

TODAY

The Parish
Magazine
for the
Exe Valley
Mission
Community

December 2012 / January 2013

Price 40p

THE RICHES OF CHRISTMAS

*Christmas is coming,
The bankers are getting fat,
Please put a penny in the tax-man's hat.
If you haven't got a penny, a ha'penny
will do,
If you haven't got a ha'penny, tough
luck for you!*

Christmas is a time of year that can make us painfully aware of the gulf that exists between the rich and the poor. Many of us simply cannot afford the kind of Christmas that we dream about, with heaps of extravagant gifts under the tree and tables laden with delicious food and drink. Some of us will go heavily into debt in order to pay for such a Christmas, and will then start the new year with a nasty shock when the credit card bill arrives.

Perhaps we are resentful towards those who can still afford a lavish celebration, but who we feel do not deserve to enjoy one. Perhaps we envy those who have a larger turkey and Christmas tree than we do. Perhaps we even get into a competitive mindset, and spend more money than we can really afford in order to out-do our friends and neighbours.

Christmas is meant to be a celebration of peace and goodwill. How sad that resent-

ment and envy so easily creep in and dominate our horizons. How tragic that giving to charity often decreases over the Christmas period, whilst the number of marital breakdowns increases. Instead of generosity, there is often selfishness. And instead of peace and goodwill, there are often simmering tensions or blazing rows over the Christmas pudding!

We do well to remember that the very first Christmas was marked not by luxury and self-indulgence, but by poverty and self-sacrifice. As the Apostle Paul reminds his

he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich"

The Lord Jesus Christ willingly gave up his place in glory in order to come into our broken and fallen world. He was born in poverty and humility and he died in poverty and humility. And he did so to make us rich! Not rich in material things, of course – Jesus Christ died in our place so that we can receive the treasures of peace with God and eternal security. These unspeakably great riches can be ours as free gifts, simply by putting our trust in the one who became poor to win them for us. Through his poverty we can become truly rich.



So what will dominate our thoughts this Christmas? Will it be envy and resentment at the gulf which exists between the rich and the poor? Or will it be wonder and gratitude at the gulf which Jesus Christ crossed, going from the heights of heaven to the depths of hell, so that we might go from the depths of hell to the heights of heaven?

True joy, contentment and riches are only found through faith in the one who became poor in order that we might become rich. May we all know that joy this Christmastime.

readers in 2 Corinthians 8 verse 9: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes

Steve

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EDITORIAL

Another year has, seemingly, flown by, hastened, no doubt, by the distinct shortage of summer weather, but at least we have been cheered by the Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the London Olympics and Paralympics.

Our grateful thanks go out to those who produce our parish reports, and all our advertisers who help to fund this magazine.

What the New Year will bring remains to be seen, but we can be sure that our future is safe in the hands of a God who cares deeply about each one of us.

May each of us enjoy a peaceful and blessed Christmas season, and look forward to a New Year full of promise.

Paul

ANN'S NATURE NOTES

Now winter has started, the butterflies are hibernating or have gone south, the flowers have had their season and are resting. The summer migrants have long gone to find some sun. Some have seemed to have gone early. Now our winter migrants have arrived, so we have lots of ducks and geese here, grazing on grass. Often they are in their thousands. If we are lucky there will be hoar frosts which are so beautiful, giving a shimmering edge to branches and seed heads. Frosts help to kill bugs like aphids and slugs so make the flowers healthier in the spring. At this time of the year the Hawthorne comes into its own. It is a plant for all seasons. The blossom in the spring has pollen for the pollinators, the thorny growth is for nesting birds, there is foliage for moth caterpillars, and the juicy berries at this time of the year are for the Thrushes.

Now is a good time to put up bat boxes. Bats are fussy creatures and it is often best to put up several, all facing in different directions so that they can choose for themselves where they want their home. They do not like draughts, and they like the boxes high up. They do not like treated wood. When they hibernate their heartbeat drops to two beats a minute and they live off a hibernation fat.

I think the best outing for the month is a visit to Rosemore, where they have a lovely winter garden.

Ann

**TRINITY COLLEGE
CHOIR**

On Friday 14th December at 7.30pm, there will be a concert in St Peter's Church, Tiverton, given by the Trinity College Choir, Cambridge in aid of ELF (Exeter Leukaemia Fund). Admission is free, but there will be a chance for you to make a donation as you leave. Hannah and Beth Partridge (granddaughters of Gill Timmins) will be among the choir members.

**HOW TO WRECK A
CHURCH**

It has been tried across the centuries – in public arenas, through mob violence and by official banning. In the first three centuries of the New Testament church, ten massive persecutions took place, and the Roman emperor Diocletian even had a medal struck – inscribed with the boast, 'The Christian religion is destroyed, and the worship of the gods is restored.' But – as Bishop William Greer of Manchester once told his critic during a TV interview –

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"The church will stand at the grave of the BBC, the ITV and all other institutions knocking around the world today." Those might sound like brave words only, were it not for the assurance of Jesus Christ that the gates of hell itself will not prevail against the Church.

We Christians today are astonished, not so much at the ever-continuing advance in the 2.3 billion-strong family of Jesus Christ worldwide, but rather at the amazing failure of our critics to learn from history. Naturally we weep when a Janani Luwum, or a Mehdi Dibaj is martyred. Such martyrs are numbered by the thousand today, as they were twenty centuries ago. But the sweep of civilization indicates that the greater the pressure on the church from its outside persecutors, the stronger tends to be its growth.

The atheist Philip Pulman has declared, 'Without a doubt Christianity will cease to exist in a few years.' He might have done better to heed the historian, T.R. Glover, 'The final disappearance of Christianity has been prophesied so often as to be no longer interesting.'

And yet a church CAN be wrecked. To read the letters of the New Testament is to understand that although persecution from outside was bitter and powerful, the real dangers arose from men within the church's boundaries, who – like others of 'broad' outlook who were to follow them – 'creep into the ministry, but they are generally cunning enough to conceal the breadth of their minds beneath Christian phraseology' (C.H. Spurgeon, college address, 1874).

A prime example of the New Testament warnings occurs in Paul's letter to Titus, appointed to lead the church in Crete. Writing of such false teachers, the apostle declares, 'They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are

detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good' (Titus 1:16).

'Detestable....' Paul is not writing of the Roman empire (of which Crete became a part in 67 AD). Nor was he fearful of other religions. Zeus was supposedly born in Crete, and Bacchus was also worshipped there – but Zeus and Bacchus, together with Osiris, Jupiter, Artemis and a host of other deities would all have to move aside with the preaching of Jesus. The real enemy was from within. The false

teachers within the Church were plausible in their appearance – 'claiming to know God'; they were human in their authority – presenting 'the commands of men who reject the truth' (the correct reading of v. 14)); they were rebellious in their attitudes – 'rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers.'

What is it about false teaching? First it dazzles, finding its ways into magazines and onto TV news programmes and book displays. It also deceives – drawing the

MESSIAH

Saturday 23rd March, 2013

St Peter's Church
OAKFORD

We are planning to hold a performance of the 'Messiah from Scratch' in Oakford Church on Saturday 23 March 2013 along similar lines as that which was held at Oakford in 1999 to commemorate the millennium.

Andrew Daldorph, who is the Director of Music for the East Devon Choral society, has very kindly agreed to direct the performance and invite the soloists and organist.

The aim is to hold an enjoyable event hosted by the Exe Valley Mission Community for all those who would like to come and sing or listen to this marvellous music.

Please put the date in your diary and publicise the event.

The 'Chorus' will practice from 2 to 5.30pm and a finger supper will be provided for them in the Oakford village hall before the performance which will start at 7pm on Saturday 23rd March 2013.

The costs will be £10 for both members of the chorus and audience and the proceeds will be shared between the Devon Historic Churches and a local charity which has yet to be decided.

Please publicise this event within your parish and come and have an enjoyable evening. In 1999 we had about 80 in the Chorus and over 100 in the audience. Details for the application for tickets will be published in the January edition of 'Today'.

If you have not already expressed an interest in coming please contact Roland Notley by e-mail on rolandnotley@yahoo.co.uk or by telephone 01363 866864 and you will be put on the mailing list.



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unwary half a degree off course. It then distorts, for the principle of the ever-widening angle will eventually see church members ten years down the line embracing teachings that are far removed from Scripture. And, finally, it destroys. Congregations slowly die. And the brilliant shooting star that had once drawn gasps from admirers drops into the darkness and is forgotten. The books end up in Oxfam shops, but the damage has been done.

The identikit of Crete's false teachers is not uncommon throughout the story of the Church. The teachings may vary across a wide range, spanning between the blatancy of a Bishop Spong ('We wrote the Bible; we can re-write the Bible') to the extremism of semi-sectarianism that asserts, 'Yes, the Cross is important – but we've moved on further now.' How do false teachers come across?

Titus was urged to recognize them as the big talkers (1: 10); also as the peace-breakers, upsetting and dividing whole households and fellowships. They were to be recognised as the truth-warpers, with their twisting of a single issue into a major mandatory tenet. Such has always been the case. Ultimately they were the death-brokers, for just as all things that the pure ever touch tend to result in purity, so all that the 'corrupted' deal with will end in corruption (1:15).

That, very largely, is how a church becomes wrecked. It happens from within.

The question always lies before Bible people and Gospel people; how are false leaders in the Church to be resisted? The answer is the same as that given to Titus. First – we are to silence them by our teaching (v. 11), and never to give in – but rather to out-preach them. We are also to correct them by our firmness (v. 13) – with the aim of winning them around. This may have to include 'fencing' the pulpit, monitoring the bookstall and guarding church leadership appointments (v.5-9). Further, we are to expose them by our very lifestyle (v.16). As often as not, false teaching will finally betray its nature in its boasting, lying, sexual deviation, cheating and avarice (v.12).

Self-control and self-vigilance on our own part are vital, 'so that in every way we may make the teaching about God our Saviour

attractive' (2:10). The alternative is... Detestable.

Richard Bewes OBE is former Rector of All Souls Church, Langham Place, and Prebendary Emeritus of St Paul's Cathedral. He is a member of Anglican Mainstream's Steering Committee. (WEBSITE: www.richardbewes.com)

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR HEATING OIL THIS WINTER

Any homeowner, who relies on oil to heat their property, knows that the cost of oil is higher during the winter months.

Worse still, those who live in rural areas like Devon, often pay more for their oil and incur further costs should they need a small tanker to get to their property, due to the county's many narrow lanes.

As oil prices steadily increase as winter draws in, the Devon Oil Collective is ready to help save you money on your heating oil.

Launched in spring this year, the Devon Oil Collective is a community based, countywide bulk buying scheme which can help households reduce their annual spend on heating oil. The principles of the scheme are to encourage Devon's homeowners to collectively buy their oil.

The scheme, run by the Community Council of Devon and supported by Devon County Council, collates oil orders from around the county, negotiates with the suppliers and passes the savings back to the homeowner.

When over half of Devon's parishes have over 70% of households off the gas network, and many relying on heating oil, there is huge potential for bulk buying savings.

The more people who use the scheme to buy their oil – the more savings that can be made. So don't delay, join the Devon Oil Collective today and get your order in earlier rather than later. Our next order deadline is Thursday 4th October.

For further information see our website www.devonrcc.org.uk or call 01392 248919.

DEVON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The Devon Community Foundation manages a number of Funds which give grants to community groups in Devon. One fund is specifically aimed at rural and isolated communities and was started by a family in the Exe Valley Mission Community.

If you are involved in a community group and would like to apply for funding to address rural isolation and deprivation please contact Gillian at the Devon Community Foundation Office on 01884 235887 or email to grants@devoncf.com.

Further details on the role of the Devon Community Foundation and details on how to apply from this and other funds can be found at <http://www.devoncf.com/apply-for-a-grant/>

PARISH ROUND-UP

Calverleigh

After a very successful Harvest Thanksgiving service on Saturday 8th September we had a good attendance at our evening Harvest service on Sunday. The Church looked lovely with all the autumn flowers and foliage and a good selection of fruit and vegetables. Our produce was then given to Charlton Lodge.

On 13th of October Lisa Hayes and Owen Cronk were married in our Church. Lisa is the daughter of Keith Hayes and the late Carole. We wish the young couple every happiness in their future life together in Rose Ash.

We give a warm welcome to Mr and Mrs Briggs and children who have moved into Palmers Mill. We wish you happiness in your new home here in Calverleigh.

At the PCC meeting, the repairs to the Church roof were discussed. This is a big

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job that needs doing. There is some funding in place at the moment but there is still a large amount of money that we have to find to complete the work. More fundraising needed.

Jean Chetham was laid to rest in our Churchyard following a service in our Church. Many friends attended.

There has been quite a lot of illness in our area lately. Pleased to say that Rita Tapp is now recovered after her recent operation. Mary Greenslade is still in hospital; please keep her in your prayers. We are also thinking of Pat Rowe as she prepares to go into hospital for an operation. Our love and prayers go to all who are feeling a little under the weather at the present time. We also hope that Ann Longbottom is recovering well after her recent operation.

We held our Songs of Praise on October 21st. All the hymns were chosen by the congregation, well known hymns and sung with gusto. We all enjoyed tea and biscuits after the service, quenching our thirst after all the singing. Thanks go to Aubrey and Julie for organising this service, also for printing out the hymn sheets.

When our Christmas Tree is in place you are invited to put gifts under it for CHAT. Things that are appreciated are tinned food, dry goods (pasta, flour, rice, etc.) and cleaning products (for home and personal).

Adrian and Sophie Webber, along with Freddie and Daisy, have now moved to Raleighs Cross to live. We wish you all great happiness in your new home. Sophie still brings Freddie and Daisy to toddlers on Fridays, which is marvellous as it is a good chance for Great grandma Myrtle to see them.

At the time of going to press we are preparing for our fundraising Autumn Fayre on 17th November.

We are looking forward to the Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance here at Calverleigh on 25th November, it was lovely

to see so many from different parishes taking part last year. We are looking forward to having the Guides and Brownies for their Christingle service. Our own Christingle service is on December 9th when we hope many children, along with parents, will be able to join us. Our carol service this year will be held at 3 pm on the 23rd December .

Cruwys Morchard

This year's Harvest Festival Celebrations went well. The church was full for Saturday's service, which was led by Cruwys Morchard YFC. Thank you to Ryan and his team for taking the service and involving the congregation in the service. We thank the Ladies' Committee who prepared the tea, Linda and Alice for organising the evening games, and Brian and Maureen Gibbs for the disco. Thank you to those who organised and ran the sports in the afternoon.

At Sunday's Harvest Festival service, we welcomed Celeste McAdam into our church for baptism.

On October 6th Melissa Hilton and Darren Jewell were married in Cruwys Morchard church; we wish them a long and happy marriage.

It is with sadness that we heard that Susan Archer and Greta Guscott had passed away. Our prayers and condolences are with their families at this sad time. We send good wishes for a speedy recovery to all those who are unwell.

As we celebrate Christmas, there will be a service of Carols and Readings on Sunday 16th of December at 11am. On Sunday 23rd December there will be a Christingle service at 11a.m. Refreshments will be served after the service. This year we hope it will be possible to stage a nativity as part of the service, and are looking for children

and young people to take part. Please contact Cindy 01363 866621 or Diana 01363 860227, if you would like to join in. We hope to have a rehearsal on Saturday 15th December, please ring for time. Christingle Making on Saturday 22nd from 2pm at Cindy's, please come along if you would like to help, all ages welcome.

At this service we shall be collecting for CHAT. All that is collected on this day will be delivered to CHAT in the New Year. CHAT keeps a reserve of foodstuffs and necessities for those who are homeless in our area. Items such as canned and packaged food, cereals and long life milk, toiletries and cleaning items are all very welcome. Please, no fresh food or Christmas presents.

Monday 24th December there will be a service of Holy Communion at 10pm.

Note from Tania Palmer - Cruwys Morchard Young Farmers

The Club has been active in entering teams in various speaking competitions; Junior Public Speaking, Brainstrust and After Dinner Speaking. Well done to Jake Henson and William Palmer who went to represent the County in the Brainstrust Competition, and Richard Stanbury and Ryan Berry who represented the County in the After Dinner Speaking Competition. The Club recently held a New Members Afternoon, and if you are interested in joining please contact Jake Henson - 0796 9134101 or come to our monthly meeting which is held on the first Tuesday of every month at Cruwys Morchard Parish Hall.

Parish Events:

Saturday 8th December - Annual Quiz at the Parish Hall.

22nd December - Xmas Bingo

Flower and Cleaning Rota :

December 3rd - Lorna Warren (cleaning only - Advent)

December 10th - Decorators for Christmas

December 24th and 31st - Diana Vincent and Val Randerson

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PARISH ROUND-UP

January 7th and 14th - Cindy Trick and Pat Cross

January 21st and 28th - Judith Taylor and Anne Gilbard

February 4th & 11th - Sonia Notley

Stove rota:

December - Mr J. Carter

Loxbeare

Our Thanksgiving Festival of talents and crafts was held over the weekend of October 20th & 21st, and ended with a service of Thanksgiving in the Church on Sunday evening taken by Steve. What a variety of talents and crafts on show, with ploughman's lunch & cream teas served in the hall making an interesting and enjoyable weekend. Our thanks to Jan for organising the displays, to Carol for organising the food, to all who helped in any way, and of course to all who provided their crafts. After expenses, in excess of £100 raised will be given to the work of Samaritan's Purse.

Christmas will soon be upon us, with many services and celebrations of Christ's birth. Our Christingle Service will have already taken place on November 18th with breakfast in the hall followed by the service with Dr Douglas Fishlock being the speaker. The Carol Service will be on the 23rd December at 6.30pm taken by Rob, with the offering being donated to Vranch House. The Christmas Day service will be at 10.30am to be taken by Rev. Steve Goodbody. Carol Singing will be on December 20th, 22nd & 24th, meeting at Loxbeare Garage at 6.30pm for the first 2 nights and Calverleigh Village Hall at 6.30pm on Christmas Eve, the collection will be for the Children of Chernobyl and CHAT.

At the time of writing these notes, we are planning an evening at New Creation Christian Bookshop on November 15th with a supper and browse amongst the well stocked shelves for cards, books, CD's etc. Well worth a visit.

On the 9th December Aaron and Sarah Beecher, missionaries in Mozambique, will be with us and sharing their ministry.

Many thanks to the Radford family for cutting the grass in the Churchyard during the past year, and to anyone who has helped in any way with the general maintenance of the Church and the Churchyard. Also thanks to all who have helped, supported and contributed to the smooth running of the Church during the past year.

Jean's sponsored walk, which she did during the summer months, has now reached a wonderful amount of over £1,000. Thank-you to everyone who has given so generously. Jean also wishes to thank everyone for their help and support given during her recovery after her knee operation,

We thank God for many answered prayers for healing for many in our parish during the past year, and that Jean is making good progress. We continue to pray for anyone who is feeling unwell or recovering from accidents or operations, and also to those who are waiting for op dates. We send our love, prayers and sympathy to Jan, Chris Bardes-Payne & family on the loss of Jan's mother; also to John Wilson (Winbow) on the loss of his father.

Congratulations to Maurice & Marlene Taylor on the birth of their great-grandson to Alan and Viv's daughter Lucy, and to all with special occasions or birthdays in Dec/Jan.

The woman's Bible Study Group continues to meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday's of the month, following a 'Discipleship Explored' course. Contact Marion Roberts on 01884 256302 or Alison Brewis on 01398 351552.

Many thanks to Chris & Jan Bardes-Payne & family, who organised a bonfire and firework evening on Nov 10th, with jacket potatoes, sausages, etc. at their home at Moss Barn. A very enjoyable evening, and thanks to all who helped. Donations were for Village Hall funds.

On 24th November at 7-7.30pm, Ron & Margaret are organising an evening in the Village Hall to share a DVD of Helen Shapiro singing and sharing her life's story. All are welcome. There will be a bring & share supper. More details from Ron on 01884-881362.

The walking group have enjoyed a couple of walks at Wimbleball Lake, followed by lunch at Brompton Regis.

Loxbeare Ladies are organising a Christmas fayre on December 1st in the Village Hall 10.30-12noon. December 10th will be the Village Christmas Meal at the Rose & Crown. More details from Sue on 01884 259496. January 7th a meeting will be at Sue's at 7.00pm to organise 2013 monthly activities.

Christmas Bingo will be on December 3rd, 7 for 7.30. Contact Carol Radford on 01884 881480.

On January 26th we will be having a Village Party in the Hall at 7.00pm. For more details phone Ron on 01884 881362.

Dates for Diary - The Roclette evening which was postponed from end of October will now be the 23rd February. Further details in next magazine.

Oakford

The church was beautifully decorated with flowers and produce for our Harvest Festival which was held on Sunday September 30th, followed by tea and cakes at the back of the church. On Monday evening 47 people enjoyed the Harvest Supper and auction of jams and produce. Our thanks to Mike for a lively auction which raised £311.50. Our thanks also to Dawn, Brenda, Connie, Mary, Jean and Wendy for organizing the food and making apple pies, not forgetting all those who decorated the church and helped and supported in so many ways. Altogether the weekend raised £537.03(net), of which we sent half to Tearfund.



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NEW CREATION NEWS

It's December once again, and the wonderful season of Christmas is almost upon us! How quickly this year has gone! We have some amazing events to look back on, with the Queen's Jubilee and the Olympic Games, but also some sad ones with tumult in many places in the world and numerous natural disasters. We have much to seek the Lord for. It seems, more than ever, that we still need to join together in prayer for our area, our country and the world. Our upper room is kept open for prayer on Thursday mornings, so everyone is welcome to join in.

Do come in for prayer and praise.

IMPORTANT NEWS

"FOR EVER IN GREEN PASTURES"

This long awaited 4th book from the pen of Christopher Tull is hot off the press.

We are delighted to invite you to meet Christopher in New Creation on Tuesday, 4th December 10.00 – 12.00 noon when he will be signing copies of his new title.

Christopher is a joy to chat with as he spent his time as a Vicar between Tiverton and South Molton hence the popularity of his books. He recounts events of these years with humour and feeling. His previous three titles, 'In Pastures Green', 'Greener Grows the Grass' and 'The Green Grass of Summer' will also be on sale. These make excellent presents and we personally recommend them.

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHES

There is still time to book - but hurry – on Wednesdays 5th, 12th & 19th December. Three Courses for only £9.75 per head. Roast Turkey Dinner with all the trimmings, Christmas Pudding or alternative sweet, Cup of Tea and a mint to finish.

BOOKING ESSENTIAL.

Coffee Shop SPECIAL OFFER for December
Cup of Tea or Coffee and Home-made Mince Pie - £1.35
Clotted Cream 25p extra.

New Creation will be open on Monday 24th December from 9.30 am– 1.0 pm. The cafe will only be serving drinks and biscuits, as staff and volunteers take a break between Christmas and New Year (although stock-taking is done during this period).

The Shop and Cafe re-open for business on Wednesday, 3rd January, 2013 at 9.30 am.

May each and every one of you receive blessing this Christmas and may the Spirit remain with you throughout the New Year giving you a heart full of joy and thankfulness.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS

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PARISH ROUND-UP

wine and mince pies will be served afterwards.

We will be decorating the Christmas tree in the church on **Saturday December 15th at 5pm.** Any children who would like to come and help us are very welcome.

There will also be carol singing in the centre of the village on **Saturday December 22nd at 6pm.**

Our congratulations to Ivy and Roy Collins, who celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary on October 18th. They have lived in Oakford all their married life, first at Spurway Mill and now at Staples Cottages. They celebrated this joyous occasion with family and friends at the Northfield Hotel, Minehead.

Village Events

The Moorland Club

Friday December 14th 7pm. for 7.30pm.

Christmas Meal : Bring and Share.

Entertainment by the Pennymoor Singers. Members may bring a guest.

Thursday January 10th 7.15pm. Fish and Chip Supper. Recycling Gift Stall.

Oakford Players Pantomime

After a year's absence, normal service has been resumed! Oakford Players are performing 'Jack and the Beanstalk' in Oakford Village Hall, on December 6th, 7th, 8th at 7.30pm, with a matinee on Saturday 8th at 2.30pm. It's going to be a great show, with all the usual nonsense that makes English pantomimes unique. Tickets are priced at £6 for adults and £3 for children, and can be obtained by calling Dawn on 01398 324035. This year's charities are Children's Hospice South West and Changing Faces.

Oakford Village Hall Music Quiz January 19th at 8p.m. £3.00 per person. Bring and Share supper and Bar. Proceeds for Village Hall Funds.

May the warmth and love of Christmas remain with you throughout the coming year.

Continued on Page 10 ⇨

On Sunday October 28th, the baptism of Mathilda Rebekah Horan, granddaughter of Rev'd Kenneth Blyth and Mrs Avenel Blyth, took place during the family service. Rev'd Blyth officiated, and his son Andrew, also a member of the clergy, gave the sermon. The service was well supported by family and friends.

The Remembrance service was held on November 11th, first at the War memorial when we remembered those from Oakford who died in the two world wars and the

wreath was laid. We remembered also all those who have died or suffered in wars since then, and especially those in recent conflicts. This was followed by a Remembrance service in the church.

Our thoughts now turn towards Christmas. We have already been having choir rehearsals for our candlelit Carol Service on December 16th at 5.30pm. This is a traditional service of carols and readings, following the story of Christ's birth. Mulled

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10am - 12 noon

For information phone
Alison Brewis on (01398) 351552

YOUTH GROUP

Wednesdays at 6.30 pm.

For more information phone
Nicki Burton (01884-255248)

SUNDAY CLUB

Sunday 2nd December
Sunday 6th January
4pm at Calverleigh Village Hall

HOME GROUPS

COFFEE PLUS

Alternate Thursdays
9.30am - 10.30am.
Prayer for the Exe Valley
at Church Cottage, Stoodleigh
(Tel. 01398-351364)

LOXBEARE PRAISE AND PRAYER MEETING

3rd Tuesday in month
At 7.30pm.
(Tel.01884-881362 for venues)

LOXBEARE WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Alternate Tuesdays at 2pm
2nd Tuesday - East Sidborough
4th Tuesday - Highgate Cottage

WALK THE TALK

Withleigh Home Group
Alternate Mondays at 8pm
(Tel. 01884-253473)

MISSION COMMUNITY SERVICES, etc

Group Advent Service
Sunday 2nd December,
10.30am at Washfield

Group Service
Sunday 30th December,
10.30am at Loxbeare

Mission Community Prayer Meetings

(at East Sidborough)
12th December
January - see website

Mission Community Home-groups

(at Withleigh Rectory
& Stoodleigh Vicarage)
5th December
January - see website

OAKFORD

2nd December
See Washfield

9th December
9.30 am Holy Communion

16th December
5.30 pm Carol Service

23rd December
9.30 am Morning Prayer

Christmas Eve
11.30 pm Holy Communion

Christmas Day
10 am Family Service

30th December
See Loxbeare

6th January
9.30 am Holy Communion

13th January
9.30 am Morning Prayer

20th January
9.30 am Holy Communion

27th January
9.30 am Family Service

RACKENFORD

2nd December
See Washfield

9th December
11.15 am Morning Worship

16th December
11.15 am Holy Communion

23rd December
11.15 am Christingle

Christmas Eve
7 pm Carols & Holy Communion

30th December
See Loxbeare

6th January
11.15 am Morning Worship

13th January
11.15 am Holy Communion

20th January
11.15 am Family Service

27th January
9.30 am Morning Prayer

STOODLEIGH

2nd December
See Washfield

9th December
11 am Family Service & Holy
Communion

16th December
11 am Morning Prayer

23rd December
6 pm Carol Service

Christmas Day
10.30 am Family Communion

30th December
See Loxbeare

6th January
11 am Family Service & Holy
Communion

13th January
11 am Morning Prayer

20th January
9.30 am Holy Communion

27th January
6.30 pm Evening Prayer

CALVERLEIGH

2nd December
See Washfield

9th December
3 pm Christingle

16th December
11.15 am Morning Worship

23rd December
3 pm Carol Service

Christmas Day
9.30 am Holy Communion

30th December
See Loxbeare

6th January
11.15 am Morning Worship

13th January
9.30 am Holy Communion

20th January
11.15 am Family Service

27th January
3 pm Evening Prayer

CRUWYS MORCHARD

2nd December
See Washfield

9th December
11 am Morning Prayer

16th December
11am Carol Service

23rd December
11 am Christingle with Carols

Christmas Eve
10 pm Holy Communion

30th December
See Loxbeare

6th January
11 am Morning Prayer

13th January
11 am Family Service

20th January
9.30 am Holy Communion

27th January
6.30 pm Evening Prayer

LOXBEARE

2nd December
See Washfield

9th December
11 am Tariro Mission
Family Service

16th December
11 am Family Service

23rd December
6.30 pm Carol Service

Christmas Day
10.30 am Family Communion

30th December
10.30 am Group Service

6th January
9.30 am Family Communion

13th January
11 am Family Service

20th January
6.30 pm Evening Praise

27th January
11 am Family Service

Sunday School at Family services

TEMPLETON

2nd December
See Washfield

9th December
9.30 am Holy Communion

16th December
No service

23rd December
7 pm Carol Service

30th December
See Loxbeare

6th January
9.30 am Family Service

13th January
No service

20th January
11 am Holy Communion

27th January
11 am Morning Prayer

WASHFIELD

2nd December
10.30 am Group Advent Service

9th December
3 pm Evening Prayer

16th December
10.30 am Christingle

23rd December
11 am Morning Prayer

Christmas Eve
6 pm Carol Service

Christmas Day
9.30 am Holy Communion

30th December
See Loxbeare

6th January
3 pm Evening Prayer

13th January
11 am Morning Prayer

20th January
11 am Family Service

27th January
9.30 am Holy Communion

WITHLEIGH

2nd December
See Washfield

9th December
4 pm Christingle

16th December
9.30 am Holy Communion

Saturday 22nd December
7.30 pm Christmas Praise

Christmas Eve
11.30 pm Holy Communion

30th December
See Loxbeare

6th January
11 am Family Service

13th January
9.30 am Morning Worship

20th January
11 am Holy Communion

27th January
11 am Morning Worship

PARISH ROUND-UP

Rackenford

As some of you may have noticed, we are no longer able to dispose of any rubbish that you may have after tending graves, so we would kindly ask that you take it home with you. Sorry for any inconvenience, and thank you.

Mrs Clyde, Eileen, Oliver and Elliott Defew have now left The Old Rectory and moved to Nomansland. We wish you all every happiness in your new home. We give a warm welcome to David and Alison Trazese and family who have come to live in The Old Rectory, and very much hope you will enjoy living in Rackenford.

Many thanks to Fred, Brian and Joan Phillips, Mervyn and Roy for all their hard work cutting the church hedge. Very much appreciated.

Our very best wishes to Annette Reed, John Blinman, Muriel Blinman and Jane McLeod who have either spent time in hospital or are not well. We hope you are all making good progress.

Congratulations to Suzanne Coleman on taking part in The Great North Run in September, her time being 2hrs, 31mins. Suzanne would like to say a big thank you to all who supported and sponsored her in raising the amazing amount of approximately £1,065. The money will be going to the Eve Appeal (gynaecological cancer). Well done Suzanne – fantastic!

The Harvest celebrations were enjoyed by many over several days. Well done to all the children at Rackenford School for telling their story of 'An Indian Honey Collector' at their Harvest Service on Friday October 12th. This took place within a beautifully decorated church which

many of the children contributed to with their lovely gifts. The collection taken by the children was given to Christian Aid. The blessing was given by Rev. Steve Goodbody. Everyone was invited to school after the service to enjoy tea and cakes. Thank you to the ladies for decorating our church so beautifully, and to anyone who brought flowers and gifts.

Our Harvest Praise on October 14th was such a lovely service, so good and encouraging to see so many people at church and also taking part in the service. Thank you to the choir for all their practising with Marjorie, to all who read lessons, and to Connie and Megan who played their musical instruments so beautifully. The service concluded with a blessing from Rev. Steve Goodbody.

On Monday the ladies (and some gents!!) were busy again moving the produce, etc. from church across to the Stag ready for the auction after the supper. It was, as always, a very enjoyable, scrummy supper! Thank you to everyone who provided food, gave draw prizes, items to auction and donations. Although the weather was miserable during the summer we still had an amazing amount of produce on display. Many thanks to Stafford Sampson for doing such a grand job as our auctioneer and, of course, to all the eager bidders. Great fun and banter made it a great conclusion to all the Harvest celebrations. £534 was raised from the auction. A big thank you to Scott for giving us the Stag hall to use, we are most grateful to you. The grand total over the Harvest (including auction) was £1,259.78. Thank you everyone.

Many thanks to the Rackenford Shop volunteers for providing us with a bonfire, fireworks and good food, on November 3rd.

Lots of people enjoyed the evening and the excellent food and community spirit.

Good progress is being made on the church porch repairs which should be finished very soon. Thank you to Jenny Sleep for trying so hard to keep the church clean for us under extremely difficult circumstances.

On September 30th at Silverton Church the ordination of Robert Brewis took place. The church was full and members of our church, Mr & Mrs Cann and Mrs L Paxton, were among the congregation for this very special service.

The final figure for our sponsored walk is £973, once again well done and many thanks to everyone.

On November 7th a tulip tree (Liriodendron Tulipifera) was planted near Trinity Well on the green to mark Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee. It was paid for by the Rackenford Community Shop and the Rackenford Garden Club. The 70 children of Rackenford School, whose names and ages are in the box planted, were there to watch the planting; they also contributed by way of all the sweets they buy in the shop!!!! The tree is expected to grow to at least 100ft (30m) and to be flowering in ten to fifteen years' time. Fed Phillips dug the hole, Graham Oakey supplied the tree and Michael Lane (for the shop), Frances Kelland (for the Garden Club) and Caroline Buckley (for the school) planted it. Our grateful thanks to all involved in this; what a lovely idea. We look forward to seeing it grow and remembering the wonderful Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

No Bingos in January, February or March but the fun will begin again in April.

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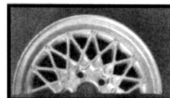


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PARISH ROUND-UP

We would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to all those who supported the quiz night organised in memory of Neil Cole, son of myself, Hilda Nott, and the late Peter Cole. To date we have raised £898 at this event, which will be donated to The Fire-fighters' Charity. We are truly grateful for your unending support; it means so much to me and Neil's sisters Lucy Poole and Vicki Cole. A special thank you to the winners of the £50 prize money, Glen & Suzanna Hookins, Sarah Butt and Nigel Woodgates, and Ali & Matt Coffey from Tiverton, who donated the prize money back to the event.

Congratulations to Rose and Edward Smith on the birth of their daughter Elizabeth Florence Louisa born on November 7th, little sister for Matthew, and a third granddaughter for Herbert and Marjorie. We hope mum and baby are both doing well.

Our love and prayers to our friends Percy Stone, Ken Blackford, Joan Clarke, Mrs Arscott and Gwendoline.

If anyone would like to join the rota of ladies who supply and display our Alter flowers, please get in touch with Hilda Nott on 881248. Thank you.

As many of you look forward to Christmas, we pray for those not looking forward to the festive season for reasons of loneliness, depression, bereavement or ill health.

Although a little early, this is the last opportunity to wish you all, and our neighbouring parishes, a very happy Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Stoodleigh

It was with great sadness that we learned of the sudden death of Edward Hill on Remembrance Sunday. Over many years Edward has given generously of his time, energy and practical knowledge to help in the external maintenance of the church and the churchyard. He has faithfully climbed the difficult tower steps to wind and care for the clock every week since he was 17 years old (helped in recent times by his son Richard), and he has been a leading bell-ringer. He will be greatly missed in so many ways by the whole village. We send our love and prayers to his wife Phyllis and their two children, Angela and Richard.

Moving to other matters... the church was filled with colour and harvest produce for the Harvest Thanksgiving service in October. Many thanks to all who made this possible – and to those who prepared, planned and attended the Harvest Supper and auction. The very generous bidding at the auction raised £260, shared between Devon Air Ambulance and the Churchyard Fund.

The Remembrance Sunday service in church on 11th November was moving and uplifting. We thank Rev'd Rob Brewis for leading that service.

Don't miss the popular Christmas Fayre on the morning of Saturday December 8th in the Village Hall, with its varied array of items, mostly made in Stoodleigh; a great selection of stalls from cakes to cards; also mulled wine, mince pies and valuable raffle prizes donated locally. There will be a children's activity corner, and Father Christmas will be there with presents for children. Entry is free. [Attention all DIY enthusiasts! There will be a Second Hand

Tool Stall at the Christmas Fayre this year. Any contributions to this stall may be left with Phil Bird at Molesworth.]

Congratulations to Roger and Linda Hill on the birth of their new grandchild, Theo, son of Mark and Laura. Theo was in such a hurry to arrive that he was delivered at home by Mark (drawing on farm experience!). Our best wishes to all concerned.

Welcome to new Stoodleigh residents Paul and Caroline, who have moved to Fairview.

Something to celebrate

After much fund-raising, including the generous sum of £44,000 under the Your Heritage scheme of the Heritage Lottery Fund, the renovation of the bells and conservation of the 15th century bosses and wall-plates at St Margaret's Church, Stoodleigh, is now complete.



One of the 15th century roof bosses

To celebrate this, there was a concert in the church in early November given by



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PARISH ROUND-UP

Con Spirito (eight thrilling unaccompanied voices) and *Stick the Fiddle* (fiddle, guitar and string bass). It was wonderful to welcome these two talented groups to the church, where the splendid acoustics were greatly appreciated by performers and audience alike. Many attended, and the church looked a picture with wall-plates and bosses at their best (!) and beautiful flowers. The music was sometimes sublime, often humorous and always celebratory. There was wine and cheese to follow.

The work to install a new bell-frame was finished in February 2011; now the conservation work has been completed on the exceptional 15th century 'Green Man' wall plates which surround the nave and the 33 roof bosses. To have accomplished all this in just over three years (fund-raising began in July 2009 after the bells had been condemned in July 2008) is a major achievement, and much praise and thanks to all those involved in this massive project.

The truth is that none of it would have happened without the determined efforts of one woman... So let's hear it for Jennifer!

Appeal for help: The church is in desperate need of someone to take over winding the clock, which has been done for so many years by Edward Hill. This is a regular commitment at the same time every week, as the clock does not run for much longer than 168 hours! Fitness is fairly important as, apart from the work involved in winding the clock, the tower has a number of stone stairs to climb. Anyone who would be interested in taking on this job should contact Jennifer Rowlandson, 01398 351402.

Dates for Diaries

Saturday 8th December, Christmas Fayre, 10.30am - 12.30pm.

Sunday 23rd December, Carol Service, this year at 6pm.

Tuesday 25th December, Christmas Day Family Communion Service, this year at 10.30am.

Parish Hall

The Autumn Market and Coffee Morning was another successful social event for the community. Thank you to everyone who supported it. We raised £352 for hall funds, which will help pay for further improvements.

Our next event will be Christmas Bingo and a Grand Draw on Monday 17th December at 7.30pm. The draw will have some special prizes, and tickets will be available in advance. You could also come and have fun playing bingo for some great Christmas goodies.

The new double glazed windows, our biggest project so far, have now been fitted thanks to a BIG Lottery Award of £10,000 which, together with our own funds, enabled us to do this work. The insulation recently installed has already improved heat retention and the double glazing will enhance that.

Children's Hospice South West

Stoodleigh Friends Group of CHSW events:

Singing of Christmas songs at The Stoodleigh Inn. 21st December 9pm.
Sloe Gin and Fruit Liqueur Tasting Evening. Don't forget to make your Sloe Gin or Fruit Liqueur for the 2nd Stoodleigh Inn Sloe Gin Championship, Thursday 17th Jan 7.30pm at Stoodleigh Inn. Free entry, £5 per person to taste, light supper.

Stoodleigh 100 Club: Draw winners, September – 1 Amy Sutton, 2 Audrey Rigg, 3 Peter Ayre, 4 Eileen Fewings; October – 1 Geraldine Talbot, 2 John Fewings, 3 Margaret Cuninghame, 4 Jennifer Ayre.

Church Flowers: 2nd, 9th and 16th December - Corinne Miller; 21st or 22nd December - all flower ladies please note.

Templeton

Our church looked splendid for the Flower Festival and Harvest Festival weekend. It's good to thank God as a community, once a year focusing on all the gifts that nature provides for us which we all tend to take for granted. Thank you to all the flower arrangers who produced such wonderful displays.

Our CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE will be held on SUNDAY 23rd DECEMBER at 6.30pm, so come and join the celebration.

In September the annual Templeton Duck Race was held at Dartcombe Mill. It was a warm and sunny day, 375 ducks took part in the race which was followed by cream teas and pasties in the garden, with the sale of books, plants, produce and a draw. In all £616.30 was raised towards funds for the village hall and the church. Many thanks to Witleigh Nurseries and Kathy Hunt for donating the plants. The winners of the race were 1st Roger and Bindy Linden, 2nd Julie and Peter Ayrton, and 3rd, last but not least, Ron Woollacott.

The winner of the October draw of the 100 club was Wendy Arnold, and November's winner was Martin Rose.

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PARISH ROUND-UP

The Bonfire and Fireworks Party was a great success; a lot of effort and weeks of hard work went into the building of the bonfire (a Dr Who theme this year) and organising the fireworks which were spectacular this year, the best yet! Our thanks to everyone who, through their work, gave us such an enjoyable evening. The weather was kind to us as well.

The annual tournaments start at the beginning of December. Anyone wishing to take part in Pool, Skittles, Darts, etc., please put your name down at the village hall.

Flower and Cleaning Rota:

- Jan Heptinstall - Cleaning only - 2nd December – 9th December
- Gloria Woollacott - Flowers and Cleaning - 16th and 23rd December
- Teresa Pancherz - 30th December - 6th January 2013
- Gill Rose - 13th January - 20th January
- Hannah Nobbs - 27th January - 3rd February

Washfield

*Shed no tear! O shed no tear! The flowers will bloom another year.
Weep no more! O weep no more! Young buds sleep in the root's white core. John Keats*

On Remembrance Sunday a good congregation came to honour those who have given their lives in past and current conflicts. Mr Maurice Balment read out the names of the parishioners who died in the Two World Wars and laid a wreath in memory of them. The service was reverently taken Mr Martin Hansford.

All churches are now preparing for Advent and Christmas. This year Washfield will be hosting the Mission Community Advent service on Sunday 2nd December.

Our Christingle service will be held on Sunday 16th December at which the children present will be involved in the making of the Christingles, and will learn about the significance of the items which make up the decorated oranges. All welcome.

The Christmas tree will be decorated on Saturday 15th December, and the Christmas floral decorations can also be put in the church on that day or at the latest before Sunday 23rd December. Thanks to all who work these floral creations. The Service of Carols and Lessons, which is always very popular, will take place on Christmas Eve at 6pm followed by coffee, mince pies and biscuits.

Plans to mount a new pole on the south wall of the church tower (mirroring the existing one with a weathervane on the north wall) so we can 'fly the flag' there on relevant days are progressing well. But it will cost around £1,750, so the PCC will need to seek donations to fund it. Mid Devon have confirmed that planning permission is not required, but formal Diocesan approval, through a faculty, will be needed.

We are happy to report that in the past 12 months parishioners have donated over 140 items for the needy through the Churches Housing Action Team (CHAT). Thank you.

A full church of family and friends came to pay their last respects to Mrs Mercy Seaford (nee Squires). Mercy lived in Hemyock but always thought of Washfield as her home. She was born and lived with her parents and brother, Gordon at Hatherland Farm for many years. Mercy was a friend to all she knew, and will be sadly missed. Sympathy is expressed to her family and friends. Mercy's ashes will join her parents in Washfield churchyard.

Get well wishes are sent to Mrs Margaret Elston who has fractured her ankle. It is so lovely to see Mrs Sylvia Cockram out and

about again after her prolonged stay in hospital – a very brave lady!

Thoughts and prayers are also with parishioners who are not enjoying the best of health at this time. Congratulations are sent to everyone who has, or is about to celebrate, a special birthday or occasion.

Congratulations are sent to Julian and Dawn Trout on the birth of Isaac James, a brother for Grace and Kieran and a fourth grandchild for Allison and Paul Trout. Best wishes also to Dee and Braden Collins on the birth of Jake Peran James in Australia, a fourth grandchild for Roger and Liz Arnold.

The Memorial Hall's fundraiser 'Mouse Racing' was a great success in September with many attending and enjoying the experience that only scampering mice can allow. The children especially love this event and cheer the mice on loudly! The amazing total of £400 was raised, and this will allow the Hall committee to purchase some more comfy chairs. Thanks to all the business sponsors, those who named mice, and all who attended and lost their shirts on a rodent!

The Social Club's annual Pumpkin competition was held at the end of October with many good sized entries. Andrew Heard achieved a fruity clean sweep with the three top weights, the heaviest weighing in at 44lbs, well done Andrew. The evening raised £215 for E.L.F. Thanks go to Sylvia Balment for her continued work in helping support this charitable event, and to Denise Wood for once again allowing her field be used for vital car parking. Social Club subscriptions are now due at £6 (not £5 as quoted in the last magazine); your support of your village club would be appreciated.

Jeanne and Garth Jones will once again host their Coffee Morning at The Cottage on Saturday 8th December from 10am. Produce, cakes and Christmas gifts and



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PARISH ROUND-UP

paper will be on sale. Proceeds will go to the church.

The Women's Institute will hold its Annual party on Friday 7th December and cordially invite you. A three course, hot meal at £16.50 will be followed by entertainment. Please contact Mrs Jean French (257703) to choose from the menu and purchase your tickets for a great evening. The Carol singers will sing around the village on Tuesday 18th December. Singers please meet at the hall at 6pm. A bring and share supper will be enjoyed in the Social Club later.

The Parochial Church Council would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helps out on a voluntary basis for the church throughout the year. We are very grateful to all who assist in any way. The PCC gets much positive feedback about how well kept the church and churchyard are. St Mary's congregations continue to be good, and we thank each and everyone who helps us to have a service each Sunday. We appreciate the efforts of the bell ringers and organists who help us welcome everyone who attends. Thank you to Maurice and Alice Balment for keeping the church open, it is appreciated by so many visitors. Appreciation goes too, to Mrs Sylvia Balment for acting as St Mary's sacristan, caring for and changing the altar cloths as necessary. Thanks to everyone else who puts in time and effort on behalf of our church.

We wish all readers of Today magazine, whether near or far, a very blessed Christmas and a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

Dates for your Diary

Sunday 2nd December Group Advent Service

Friday 7th December W.I. Christmas party in the hall. A hot three course meal £16.50 plus entertainment. Phone Jean 257703

Saturday 8th December Christmas Coffee Morning at The Cottage 10am – 12noon. Produce, cakes, gifts, wrapping paper etc. All welcome. Proceeds for church funds

Saturday 15th December Decorating the church Christmas tree

Sunday 16th December Christingle service 10.30am. Children, come and make a Christingle.

Tuesday 18th December Carol singing around the village. Meet at the hall at 6pm. Bring and share supper in hall later.

Monday 24th December Traditional Christmas Eve service of Carols and Lessons at 6pm followed by coffee, mince pies and biscuits.

Church Flower Rota:

December 2nd/9th Mrs S Balment
 December 16th/23rd Mrs Smith
 December 30th/January 6th 2013
 Mrs Hansford
 January 13th/20th Mrs Harding

Church Cleaning Rota:

December 2nd/9th Mrs Harding/
 Mrs Jones
 December 16th/23rd Mr & Mrs McCahon
 December 30th/Jan 6th 2013 Mrs French
 January 13th/20th Mrs Arnold/
 Mrs Bicknell
 January 27th/February 3rd Mr and
 Mrs Parnell

Christine, Sara and David this year's winners. Following the Treasure Hunt we were joined by some more villagers to enjoy a delicious hot supper in the Village Hall. Thank you to all who supplied the hot supper and the desserts. Thank you also to Becky and Richard who organised the treasure hunt.

The Sellick family were the worthy winners of this year's Team Skittles event, with Paul, Elizabeth, David, Duncan and Sara being the runners-up. Thank you, Duncan, for organising the evening.

It was good to have the Young Farmers join us again this year for our Bonfire and Firework evening. We all enjoyed some spectacular fireworks, before heading back to the hall for soup, hot dogs and some delicious cake kindly made by the Young Farmers. Thank you to Duncan, Nigel and Richard who let off the fireworks, and to Duncan and Sara who kindly let us use their field again this year.

Congratulations to Duncan and Sara Kittow who celebrated their Silver Wedding Anniversary on the 18th November.

The Children's Christmas Party will take place in the Village Hall on Saturday 1st December at 3pm – 5pm. Please call Sara Kittow on 252949 for more details.

We send our sympathy to Ruby Reed and all the family on the recent death of Mervyn. The church was full for his funeral service before he was interred in our churchyard. The churchyard always meant a lot to Mervyn, as he had cut the grass for a long time before he relinquished the duty several years ago, but he still continued to help Ruby clean the church and, latterly, helped his daughters after ill health prevented Ruby

Withleigh

The Car Treasure Hunt took place on the 6th October, congratulation's to



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PARISH ROUND-UP

from doing so. Our prayers and thoughts are with you all.

Congratulations to the Women's Institute on winning the first round of the County Skittles Competition. Members are now awaiting the first round County Darts match, so we wish them well in these two competitions. The new programme starts in January, so if you are interested in joining the Women's Institute, the meetings are on the second Thursday of each month in the Village Hall at 7.30pm, with the January meeting being slightly different, with lunch out. Please ring Christine Luxton, 257571, for further details.

Our Christingle service is on 9th December at 4.00pm. This always proves to be a special service especially when all the Christingles are lit.

We are going Carol singing around the village on Monday, 17th December, meeting at the Village Hall at 6.30pm. Please join us and make this revival a good one, or listen out for us as we sing outside of your door!!

Our Christmas Praise Service is on **Saturday**, 22nd December at 7.30 p.m. followed by mulled wine and mince pies, and our Christmas Eve Holy Communion Service is at 11.30pm. Christmas is a special time in the Church calendar, so we hope you are able to attend and enjoy our Christmas services.

On the 5th January we will be having a rather late Christmas Meal. This will be a Home cooked Three Course Meal with Christmas trimmings. Please bring your own drinks. Tickets £15 each from Duncan 252949 or Brenda 252431. Numbers will be limited, so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Scottish Dancing classes will begin again on 16th January, starting at 7.30pm, finishing at 9pm. Classes will be held every other week, so the second class will be on 30th January. The dances are really easy to learn and we all help each other if we do go wrong, so do come along for an enjoyable evening. For more details call Duncan 252949 or Brenda 252431.

We send get well wishes to all those known to us who are not well at the moment.

We would like to wish you all a Happy Christmas, together with a Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year.

Forthcoming Events:

Sat 1st Dec - Children's Christmas Party 3pm.

Sun. 9th Dec – Christingle service in church 4pm

Mon 17th Dec – Carol singing around the village 6.30pm

Sat 22nd Dec – Christmas Praise in church 7.30pm

Christmas Eve – Holy Communion in church 11.30pm

Sat 5th Jan - Christmas Meal 7pm for 7.30pm.

Wed 16th & 30th Jan - Scottish Dancing 7.30pm. (see above for details).

Flower Rota:

Dec 2nd) Sara Kittow
9th)

Dec 16th) CHRISTMAS
23rd) Cathy Luxton, Tree.
30th)

2013

Jan 6th)
13th) Margaret Gale
20th)

Jan 27th Brenda Tucker

Monthly Diary dates:

First Thursday – Bingo
Second Monday – Whist Drive
Second Thursday – W.I.

FEEDING OUR FUTURE

This has been a difficult year for farming and food production across the world, particularly because of chaotic weather patterns, including in the UK. The likely consequences of poor global harvest through excessive rain or drought will be higher food commodity prices. This inevitably means more expensive produce in our shops, which will especially affect the poorest sections of our communities. Food poverty is sadly set to increase in the months ahead.

At the same time, the longer term future is not looking promising either. Climate Change and rising energy costs will mean uncertainties of food production and food security. The choice of growing crops for fuel rather than for food compounds the matter.

If we add to this a realisation that around the world a quarter of our soil is threatened by erosion, salinity, loss of organic matter and contamination, plus we are losing fertile land to rapid urban expansion, and the outlook is disturbing. Some call this the phenomenon of 'Peak Soil' and together these massive challenges must prompt us to deeply examine our food policies and practices.

At the Devon Food Conference held near Crediton in October 2012, it was emphasized that it is importance that Devon be able to provide more of its own food in the future. This may mean revising farming policy which encourages high grade agricultural land to be sold off for development. We should not lose our local food culture, skills, land and resources at this time but move towards more low-input farming and support community food initiatives.

In addition, we cannot go on discarding and destroying one third of our good food every day. Our current food industries encourage too much waste in a world of growing need. That is why projects like the Devon & Cornwall Food Association which redistribute in-date food to local charities around Exeter and Plymouth are to be supported. See more details at www.devonandcornwallfoodassociation.org/

(Martyn Goss)

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