

*PENTREF
BAPTIST
CHAPEL*



The Chapel at the Heart of Newbridge



**The Newsletter
Of Newbridge-On-Wye,
Baptist Church,
January 2021**

FROM THE MINISTER

As we leave 2020 behind us, many will be breathing a sigh of relief and saying, “Good Riddance”. Yet despite all of the difficulties and challenges that the year has brought, as I look back, I reflect on many positive things as well. Lessons that I have learnt, and will want to take with me into 2021; lessons that I hope will stand me in good stead for all the years yet to come.



The forced isolation of much of the year has left me with time to do things. I have found time to discover and enjoy new music. Mickey MacConnell’s humorous songs have brought a smile to my face. If you don’t know them, they are well worth a search on YouTube. Here’s the chorus of ‘The Politician’s Song’: *“Well I’m very glad you asked me that for at this point in time In the circumstances that exist there is in the pipeline Infrastructural implications interfaced with lines of thought Which lead to grassroots viabilities which at this point I’d rather not Enunciate in ambiguities but rather seek to find Negotiated compromises which are the bottom line For full and frank discussions which could serve to integrate With basic fundamental principles to which we all relate Not in doctrinaire philosophy which any fool can see In inescapable hypothesis confronting you and me But in the interests of the common good then you need never fear For I have the matter well in hand and I’m glad I made things clear.”* A truly memorable chorus, ideal for group participation!

Alongside finding time to listen to new music, I have found time to read some of the books that I have been intending to read for ages. I have also had the joy of re-reading some old favourites and have re-discovered the joy of reading poetry.

The closure of the chapel has forced me to learn new computer skills. The lockdowns have taken away structures that used to define my week. I have had to learn new ways of managing the time, rather than just letting it pass as another wasted moment. This particular lesson is still a work in progress.

Again, the lockdown has given me time to do some of the work that needs doing around the house and finding pleasure and pride in the work of my hands.

All useful lessons, which I hope I will have the wisdom to take into future years. But I think the most important lesson has been a lesson in patience. In my prayer life, I would like it if God just got on with things – 2020 has brought home to me the importance of waiting on God’s time – He has heard and will answer in his time, not mine.

As we look forward to 2021, we look forward to a different future. Hopefully it won’t be too like 2020, but neither will it go back to how it was in the days before the virus. As you reflect on 2020 what lessons will you be taking with you into 2021?

May God bless you all and give you a happy new year.

Steve

Aberithon Turbary Village Nature Reserve – Maybe!

Aberithon Turbary Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Newbridge is probably better known to you as “The Bog”! It is the last remnant of the village’s former Aberithon Common and is called a turbary because it is where villagers could cut peat for fuel before the coming of the railways bringing cheap coal. The presence there of one of the few reedbeds in the area was originally, probably to supply reeds for the reputedly, twenty or more thatched houses present in the nineteenth century and in to the twentieth century part of the site was the local refuse dump. So, with such a past, the turbary holds a special place in the heritage of the village.

It is owned by Llanyre Community Council and in the past was rented out as grazing, but the growth of bramble and scrub have made this unattractive to would be graziers. However, the habitats and wildlife are full of interest. The reedbed, marsh, wet willow and dry semi-natural woodland, and the mosaic of wet and dry grassland are all quite special. But all have their problems and needs some TLC. Otters regularly use the site, particularly the reedbed as day refuges during the summer. A sound like squealing piglets can be heard in the reeds for most of the year produced by the elusive water rail. Sedge and reed warblers nest there with pied flycatchers nesting in the nest boxes and tree hollows. Several species of bat hunt over the site and five sorts of amphibians, including the rare great crested newt, live and breed in the areas of open water. The old meadow area holds many interesting plants and the yellow ant nest mounds are typical of undisturbed old meadow.

Enter then the chance to apply for a Welsh Government/Heritage Lottery Fund “Local Places for Nature” grant. If the Community Council is successful, the biological problems can be addressed and, most importantly for many people, a pathway will be constructed around the site, a distance of almost half a mile, making it a pleasant traffic free country walk...

There would be a small pull in and pedestrian gate at the main entrance by the current gate on the Brynwern road, maintaining the privacy of the access road to Aberithon Farm. At the other end of the path there would be a pedestrian gate at the end of a boardwalk more or less on the bend in the Brynwern road.

Part of the submission for the grant needs evidence that the project has some support in the village. If you think that a pleasant walkway around a “Local Place for Nature” would be a useful asset for the village then a note or email to me (Fred Slater, Bridgehill, Newbridge-on-Wye or slaterfm@cf.ac.uk) saying that you support the Aberithon Turbary proposal, and you might even consider becoming a “Friend of Aberithon Turbary Village Nature Reserve” at no cost or commitment, then that would be very useful! Thank you in advance from me (FS) who has volunteered to fill in the forms for the Community Council!!

REGULAR MEETINGS

**Until the Tier 4 restrictions are lifted
there will be no meeting in the Chapel
all meetings will take place
via the medium of Zoom**

**SUNDAY 5:00PM Evening Worship
(with communion on the second and fourth Sundays)**

THURSDAY 2:30PM Bible Reflection with Prayer

**To get a link to join the Zoom Meetings please email
the secretary at: Elsa.harflett@hotmail.com**

**A virtual Service will be posted on YouTube each Sunday Morning
follow the 'Sermon' Link on the Chapel website
www.newbridgebaptistchurch.co.uk**

In the April edition of the Newsletter, I asked the question: What is the difference between a chapel and a church? The answer is easy, the chapel is the building in which the church meets. The church is not a building but the people of God who come together to worship him and to share His love with each other and the world.

I then pointed out that the work of the church continues. The resources are limited as many who attend the chapel are elderly or vulnerable, but if we can help you in any practical way at this time or if you would like prayer please contact the Minister: Rev Steve Wallis on 01597 860185
Or email him at: steveoncomputer@aol.com and we will see what we can do to help.

**The deadline for the February Newsletter is January 22nd
Please send all copy to steveoncomputer@aol.com**