All Saints' Tide) into the New Year. There will be a series of services and events throughout this period, in addition to the Christmas services. Again, please watch this space, but if you are able to contribute an angel, or need some inspiration, please drop into the church between 10 and 4.



Rev'd Jason Bray

Photos: Nick Roe (left); Paul Wynn (right)

### **Wrexham Mission Area**

Mission Area Leader: Rev Jonathan Smith

Mission Area Administrator: Ann Owen

01978 355808 or 07751 422594;  
office@wrexhamparish.org.uk

#### **St. Giles' Parish Church LL13 8LS**

Sundays: 9.30am All Age Worship; 11am Said Holy Eucharist (available later on YouTube and Facebook)

1st Sunday Cymun Bendigaid 6pm

Thursdays: 11am Eucharist

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays: about 5pm

Evening Prayer on YouTube and Facebook

Vicar: Rev Dr Jason Bray. 07957 222418;

vicar@wrexhamparish.org.uk

Curate: Rev James Tout

#### **St. Margaret's, Garden Village Chester Rd LL11 2SH**

Sundays: 8.15am Said Holy Communion

9.30am Worship with recorded music. Holy Communion  
2nd & 4th Sundays

(Please let us know if you are coming to ensure a space)

4.00pm Online Service on Facebook posted on website  
afterwards

Wednesdays 11.00am Said Holy Communion

Vicar of St. Margaret's & St. Mark's:

Rev Jonathan Smith: 01978 350797;

jonathan@plwyfwreccsam.org.uk

Assistant Curate: Rev'd Jo Mackriell:

revjo20@gmail.com

#### **St. Mark's, Caia Park, Bryn Eglwys Rd LL13 9LA**

11.00am Worship with recorded music. Holy Communion  
1st & 3rd Sundays

4.00pm Online Service on Facebook posted on website  
afterwards

Vicar of St. Margaret's & St. Mark's:

Rev Jonathan Smith: 01978 350797;

jonathan@plwyfwreccsam.org.uk

Assistant Curate: Rev'd Jo Mackriell:

revjo20@gmail.com

#### **St. John's, Rhosnesni, Borrass Rd LL13 9ER**

Sundays: 2.30 pm: Sunday Worship (1st & 3rd); Holy  
Communion (2nd & 4th)

Online worship recorded in St John's and uploaded to  
Youtube channel, 'St James' Rhosddu and St John's  
Rhosnesni', for about 4pm each Sunday.

Vicar of St. John's & St. James'

Rev'd Sarah Errington: 01978 266018;

saraherrington@cinw.org.uk

**During restrictions it is advisable to check websites  
and social media or to email or phone for current  
information**

**This directory includes online worship**

#### **St. James', Rhosddu, Rhosddu Rd LL11 2NW**

Sundays: 11am: Sunday Worship (1st & 3rd); Holy  
Communion (2nd & 4th)

Online worship recorded in St John's and uploaded to  
Youtube channel, 'St James' Rhosddu and St John's  
Rhosnesni', for about 4pm each Sunday.

Wednesdays 10 am: Holy Communion

Vicar of St. John's & St. James's:

Rev'd Sarah Errington.: 01978 266018;

saraherrington@cinw.org.uk

#### **Holy Trinity, Rhostyllen, Esclusham, LL14 4DW**

Sundays: 9.30am Sung Eucharist (3rd Sunday: Family  
Eucharist )

4th Sunday: 6pm Evensong & Benediction

Vicar of All Saints' & Holy Trinity:

Fr. Dylan Parry Jones

dylanparryjones@cinw.org.uk

01978 517737 ; 07737377065

#### **All Saints', Poyser Street, LL13 7RT**

Sundays: 11am Sung Eucharist (Family Service 3rd  
Sunday)

Thursdays: 10.30am Said Eucharist

Vicar of All Saints' & Holy Trinity:

Fr. Dylan Parry Jones

dylanparryjones@cinw.org.uk

01978 517737 ; 07737377065

#### **St. Mary's, Bersham**

1st Sunday: 11am Morning Prayer to be resumed  
when singing allowed. 3rd Sunday 11am Holy  
Communion

01978 263522 lloydfitzhugh@gmail.com

#### **Church Army Officer:**

Captain Josh Smith

07983 881412 j.smith@churcharmy.org.uk

#### **WREXHAM MISSION AREA NEWS**

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