

February 2021

# CIRCUIT NEWS

## CIRCUIT NEWS AND VIEWS FOR BANGOR & HOLYHEAD METHODIST CIRCUIT

**THE MISSION OF THE BANGOR & HOLYHEAD CIRCUIT IS TO LIVE OUT GOD'S WORD AND SHARE THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS CHRIST BY LOVING AND CARING WHOLEHEARTEDLY THROUGH SERVICE AND WORSHIP WITH FUN, FELLOWSHIP AND JOY FOR ALL THE CHURCH FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY.**

**A mission to support our local communities during Covid – “Children home-schooling 'denied laptops' by means testing” <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-55556630>  
Debbie Jones from Bangor reports on how we can help**

Perhaps you saw this headline on 6th January and wondered ‘How can I help?’ – well now you can. A social (not for profit) enterprise in Llangefni, established in 2019 by my sister Becky and her partner Robin, are accepting donations of redundant I.T. equipment (desktops, laptops, tablets, old cables etc). The equipment is then securely cleared of all data, refurbished with a new operating system, and donated to a school for them to allocate to local school children who are currently struggling with access to computers for home schooling.

Since opening the scheme mid January, schools in Holyhead, Llangefni and Mochdre have already had laptops (see photos below). The organisation is North Wales Recycle I.T. – their website / details about the project are available here: [North Wales Recycle I.T. CIC](https://www.northwalesrecycleit.com/)

You can help in one of three ways:

- Donate your old laptops / desktops / tablets (click on the link and complete the contact form: <https://www.northwalesrecycleit.com/contact-1>) or phone 01258 858371
- Provide a cash donation to fund the project (it costs on average £30 to securely remove all data; refurbish and upgrade hard drives and RAM; clean; licence with Windows 10 software etc) [https://www.gofundme.com/f/north-wales-digital-drive?utm\\_source=widget&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_campaign=p\\_cp+share-sheet](https://www.gofundme.com/f/north-wales-digital-drive?utm_source=widget&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=p_cp+share-sheet) – all donations, no matter how small, are welcome and will contribute directly to this worthwhile cause to benefit the local community
- Share details of the project with your contacts.



I should mention that I am involved with the organisation on a voluntary basis as a non-exec director. If you do have anything you'd like to dispose of, please contact them directly to support this really worthwhile cause 😊. Debbie Jones

Photo: Stacy Harris collecting lap tops for a school in Mochdre

## **Carrying on with the Read the New Testament in a year Howard Jackson introduces us to the letter from the Romans**

At the end of the first week of February we start reading St. Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome. Here is a little background information.

When the letter to the churches in Rome was written around 57CE, we can imagine there were some tensions in the churches there. Before 50CE, the Emperor Claudius had evicted all the Jews from Rome, including the Christian Jews. In 54CE, the Emperor Nero allowed them to return. The Jewish Christians would have found that the churches were now led by non-Jews and things had changed. This letter could be Paul's response to some information about the situation he had received from Rome.

Paul probably wrote it in Corinth. He had taken responsibility for collecting money from the churches in the area for poorer Christians in Jerusalem and was taking the money there himself. Then he planned to go to Rome. The readings in Acts give the background story of his later arrest and imprisonment in Jerusalem, his voyage as a prisoner to Rome and his first meeting with the Christians there.

In the letter, Paul uses scripture to justify non-Jews in the Church not being subject to the Torah (the Jewish Law) – particularly in the matter of circumcising Gentile Christians. It seems the "Apostle to the Gentiles", wanted to settle this argument once and for all. He thereby established a sound foundation for Christian belief and practice.



We have to do a bit of detective work to find out why there was an argument in the first place. Surely this matter had been dealt with in Jerusalem in 48CE? (Acts 15) Paul had asked for the Jerusalem Church leaders to discuss the demand of some Jewish Christians visiting Antioch that Gentile Christians were to be circumcised. The Jerusalem leaders heard Peter, Paul and Barnabas' testimony and agreed that Gentile Christians did not have to observe the Jewish Law. A faction of the Christian Jews did not accept this, because some of them went round the churches Paul had founded, undermining his teaching on the matter. Perhaps including Rome?



Paul includes in the letter an outline of what living the Christian life means in practice. If you want to know what real worship is, there is a memorable one-liner that sums it up perfectly. Have you ever puzzled over God's will for you? The key to it is there, but that needed two lines! And did you know that the whole Jewish Law can be contained in a single commandment out of

the five books of Law?



John Wesley, whose life  
was transformed after

Howard continues his  
introduction to  
Romans

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But Paul also has a message for his fellow Jews. He has a heartfelt desire for his whole nation to have faith in Jesus, their Messiah. Paul knows that their problem is the same as his used to be. He sets out their problem and shows them the solution. They are seeking God's acceptance and favour through their zeal for the Mosaic Law, not realising that faith in Jesus is all they need. And he traces the origin of God's kingdom of people, accepted by faith alone, all the way back to Abraham, long before the law existed.

What is this to us today? Just remember that John Wesley struggled for years to accept this truth about "faith alone" before he heard something in a reading of Luther's Preface to Romans (a short commentary outlining its teaching) which caused him a change of heart and completely transformed his life. I am including a Website link to a translation of Luther's Preface to Romans with the reading notes for a little supplementary study if you are so minded.

Howard Jackson.

## Looking forward to Lent Clean Monday

In Greece, Clean Monday is a public holiday. It is just 2 days before Ash Wednesday. The Orthodox Lent does not always coincide with the Western Church Lent. It is a day when outdoor excursions are taken. The food in Lent must not include meat, so much seafood is consumed in elaborate dishes. It has become the practice to build and fly kites on this day.

Although it is part of Lent when you might expect a sombre approach it is a day of enjoyment. Straight faces are banned. The Orthodox church encourages enjoyment on this day by quoting Matthew 6:14-21:

*"And when you fast, do not put on a sad face as the hypocrites do. They neglect their appearance so that everyone will see they are fasting. I assure you, they have already been paid in full. When you go without food, wash your face and comb your hair, so that others cannot know that you are fasting – only your Father, who is unseen, will know. And your Father, who sees what you do in private will reward you."*

Keith Alexander

## Confessions of a Cart Tart or Trolley Dolly

John Nunn, a member in Bangor reflects on his time volunteering in the NHS

What, you might reasonably ask is a cart tart or trolley dolly? As some of you may know it is the nickname for the folk who push WVS/WRVS/RVS trolleys around hospital wards. A brief history (well, I was a history teacher). The Women's Voluntary Service was set up by the ARP (Air Raid Precautions) in 1938 (anticipating war) to provide assistance to civilians affected by bombing raids. After the war it continued to work with people needing assistance in all sorts of ways. In recognition of its work it was granted the title "Royal" in 1966 with H.M. The Queen becoming its patron. By 2004, many of its volunteers (like me) were men and there was a feeling that men were being discouraged from joining because it was "Women's". So, they had a cunning plan. A bit like British Petroleum becoming just BP they became simply WRVS. Sadly, men weren't fooled so in 2013 the name was changed again to "The Royal Voluntary Service". However, for the sake of historical continuity the medal which you get on completing 15 years' service still says WVS on it.



My involvement started when semi-retired and knowing I wanted to do something with my spare time, I noticed a poster in the hospital waiting room advertising volunteering in the Hospital. Traditionally, women had taken the trolleys but even though I was a man, the nickname stuck. We are all Cart Tarts or Trolley Dollies. I'm sure you will look on me in a whole new light!

So, what are these famous confessions then? Taking trolleys around the wards I have had both fun, sadness, enjoyment and education. This is not a narrative but a series of windows into the activities of a cart tart.

Artists amongst you might know the name of Harold Riley, a Northwest artist who paints in the style of Lowry. His paintings are much in demand and will sell for thousands of pounds. On the ward one day one chap said he had no money. I said that I would buy him a paper if he wanted, and he said he would give me a signed IOU, only I could probably sell it for a thousand pounds. I saw the name above his bed and said "Not the..." and he was! He then told me to tell the chap on the opposite side of the ward my birthdate. I did – 13/06/47. Friday he said instantly. And my wife, said I. Wednesday came back. Both spot on. Apparently he can do it for any date in the last 1,000 years!

An elderly lady sitting on the chair beside her bed dropped her money and asked me to pick it up. I looked at the way she was sitting and said to my fellow CT, a lady called Alice in her 80s "Would you mind picking it up, Alice – my back is killing me." She did so without comment but on the way out of the ward she said without any expression in her voice or looking at me, "Wise decision". Alice was a joy to work with appearing prim and proper but with a very earthy sense of humour. I recall going on to a women's ward one day and Alice had the ladies convulsed in laughter. "What's going on say I". Go away John" she said. "You're too young". Turns out that somehow Alice had mentioned that her husband (a policeman - see below) had patrolled Manchester's red light area. The ladies all had tales to tell about that zone. I didn't know where to look! Incidentally, she always said her husband was one of the few coppers allowed to marry a crook. Crook was her maiden name.

We were once on a ward when we could hear alarms going off intermittently in the distance. An intermittent alarm meant there was a fire in a nearby ward and anyone in it should evacuate. If the fire was in the ward you were in, you would hear a continuous siren. Turned out the fire alarm in our ward wasn't working. It should have been ringing continuously!

I remember one woman who had chronic curvature of the spine. She lay in bed with her head in a kind of clasp attached to a chain which went over a pulley above her bed and was attached to a heavy weight. She was in continuous pain but she always greeted me like a long lost friend. "Mustn't grumble – could be worse", she would say ??!! Then one day she wasn't there. I asked where she was. "Oh, she died" came back the reply.

I was really quite devastated – she had been under treatment for so long with the hope of something better and then.... It seemed so unfair.

Alice had a seizure whilst doing the trolley one day. She fell backwards and pulled the trolley on top of her with an enormous crash – sweets and bottles everywhere. However, being a very sensible woman she did this in A&E! This was on Thursday: by the following Monday she had been fitted with a pacemaker and was back on the trolley by the following Thursday. They bred them tough in her day

After her death some years later, I was paired up for a while with a lad in his early twenties who had severe autism, but was coping and could talk in a comprehensive and engaging manner about his condition. I learnt more about autism in the few weeks he was doing it whilst he was looking for a permanent job, than in all my years teaching.

Quite often an elderly (usually female) person will express fear about her predicament and ask you to just sit by her bed and hold her hand. Strictly against the rules of course in this era of safeguarding, but what do you do? You can do the “correct” thing or you can do the “right” thing. My first hospital was Salford Royal but after I had moved to Ysbyty Gwynedd I recounted this to one of the managers. “I didn’t hear that” he said.

Something that happened quite regularly at Salford Royal was that there would be a patient attached to a police officer or prison warder by a very long and solid looking chain. I’ve not seen that at YG yet. On one occasion at Salford there was a prisoner in a side ward being guarded by several officers in protective clothing and carrying sub-machine guns - a product of the gang warfare culture in Manchester. “Papers, drinks, chocolates,” we cried, and they all queued up in an orderly fashion with their guns pointing to the floor and bought their sweeties.

At Christmas, usually (though obviously not this year) my tradition is to don a full Santa outfit and add to our already festively decorated trolley a sound system playing Christmas Carols and secular Christmas songs. The response is always amazing from staff and patients. I can’t count the number of times ward staff have asked to be photographed with Father Christmas “for their children/grandchildren”. Here I am with my current oppo, Aled. He also dons Santa outfits so we had to do different days. After all, there is only one Father Christmas



Apart from the pleasure I have attained from “doing” the trolley, it is a fact that patients love our arrival on the ward. We do have jokes with them and they often comment that whilst the ward staff and doctors are absolutely wonderful, there is no getting round the fact that it is a patient – doctor/nurse relationship. They are the broken hip in bed 2, or the appendix in bed 5, whereas to us they are just customers, the same as if they were “outside”. “Highlight of the day”, they will say. One of the real joys is seeing patients, sometimes over a short period and sometimes over a period of months going from being seriously ill to excitedly getting ready to go home. God bless the NHS.

At Ysbyty Gwynedd as many of you will know, the language on the wards is Welsh. I can now enter the ward and exclaim cheerily “Bore Da, papurau newydd”, only to have to admit when faced with a barrage of Welsh, “Sorry, that’s it, I’m afraid”. It does usually gain a laugh though. I can usually manage a “Diolch” or “Diolch yn fawr” on leaving the ward. Embarrassingly, when I have recently returned from a visit to Fuerteventura I sometimes exclaim “gracias” to rather blank responses!

Interestingly, I discovered that although RVS is not a specifically Christian organisation, almost everyone I have ever met - certainly in Salford - was a member of a church. Reminds me that a speaker at a Manchester and Stockport Synod once quoted official government figures to demonstrate that an absolutely enormous percentage of “social” work – often unofficial – is carried out by churches or church related organisations and individuals, and that if all the churches of the country closed, the whole system would collapse.



Here, Emma Hay, John Hay's Daughter tells us how we can reduce our carbon foot print by planting more trees. Emma graduated from Oxford with a degree in biology and now works for a pharmaceutical company.

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Reduce your carbon footprint and support local communities, for free, with this upcoming start-up: Treeapp

### What is Treeapp?

Treeapp is a simple app that allows you to plant trees around the world for free. This allows you to offset your carbon footprint<sup>2</sup> and create local job opportunities for communities across the world<sup>1</sup>.

Simply answer a few questions on the app, to plant a real tree with an official reforestation project. Up to one tree can be planted per day per person.

### How can you plant a tree without paying any money?

To understand how it's financially feasible for you to plant trees without paying any money you must first ask yourself, how does Facebook make its money? How does Google generate such staggering revenue?

The quick answer: through advertisers.

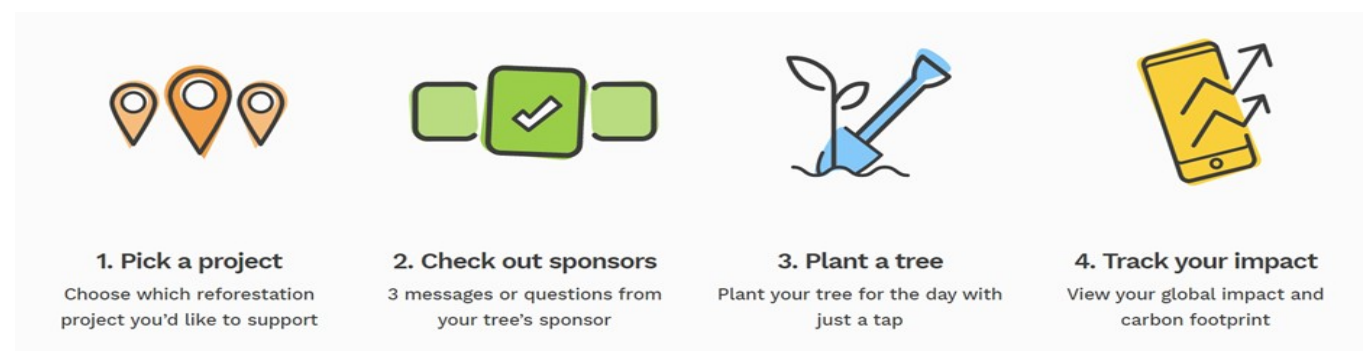
Advertisers pay Facebook to advertise their products directly to your newsfeed - without any involvement from you, whose attention is the product in this transaction.

Treeapp essentially taps into this money generating interaction, but with three key differences:

- the advertisers paying for your attention are eco-conscious companies,
- the product (your attention) is voluntarily and purposefully given by you,
- part of the profit funds a tree being planted from one of Treeapp's NGO partners across the world

So, if you are happy to donate 60 seconds of your attention in exchange for planting a tree (for free!) then this app is for you.

### **So how does it work?**



Then choose which project you want to plant a tree with (initially you will only have access to a few projects, but the more trees you plant, the more projects you will have access to). Simply watch 3 messages or answer 3 quick questions from a sponsor (the advertiser) – this step shouldn't take more than a minute;

Voila! Now you get to plant your tree (up to one tree can be planted by you per day).

They even have a handy tracker section for you to monitor how many trees you've planted and how much carbon you have offsetted.

### **Want to know more?**

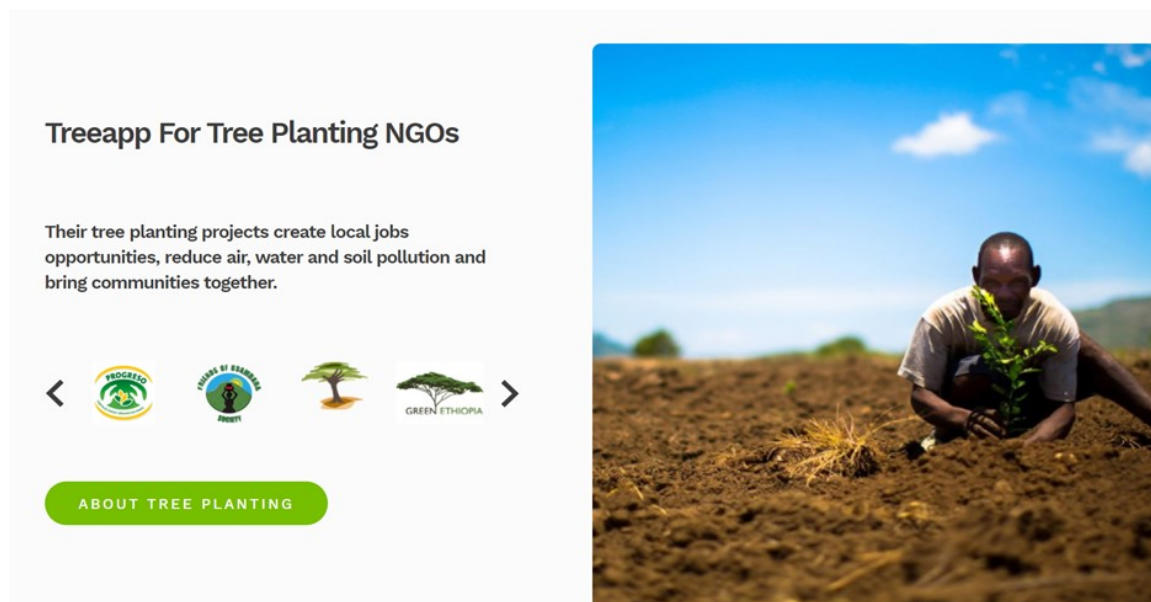
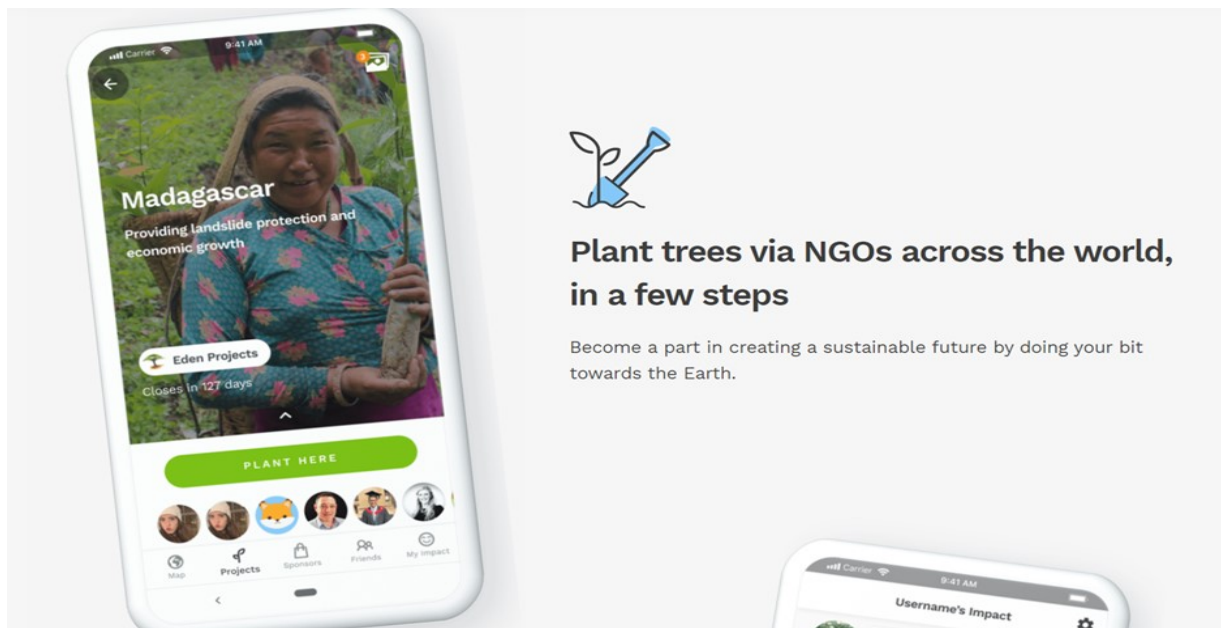
Check out the official Treeapp website:

<https://www.thetreeapp.org/>

Check out these articles on Treeapp and an interview with one of the founders, Jules Buker:

<https://www.tapsmart.com/tips-and-tricks/plant-trees-offset-carbon-free-treeapp/>

<https://irishtechnews.ie/plant-a-tree-for-free-everyday-jules-buker/>



### **References**

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Cocking, S. (2020). 'Plant a tree for free everyday, in less than a minute, Jules Buker', Irish Tech News, 15 May 2020, viewed 21 December 2020. <<https://irishtechnews.ie/plant-a-tree-for-free-everyday-jules-buker/>>

## ONE MORE YEAR

To-day Dear Lord, I'm ninety, there's so much I haven't done.  
I hope, dear Lord, you'll let me live till I am Ninety-one  
But then if I've not finished with all I want to do,  
would you let me stay a while till I am Ninety-two.  
So many places I want to go, so very much to see,  
do you think you could manage to let me stay till I am Ninety-three.  
The world is changing very fast, there is so much in store.  
I'd like to live so very much till I am Ninety-four.  
And if by then I'm still alive I'd like to live till I am Ninety-five.  
So I'd like to stick and see what happens when I am Ninety-six.  
I know, dear Lord, its much to ask, and it must be nice in heaven,  
but really please I'd like to stay on earth till I am Ninety-seven.  
I know by then I won't be fast, and sometimes very late,  
but it would be so pleasant to be around at Ninety-eight.  
I will have seen so many things, and had a wonderful time,  
So I'm sure that I'll be willing to leave when I'm Ninety-nine.

[Patricia Dann's mum]

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**Signs of Spring.** Photo by Mary Bulmer from St. John's, Bangor. Even in January there are early signs of Spring. Catkins are coming on some of the trees and the early migrant birds are starting to arrive.

**We need you to help us to fill future editions of Circuit News. If you have any words of wisdom, jokes, pictures, stories you would like to share please send them to us.**

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## Save the Date!!

## Amlwch All We Can Garden Party

**Saturday 10th July**

**14:30— 16:30**

**Covid Restrictions Permitting**