

“We look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.”

2 Corinthians 4:1

*Nature sleeps, the dark comes
Between temporal and eternal worlds
The veil thins to gossamer.*

The earth takes on a blanket of leaves to hibernate and sleep. Winter is a time to retreat to the hearth, to gather in. Under the earth preparations are beginning for the coming year, composting, germinating, rooting.

Forage

Always use a good foraging guide.

- The last blackberries
- Sloes
- Chickweed
- Burdock root
- Fennel Seed

Pilgrim Places

- Llangybi
- Ynys Cybi
- Llanilltud Fawr
- Tywyn (Cadfan)



Share your experiences with friends through social media using the ‘What-Three-Words’ app to help note specific places.

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See our website below for links and further ideas.



All Hallows

Beginning of the Celtic Year

**A short guide to outdoor activities
For use on your own
or with friends.**

*Cybi, Cadfan,
Illtyd, Tysilio.
Retreat, gather
prepare.*



Look out for Skeletal leaves

Art by Chloe Elliott

Retreat Day: If possible spend a half or whole day by yourself in nature. Or, if this is not possible try to keep an hour or two at a time each month.

The earth takes on a blanket of leaves to hibernate and sleep. **Explore** the fallen leaves for signs of continuing life.

Gather fallen leaves and branches into piles to compost and to make habitats for decomposers. They help break down material into the earth to feed the new growth.

All Hallows' is a liminal space where the separation between life and death comes close. **Reflect** at crossing places: stiles, gates, crossroads, churchyards.

“Return, O my soul, to your rest, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.”

Psalm 116:7

“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff— they comfort me.”

Psalm 23:4

Sit Spot

Choose somewhere to sit for half an hour. Sit and calm yourself. Welcome distractions. Notice the small world of nature around you. Ask open ended questions. What is the spirit saying to you?

Treasure Trail

As squirrels, leave ‘treasures’ for people to find.

- Bug hotels
- Habitat for slow-worms
- Packet of seeds to plant
- Nuts and seeds for the birds

“It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting; for this is the end of everyone, and the living will lay it to heart.”

Ecclesiastes 7:2

Make and light a bonfire. Bring our fears of death, decay, dying and darkness to the light of the flames. As we watch and feed the flickering light reflect on those we no longer see, those who have returned to the earth. In the ashes of the fire is the genesis of new life.

Bake ‘soul cakes’ rub 2 parts flour into 1 part butter until crumbs. Mix with milk or water. Add salt, sugar, fruit to taste. Shape and bake on a hot griddle and share them with those who gather around the fire.



*“The light shines in the darkness, and
the darkness did not overcome it.”*

John 1.5

*Cradled in candlelight
Encouraged by birdsong
Anticipating the light to come*

Use the wisdom of winter time to learn well how to watch and wait during Advent. To celebrate the gifts of birth and life at Christmas. To wonder at the stillness as the light of Epiphany dawns.

Observe

- Animal and bird behaviour
- The turn of the earth to the sun
- The wind in leafless trees
- What is still green
- How much colour remains
- The all encompassing darkness

Pilgrim Places

- Tudweiliog - Cwyfan's Well
- Llanasa (Kentigern)
- St. Asaph (Kentigern)



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Winter Solstice

The shortest day

A short guide to outdoor activities
For use on your own
or with friends.

*Kentigern, Tudwal,
Christmas, Epiphany,
Stillness, Gift,
Plygain, Wintering.*



Look out for Mistletoe

Art by Chloe Elliott

Retreat Day: If possible spend a half or whole day by yourself in nature. Or, if this is not possible try to keep an hour or two at a time each month.

Explore places where summer growth has died back for the winter. Walk paths that have become open once again.

Offer yourself to another as a companion on the way. Carry each other. Walk to the turn of the earth in the meagre hours of light.

Dwell in the company of brightness. Warm to winter's shrouded colours.

Cherish the days when the light of winter is at its best and the darkness allows us to search the skies above.

*“When I thought, “My foot is slipping,”
your steadfast love, O Lord, held me up.”*
Psalm 94.18

*“When the cares of my heart are many,
your consolations cheer my soul.”*

Psalm 94.19

Sit Spot

Choose somewhere to sit for half an hour. Sit and calm yourself. Welcome distractions. Notice the small world of nature around you. Ask open ended questions. What is the spirit saying to you?

Gifts for the earth

- Lighter footprints
- Travel slowly
- Food for the birds
- Create habitats for bugs
- Don't 'tidy' till the spring
- Leave water for animal visitors

*“In his hand is the life of every living
thing and the breath of every human
being.”*

Job 12.10

Make a wreath of Ivy and Holly. Plait fronds of Ivy into a circle and push sprigs of Holly into it. Leave them in places where there is little green.

Light up windows with candles to remind ourselves and others that whilst the light is scarce it can still be found. Be the light of a candle for someone - bring gifts of warmth and light to others. Offer hospitality.

Sing together in Plygain to warm the heart and cheer the soul.



Meditate on Snowdrops as Anna the prophet.

“At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child...” (Luke 2:22ff)

*Determined but humble with heads hung low against the wild winter.
As midwife they sing:
‘It is at hand’*

Offer Hospitality: According to legend Saint Bridget changed reeds into fish in order to feed the people of Llanrwst.

- Feed your friends with something wild and natural like nettle soup.

Bird Boxes

- Clean out bird boxes ready for the breeding season.
- Make and put up new bird boxes in your garden or local area (with permission)

Pilgrim Places

- Visit the Priory and well at Penmon and S. Seriol’s island
- Walk the Saint Teilo Way



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Celtic Spring

February-March

A short guide to outdoor activities
For use on your own
or with friends.

*Saint Bridget,
Candlemas,
Saint Seriol,
Saint Teilo, Lent.*



Art by Chloe Elliott

Look out for Snowdrops

Retreat Day: If possible spend a half or whole day by yourself in nature. Or, if this is not possible try to keep an hour or two at a time each month.

Choose a piece of land, Garden, Public Park or Woodland. Begin to understand and know the area better. If you need ideas, use the website pages (on the back of the leaflet) to see where other people have been.

Wander without destination and pray or meditate on everything you find in your path.

Search the area, be inquisitive. Look, Listen, Taste, Smell, Touch.

“God saw everything that he had made and indeed it was very good.”

Genesis 1:31

“Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place?”

Psalm 24:3

Sit Spot

Choose somewhere to sit for half an hour. Sit and calm yourself. Welcome distractions. Notice the small world of nature around you. Don't analyse too much. What is the spirit saying to you?

Treasure Hunt

Make a list before you go out:

Some ideas:

- Willow shoots
- Animal footprints
- Snowdrops 'Mary's Bells'
- A Spider's web
- The first song of a Blackbird
- A skeletal leaf

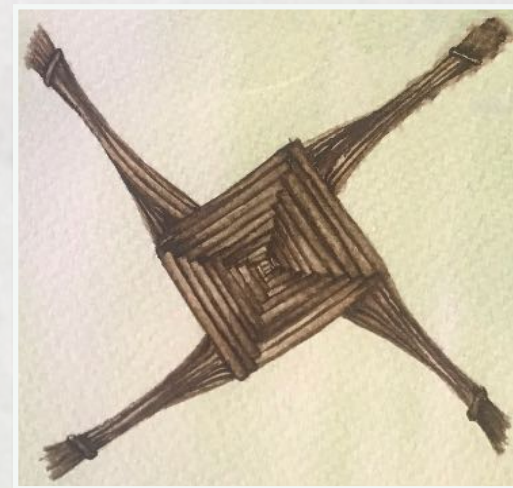
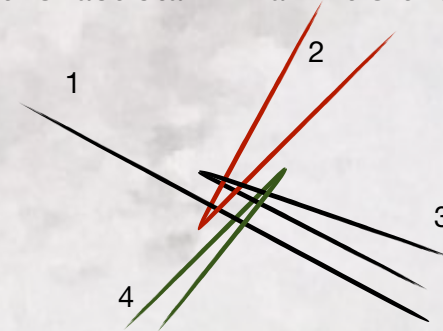
“The kingdom of God is like treasure hidden in a field.”

Matthew 13:44

Make a cross of Saint Bridget, push wild flower seeds between the stalks and leave them somewhere as a surprise for others later in the year.

How to make the crosses:

Choose a straight stalk. Fold another in half and put in around the first at 90 degrees. Fold the next in the same way. Follow the same pattern each 90 degrees until a square forms. Fold the last stalk in and tie the ends.



Plant alliums (onion family) or other perennial bulbs.

“Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” John 12:24

*Watch and wait the letting go
earthed laid out to rest
reconciled through death reborn*

Forage for spring greens:

Always use a good foraging guide.

- Ramsons
- Pennywort
- Hairy Bittercress
- Primrose
- Common Sorrel
- Watermint
- Common Hogweed

Offer Hospitality:

Fold some foraged spring greens into bread dough. Break and share the bitter-sweet bread with friends.

Listen to the dawn chorus

Pilgrim Places

- Visit St Beuno’s well and Church at Clynnog Fawr
- Walk Garn Fadryn
- Visit Llanbadarn Fawr



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Spring Equinox

March / April

A short guide to outdoor activities
For use on your own
or with friends.

*Rest, Reconciliation,
Easter, Saint Madryn,
Saint Beuno, Saint Padarn*



Look out for Blackthorn

Retreat Day: If possible spend a half or whole day by yourself in nature. Or, if this is not possible try to keep an hour or two at a time each month.

Choose a small piece of land that is unlikely to be disturbed. One you can visit often. Wait and watch to see what happens. Only intervene if absolutely necessary. Watch nature slowly restore its own balance.

Wander - have courage to walk where you have not walked before and pray or meditate on everything you find in your path.

Sense the season, in sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing. Celebrate the renewal of nature.

*“When you send forth your spirit,
they are created; and you renew the
face of the ground.”*
Psalms 104:30

*“Keep your heart with all vigilance,
for from it flow the springs of life.”*

Proverbs 4:23

Sit Spot

Return to a familiar place. Sit and calm yourself. Welcome distractions. Notice the small world of nature around you. Don't analyse too much. What is the spirit saying to you? Do you feel accepted here?

Treasure Hunt

Make a list before you go out:

Some ideas:

- Morning dew
- A Hare
- Leaf and blossom buds
- Birds attracting a mate
- Frog and Toad spawn
- Feeling the warmth of the sun

*“For where your treasure is, there
your heart will be also.”*

Matthew 6:21

Make a journey stick



A journey stick is a reminder of where you have been and what you saw.

Choose a stick for your journey, retreat day or walk.

As you go, attach items to the stick that attract your attention.

Make sure you attach them in the order you found them so that you can re-tell the story of your journey using your stick as a reminder.



Plant a cross of sticks in a pot of nasturtiums or sweet peas and allow them to grow and weave around it.

*“So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.”
1 Corinthians 3:7*

*From the Hearth onto the heath.
Winter to summer dwelling.
Stretching, learning to rejoice.*

Forage

Always use a good foraging guide.

- Lime leaves
- Seaweeds
- Fennel
- Wild Onion
- Yarrow



Practical

- Hunt for bugs
- Go pond dipping
- Play sensing games
- Practice animal behaviours
- Melangell protected a hare from hunters - Protect nature from those who would destroy it.

Pilgrim Places

- Pennant Melangell - Yew trees, church and shrine.
- Llyn Geirionydd - (Monument to Taliesin)
- Discover and Walk Sarn Helen



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Birth of Summer

May

A short guide to outdoor activities
For use on your own
or with friends.

*Pentecost, Ascension,
Helen of Caernarfon
St. Melangell, Thresholds,
Rogation, Learn,
Grow, Rejoice*



Art by Chloe Elliott

Look out for Cuckoo Flowers

Retreat Day: If possible spend a half or whole day by yourself in nature. Or, if this is not possible try to keep an hour or two at a time each month.

Rogation (*from rogare: to ask*) Walk the boundary, threshold or at the edge of places where two environments meet. Consider Christ at every edge. Learn what it means to be the in-between.

Consider every atom where they have been. That each one might have been a part of you. Reflect on the poem I am Taliesin. *“I have been a blue salmon, I have been a dog, a stag, a roebuck on the mountain...”*

Participate with nature. Rejoice in the beauty of sweet flowers and the harmony of birds. Sing in unison with the grasses as they dance in the breeze.

“Do I not fill heaven and earth?”
Jeremiah 23:24

**“For God alone my
soul waits in silence;”**
Psalm 61:1

Sit Spot

Choose somewhere to sit for half an hour. Sit and calm yourself. Welcome distractions. Notice the small world of nature around you. Ask open ended questions. What is the spirit saying to you?

Treasure Hunt

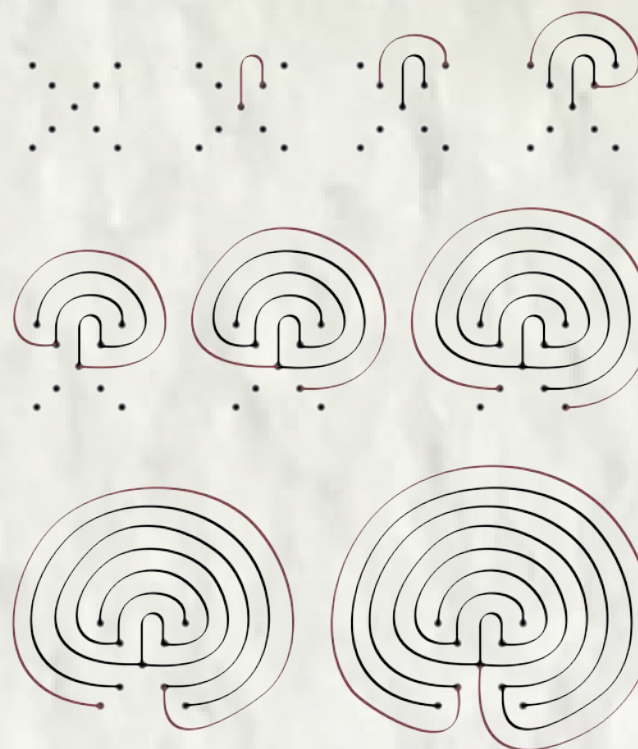
Make a list before you go out.

Some ideas:

- Blossom
- A border
- Nesting birds
- Cuckoo
- An opening
- Transforming Tadpoles

**“This is the day that the Lord
has made; let us rejoice
and be glad in it.”**
Psalm 118:24

Make and walk a labyrinth. Begin with nine stones laid in a cross and join them as shown. Use natural items if possible, or simply mark the path on the earth.



Walk the path slowly allowing your whole self to be absorbed by it. Pause and reflect at the centre, before retracing your steps outward.

Light a candle for St' John's eve (24th June) in place of a fire beacon which were often lit at mid-summer. Hold a barbecue, cook outdoors to celebrate the high point of the year.

"He must increase, but I must decrease." John 3:30

Rise up, becalm, contemplate at midsummer the view ahead behind before descending

Forage

Always use a good foraging guide.

- Go on a pignut hunt

Ask the landowner before digging for pignuts. They can be found on meadowland especially. Follow the stem of the plant down to the earth. Use a knife to carefully follow it below ground. Don't pull their stems. Hopefully there will be a nut at the end of the stalk. They are very tasty, mild and similar to sweet chestnuts or hazelnuts. Only collect them when they are found in abundance.

Pilgrim Places

- Llandogo
- Your local well
- St. James Church and
- St. Winifride's Well Holywell



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Summer Solstice

Mid Summer

A short guide to outdoor activities
For use on your own
or with friends.

*St. John the Baptist
St. James, St. Euddogwy
Rise up, Quieten,
Relax, Reflect*



Look out for Pignut

Art by Chloe Elliott

Retreat Day: If possible spend a half or whole day by yourself in nature. Or, if this is not possible try to keep an hour or two at a time each month.

A high place At the high point of the year, walk to the highest point in your area in order to gain perspective. Reflect on what has been and what is to come.

Walk with 'Fox Feet' (Try to walk without making sound.)

Listen with 'Deer Ears' (Use your hands to hear more.)

Look with 'Owl Eyes' (Concentrate on something distant.)

Participate with nature. Try to be a part of nature rather than a spectator.

“The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.” Psalm 19:1

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.”

Matthew 11:28

Sit Spot

Choose somewhere to sit for half an hour. Sit and calm yourself. Welcome distractions. Notice the small world of nature around you. Ask open ended questions. What is the spirit saying to you?

Treasure Hunt

Make a list before you go out.

Some ideas:

- Sunset
- Butterflies
- Wild Strawberries
- Natural Visitors
- Bats

“I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.” Psalm 27:13

Summer Stories. Be creative with natural things. Choose something to create summer stories which begin like:

This is not a stick. This is a key to unlock the world around you...

This is not a stone. This holds the stories of all those who have walked on this path...



The earth is generous to us at this time of year. As we go out and gather our food remember to leave a portion for the rest of nature and share our harvest with those who cannot gather their own food.

“Those who are generous are blessed, for they share their bread with the poor.” Proverbs 22:9

*Gathered around a fire
Watching bread rise and cook
Stories of bread for today*



Forage

Always use a good foraging guide.

- Bilberries
- Wild Strawberries
- Balsam Seedpods
- Giant Puffball
- Elderberries
- Meadowsweet
- Horseradish

Pilgrim Places

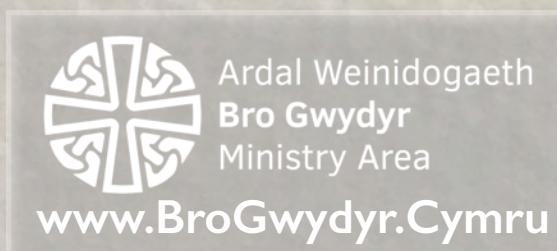
- St. Deiniol's Cathedral
- Burry Holms
- Merthyr Tydfil
- St. Mary's Well, Uwchmynydd



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Lammas

*First Fruits
of the Harvest*

A short guide to outdoor activities For use on your own or with friends.

*St. Deiniol, St. Mary,
St. Gwyddelan, St. Tydfil
Beginning of harvest*



Look out for Bilberries

Art by Chloe Elliott

Retreat Day: If possible spend a half or whole day by yourself in nature. Or, if this is not possible try to keep an hour or two at a time each month.

Lammas = loaf mass

A time of celebration and rejoicing that the harvest has begun. Often a loaf of bread was baked with the first cut of wheat and bilberries were folded into the dough.

Watch and wait, take only what you need for today.

Consider that we are but one of those at nature's table.

“And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food. And it was so.”

Genesis 1:30

“So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own.”

Matthew 6:34

Sit Spot

Choose somewhere to sit for half an hour. Sit and calm yourself. Welcome distractions. Notice the small world of nature around you. Ask open ended questions. What is the spirit saying to you?

Treasure Hunt

Make a list before you go out.

Some ideas:

- Fields of golden stubble
- Harebells
- The sky through a canopy
- Fresh rain and a cool breeze

“For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.”

Luke 11:10

Make a simple, slow loaf of bread. Sour dough bread need only be flour and water, though salt is often added for flavour.

Begin with one measure of plain flour to two measures of water mixed together.

Each day feed the mixture with a little flour and a little water.

When it starts to grow and bubble add enough water and flour to make a soft pliable dough. This should be around half the size of your baked loaf.

Mix and leave it overnight.

The next day knead the dough on a floured surface. Shape and place it in a proving basket or floured tin. Leave to rise. Bake in the middle of a hot oven until hollow when tapped. Around an hour for a large 2lb loaf.

Try adding nuts, seeds or bilberries.

*“And a harvest of righteousness is sown
in peace for those who make peace.”*

James 3:18 NRSV

*Gathering the harvest together
and meeting within
the shelter of each other’s soul*



Forage

Always use a good foraging guide.

- Blackberries
- Elderberries
- Hedgehog Mushroom
- Crab Apples
- Hazel Nuts
- Horseradish

Pilgrim Places

- S. Michael’s Churches
(Many over Wales)
- S. Dyfrig’s Well
(Garn Llwyd, Llancarfan)



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Ardal Weinidogaeth
Bro Gwydyr
Ministry Area

www.BroGwydyr.Cymru

Autumn Equinox

Harvest

A short guide to
outdoor activities
For use on your own
or with friends.

*St. Dyfrig, Cadoc,
S. Michael.
Sharing, Letting Go,
Gleaning.*



Look out for Michaelmas Daisies

Art by Chloe Elliott

Retreat Day: If possible spend a half or whole day by yourself in nature. Or, if this is not possible try to keep an hour or two at a time each month.

Anam Cara - Soul Friend

Over the Equinox day and night are equal once again. In a time of balance at the beginning of Autumn, before the Winter, often the weather can quieten for a small Michaelmas summer.

Quieten your soul to help you prepare for the winter and discover those who are friends to your soul. Keep them close when the days shorten.

Be ready to let go of the summer and turn cheerfully to the coming winter.

“Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure.”

Psalm 16:9

“He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money.”

Mark 6:8

Sit Spot

Choose somewhere to sit for half an hour. Sit and calm yourself. Welcome distractions. Notice the small world of nature around you. Ask open ended questions. What is the spirit saying to you?

Treasure Trail

As squirrels, leave ‘treasures’ for people to find.

- Seeds
- Small cairns
- Painted Stones
- Plaited grasses

“Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.”

Psalm 126:6

Make a walking stick: Cut a straight branch from coppiced Hazel trees (if possible with a fork at one end). Clean any shoots away with a knife or drawknife. Use sandpaper to smooth the sides. Use a small piece of copper pipe as a ferrule at the bottom. Finish with oil.

Collect acorns, hazelnuts or other tree seeds and plant them in pots. Keep them safe from squirrels. Reflect on their life as they grow and give the trees as presents next year.

Hedgehog shelters: Dyffrig was often pictured with a hedgehog. Make a shelter for hedgehogs in your garden.

