

TODAY

The Parish
Magazine
for the
Exe Valley
Mission
Community

December 2009 / January 2010

Price 25p

LOVING IS GIVING

“What do you want for Christmas?” is a question often heard in my family at this time of year, but why do we give Christmas presents? I would like to think that we are celebrating the greatest gift of all! “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3 : 16). God’s motive for giving is His love for us. Jesus said, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” and “Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these”. (Mark 12 vv 30, 31). This kind of love should result in our generous giving, both to God and to those around us.

GIVING TO NEED

The challenge is that we are so often faced with giving to need. We must give something to the aunt who gave an unexpected gift last year. What about all the charitable appeals and particularly

those from the aid agencies? Even the diocese needs more money. There simply isn’t enough to go round!

NEEDING TO GIVE

However, the Bible encourages us to give regularly, proportionately, generously, and cheerfully! “On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income” (1 Cor. 16 : 2). “--- in your love for us - see that you also excel in this grace of giving. I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love” (2 Cor. 8 vv 7,8). “Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9 vv 7,8). Christians need to give as an expression of their love for God and their fellow men. When we give in this way He promises to bless us!

THANKS BE TO GOD FOR HIS INDESCRIBABLE GIFT! (2 Cor. 9 :19)

It is as we receive God’s gift of salvation in Christ, and His indwelling Spirit, that He is able to transform our attitude to giving. Come and join us in January on Friday evenings in Withleigh Village Hall, as we explore the other gifts that God has given His church to enable us to be the people He wants us to be!

Have a happy and Christ-filled Christmas and New Year!

Andrew Rose



Wishing you the Joy and Peace of Christmas

**Material for the February / March issue
should reach Paul Iliff no later than Tuesday 12th January.**

**THE EXE VALLEY
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READER

Mrs Anna Hansford

The Paddock,
2 Kensington Court, Washfield,
Tiverton, EX16 9QU.
Tel: (01884) 253463

YOUTH WORKER

Samar Al Alam

The Annexe, Lower Ingrams,
Loxbeare, Tiverton, EX16 8BY.

Where are we?

As five months have now passed since Godfrey's retirement, the process to find his successor is now well under way. Parish profiles have been compiled, and the PCCs have met with Bishop Bob and the patrons. Each parish has elected a representative to be part of the selection process, and the representatives have been meeting to produce what is, in effect, a "Mission Community Profile", and profile of the person we hope to appoint. By the time you read this, the vacancy should have been advertised on the Diocesan website, open to anyone within the Diocese. The closing date for applications is mid-December, and the intention is that short-listed candidates will be interviewed in January.

Should nobody suitable be found from within the Diocese, then the position will be advertised nationally. This will, obviously delay the appointment, but cannot happen before an internal appointment has been explored.

Please pray for our parish representatives, and all who are involved in the selection process.

Paul Iliff

Farewell from Samar

First of all I would like to thank all of you for your faithful prayers and support to the work I have been doing among the young people in this area. It has been such a good experience, yet challenging some times. It is sad that my time with you is coming to an end, but, however, you will always be remembered. I look back at the two and a half years that I've been serving here, and I can see some wonderful things that God has done. It might not be obvious, but we have to believe that a good seed has been planted in the young people's

hearts, and at the right time this seed will grow and produce fruits. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3 : 6 - 9, "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labour. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building."

I praise God for all the young people who have been attending the youth bible study evenings. I have to admit that it was a big challenge for me to get them together from all the parishes, but more challenging to maintain the work. But I praise God who gave me the strength to do that. I also want to thank Nicky Goldsworthy for all her faithful work and support.

I have enjoyed working in the Exe Valley. I loved every experience, Fish Club, Youth Club, the assemblies, and the services. I thank God for this opportunity to grow and mature in my faith, and work for Him.

And finally, I don't have many words to say, but those of thanksgiving and praise to God, and to all of you who have been giving and supporting me faithfully. And my hopes and prayers will be that the work that I have been doing among the young people will bare good fruits, and will continue.

Samar

PARISH ROUND-UP

Calverleigh

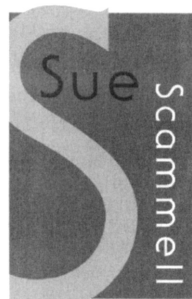
Our Harvest Celebrations started on a beautiful warm and sunny afternoon, with a short service in a fully Harvest decorated church. We wish to thank Pat

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Shapland for leading this service. It was then time for the sports on the green followed by a Bring and Share tea, which proved to be a great success. A great time was had by all.

Mark Balsdon and Amy Hayes were married in our church on September 26th. Amy is the daughter of Keith and Carol Hayes. We wish the young couple every happiness in their life together.

A big thank you to Alison Webber for keeping the Baptismal record board up to date. What lovely handwriting she has. Well done.

There was a very good congregation for our Songs of Praise on Sunday 18th October. This service was led by Jackie and many favourite hymns were sung. We all joined together at the end of the service for a welcome cup of tea or coffee and biscuits, as all the hearty singing had given us a thirst.

Following on from the sponsored walk by Adrian, Andrew and Thomas Webber, a barn dance was held at Calverleigh Village Hall. A great many people attended and danced to Stick the Fiddle. Everyone joined in, the young and old alike. Many of us got our right hands and feet mixed up with our left, but it all added to the fun of the evening. There was some very comical entertainment by Rose Channing. The Webber family had worked very hard organising this, and preparing the ample buffet supper. The total raised by the walk, cream tea and dance was £3,200. A grateful thank you for the £2,200 which they donated to our church in Calverleigh, the remaining money being given to the "Bryer" Section at Post Hill in Tiverton. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication; Ivan would have been truly proud of you all.

Our Grand Quiz Night was held on Friday 23rd October. What a great success. Barbara Hill, Pam Anslow and Sheila

Greenslade organised this event and they were supported by other members of the PCC. We had a full house of 25 tables of 4. Supper was provided in the interval. Many thanks to all who helped on the night - Derek, who was quizmaster, Colin and Sue Hill who organised the questions and checked and kept account of the scores, Lester and Rita for organising the draw, Tony and family for the bar, and those who helped with the food and drinks. We also have to thank all the sponsors, all those who donated money, food and drinks; without you we would not have been able to donate £1,700.60 towards the new lighting and wiring in the church. A big pat on the back for you all.

On Sunday 1st November we welcomed Freya Olivia Grace into the church for her baptism. Freya is the daughter of Myles and Leanne Harris, and Granddaughter of Gary and Alison Smith. It was good to see so many family and friends joining them on such an occasion.

The Webber family organised a coffee morning to help the family of Myrtle's Great Niece, Erin Berry, who is seriously ill in hospital. A magnificent total of £650 was raised. We hope that Erin will soon be on the mend.

We send our sympathy to Mr England and all the family on their recent sad loss of Mrs England.

Our prayers and best wishes go to all who are not well at the present time, thinking especially of Carol Hayes. We are also thinking of all who have recently had operations and those who are waiting for treatment. Hope everyone will be fit and well again very soon.

We will soon be in the festive season, and preparations for our Christmas services are in hand. We look forward to welcoming you all to our Carol Service, Christingle service and Christmas day

service. Days and times are printed in the middle of this magazine.

Flower and cleaning rotas are displayed in Church porch.

Cruwys Morchard

The work on the screen continues as the craftsmen and ladies pains-takingly work at taking back the varnish; hopefully it will be finished by Christmas. Children from Bickleigh School visited the church to see the screen restoration in progress, the visit including a talk, and a chance to try their hand at carving.

A good time was had by all at the Harvest Festival made all the better by fine weather. Thank you to Geoff Littlefield and Jim Carter for organising the sports, and to the ladies committee for providing refreshments. Thank you to all who gave so generously and to those who gave up their time to collect. A special thank you to Brian and Maureen Gibbs who provided an excellent disco, which made for a very enjoyable evening; we hope to see them again next year. Thank you to all who donated produce which was taken to Charlton Lodge who were very appreciative.

Cindy Trick has copies of The Pilgrim's Guide to Devon's Churches for sale at a cost of £6.00 each, which includes a £1.00 donation to church. Contact Cindy if you would like a copy, they would make good Christmas presents.

The baby boom continues in Cruwys Morchard as we send Congratulations to Laura and Michael Parker on the birth of Nathaniel David, grandson for David and Diana Vincent. Also congratulations to Mary and George Floyd on the birth of Rose, granddaughter to Guy and Sarah

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Cruwys, and to Joy and Lee Campbell on the birth of Chloe, granddaughter to Anne Saunders.

We welcome Eileen, Ethan and Louise Nash to Beech Park; we hope you will enjoy living in the parish.

We send best wishes for a speedy recovery to all who have been unwell or have had a stay in hospital recently.

Our Christmas Carol and Christingle service will be held on Sunday 20th December at 11am. We do hope you will join us after the service for coffee and mince pies. The Christingles will be made at Cindy's house on Saturday from 2pm. If there are any adults or children who would like to help, please do come along for a fun afternoon, refreshments provided. Would decorators for Christmas, do so as usual. If anyone would like to join the cleaning and decorating team please let Cindy know.

Again this year we will be collecting at the Carol service, non-perishable items for CHAT - Churches Housing Action Trust - to provide basic needs for the homeless people. Please see flyer for a list of suitable items. These items should not be gift wrapped as they will go into store to be distributed throughout the year.

Quiz - 5th Dec at Parish Hall for New Hall Funds, light supper included. To book your team ring Marilyn Hill (01363 860253) or Pauline Guscott (01363 866754).

Christmas Bingo will be held in the Parish Hall on Thursday 17th December, eyes down 8pm. doors open at 7pm. The Parish Hall will not be running Bingos in January and February. However Cruwys Morchard YFC will hold their Bingos on those dates, 30th January and 27th February. 200 club draws will take place at Parish Hall meetings.

Fri 5th March Cruwys Morchard Parish Hall presents 'The Men of Morchard'. Ring Mary (01363 83005).

Pens are now available with 'Cruwys Morchard' on them, blue or green, for New Hall Funds. See a committee member, or buy one at the bingo.

A Flower Festival, to celebrate 300 years since the church fire, will be held, May 29th, 30th & 31st, 2010. A meeting will be arranged at church in the New Year. Anyone interested in helping with this event, in particular arranging flowers, please speak to Pauline Guscott or Cindy Trick.

Flower and Cleaning Rota

December 7th - Lorna Warren and Margaret Southwood (cleaning only)

December 14th - Decorators for Christmas

December 21st & 28th Diana Vincent & Val Randerson

January 4th & 11th - Cindy Trick & Pat Cross

January 18th & 25th - Judith Taylor & Anne Gillbard

February 1st & 8th - Sonia Notley

Stove Rota

December - Mr J. Carter

January - Mr M. Trick

February - Mr D. Edmonds

March - Mr J. Lake

Please light the stove on Saturday (morning if possible). Any problems contact Cindy (01363 866621) or Diana (01363 860227).

'HATS' IN THE BELFRY THE FOLLOW UP

Once again, several members of the bell ringing team, and one 'partner', recently spent a busy Saturday morning in the bell chamber, continuing the cleaning and

painting process to ensure the bells are in pristine condition for the Quinquennial Inspection.

Following a visit by Ian Smith of the Devonshire Guild of Bellringers, we had been advised to carry out various remedial actions to ensure the continued safety of the bells, and as a result of this we would like particularly to thank Francis Lancelles for replacing the metal strap on Bell No 5 stay, Frank from Acorn Saddlery, South Molton, for providing saddle felt to retain oil in the bell mechanism bearings, and Bob Ogden for supplying a huge bar of beeswax to lubricate the bell sliders - all without charge. Without this help and, of course, the invaluable time of the 'workers', it would be almost impossible to keep the belfry in good working condition, and the bells ringing out over the countryside. We would like to add at this point that Ian Smith commented that the plain bearings used in the Cruwys Morchard bells are normally expected to last for 80 to 90 years, but owing to the excellent standard of maintenance throughout the years, our 104 year old bearings are still in relatively good order and the bells safe for ringing.

We also must not forget to thank BAM Construction Ltd. for again loaning hard hats for those who wanted them, and Nellie and Hilary for providing our mid morning snack.

Ann McGoun
Novice Bell ringer

COMMUNITY CAROLS IN THE CRUWYS ARMS.
on Friday 18th December
Short Carol service in the
Congregational Chapel,
Pennymoor at 7pm
followed by Mince pies, mulled
wine/apple, etc. and more singing in
the Cruwys Arms at 7.30 pm.
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Loxbeare

It is with great sadness that we record the death of Mrs Joyce Heywood, who farmed at Loxbeare Barton with her husband, Leonard, for many years until his death, and after, with her sons, until moving to Barton View with her youngest son Richard. For many years Joyce was the Treasurer of our church and, after Leonard's death, succeeded him as churchwarden, a position she held for a number of years. Although leading a very busy life, Joyce lived out her faith by attending church, Sunday by Sunday, to worship her Lord, until being prevented from doing so by ill health; four years ago she moved into the Larches. She was a lady who held the love and affection of many people in the local community and further afield, and will be greatly missed. We send our prayers, love and deepest sympathy to Andrew, Gerald, Jean and Richard and Linda, Liz and to all her grandchildren of whom she was rightly proud.

Congratulations to Trish and David Bending on the arrival of their beautiful baby granddaughter Matilda Rose.

Congratulations to all celebrating a special birthday and / or anniversary.

The sponsored walk organised by Jean Heard along the canal raised £400 for the Barnabas Fund. It was a beautiful day, when the group walked from Halberton to Sampford Peverell for lunch, and back again. Jean would like to thank those who took part, and those who sponsored the event.

We send our love and prayers for a speedy recovery to all who are unwell - especially Mrs Eda Gooding and Geoff Pack - both recovering from operations, and to Steve Troake and Bob Berry, and to anyone else who are unwell - get well soon.,

We send our love, prayers and deepest sympathy to the Maynard family on the death of David.

The Harvest Festival was well attended on the Saturday when the Rev. Chris Routledge, from St. George's and St Paul's, was the speaker. It was a beautiful afternoon for the sports which were held on the field opposite the church by kind permission of the Heywood family. Tea followed in the hall, after which the sports prize money was presented by Pauline. The Harvest Praise Service on the Sunday was taken by John, and was followed by refreshments. The collection taken on the Saturday amounted to £137, and has been sent to Tearfund. The Harvest Supper took place on the following Thursday, and was enjoyed by all who came along. Thank you to all who helped in any way over the harvest weekend in tidying the churchyard, and in decorating the church so beautifully with the flowers and produce that was later taken into the Salvation Army.

Carol singing this year will be on the nights of Saturday 19th December and Tuesday 22nd December, meeting at Loxbeare Garage at 6.30pm, and on Christmas Eve, meeting at Calverleigh Village Hall at 6pm. We will be collecting for the Parkinson Society and CHAT. If there is anyone willing to entertain the Carol Singers to supper, please telephone Ron on 881362. Decorating the church for Christmas will take place on Saturday 19th December - help would be much appreciated.

The Carol Service will be on Sunday 20th December at 6.30pm, followed by mince pies and coffee in the hall.

On Christmas Day we will be celebrating God's gift to us of Jesus, with a Family Communion Service at 10.30.m.

Thank you to everyone who helps to ensure the smooth running of our church throughout the year.

Dates for your Diary:-
Monday 7th December - Christmas Bingo in Loxbeare Hall. Doors open at 7pm. Eyes down at 7.30pm.

Loxbeare Ladies:-
Monday 14th December - Christmas Dinner at the Rose and Crown at 7.30pm. Please phone Sue on 259496 to book.

2010:-
Tuesday 5th January at 7.30pm - Social Evening at Calverleigh Village Hall - £5. Stalls, draw, refreshments, in aid of Calverleigh Church and Research into lung Disease.

We wish all our readers a very happy Christmas and a healthy new year.

Loxbeare Women's Bible Study Group
Our group, which consists of about a dozen ladies of all ages from 20's to 80's, continues to meet twice monthly on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays for about 2 hours in the afternoon.

After a cup of tea and a chat, we get down to some serious Bible study. With the help of Good Book Guides, we have looked at the real lives and experiences of seven "Women of Faith" from the Old Testament, and followed a study of 1 Peter from the New Testament, entitled "Living in the real world". We have recently completed a series of studies on the Apostles' Creed! So our subject matter has been quite varied, but, I think we would all agree, we have discovered a deeper understanding of God and of ourselves in relationship to Him, and so have grown in our Christian faith. We have also got to know one another better, and have benefited from listening to other people's experiences of life and of how God has helped and guided each of

Continued on Page 8 ⇨



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Sunday 27th December

At Calverleigh
10.30 am

Sunday 10th January
PLOUGH SERVICE

At Loxbears
10.30 am
Followed by
a shortened service
of
Holy Communion

OAKFORD

6th December
9.30 am Holy Communion
13th December
9.30 am Morning Prayer
20th December
5.30 pm Carol Service
Christmas Eve
11.30 pm Holy Communion
Christmas Day
10.00 am Family Service
27th December - See Calverleigh
3rd January
9.30 am Holy Communion
10th January - See Loxbears
17th January
9.30 am Holy Communion
24th January
9.30 am Family Service
31st January
9.30 am Morning Prayer

RACKENFORD

6th December
6.30 pm Evening Prayer
13th December
11.15 am Holy Communion
20th December
11.15 am Family Service
Christmas Eve
7.00 pm Carols & Holy Communion
27th December
See Calverleigh
3rd January
6.30 pm Evening Prayer
10th January - See Loxbears
17th January
11.15 am Family Service
24th January
9.30 am Morning Prayer
31st January
11.15 am Holy Communion

STOODLEIGH

6th December
11.15 am Morning Prayer
13th December
11.15 am Holy Communion
20th December
7.00 pm Carol Service
Christmas Day
11.00 am Holy Communion
27th December
See Calverleigh
3rd January
11.15 am Morning Prayer
10th January - See Loxbears
17th January
6.30 pm Evening Prayer
24th January
9.30 am Holy Communion
31st January
11.15 am Holy Communion

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CALVERLEIGH

6th December
3.00 pm Christingle Service

13th December
9.30 am Holy Communion

20th December
3.00 pm Carol Service

Christmas Day
9.30 am Family Service

27th December
10.30 am Mission Community Service

3rd January
11.15 am Morning Prayer

10th January
See Loxbeare

17th January
11.15 am Family Service

24th January
3 pm Evening Prayer

31st January
9.30 am Holy Communion

CRUWYS MORCHARD

6th December
11 am Morning Prayer & Baptisms

13th December
11 am Family Service

20th December
11.00 am Carol Service & Christingle

Christmas Eve
10.00 pm Holy Communion

27th December
See Calverleigh

3rd January
11 am Morning Prayer

10th January
See Loxbeare

17th January
9.30 am Holy Communion

24th January
6.30 pm Evening Prayer

31st January
11 am Family Service

LOXBARE

6th December
9.30 am Family Communion,
Speaker from Leprosy Mission

13th December
11 am Christingle Service

20th December
6.30 pm Carol Service

Christmas Day
10.30 am Family Communion

27th December - See Calverleigh

3rd January
9.30 am Family Communion

10th January
10.30 am Plough Service
followed by Holy Communion

17th January
6.30 pm Evening Praise

24th January
11 am Family Service

31st January
11 am Family Service

TEMPLETON

6th December
9.30 am Holy Communion

13th December
No Service

20th December
11 am Family Service

Christmas Eve
4.00 pm Toddlers' Service
7.00 pm Carol Service
+ Holy Communion

27th December - See Calverleigh

3rd January
9.30 am Holy Communion

10th January - See Loxbeare

17th January
11 am Family Service

24th January
11 am Morning Prayer

31st January
No Service

WASHFIELD

6th December
3.00 pm Evening Prayer

13th December
11 am Morning Prayer

20th December
11 am Christingle

Christmas Eve
6.00 pm Carol Service

Christmas Day
9.30 am Holy Communion

27th December - See Calverleigh

3rd January
3.00 pm Evening Prayer

10th January - See Loxbeare

17th January
11 am Family Service

24th January
9.30 am Holy Communion
by extension
(to be taken by Anna Hansford)

31st January
11 am Morning Prayer

WITHLEIGH

6th December
4.00 pm Christingle

13th December
9.30 am Morning prayer

20th December
7.30 pm Christmas Praise

Christmas Eve
11.30 pm Holy Communion

27th December - See Calverleigh

3rd January
11 am Family Service

10th January - See Loxbeare

17th January
11 am Holy Communion

24th January
9.30 am Morning Prayer

31st January
9.30 am Morning Prayer

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us. We have really enjoyed these times together!

Our study of the Creed has shown how all the statements that we make when we recite the words of the Creeds together at our Church services, are actually derived from the Bible, and are a summary of what we believe as Christians. So we have looked at the relevant passages in the Bible, and found out why we say what we say, and what impact it should have on our daily lives.

In December we shall start a new series of studies in the first 8 chapters of Mark's Gospel, entitled "The Coming King". Who was Jesus? Was He / is He really a King? Or the King? If so, why did he come in such a humble and secret way? Why is He so powerful, yet opposed? Why do some recognise Him, but not others? What difference does He make to my life? These are some of the questions we shall be looking at in Mark's gospel. These studies will take us up to Easter and beyond!

We would love to welcome more Loxbeare ladies to our group! If you don't live in Loxbeare, why not start a group in your own village? Come along and try ours out first if you are thinking about it!

Marion Roberts

Oakford

The Harvest service and tea on Sunday September 27th and the Harvest supper on Monday 28th were enjoyed by a good number of the villagers. The Church was beautifully decorated with flowers and a good amount of produce in spite of the bad weather. The net profit was £409, to be shared between Tearfund and the church. Our thanks to Mary Summers for organizing the food and to all the helpers, not forgetting all those who supported and took part in a very lively and spirited auction. The jars of Mary's runner bean chutney were much in demand.

Congratulations to Grant and Rebekah Horan on the birth of their daughter, Mathilda Rebekah on July 14th 2009. Mathilda is the granddaughter of Rev'd Ken and Avenel Blyth.

With much regret, we have to record the death of Jim Short, and our sympathy is with all his family.

Steve and Sylvia Manzie of the Red Lion renewed their marriage vows, on October 16th, in a lovely service surrounded by family and friends.

Sue Llewellyn and her sister Jenny are to be congratulated for raising £150 by taking part in the Devon Historic Churches Trust Annual Bike ride which was held in September.

The Remembrance service was well attended at the War memorial and then in the church. Our prayers were for all those who have lost their lives and those still serving in the conflict of war.

Our Christmas celebrations start with the decoration of the Christmas tree in the church on Saturday December 12th at 5pm. Any children who would like to come and help are very welcome. Adults as well if you fancy it!

Afterwards at 6pm, there will be carols around the village Christmas tree outside the shop.

Carol Service with traditional carols and readings at 5.30pm on Sunday December 20th, followed by Mulled wine and hot mince pies.

December 24th at 11.30pm - Holy Communion to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

December 25th at 10am - Family service with carols and readings.

We hope you will be able to join us in these events, and wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

Moorland Club

Friday December 11th Christmas Dinner 6.45pm for 7pm at the village hall.

Thursday January 14th 2010 Fish and Chips supper at 7pm. There will be a cheque presentation to FORCE at this meeting.

Oakford Players

Pantomime 'Robin Hood' at Oakford Village Hall, Thursday December 3rd at 7.30pm, Friday December 4th at 8pm Saturday December 5th Matinee at 2.30pm and evening at 7.30pm.

Tickets - 01398 351525

Rackenford

The Village Carnival was held on September 5th. Well done to all who organized and took part in this - hope you all had a fun evening.

Belated best wishes to Katie Cox, who is still recovering from a car accident; our prayers for a full recovery Katie.

Many congratulations to Fiona & Chris Maddocks on their wedding in our church on September 12th; what beautiful weather. Our best wishes for a long and happy married life.

Thank you to Jenny Sleep, Joan, Fred and Brian Phillips, for all their hard work in cutting the church hedge. This is very much appreciated.

The school children began the Harvest celebrations on October 8th by taking their gifts into the church. This part of the preparations is very important, and all produce is auctioned at the Harvest Supper. The children's church service

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followed the next day when many parents, family & friends, joined the children to give thanks, and enjoy their singing and prayers. Reverend Rose supported the children at this service, and the collection of £107.00 was given to Christian Aid. After the service, several returned to the school to enjoy a lovely ploughman's lunch and delicious cakes provided by the PTFA. The children also had cakes after their school lunch.

Many thanks to everyone who helped to decorate our church so beautifully, it really did look lovely, and thanks to all who gave flowers and produce. On Sunday 11th October, Reverend Rose welcomed the congregation for our Harvest Praise Service. The children's choir played a big part in this service with their singing, bell plates, and Connie and Megan Isaac playing the flute and organ. It was nice to see several faces from the past coming back to Rackenford where they grew up.

Sincere thanks to Rackenford Club for their warm welcome and help, enabling us to hold our 'Harvest Supper' on a smaller scale. but very enjoyable and successful. We were all so pleased to get together again. Many thanks to all the ladies for a lovely supper, and to all who helped in any way, and for all draw prizes. Thank you Annette for running the draw and to all who bought draw tickets and gave donations. Paul Henson got everyone spending well at the auction. Many thanks to him. The Harvest profit was a very rewarding £605.79. Well done everyone and thank you.

Edward and Rose Smith's baby, Matthew, was baptized on Sunday October 18th. We welcome Matthew into the church, and pray for his future. Congratulations to Paula Hallet on becoming a grandmother again – daughter Rhianne and Jason have a daughter Harriet, a sister for Elenor.

We hope that all who ventured out at Hallowe'en had a safe evening and enjoyed their treats!

Best wishes to Sarah Oke who has left Rackenford. Sadly Lisa, Rosie & Lily have left Rackenford; sorry to lose you from our village, but glad you are still part of village life at 'Little Angels', and with children now enjoying school.

Our very best wishes to Dave Blackford who has spent time in hospital and is now recovering at home.

Our Remembrance Service took place at the War Memorial on Sunday November 8th. Many thanks once again to Derek Herniman for taking this sad and moving service for us, as we remembered the men and women who gave their lives for us, in circumstances which are hard for some of us to understand. Sadly we are all too aware of all the lives lost today. It was a cold morning but warming to stand together and remember them. Richard Harris laid the wreath and Cyril Blackford provided music. The collection of £157.50 was given to the British Legion. Thank you to everyone who supported the 'Remembrance Service'.

To anyone who is feeling poorly, lonely or depressed, our love and prayers are with you.

Although it may seem early, this is the only opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a Healthy & Peaceful New Year.

Stoodleigh

The anticipation of Christmas is already in the air - the preparations of puddings and cakes, the excitement of children, all the planning we all take part in, but first we must remember the Autumn events and Harvest.

A good congregation gathered to celebrate the Harvest on Sunday 4th October. The church was filled with colours of every hue, and the Flower Ladies were up to their usual high standard and we thank them. Our thanks also to all who contributed to the Harvest Supper and who gave so generously at the Auction of produce. Peter Broadbent and John Shepherd were the excellent auctioneers who by their efforts and persuasion helped to raise £190 for the Devon Air Ambulance.

A very successful visit to the Westonbirt National Arboretum took place on 19th October, organised by the Garden Club. The Autumn colours and beautiful trees were a delight.

We are grateful to Peter and Christine Broadbent for hosting a convivial evening of Music by the "Con Spirito" group and "Stick the Fiddle", together with a meal. This event was well supported and raised £456 for church funds.

SWAG - On February 10th at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, there will be an evening with Mervyn Stutter. "He is brilliant", The Guardian Newspaper reported. Tickets - adults £6, child £4, family (2+2) £15, available from SWAG members. Watch out for posters.

Carol Singing round the village will take place on Tuesday 22nd December. We shall meet at the village Hall at 6pm and finish at the Club. All are welcome. Please contact Margaret Cuningham (01398 351252) or Jennifer Rowlandson (01398 351402) if you would like a visit from the singers.

Diary Dates

Christmas Fayre - 6.30pm, 4th December in the Village Hall.

Carol Service - 7pm, 20th December

Christmas Bingo - 7.30pm, 21st December in the Village Hall.

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Carol Singing around the village, starting at 6pm 22nd December. Coffee Morning and Photographic Exhibition - 10.30am 12th January at The Old Stable. Bring & Buy stall in aid of Stoodleigh church bells.

Flower Rota - 5 - 12 December Corrinne Miller, 18 December - church decorating for Christmas.

Stoodleigh Club news

Lizzie writes - A Children's Christmas Party with a visit from Father Christmas will be held on Sunday 13th December at 2pm, with fun and games and a free tea. Will parents please ring Lizzie to book places.

Opening Times Christmas & New Year

Christmas Eve - free buffet from 12 to 12. Boxing Day, 8pm - 10pm. Sunday 27th, 12pm - 2pm and 8pm - 10.30pm. New Year's Eve - from 8pm 'til late - lots of fun, and a Chinese Supper if you order before 9pm. New Year's Day - the Club will be closed.

Templeton

Our Christmas Services this year will be held on Christmas Eve. The Toddlers Service will be at 4.00pm. The Carol Service will be at 7.00pm, followed immediately by a shortened Holy Communion.

A grateful thank you to all those who arrange the altar flowers and clean the church. If there is anyone else willing to take a turn (it is just two weeks a year) then please ring Gloria on 01884 254509.

We welcome Jill and Martin Rose who have come to live at Crossmoor, and also Sharon and Mark Dana-Brandt, Jasmine and Amelia, who have recently moved into I, Dry Close. We hope they will be very

happy in their new homes and within the community of Templeton.

The Christmas competitions for Pool, Darts and Skittles will start at the club on December 5th. Anyone wanting to take part should put their names down at the village hall. The new dates for the Country and Western evenings are the 29th and 30th January.

We continue to send our good wishes to all those who are ill and to those who have been in hospital recently. Our thoughts are with you all.

Flower and Cleaning Rota
Frances Saunders (cleaning)

6th - 13th December - Gloria Woollacott
20th - 27th December - Teresa Panchez
3rd - 10th January - Gracie Layton
17th - 24th January - Sara Coffin

Washfield

As we write these notes Christmas will soon be with us. How time flies! Most of us lead such busy lives, so it is often not until the clocks change that we realise winter is creeping up on us. The beautiful bonus of autumnal sunshine has certainly helped.

On Remembrance Sunday a large congregation came to pay their respects to those who have given their lives in past and current conflicts. Mr Maurice Balment read out names of villagers who died in the two World Wars. This service was reverently taken by Mr Frank Smith who has now retired from lay preaching. We will miss you Frank! Thank you for all you have done in the past.

We are pleased to welcome James, Sarah and little Matilda Herniman to the Well House, and wish you much happiness in your new home.

In September we welcomed Emily Kate Webber into the church at her baptism. What a lovely full church for this traditional family event.

Mrs Jenny Parnell, a talented singer, had the honour, with her St John's choir, to recently sing for services at York Minster, where she met the Dean, Keith Jones, a former Dean of Exeter Cathedral.

Our Christingle service will take place at 11am on December 20th in a festive, decorated church, and we hope for a repeat of last year's children's orchestra. Decorating the church and tree will take place on Saturday December 19th from 10.30am.

Mr and Mrs Paul Crease welcomed us to their home for a coffee morning in November, and realised the sum of £216 in aid of the BHF and church funds. They wish to thank everyone for their support. Please come along and support the Christmas Fayre coffee morning at The Cottage on Saturday 5th December from 10.30am - all welcome.

John and Sattie Burton have celebrated the civil ceremony of their marriage; their large village party was a lovely way for everyone to meet Sattie and express sincere congratulations to them both.

We send best wishes to everyone not enjoying good health at this time, particularly Amanda Takle and Barbara Gill. We hope you all escape the seasonal round of coughs, colds and viruses.

The Social Club held its Pumpkin judging competition, the winner being David Bowden. This annual charity event raised £150 for E.L.F. Sylvia has continued to organise this fundraiser for many years (for which we sincerely thank her) but is now bowing out, and thanks everyone who has supported this fun event thus far.

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The Parochial Church Council would like to extend its thanks to the many people who do so much for the church and churchyard throughout the year. Our beautiful church always presents a tidy exterior and a clean, warm and welcoming interior, and it could not look like this, or function effectively, without the team of volunteers diligently working away behind the scenes. We thank each and every one of you, and also the Today magazine distributors, organ players and bell ringers (some of whom travel quite a distance!).

On a final note, we wish all our readers, near and far, a very blessed Christmas and a healthy, happy and peaceful New Year.

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 5th December Christmas Coffee morning 10.30am at The Cottage.

Friday 11th December W I Christmas Party with 3 course meal and usual local entertainment. All welcome – book with any W I member.

Sunday 20th December Christingle Service 11am.

Tuesday 22nd December Carol Singing around village. Meet 6.30pm at hall.

Thursday 24th December Traditional Christmas Eve service of lessons and carols 6pm, followed by coffee and mince pies.

Thursday 21st January 2010 Lunch Club 12noon for 12.30pm (Please note date as not usual Thursday).

Church Altar Flower Rota

December 6th/13th Mrs J McCahon

December 20th/27th Mrs S Tobey

January 3rd/10th Mrs J French

January 17th/24th Mrs M May

January 31st Mrs S Balment

Church Cleaning Rota

December 6th/13th Mrs French

December 20th/27th Mrs Arnold/
Mrs Bicknell

January 3rd/10th Mrs Jones/Mrs Harding

January 17th Mrs Horsey

January 24th/31st Mr & Mrs McCahon

Withleigh

A big thank you to all who contributed to our Harvest weekend in September. We were blessed with a sunny afternoon on Saturday 12th for the outdoor service - thank you Samar for speaking, and helping out with the music. Thank you, also, to all who decorated the church for the Festival service on the Sunday. The produce was all auctioned at the end of our harvest supper on the Monday, the sum raised of £200 being sent to Children's Hospice South-West.

Thank you also to those who helped in our 'autumn clean' of the church.

Saturday 3rd October was our annual walk on Exmoor, kindly organised by David and Carol Hitt. Many thanks to Carol, and also to David who kindly acted as guide as well. Approximately five miles of beautiful landscape were enjoyed by all. To round off the day we met in the Village Hall for jacket potatoes with various fillings, baked for us by Ray & Lynn, followed by desserts from hall committee members, thank- you everyone who prepared food.

The annual Team Skittles evening was held on Friday 23rd October with a good number of teams, this year's contest being hard fought. The victors were Janet and Ron Stacey's team; runners up were Elizabeth and Paul Iliff's team; congratulations to you all.

A rather damp evening did not deter spectators at our annual Bonfire and

Fireworks evening, on Saturday 7th November. A lovely display of Fireworks was put on by Steve, Duncan & Richard; thank-you very much. Again many thanks to Duncan & Sara Kittow for the use of their field. The evening ended in the village hall with soup and hot dogs, thank-you to the cooks.

The resurfacing work to the churchyard paths has resulted in a great improvement to the access to church, from both gates. Thank you Brenda for organising. Inside church, the new frontals, and cloth to the Communion table, have brightened things up considerably.

Hopefully (providing the editor gets on with it!) this issue will have been delivered in time to remind you of our Autumn Fair, to be held in the Village Hall on Saturday 28th November from 11am - 2pm. In addition to the usual stalls, draw, coffee, etc., we will also be serving home-made soup and rolls.

Christmas events begin on Saturday 5th December, with the Children's Party in the Village Hall - please contact Sara for details, tel. 252949. This will be followed by a Bring & Share Christmas Supper at 7.30pm. Everyone is welcome to come and join us, and share in the Christmas cheer; please bring your own drinks.

Our Christingle Service will be on Sunday 6th December at 4pm.

The Christmas Dinner is to be held on Wednesday 16th December, 7.30 for 8pm. This will be a three course meal kindly cooked by Lynn & Ray Judd. The tickets are £12 each. Please book your tickets early from Lynn (253741) or Brenda (252431).

Resulting from the date chosen for the dinner, our Carol Service will now take place on Sunday 20th December at 7.30pm.



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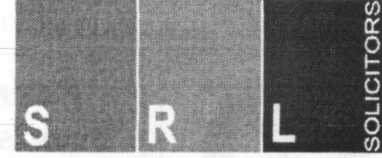
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This is being planned as "Christmas Praise", and promises to be different from previous years. Do try to join us in this celebration of Christ's birth. Donations of non-perishable foods and cleaning items left under the tree, will be given to CHAT.

Dec 20 / 24 CHRISTMAS
 Dec 27)
 Jan 3 / 10) Margaret Gale
 Jan 17 / 24 Jenny Rose
 Jan 31 / Feb 7 Brenda Tucker

The New Year Social evening will be on Saturday 2nd January, please see posters for details, or ring Duncan (252949).

Other forthcoming events

3rd December Annual Christmas Bingo at 7.30pm.
 14th December, Annual Christmas Whist Drive at 7.30pm.

Following the death of one of the Village Hall Trustees, we are looking for someone to act as Trustee for the Hall, along with the three other trustees. If anyone would be willing to stand for election or would like more details please contact Duncan (252949).

Almighty God,
 you taught us through your Son
 that your Church should be one.
 Unite our nine parishes in love for you,
 and for one another,
 that we may work more closely
 in all that we do in your name,
 for the sake of your Son,
 our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
 Amen.

We send our good wishes to Eda Gooding, and to all who are, or have recently been unwell, and wish you a speedy return to good health.

FLOWER ROTA

Dec 6 / 13 Sara Kittow

THE BROOK

*In the background
 the brook is running,
 chuckling and scurrying,
 tilting the pebbles.*

*Digging and breaking,
 whispering and waking,
 the secret heart.*

*There is laughter in the water.
 Clear, cold,
 it winds sparkling
 through the moors of fear,
 refreshing my soul.*

*And the song beckons my spirit,
 it seals its beauty into my head.
 Do I follow the path of the water,
 Or turn away instead?*

Jenny Rose

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