

## **Bro Cybi Ministry Area**

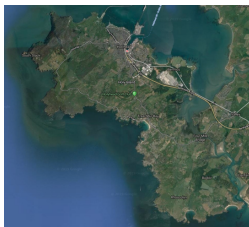
25<sup>th</sup> of June 2020

### **Letter to Bro Cybi**

Dear friends,

I hope this letter finds you well. Thank you so much for all your cards, letters, telephone calls and well wishes, I have been overwhelmed by your generosity and kindness since coming to minister here in Bro Cybi. Many of you have asked about my family and close friends who seem far away at the moment. We do keep in touch as I'm sure many of you do with Family who are away from you. My son Tom, his wife Rachel and my grandchildren Rowan and Douglas moved to the Isle of Mull in February to take up a new residential post with the Iona Community they are in an isolated place and are physically well, but they do miss seeing family and not having visitors or guests. My daughter Katy has been very busy running the emergency food grocery store at Cre8, at times she has only had two or three people to help her because of illness or isolation. But she is very well and keeps on smiling. We chat every couple of days on the phone and video – especially when she has a difficulty or is feeling stressed or at risk of being overwhelmed.

I am very happy that Carol came down from Glasgow only a couple of days before lockdown, she has been staying at my small farm in Blaenau and I have been mostly there with her. I am so glad that she was not on her own in the City of Glasgow – and I'm also glad that I was not on my own here. I have converted the caravan outside the farmhouse into my temporary office which has worked fine until yesterday when it became unbearably hot in there! Lockdown has been so mixed for many of us – at times challenging and difficult and also at times life-giving and joyful as we have all experienced new ways being 'at home', new ways of connecting with our Creator God and also connecting with each other. It has been strange for me to be in a new place – Holyhead, to barely get my feet on the ground and then to be locked down. I travel between here and Blaenau once or twice per week, taking care to wash myself thoroughly at each end of the journey.



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For Carol and I, lockdown has been a formational time. We had only begun our relationship in September last year. It had been long distance with the associated lengthy telephone calls for the first six months and now we see each other much of the time. I'm hugely pleased that we have had this time together. Carol has decided to move to Wales and this weekend she will clear out her flat in Glasgow and move to the farm in Blaenau. I will go with her to help so I will be away from Wales between Friday afternoon and Tuesday. Of course, my colleagues and Archdeacon Andy know I will be away and they also know that I can be contacted on my phone if there is something which I need to deal with urgently.

The recent outbreak at the Two Sisters factory in Llangefni reminds us that we should continue to look after our health, to be careful in how and when we venture out and the precautions we should take. You may have heard or read that Churches in Wales could open for private prayer from Monday this week. We had less than one week's notice about this and I had expected it to be a little longer. I have been having many meetings and discussions about the possibility of re-opening some of our Churches and how we might be able to fulfil the Health and Safety guidelines we have now been given from the Church in Wales. In this regard we will be having two MAC meetings, one tonight and one next Thursday. I hope to be able to tell you more about re-opening soon.

It is clear from the Risk Assessment and the Guidelines that we will need several things to happen in order to re-open:

- Volunteer stewards
- Cleaners
- Signage

We are advised that toilets and washing facilities in Churches must remain closed to visitors. So those Churches that do not have these may be at an advantage here !



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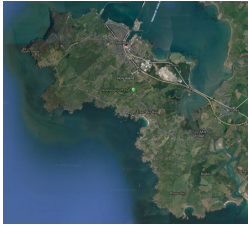
I am very conscious and very concerned that nobody should feel they have to volunteer or to help if they do not want to. You should not feel under any pressure in this and you are under no obligation to help now just because you have done in the past. Many of us are getting on and are in the 'high risk' category – therefore staying at home is often the best thing to do. And neither do I want you to be prevented from helping if you want to. We all gain a sense of worthiness and wellbeing by being able to help others – so if you want to help then please come forward. We will go through an assessment with you which will help us to decide if its right that you help out with stewarding or cleaning.

I understand there will be further announcements in coming days about additional services as we move towards the 'Amber' phase. This may mean that weddings and funerals may take place in our Churches – again my understanding is that it will be our decision i.e. each Church, to decide how and when it wants to open once it is legally possible to do so.

I am hugely grateful for all the financial giving to Bro Cybi that has taken place since my last letter, your donations have helped to ease our financial situation and the Diocese has also very kindly agreed to give us some relief from our contributions to the Bishop's Ministry Fund. Our money in the bank will still be very much down this year though because we cannot do any of the regular fundraising activities. Please do give what you can, your money is very well used and I am working to reduce expenses wherever possible.

The Church will continue, we will re-open our buildings, we will continue with postal mailings if people want them even after we emerge from lockdown. We will continue with telephone ministry even after lockdown and we will continue with virtual services. We are all learning a huge amount! I believe we will emerge as a community of people who know more about each other, about scripture, about who and where God is and what God wants and expects from us, we have learned so much about the generosity of our friends and neighbours. And eventually, we will know what our Church life will look like in the future.

With love and best wishes, Rob



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