



TODAY

The Parish
Magazine
for the
Exe Valley
Mission
Community

February / March 2010

Price 25p

The Love of God! – In us?

How quickly we move from the Christmas season to thinking about Spring – and Valentine's day will soon be with us with its version of love seen as a romantic feeling of euphoria. Yet as I write this I have just been able to drive up our lane for the first time in 8 days thanks to a local farmer's tractor removing the 3ft. snow drifts yesterday.

And it is in this time of snow, ice & freezing temperatures, with local people snow bound in their own homes, that we have seen examples of profoundly real love. For love as the Bible sees it has far more to do with "giving" than with how we feel or with what we can get – and giving is what our rural communities have been experiencing over these snow bound days. So many in our communities have been only too pleased to offer help with shopping, giving lifts, even cooking for each other so that those who are able to do more have been able to encourage and bring help to those for whom the snow is less than fun. What is it in the human make up that enables us to offer help to our neighbour even when our inclination is to stay inside and keep warm? Why should I feel that I want to offer

help to someone when it is simply not in my interests to do so?

In the Bible's creation account we read that God said ".....let us make man in our image, in our likeness..." and it is this image of God which is embodied in each human being which enables us to show love, not only to those we like, but also to any whom we perceive to be in need. In God's image we are not just animals, motivated by our own genes and instincts alone (although of course these are strongly within us) but we are also capable of showing acts of incredible selflessness whether on the grand scale of a bomb disposal soldier in Afghanistan or by driving down snow covered roads to Tiverton to get shopping for a less able person in our community.

For God is a "Giving" God and the Christian Gospel is a Gospel of unrestricted love by a God who has no need to forgive and love each one of us – but who chooses so to do because it is in His eternal nature. The Apostle John sums this up succinctly when he writes "this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins". Now there is an act of

generous, unconditional, self giving love! And so at Christmas we celebrated the birth of Jesus who is called "Emmanuel - God with us". On Good Friday we remember that immeasurable act of self giving love on The Cross; and we look forward to Easter day when we celebrate the triumph of love over sin & death. We are challenged to submit to the one who freely offers each of us His gift of unconditional love. We can of course ignore Him, and many choose to do so, but let us remember that true love stems from the very nature of the God who is love. Perhaps we have seen a glimpse of this God given gift of love demonstrated in the community during this time of the "Big Freeze".

John Roberts

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.

Copy Deadline for the April / May issue - Tuesday 9th March

**THE EXE VALLEY
MISSION COMMUNITY**

Calverleigh, Cruwys Morchard,
Loxbeare, Oakford, Rackenford,
Stoodleigh, Templeton, Washfield
and Withleigh

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TEAM VICAR Part time (Sun, Wed, Thurs)

The Rev'd Andrew Rose

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*Enquiries regarding Baptisms,
Weddings, Funerals, Memorials in
the churchyard - please contact the
Team Vicar*

NON STIPENDIARY MINISTER

The Rev'd John Roberts

East Sidborough, Loxbeare,
Tiverton EX16 8DA.
Tel: (01884) 256302

READER

Mrs Anna Hansford

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

Where do we go from here?

No doubt, most of you will have heard that the internal advert on the Diocesan website, for a new rector for the Exe Valley, drew a complete blank. Although disappointing, this did not come as any great surprise, since Archdeacon Penny had advised the churchwardens that this might well be the outcome.

And so, a decision was awaited from the Diocese as to when the post could be advertised nationally. The bishop's staff met during week commencing 11th January, and, just at the time we were due to go to print, we received the news that the post will now be advertised nationally. However, this still means that the arrival of a new rector will not happen for several months yet.

Meanwhile, it is gratifying that, in addition to Andrew, John and Anna, we have so many within our parishes who, having been trained in recent years, are able to help lead our Sunday services, and this must surely be an encouragement to any who might apply for the post of rector. But we also owe a great debt of gratitude to all the Readers and (largely retired) clergy who willingly help us maintain our pattern of Sunday worship across the Mission Community. Without their help, producing the monthly service rotas would be a real nightmare.

Please continue to pray for our parish representatives, all who are involved in the selection process, and all who lead our services week by week.

Paul Iliff

Worshiping together..

Washfield played host to our Mission Community Advent service on 29th November.

The church was full, and the service was led by Anna Hansford, the preacher being the former Archdeacon of Barnstaple, the Rev. Trevor Lloyd. Members from the other churches participated with the readings and singing. Coffee was served after the main service which was, in turn, followed by a shortened service of Holy Communion.

During the morning, Samar was presented with a cheque, in appreciation of all the hard work she has done over the last 2½ years in her role as youth worker. We will miss you, Samar, and ask that God will bless you now, and in the years to come.

The Mission Community service of Holy Communion on 27th December was held at Calverleigh, with Bishop Bob presiding. The church was full, once again, and the bishop's sermon was as inspiring as ever. Calverleigh are to be commended on the standard to which the church had been decorated – it looked stunning!

..and meeting together

As a result of the extreme (by our standards) weather during the first half of January, the decision was taken to postpone the 'Body Language' course until a later date.

The lent course, this year, will begin with an Ash Wednesday service at Templeton on 17th February, beginning

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at 7.30 pm. The course itself will take place in Withleigh village hall on Friday evenings – 26th February, 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th March, beginning with soup and bread and cheese at 7 pm. For those not wishing to share in the supper, the study part of the evening will begin at about 7.30 pm. The Agape meal will be on Maundy Thursday – 1st April; details to be decided.

Fish Club

We finished the year with a Christmas party. All the children had fun playing games, and adults and children all sat down together to enjoy a lovely tea, which included jelly and ice cream. At our Christmas party, we said goodbye to Samar, who has been a big part of Fish Club and Holiday Club during her time as Youth Worker in the Exe Valley. She was very popular with the children and helpers at Fish Club. We shall miss her, but we wish her well in her chosen career.

Thank you to Shirley Goldsworthy and Myrtle Webber who help every week, and to Alison Webber who comes once a month to do a craft activity.

We are very grateful to Anna Hansford, who has very kindly volunteered to join the team of leaders.

If you, or anyone you know, has any time to spare on a Friday afternoon from 3.30 to 5.15, and would like to help, I would love to hear from you.

The start of the spring term has been delayed due to Calverleigh Village Hall being closed due to a burst water pipe. Hopefully we shall be back by the time you read this.

The Fish Club is open to all children from the Exe Valley Mission Community and surrounding area. If you know of any children between the ages of 4 and 11 who would like to join us, please let me know.

This term we shall be learning about God's Creation, through bible stories, songs, activities and crafts.

Any enquiries, contact: Cindy Trick: Tel 01363 866621

Sorry. I wouldn't know how to

Have you been asked to join the PCC at your Church? Or to take over as its Secretary, Treasurer – or even Churchwarden? What would the job involve? How vital is it to the community? What experienced help is on hand if problems arise?

I recently attended the first of a series of free training days run by the Diocese for

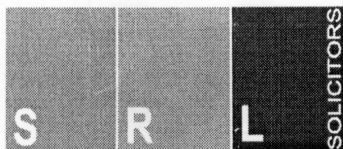
NEW CREATION NEWS – February 2010

We always try to offer a good choice of books at New Creation and to help us to continue this provision we have become a Premier Stockist for CWR. This means we will have a selection of books changed every two months. Some of the titles in stock at the moment are:- The Highway Code Books – Marriage, Parenting and Happiness; What to say when People Need Help; Praying through the Scriptures; and for Children, 50 Craziest and 50 Weirdest Bible Stories; Easter Swallows. So do remember to ask about new stock available when you come in.

Having mentioned Easter, there will be books for Lent and Easter in store, along with a variety of Easter cards. There are always those with lovely spring flowers and the baby ducklings and chicks, all to help us remember the renewal of life brought to us by the Lord Jesus. It will be a particularly welcome way to greet friends and relatives after the long dark days of winter this year. Shrove Tuesday falls on 16th February, and pancakes will be on the menu in the Coffee Shop.

Fairtrade Fortnight commences on 22nd February. Although we realise it is important in the present climate to support local producers and local outlets, sometimes we can achieve both. Many fair-traded items are not produced in this country, but may well be stocked by small local outlets such as ourselves. Traidcraft goods are of a very high quality, and generally at competitive prices.

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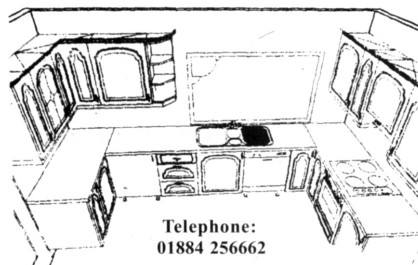
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those setting up or running Mission Communities that answered these questions – and introduced me to the experts on hand. Excellent! Why not give it a try?

Martin Hansford

PARISH ROUND-UP

Calverleigh

We wish everyone a very Happy, Peaceful and healthy New year.

Some of the Presentation Sisters paid us a visit recently when they came to visit the Church again. It was only a short visit but we were very pleased that they were able to join us for coffee and refreshments before they continued their journey to Dorset.

Our Annual Fayre was once again a great success. The crowds gathered soon after the opening, they shopped and got many bargains from the laden stalls. There were also draws, competitions and children's activities. Our "Chefs for the day" managed to supply about 90 hot meals at lunchtime. Coffee, teas, filled rolls, cakes and biscuits were available from when the door opened at 10.30. A hearty thanks to all who manned the stalls, supplied and cooked the lunches, made coffee and tea, all who gave so generously to stalls, draws and donations, and of course our thanks to all of you that supported us. Without your support we could not have raised the magnificent sum of £1,309.50 which will be used toward the new lighting and wiring for the Church.

The 1st December was a very sad day for us all as we heard of the sad loss of Carole Hayes. Our love, thoughts and prayers go to Keith, Amy, Lisa, Carole's mum June, and all the family. She is sadly missed by us all. Carole was laid to rest in our Churchyard, the Church where she was a regular worshipper, on December 10th. The Church and Churchyard were full to overflowing with over 400 people wishing to pay their

respect to a much loved wife, mother, granny, daughter, and caring friend to us all.

We hope that you have all managed to keep reasonably free from all the winter ailments, and keep warm in the recent freezing conditions.

Alison Webber has been in hospital and is now home making a very good recovery. Maureen Wade was a victim of the ice just before Christmas. She fell and broke her wrist. Hope you are now on the mend Maureen.

Just before Christmas a new baby arrived at Calverleigh Mill. Peter and Rachael Norris presented Gemma and Joseph with a little brother, Jack William Peter, who weighed in at 9½ pounds. Congratulations to you all.

The Church was once again beautifully decorated for Christmas by the ladies, a credit to you all as it has been much admired by many people from this and other Parishes.

Our Christingle service was led by Nikki Goldsworthy, and what a great success it was, and the Church was nearly full. Our thanks go to the Goldsworthy family once again for all their hard work in organising this service. Thank you Doreen for your kind donation of the Christingles, and thank you to those who made them. Tea and a variety of cakes were enjoyed at the end of the service.

Our Carol Service was held on the 23rd December, led by Anna. Our thanks go to Anna, Aubrey and Julie for putting the service together, and all the readers. It was a lovely service and tea, coffee and mince pies at the close of the service made it a perfect Christmas get-together.

Christmas day dawned very cold and icy, but we had a large congregation for our 9.30 Christmas Communion led by Andrew. We were very surprised that so many people braved the treacherous conditions to join us, but they all arrived safely and returned home safely to be with families and friends for Christmas.

It was good to have Bishop Bob with us in our Church, the week after Christmas, for our Mission Community Communion service which again was a great success.

In the recent freezing weather some of our neighbours have been shopping, giving lifts, and clearing snow and ice from driveways and paths, for those who are not so young and agile. A big thank you to all who have helped; it is very much appreciated and it reminds us of the good old days when everyone helped each other, so some good comes out of adversity.

The next P C C meeting is on February 9th at Blue Cedars at 7.30pm.

Cruwys Morchard

Update on the screen restoration

The scaffolding was taken down in time for our carol service and the cleaning of the screen has now been completed. The reconstruction of the screen and panelling has been delayed because of the bad weather, but hope that it will soon be finished.

Despite the icy weather, the Christmas Carol and Christingle Service was well attended. Thank you to all who brought gifts for CHAT, they were extremely grateful for your donations, having distributed hampers for Christmas the previous week, their basic stocks were very much depleted, so they were very pleased to have more to give to those who find themselves homeless and without food and the basics they need to look after themselves. Thank you to all who helped make the Christingles, decorated the church and provided the refreshments, which were much appreciated on such a cold day. Thank you also to Nellie, the choir and the bell ringers and all who helped with the service.

We send our prayers and condolences to the families of Philip Vinnicombe and Violet Rice who passed away in November.

We send Congratulations to Jill and Chris Cousins on the birth of Miles, and to Joanna and Stuart Biss on the birth of Madison, granddaughter to Anne Saunders and Bernard Hallett.

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We welcomed into our church for baptism on Sunday December 5th, Tilly-Rose Winterton and Rose Floyd.

We send best wishes for a speedy recovery to all who have been unwell or have had a stay in hospital recently, thinking especially of those who have had accidents in the icy weather.

Flower Festival. May 29th, 30th & 31st, 2010. There will be a meeting at the church on **Saturday 13th February at 2.30pm.** The theme will be 'Hymns, or Stories from the Bible'. Anyone interested in helping in any way with this event, please do come along to the meeting or speak to Pauline Guscott or Cindy Trick.

Tuesday 16th February – Ladies Committee 7.30pm at Judith Taylor's Home.

Saturday 27th February. Cruwys Morchard YFC Bingo at the parish hall, eyes down 8pm.

Friday 5th March 7.30 for 8pm. Men of Morchard at the parish hall. Bar & draw. Tickets £7 including supper, on sale from 1st February, from Mary (01363 83005), Marilyn (01363 860253) or email cmparishhallmary@btinternet.com

Sat 27th March Bingo half of the profit will go to Breast Cancer Care. 7.30 for 8pm. Dinners for full house. 200 Club Draw.

Friday 16th April. Concert in parish hall. Local talent. Refreshments, Draw. Ring Len & Cissy for further details or if you would like to take part (01363 866578).

Flower and Cleaning Rota

February 1st & 8th – Sonia Notley

February 15th & 22nd – Denyse Standen
(Lent - no flowers)

March 1st & 8th – Lorna Warren
& Margaret Southwood

March 15th & 22nd – Carol Chisholm
& Jackie Mitchell

March 29th – Decorators for Easter

April 5th & 12th – Sue & Pauline Guscott

Stove Rota

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)

Bell Ringing News

The past twelve months have seen a very heartening and exciting bell ringing revival at Cruwys Morchard, and we now have eleven ringers who are able to ring rounds and simple call changes. We have regular practices and have rung for every Sunday service for the past few months.

During the year we decided to join the guild of Devonshire ringers which means that we can take part in activities such as the raising and lowering day at Huntsham, which some of us attended. We are also made welcome at the branch practice towers of Bampton and St Peters, Tiverton.

Two groups of us enjoyed visiting Exeter Cathedral for their open practice in September and October.

The Bampton ringers kindly gave us an old set of mufflers, which we used on the bells for Remembrance Sunday with an interesting effect.

Our last ring of the year was for our Christmas Eve service at 10pm. We are now looking forward to making lots more progress in 2010.

Nellie

Loxbeare

At the time of writing we are in the midst of the big freeze. We pray that it hasn't caused too much disruption to people, especially the elderly and infirm, and hope that the much warmer weather

will be with us before too long, and the bitter cold will be a distant memory.

Congratulations to Les and Liz Heywood on the arrival on Christmas Day of their new baby daughter, Evie Jane, a beautiful little sister for Alice, and a second granddaughter for Linda and Gerald.

We send our love and prayers to all who are unwell, especially to Ruth Partridge who was rushed to hospital on Christmas Day. We are happy to report that Ruth is now at home convalescing - also to Eda Gooding, recovering after a major operation at Derriford, Steve Troake, Godfrey Bell, and also Donna Hibbert recovering from shingles - we wish them and any others who are unwell a speedy recovery.

Ruth and Cecil Partridge would like to thank everyone for their prayers, kindness and concern during and since Ruth's illness.

It was with great sadness that on the 1st December we learned of the death of Carole Hayes who occasionally came along with Jean to worship at Loxbeare Church. Carole was loved by so many. We send Keith and family our love, prayers and deepest sympathy on their tragic loss.

We also extend our love, prayers and deepest sympathy to Katy, Phil and Peter Barlow on the sad loss of Katy's father just before Christmas; a grand old gentleman who still drove down to Southampton for visits to his family, and, on occasions, also worshipped at our church.

The Men's Working Party spent two half days working on the churchyard, pruning and tidying, and cleaning the

Continued on Page 8 ⇨

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4th Tuesday - East Sidborough

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MISSION COMMUNITY EVENTS

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

17th February
7.30 pm at **Templeton**

LENT COURSE

At **Withleigh** village hall
Fridays at 7 pm

26th February

5th March

12th March

19th March

26th March

AGAPE MEAL

Maundy Thursday

1st April
(details to follow)

OAKFORD

7th February

9.30 am Holy Communion

14th February

9.30 am Morning Prayer

21st February

9.30 am Holy Communion

28th February

9.30 am Family Service

7th March

9.30 am Holy Communion

14th March

Mothering Sunday

9.30 am Family Service

21st March

9.30 am Holy Communion

28th March

9.30 am Morning Prayer

RACKENFORD

7th February

11.15 am Morning Prayer

14th February

11.15 am Holy Communion
and baptism

21st February

11.15 am Family Service

28th February

9.30 am Morning Prayer

7th March

11.15 am Morning Prayer

14th March

Mothering Sunday

11.15 am Family Service

21st March

11.15 am Holy Communion

28th March

9.30 am Morning Prayer

STOODLEIGH

7th February

11 am Morning Prayer
With Baptism

14th February

11 am Holy Communion

21st February

6.30 pm Evening Prayer

28th February

9.30 am Holy Communion

7th March

11 am Morning Prayer

14th March

Mothering Sunday

11 am Holy Communion

21st March

6.30 pm Evening Prayer

28th March

9.30 am Holy Communion

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CALVERLEIGH

7th February
11.15 am Morning Prayer

14th February
9.30 am Holy Communion

21st February
11.15 am Family Service

28th February
3 pm Evening Prayer

7th March
11.15 am Morning Prayer

14th March
Mothering Sunday
11.15 am Family Service

21st March
9.30 am Holy Communion

28th March
3 pm Evening Prayer

CRUWYS MORCHARD

7th February
11 am Morning Prayer

14th February
6.30 pm Evening Prayer

21st February
9.30 am Holy Communion

28th February
11 am Family Service
with baptism

7th March
11 am Morning Prayer

14th March
Mothering Sunday
11 am Family Service

21st March
9.30 am Holy Communion

28th March
6.30 pm Evening Prayer

LOXBEARE

7th February
9.30 am Family Communion

14th February
11 am Family Service

21st February
6.30 pm Evening Praise

28th February
11 am Family Service
- Tear Fund -

7th March
9.30 am Family Communion

14th March
Mothering Sunday
11 am Family Service

21st March
6.30 pm Evening Praise

28th March
11 am Family Service

TEMPLETON

7th February
9.30 am Holy Communion

21st February
11 am Family Service

28th February
11 am Morning Prayer

7th March
9.30 am Holy Communion

14th March
Mothering Sunday
11 am Family Service

28th March
11 am Morning Prayer

WASHFIELD

7th February
3 pm Evening Prayer

14th February
11 am Morning Prayer

21st February
11 am Family Service

28th February
9.30 am Holy Communion

7th March
3 pm Evening Prayer

14th March
Mothering Sunday
11 am Family Service

21st March
11 am Morning Prayer

28th March
9.30 am Holy Communion

WITHLEIGH

7th February
11 am Family Service

14th February
9.30 am Morning Worship

21st February
11 am Holy Communion

28th February
9.30 am Morning Worship

7th March
11 am Morning Worship

14th March
Mothering Sunday
9.30 am Family Service

21st March
11 am Holy Communion
by extension
(to be taken by Anna Hansford)

28th March
9.30 am Morning Worship

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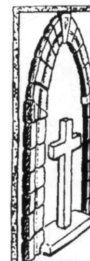
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roof gutters, and hope to meet again to weed and clean the paths. Thank you to all who came along and helped.

On Sunday 6th December, Natalie Husk from the Leprosy Mission came to speak to us at the Family Communion Service. Natalie gave a very enthusiastic, informative talk on the Mission's work. The collection and donations amounted to £292, and this has been sent to the Leprosy Mission to help with their work.

The following Sunday was the Christingle Service, again well attended, and taken by Linda, and enjoyed by all who came along. Thank you to all who helped on the Saturday to make the Christingles, which were lit for the singing of the last hymn at the service.

Carol would like to thank everyone who filled shoeboxes for the Operation Christmas Child.

Once again the Loxbeare and Calverleigh Carol Singers sang around the two parishes. We were sorry that the cold, frosty and icy roads prevented us from singing at some of our usual houses. In spite of the bad weather we were able to raise £682 to be equally divided between the Parkinson Society and C.H.A.T. Thank you to everyone for their generous donations and warming food, drinks and chocolates to help us on our way. A special thank you to the host families who entertained the singers to delicious suppers on each of the three nights - Jean Antonia and Richard on the first night, Michael and Claudine on the second night, when Michael went so far as to clear the lane of snow to enable the cars to get up to North Sidborough, and to Myrtle on Christmas Eve. Thank you all for your kind hospitality, and last but not least to the Carol Singers for braving the cold and giving of their time.

Thank you to all who helped to decorate the church so beautifully for Christmas. The Carol Service was well attended,

when once again parishioners read the lessons, telling the story of our Saviour's birth. The young people took part with a poem, and Pauline played the organ for the carols. The service was taken by Andrew. Coffee and mince pies were served in church after the service. The collection of £155 was for Children's Hospice Southwest. Christmas gifts placed beneath the tree during the first carol were later taken to a local nursing/residential home for the elderly, when a group of singers sang carols to the residents.

The Christmas Day Family Communion Service was well attended, yet again in spite of the very cold weather and slippery roads. John led the service, which was enjoyed by all, and Marion played the organ.

Carol and Eda would like to thank everyone who supported the Christmas Bingo, gave prizes and helped in any way. £93 was raised in aid of Loxbeare Hall.

December. Loxbeare Ladies enjoyed their Christmas meal at the Rose and Crown, when they were joined by husbands and friends. Thank you, Sue, for arranging a lovely evening.

January. We met at Sue and Steve's to arrange the programme for 2010.

February 1st visit to the Pantomime. Please phone 881209 for details.

March 10th Charity meal at Anne's. Please phone 253013 to book.

Sue and Steve would like to thank Hedley, Laura and Evette for all their hard work in clearing the road of snow.

Easter Bingo - 29th March at Loxbeare Parish Hall. Doors open 7 p.m., eyes down at 7.30 p.m. In aid of Hall funds.

you to all the children who helped to decorate the Christmas tree in the church on the 19th December. Afterwards, many villagers gathered by the Christmas tree outside the shop to sing carols when the tree lights were switched on. Everyone enjoyed mulled wine provided by Chris and Kelvin Holdom. Brenda Burrows, who provided some delicious sausage rolls, organized some of us to make mince pies as well, all of which made a very enjoyable occasion even better. On December 20th the carol service was held in the church, which looked lovely in the candlelight with all the beautiful window decorations. Thank you to everyone who made them and especially to Bridget Fitter for her lovely arrangement by the pulpit. Our thanks also to Sue Llewelyn for providing the mulled wine, Dawn Williams for the candlelit votives, and mince pies made by other members of the church. Not many people could get to the Midnight service because of the icy conditions, but a sterling effort was made by Andrew Rose, who took the service, and Jill Timmins who played the organ. About forty adults and children braved the weather to attend the Christmas day service of readings and carols.

Although a few weeks ahead, please note that, as March 14th is Mothering Sunday, a Family service will be held. The Morning Prayer will take place on March 28th.

The Moorland Club

As the January meeting had to be cancelled, the fish and chip supper will now take place at the next meeting on February 11th at the earlier time of 7pm. A cheque presentation will be made to FORCE. Penny will also have her 'unwanted gift' stall at this meeting.

March 11th 7.30pm Shillingford Ladies will be joining us for 'Nursery rhymes on the Catwalk' and a 'Bring and Share'

Oakford

The Christmas services went well in spite of icy weather. Firstly a big thank



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supper. There will also be a 'Bring and Buy' stall and a competition for 'recycled' jewellery - to be made from whatever you wish.

Notice of events

Oakford Village Hall, Friday 12th February, 8pm – Country Music with Roger Calomie, Tickets £10, including a fork supper.

PANCAKE RACE February 20th in the village street! Details later.

Rackenford

Many thanks to Stuart Warne for continuing to put up the flag for Remembrance Sunday and other important occasions, and for keeping our church clock ticking.

Eventually the 'Bonfire' did take place on the common, but bad weather once again played its part in the hold-up. Many thanks to everyone for all their hard work in making sure it did take place.

A belated welcome to the family who have moved into 1 The Villas and also to the Smith family who have moved into 'Baters'. We hope you will enjoy village life here.

Our deepest sympathy to Keith Hayes, Lisa, Amy, June and all the family on the death of Carole. You are all very much in our thoughts. The village was saddened to hear of the death of Norman Carter on December 15th. Norman had been in hospital a while and sadly died after returning home. Norman's funeral took place at our church on December 30th where a full church of family and friends gathered to remember him. Our deepest sympathy to Elaine, Shaun, Mark, grandchildren and families, at this difficult time.

Congratulations to Connie Isaac on passing her Grade 6 music exam, Megan Isaac on her Grade 5, and Nell Baillie on Grade 2. Well done girls, you are doing so well.

Rackenford School children presented their end of term concert, 'The Nutcracker', on December 16th, once again to a full house, having already done an afternoon performance. All the programmes were designed by the children. The acting, singing and costumes were wonderful.

At the end of the concert Mrs Buckley thanked all the children for doing so well, and said 'Goodbye' to Beryl Coleman after 23 years of working at the school. The children presented Mrs Coleman with several gifts and their own kind words, remembering all the things Beryl has done for the school over the years. Beryl was also presented with vouchers from the PTFA. The following evening, many familiar faces from over the years gathered with staff, friends and governors at the school for a surprise evening for Beryl. It was a very lovely, but at times emotional, evening with everyone remembering their time with Beryl, and wishing her well. Several gifts were presented to her, along with a book of memories, signatures and even a song (!!!) from present staff, for all the jobs she has undertaken over the years. A bring and share supper was enjoyed by all. Beryl will be greatly missed for her fun and laughter as well as all her hard work. Our very best wishes to you for a happy and enjoyable retirement.

Many thanks to those who decorated the church so beautifully for the festive season - Muriel, John & Jenny. The lovely tree was given by the Paxton family, and decorated by Tim, James and Herbert. On December 18th the children lead the Carol Service at the church, beautifully dressed in their appropriate costumes, as they told the Christmas

story and sang their carols to a full congregation of family and friends. Rev. Andrew Rose accompanied the children, and thanked them. The children took the collection which will go to 'Shelter'. After the service, everyone was welcomed to return to the school for mince pies and a cuppa. As usual, the children enjoyed many days of fun, with Christmas Dinner and treats and a party.

The Carol Service on Christmas Eve was a great success, with a full church, and taken by Rev. A Fensome from Tiverton. Members of the congregation read the lessons, the choir sang well and everyone enjoyed singing their favourite carols. This was followed by a short communion service.

We send our very best wishes to Brian Peace who, at the time of going to print, is recovering in Exeter Hospital. A thank you note from Brian has been put on the shop notice board. Best wishes to Jane Wood after her accident and to son Harry who has injured himself during sledging in the recent snow. We hope all of the village children are enjoying their time off school, and have had fun in the snow!!

A thank you to all the wonderful volunteers at the Village Shop for all the hard work they do which benefits us all. There are so many things to help everyone, and nothing seems too much trouble.

A Happy and Healthy New Year to everyone.

Stoodleigh

It was lovely to have the church almost completely full for the Carol service on Sunday 20th December, despite the bitterly cold weather and icy road conditions. Those attending really appreciated the warmth of the church, created by the beautiful flower



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arrangements, the Christmas tree, candles, decorations and the seasonal refreshments. The service maintained a flowing balance of music, readings, poems and play, and was ably led by the Rev'd John Roberts. Our thanks to all who worked towards making this such a rewarding service. Special thanks to the choir, strengthened by friends from outside the village, and soloists - Jenny Parnell, Jennifer Rowlandson and Martin Kent. Sadly, because of deteriorating road conditions, the Christmas Day service had to take the form of Morning Prayer, instead of Holy Communion, as the Minister booked to take the service could not risk the journey from North Devon.

A successful Christmas Fair raised £935 for Church funds. Thank you to all who supported this event.

Church Bells - an update

Fund raising for the Stoodleigh Church Bells continues apace. £4,000 has been raised in Stoodleigh. Many thanks to everyone especially Jennifer Fraser (coffee morning £110), the Carol Singers (who braved sub-zero temperatures to raise £120), and Jennifer Rowlandson (cards and sponsored walks!). £16,000 has been promised or already donated by the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund, Heathcoat Trust, Viscount Amory's Charitable Trust, Allchurches Trust, Elmgrant Trust and Uffculme Environmental, and we are very grateful to them all for their support. Further applications are pending, and it is hoped that the halfway mark will be reached soon for the £50,000 required. It is now possible, thanks to Edward and Richard Hill, to ring four bells for a short time on specific festivals, but the major work is still required to restore the bell-frame and all six bells. There will be no let up in fund raising efforts! £170 was raised at a coffee morning hosted by Jennifer at the Old Stable on 12th January. Thanks to

the many people who attended in spite of the ice and snow.

We have no names on the Church Flower Rota for February. Please ring Eileen Fewings if you would like to help (01398 351328).

Congratulations to Bradley Isaac whose poem entitled "The Wind" is to be published in a children's poetry book. Bradley's poem was chosen from those written by 65,000 children who have been writing poetry in their schools.

SWAG

Using the Community Bus, a group visited Plymouth on 18th November. Some spent an informative few hours in the Aquarium before joining the "shopping group" in Drake's Circus.

Tickets for the Mervyn Stutter evening (see leaflets enclosed) are obtainable from SWAG members who are Pat Aplin, Margaret Cunningham, Jan Fraser, Alistair Morison, Annette Penwill, Fred Robinson, Tricia Summers and David Wotton.

In prospect for 2010: Dartmoor, Tarka Line, Glassworks and Sheepdog Trials.

We are sad to report the death of Margaret Lander who, with her husband Chris, lived in Stoodleigh for many years before moving to Minehead. Many people will have fond memories of Margaret who joined in so many village activities. She was President of the Stoodleigh W.I., a member of the Bus Committee, and an inspirational organiser of the annual Produce Show. Nothing was ever too much trouble for her. Her generosity, kindness and friendliness will be remembered by all who knew her. We send our sympathy to Chris and all the family.

Stoodleigh Club News

Lizzie writes -

Our children's Christmas party was greatly enjoyed by many, thanks to Uncle Tiger's entertainment and the visit from Father Christmas. The usual Christmas and New Year's Eve activities were well supported. During the bad weather, the Club came alive as many people called in for a break from sledging and snowballing. The warm open fire and hot food were well appreciated. Some people of all ages were caught on "Candid Camera" sledging on inflatables in the snow! Great fun! Remember we can help organise all sorts of functions. Just give us a ring on 01398 351357.

Lizzie, Mike and family wish you all a Happy New Year!

Templeton

Continual snow and ice has brought the village together, and those of us without 4x4s are really grateful for the help so generously given.

It was frosty and bitterly cold on Christmas Eve when we held our Toddlers Service. The children made sheep to hang on their Christmas trees, having heard the story of the shepherds visit to Jesus in the stable. They also made paperchains to add to the beautiful adult decorations in the church. The village gathered together to celebrate the birth of Christ at the Carol Service that evening - a wonderful start to Christmas

Returning to November, before winter really got a hold, the Bonfire and Firework party was a great success. Many thanks to Reg Coffin and Mark Stone for their organisation and hard work, also to all those people who built the bonfire; we think it was the best so far. Ladies Night went well - an enjoyable evening that raised £70 for the

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hall funds. Our annual competitions were held on Christmas Eve at the Social Club following the Carol Service. The winners and runners up were as follows- Mens Darts - Jake Pancherz Martin Saunders; Ladies Darts - Monica Salisbury, Teresa Pancherz; Pool - Mike Pancherz, Peter Withers; Ladies Skittles - Gloria Woollacott, Monica Salisbury; Mens Skittles - Eric Kingdom Jake Pancherz; Table Tennis - Martin Rose Tom Pancherz

Sadly Mrs Dorothy Bell died at the end of the year. She had lived at The Beeches for a long time. On 9th January Joan Greenfield of Thornes Farm, the mother of Val Greenfield, died peacefully at the age of 95. We send our condolences to both Val and Godfrey.

The good news is that Martin and Brenda Hill have celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary, and Sue Tout her 40th Birthday, both in November. More recently Peter Withers and Jackie Freemantle have become engaged. Our warm congratulations to them all.

Flower and Cleaning Rota

- Sara Coffin - cleaning and flowers
31st January - 7th February
- Gloria Woollacott - cleaning and flowers
14th February - 21st February
- Francis Saunders - cleaning only
28th February - 7th March
- Monica Salisbury - cleaning only
14th March - 21st March
- Philida Strong - cleaning and flowers
28th March - 4th April

Washfield

We were pleased to host the Mission Community Advent Sunday Service (see article on page 2).

The church was beautifully adorned for the Christingle service, taken by Anna and led by the children who formed their own orchestra, leading the singing and readings before distributing the Christingles. The cash collection of £73.15 was donated to The Children's Society. Thank you to everyone who made the church look so festive and for making the Christingles.

On Christmas Eve the church was full to overflowing for the service of Carols and

Lessons, which was led by Frank, followed by coffee and mince pies. The Christmas Day service was taken by Anna after bad weather prevented the Rev. Hugh Pollock from reaching us.

We send our love and deepest sympathy to Dorothy Turner and family on the sad and sudden death of Wallace. Wally and Dorothy had resided in Washfield for over sixty-five years, having celebrated several milestone anniversaries. Wally loved his garden – a great perfectionist. We are so sorry to hear that Dorothy is now in hospital – we wish her a full and speedy recovery.

We also extend this to her granddaughter Amanda Takle who has been very unwell, and to everyone coping with illness; you are all remembered in our prayers.

It is with much sadness that we hear of the death of Nick Woollard. Nick was the son-in-law of Peter and Anne Moore, the long-term partner of Joanna, and the father of little Lily. Nick had been ill for sometime. Nick and Joanna were married in St Julia's Hospice, Hayle on December 30th. Our heartfelt love, thoughts and sympathy are with Joanna, Lily, Peter, Anne and all the families.

Anne sends apologies for having to cancel Lunch Club at the moment. Members will be notified the date of the next Lunch Club.

Thank you to Jeanne and Garth Jones for hosting their annual Christmas coffee morning at which £150 was raised towards the church. They would like to thank everyone for their support.

How generous the villagers have been. Two parties of carol singers also raised great sums of money for their chosen charities. The village party raised £142.50 for CHAT, and the Courtney Cottage and upward group raised £140 for the Children's Hospice South West. Owing to adverse weather, other promises are yet to come in.

Following our Sunday Remembrance Service, the cash collection of £95.50 was sent to the Royal British Legion.

The Social Garden Club meet again on March 2nd at 8pm.

The W.I. Christmas Party was its usual success with a good meal, entertainment and company.

Church Flower Rota

- Feb 7th Mrs S Balment
- Feb 14th Mrs French
- Feb 21st/28th/Mar 7th/14th/21st/28th LENT
- Apr 4th/11th Mrs Jones

Church Cleaning Rota

- Feb 7th/14th Mrs French
- Feb 21st/28th Mrs Arnold/Mrs Bicknell
- Mar 7th/14th Mrs Jones/Mrs Harding
- Mar 21st Mrs Horsey
- Mar 28th/Apr 4th Mr and Mrs McCahon

Withleigh

The Village Hall was nearly full when the Men of Morchard came to entertain us on Saturday 14th November. The evening was full of song and laughter, and much enjoyed by everyone. We were also well fed with a Bangers and Mash Supper. Thanks to Lynn & Ray, Linda & Michael for decorating the hall and providing the supper and to everyone who helped to serve it out.

The Autumn Fair was a great success, in spite of the cold day, perhaps the reason the soup and rolls went down very well, and £495 was raised for church funds. A great effort by all concerned.

The Children's Christmas Party was once again thoroughly enjoyed by a good number of children. It was good to see all age ranges mingling in the familiar games they so love. Thank you Sara for organising the party, Sue for all your efforts with the games and, not least, Father Christmas who delighted the children and the adults who watched their children and grandchildren collect their presents from him.

Following the Children's party the slightly older children enjoyed a Bring and Share Christmas Supper to get us all into the Christmas spirit.

Our Christingle Service on 6th December went well; our grateful thanks to David, Janet, Christine and Eda for making the Christingles.

On the 16th December we saw nearly 70 people sit down for Christmas Dinner.

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We were treated to a four-course meal with a delicious Turkey (that's saying something coming from a Goose producer!) main course. Our four waitresses worked hard and got everything to the tables lovely and hot; thank-you to them, thanks also to everyone who helped in any way to help Lynn & Ray prepare for the evening. Most of all, thanks to the cooks - you put so much hard work into making it a really lovely evening. Thank-you.

Our Carol Service on Sunday 20th December took the form of "Christmas Praise", including some different readings and carols as well as some of the more familiar. A big thank you to all the readers, and to Janet Sellick for co-ordinating them. The mulled wine and mince pies, etc, after the service, were most acceptable! Donations of non-perishable foods and cleaning items, left under the tree, were taken to CHAT, who have written thanking St Catherine's for our support:-

"The food will help to replenish our stocks after filling the Christmas hampers, and the seasonal gifts will be given out to those in need at this time.

We are very grateful to have such loyal support from you all, and really appreciate your kindness. Without this support we would be unable to provide some of our services to the neediest in the community".

Our thanks also to Rev. Tony Fensome for officiating at our midnight service of Holy Communion on Christmas Eve.

We began the New Year in the Village Hall with a Knockout Skittles competition, and we also played two games of Killer as we called it, (don't worry everyone went home fit and well!). With the game of killer skittles you had to knock down at least one skittle with one ball or you were out of the competition, instance dismissal, hence the name. Delicious homemade soup with rolls was served during a break in the proceedings. Thank-you Linda, Lynn & Ray for providing the food. Also thank-you Duncan for organising the skittles.

February 6th we are holding a friendly quiz evening, in the Village Hall at 7.30pm. There will be a break for sandwiches and a chat. Do come along and enjoy our monthly social event, we try to put on different entertainment every month. If you have any ideas or suggestions for our monthly socials please call Duncan, 252949.

Table Tennis, Pool & Darts will be the focus of activities on March 6th, but you can also just come along and enjoy the company, there is no charge for attending, just bring your own drink. We begin at 7.30pm.

The Tiverton Singers will be in concert at St Catherine's on Saturday 13th March at 7.30 pm, followed by refreshments in the village hall – see posters for details.

The following day is Mothering Sunday, with our traditional Family Service in church at 9.30 am.

The Annual Beetle Drive will be held on 3rd April, starting at 7.30pm, with Easter

Egg prizes; this always proves a popular event. Please ring Duncan if you need any more details.

We are going to celebrate St George's Day this year with a traditional English Roast Beef meal. This will take place on Friday 23rd April in the Village Hall, again the cooks are Lynn & Ray. Please reserve your tickets from Lynn 253741, Brenda 252431 or Duncan 252949.

We send our good wishes to Trudi Luxton, Eva Gooding who is recovering after surgery at Derriford, Angela Sellick, Alan and Marion Kingdom, all recovering after a recent accident, and to all who are, or have recently been unwell, and wish you a speedy return to good health.

FLOWER ROTA

Feb 7 / 14 Brenda Tucker
Feb 21 – Mar 28 LENT (no flowers)

Forthcoming events

6th February, Quiz Evening at 7.30pm.
6th March, Table Tennis, Pool & Darts at 7.30pm.
3rd April, Annual Beetle Drive at 7.30pm.
23rd April, St George's Day Meal, 7.30pm for 8pm.

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