

VISION DAY 2026

Revd Mark Melliish

Over this last year we have grown as a church. Some of you have joined in the last year and we thought that it was a good time at the beginning of the year to set out some of our hopes and dreams for the coming year and to share some of our current needs as a church family.

I was thinking this week what it means to be a healthy church and I came up with a short list. You may well add to this of course but here's a few things that I think reflect us as a church.

1. A place where people find friends
2. A place to explore and grow in faith
3. A place to serve God
4. A place where people can give in time talents and treasure
5. A place where our whole community is lifted in prayer

And we hope that these are what you feel exist here. We are a church that values relationship, lifts the name of Jesus up, and works together as a family.

A quick look back over the last year reveals that we are on a good trajectory. Last year we launched **Outdoor Church Goes Wild**, which has been a great opportunity to give people in our community a taste of who we are and what we do. It's a friendly way of inviting neighbours and friends into our community.

This last year we have seen **growth in numbers**. If we include everyone who comes to all our services together then we think we are northward of 30 regular members. That's not insignificant for a little rural church.

One of the deep joys is seeing children come to our gatherings. We love each and every one of you young people and so celebrate the life that you bring. Parents, thank you for trusting us and bringing your children along.

And perhaps it's worth adding to each parent that those of us who are not now parenting young children that we have been there, we understand more than might sometimes be thought, and any noise, over excitement, or just young horseplay are all part of us. Never be in doubt that your children are accepted and loved and we celebrate them being here.

So a few highlights...

- This last year we have extended **Outdoor Church** so that it is every other week.
- We also continue to serve our community with a **service every week** here at Welsh Newton and run the occasional services at Llanrothal with 92 attending the Christmas Eve service.
- Our Christmas, Easter, Harvest and other special services have all been well attended.
- Our Remembrance Sunday is well supported as well as our act of worship around the war memorial
- Our small foodbank is well supported and used, and the church remains open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- People in our community can ask us to pray and we regularly have requests for prayer from neighbours and visitors.
- Over the year we have also held a number of funerals and weddings. And through our church yard, All Souls service and other support we have a special ministry to those who have lost loved ones.
- Our church yard is carefully looked after and used by all sorts of people.

So what about going forward? We want to continue to grow and provide for our community and today we are asking if you might join us in helping to make this happen.

As a church we have some fixed costs which work out at about £1,000 per month. This covers care of the church yard, insurance, general maintenance and repairs, as well as electricity, gas and logs.

Then we add in the cost of our services. Outdoor church costs about £30 per week, so £60 per month now that we run it twice, and then there is always extra for hospitality on lots of other occasions.

We currently receive £10,000 in giving and out of this we have to give about half to the diocese to support a vicar, vicarage and to have this church to use.

So we are asking for your support. We will need to raise an extra £80 per week or £320 per month.

Between us we hope to be able to meet this

- 2 people gave £50 per month
- 4 people gave £25 per month
- 5 people gave an extra £15 per month
- 6 people gave £10 per month

That would add up to the extra we need to run as a church.