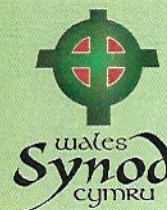


Yr Eglwys Feth+distaid yng Nghymru
The Meth+dist Church in Wales



To all friends and colleagues
in Wales Synod Cymru of
the Methodist Church

December 2022

Chairs of Synod: Rev. Dr. Jennifer Hurd &
Rev. Dr. Stephen Wigley
Synod Office, Cyncoed Methodist Church,
Westminster Crescent, CARDIFF CF23 6SE
Tel: 029 2076 1515
E-mails: jennifer.hurd@methodist.org.uk
or office@methodistwales.org.uk

Dear Friends,

As I write this letter, I'm very conscious of its being both the first Christmas letter Jennie and I will be sending out to the new Wales Synod Cymru, and the last time that I will be involved in drafting it, as I am standing down this summer after 16 years as a Synod Chair in Wales.

I appreciate there's something quite Biblical about reflecting on the first and the last, not least as it's a theme that runs right through it into the last Book of Revelation. But perhaps there's something even more appropriate to this season in the accompanying challenge, of looking back to what's already been achieved and looking forward to the promise of what's to come.

That's something which we're encouraged to do in this season of Advent. We look back to the testimony of those who have gone before us in the pages of the Bible, and look forward to where they are pointing, to the coming kingdom of God set forth in Jesus Christ. Indeed, there's a famous painting by the artist Matthias Grunewald which has John the Baptist, that uniquely prophetic figure, with his finger almost growing as he points to Jesus on the Cross.

But equally, and especially in the prophetic passages that we read in Advent, there is the sense that God is doing a 'new thing'. For the prophets this involved fashioning a new future out of all the sorrow that had surrounded God's people in their time of exile and loss; and for the Gospel writers, this would all bear fruit as a young maiden conceives and gives birth to Jesus.

There are plenty of things to be thankful for in the lives of both Synods over the last 15 years. We too have been on something of a journey and one which has had its fair share of ups and downs along the way. But we believe that it is a journey that has led to the place where God is calling us to be now, a place where we can witness to the bi-lingual nation in which God has set us, the good news that Christ is born, that God is with us, and the Kingdom is coming.

So, wherever we are and whatever may be the language of our heart, may we have cause to rejoice and look forward in hope to the future where God is leading us.

With every blessing for Christmas and the New Year,

Stephen Wigley and Jennie Hurd