

December 2016 - January 2017

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FROM THE RECTOR

Well, to start with that looks a little strange – at least, it does to me! Maybe it does to you too, as you have been without one for so long! A Rector, I mean. And shouldn't it be Rectrix instead of Rector? But then, would I be living at the Rectrix or even the Rectrixory rather than the Rectory? And what does it matter anyway?

I am very pleased to be with you at last and I look forward to meeting you over the next few weeks and months. Whatever you wish to call me will be fine - Rector, Rectrix, Stephanie, Steph, Steff, Steff Jeffs, Steph Jeph's or Stephe Jeffie, or even Stephany Jeffany (I have been called all of these and many other things besides!)

I will start work in December but I will not move house until the middle of January. When I say 'I' will move house, it will probably mean more than just me and the cat (Esme). My younger son Patrick with Imogen and maybe our friend Ben will be with me and regular visitors will be my

daughter Rosie with Noah and my elder son Matthew - when he comes home from teaching English in Hanoi. And here we are – well some of us!



So – what can I say, after all this time of waiting? Well, obviously, Advent is the season of waiting; waiting for the promise of good things to come and I hope and pray that everyone living, working and worshipping in the Exe Valley will experience the good things that God has in store for us.

When I was offered the post of Team Rector, I stumbled across a verse from "The Message", which has meant a great deal to me over the last few months. 'I have pitched my tent in the land of hope' – and I truly believe that this is

what God has called me to do – and that WE will be living in the land of hope together!

I hope that I will see as many of you as possible at the many Christmas Services that will take place in the Exe Valley. You are all very welcome! Come and introduce yourselves. I also hope that you will all join me for prayer in the New Year - a new beginning in the life of the Church in the Exe Valley. The prayer that we will be using on Sunday 1st January is on Page 10 in the magazine.

The timetable for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity which runs from 18 – 25 January, is on Page 12 of the magazine. Do join me in prayer, whether in Church with others, at various different places during the week, or in your own home.

God bless you! And may you have a very happy Christmas and an equally happy New Year.

Steph

More from Steph on Page 10

THE EXE VALLEY MISSION COMMUNITY

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Morchard, Loxbeare,
Oakford, Rackenford,
Stoodleigh, Templeton,
Washfield and Withleigh
www.exevalleychurches.org

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
Paul and Elizabeth Iliff
6 Southfield Way
Tiverton EX16 5AJ.
Tel: (01884) 253473
pe.iliff@tiv.eclipse.co.uk
NOT FRIDAYS PLEASE !!

NON STIPENDIARY MINISTER
Rev'd John Roberts
East Sidborough, Loxbeare,
Tiverton EX16 8DA.
Tel: (01884) 256302
john@sidborough.eclipse.co.uk

READER
Mrs Anna Hansford
The Paddock,
2 Kensington Court,
Washfield, Tiverton, EX16 9QU
Tel: (01884) 253463
hansfordam@john-lewis.com

MAGAZINE EDITORS
Jenny & Geoff Parnell
Keepers Cottage,
Lower Washfield,
Tiverton, EX16 9PF
Tel: (01884) 254402
today@exevalleychurches.org

ADVERTISEMENTS
Geoff Parnell

Details as above but
new email address

todayadverts@aol.com

CHURCHWARDEN CONTACT DETAILS

Calverleigh
Aubrey Goldsworthy 01884 255248
Jackie Herniman 01884 255814
jmherniman@talktalk.net

Cruwys Morchard
Diana Vincent 01363 860227
vindr@hotmail.com
Sarah Cruwys 01884 860287
wagscruwys@live.com

Loxbeare
Ron Tidball 01884 881362
margaret.tidball@yahoo.com
Jean Heard 01884 881400
jeanm.heard@googlemail.com

Oakford
Mike and Wendy Boynton 01398 351383
mboynton@btinternet.com

Rackenford
Herbert Smith 01884 881375
ejsesqldetc@uwclub.net
Mary Cann 01884 881696
mary_cann@outlook.com

Stoodleigh
Margaret Cuningham 01398 351252
margaret.cuningham@btinternet.com
John Fewings 01398 351328
johnfewings@btinternet.com

Templeton
Jan Heptinstall 01884 255399
Jan.Heptinstall@BTOpenworld.com

Washfield
Jeanne Jones 01884 254306
jeannejones007@gmail.com

Withleigh
Brenda Tucker 01884 252431
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Paul Iliff 01884 253473
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EDITORIAL

How wonderful that our Rector will be here with us, to share Christmas and the beginning of an exciting new year.

In each issue. Steph will have a "Steph ReflEXE ..." column, where she will give us her reflections on a Bible passage. This will help our understanding and knowledge of the Bible and we look forward to reading this new feature. In this issue you will find it on Page 10. It may not always be on the same page, so we will put the Page No at the bottom of her front page article.

There are extra articles and photographs in this issue, so there are no "Boxes" on Page 19 but you can discover what's going on by checking the individual Round-ups".

We would like to thank our Contributors, without whom there would be no "Round-ups" and the Distributors, without whom no magazines would be delivered to your door. Thanks go, also, to our Advertisers, without whom there would be no magazine and also Impact, our Printers, who do such a marvellous job for us.

We would also like to thank Wendy Cook who has been working hard as our Advertising Co-ordinator. She has decided not to continue, so Geoff has taken over this

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role. You will see from the inside cover that he has his own email address, so please direct any advertising queries to that.

Thank you to Paul and Elizabeth Iliff, who have helped us to learn the ropes and have continued to be there whenever we've had any queries. It is good news that they will soon get the retirement they deserve.

Finally, our thanks go to John Roberts, who has been a tower of strength during our time without a Rector. He has been incredibly helpful to us and we have appreciated his patience and support.

Let us all make 2017 the year we work together, with Steph, to swell our ranks and protect the future of our Churches.

Jenny and Geoff

MOVING ON PART 11

OVER AND OUT

The object of this "Moving on" column has been to keep the members of our Mission Community as up to date as possible on what was happening during the vacancy. With said vacancy now drawing to a close, the time has come to put the lid on my ramblings.

So, for the final time ...

I am sure that there is little need of a reminder that Steph will be instituted by Bishop Sarah at Cruwys Morchard on Wednesday 14 December, the Service beginning at 7.30pm. With the capacity of our church buildings being finite, the numbers expected may well not fit into Cruwys Morchard Church. At the time of writing, consideration is being given to

relaying the Service to the Parish Hall but, apart from those directly involved in the Service, it will have to be a 'first come, first served' as regards being in either the Church or the Hall. That said, the Hall may well offer the greater comfort !

I mentioned in the last issue that Churchwardens' Council had been considering the necessity to employ an administrator on the basis of a set number of hours each week. Four people initially showed an interest, two of whom dropped out before interviews could take place. At the November meeting, Churchwardens' Council unanimously agreed to the appointment of Stephen Hirst as PA to Steph. Details have still to be worked out, but Stephen's weekly hours will be three mornings of two hours each. The office will be at Withleigh Rectory and starting at the end of January / beginning of February, since Steph's move into the Rectory has been delayed until mid-January.

Please continue to pray for Steph, for Stephen as he takes on his new role, and also for our Parishes and Mission Community. The future looks exciting!

Our Group Service in October, due to have taken place at Stoodleigh was moved to Loxbeare at the last minute, due to problems with the heating system at Stoodleigh. Thank you, Loxbeare, for coping at short notice. This means that the next time the Group Service is scheduled for Loxbeare (May, I suspect) it will take place at Stoodleigh! Clear???

With no Group Service in December, the next will be on 22 January at Washfield, 10.30am.

Over and out !

Paul Iliff

NATURE NOTES

We are approaching the anniversary of my encounter with an Eagle Owl. I was returning homewards along our lane some time after 9 o'clock on a fine calm night. The sky was starless and suffused with a grey milkiness, reducing the trees, telegraph poles and hills to inky black silhouettes against the pale backdrop. The motionless owl was perched like a shadow puppet on a telegraph cable, near to a pole at a point where the cable crosses the lane.

I knew it to be an Eagle Owl because of its size and, as older readers will appreciate, immediate thoughts of the lately lamented Dennis Healey. I took care not to do anything suddenly but the surroundings and time stood still, with only my steady steps marking off the seconds. We viewed each other carefully but no doubt the Owl on this occasion had a better view. I understand that at night, an Owl is equipped to make objects five times brighter than us. However younger readers with good eyesight may be surprised to know that they have a better field of view and superior colour and binocular vision. However some may envy the Owl and think the ability to swivel the head through 270 degrees may have an advantage in the classroom. A less fascinating fact, is that an Owl has three eyelids with different functions but this feels like a case of over-design.

When I came to within twenty yards, the Owl rolled off sideways, at an angle to the cable and glided soundlessly into a nearby tree. There was no flapping of wings and despite the contradiction, I can only describe it as motionless movement. I do not need much excuse to consult my two bird reference books, as I love the artistry they contain. On most occasions,

continued overleaf →

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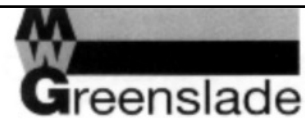
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and despite my excitement at a new sighting, I am often disappointed to read that the bird is 'common' to the British Isles. In this case, however, I read that the bird is not resident in Britain. I know an Exeter man was exceedingly frightened by an escapee owl [from an aviary in Newton Abbot] this Spring but I can assure all that they are here and any chance encounter will, with a sense that pre-dates the modern use of the word, be awesome.

Thomas More

OPEN DOORS

The Speaker at the October Group Meeting was a representative from "Open Doors". This international organisation supports persecuted Christians around the world, with bibles, food, medical relief and shelter. It was founded by Brother Andrew, who risked his life, many times, smuggling bibles to secret Christians in 1956.

Their work is even more important today, at this time of terrible hardship for homeless refugees and the account he gave of the suffering and persecution of so many people, was heart-breaking. It was humbling to hear about the bravery and commitment of the aid workers who risk their lives daily.

Money is constantly needed to enable them to continue their work. If you would like to know more about it, or maybe make a donation, you can phone them on 01993 460015, email them on inspire@opendoorsuk.org or visit their website at www.opendoorsuk.org.

PASTOR BEHNAM IRANI



Pastor Behnam Irani is a persecuted Christian from Iran. He has recently been released after years of imprisonment and ill-treatment – often at the hands of other prisoners. This is his story.

He has arrested in 2008, charged with "Action against national security) and was given a five-year suspended sentence. Two years later, he was re-arrested during a house church Service. In May 2011 he was given a one-year prison sentence with another five-year suspended sentence. He suffered ill-health and beatings which, in 2014 resulted in him being admitted to Hospital for an operation to staunch bleeding from the stomach and colon.

Later that year, more charges were made and he was put in solitary confinement. Finally, in October 2014, he was sentenced to six years in prison and sent, in exile, to Zabol, on the Afghanistan border. Following an appeal, some of the charges were dropped and he was released in October 2016.

This is the message he wrote to his friends to encourage them in their faith.

'Many of my cellmates in prison ask me why I am paying such a huge price for

my belief in Jesus Christ. They ask me why I don't just deny my belief and go back to my wife and children? I then ask myself: what cost did the Lord pay to save me, and to transfer me from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light? The death of Jesus Christ on the cross, blood of the Lamb of God! Yes this is a huge price. Therefore I am also able to prefer prison over being set free. I have decided to keep my faith in our Lord and stay in prison.

I encourage you to understand the value of your faith. We have received salvation for free but remember it was not free. God paid for it. He sacrificed his beloved Son Jesus Christ. Remember that there is only one way to God and Jesus told us about it: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me" John 14:6'

PARISH ROUND-UP

CALVERLEIGH

On 24 September the Salvation Army entertained us in Church with their band, songsters and timbrels. Everyone who attended thoroughly enjoyed an evening of praise and music in the form of a Service. Refreshments were served afterwards and a time of fellowship followed. Our thanks go to the Army, to those who supported the evening, provided refreshments or helped in any way.

A Service to celebrate the life of Susan Luffman was held in Church on Tuesday 27 September. The daughter of Diana

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PARISH ROUND-UP

Hopper and the late Clive, Susan was involved in the running of the Village Hall, a regular bell ringer when she was able, as well as a member of the choir. The Service was well attended with a packed church and parts of the Service were relayed to those mourners who were in the churchyard. Susan will always be remembered for her commitment to Village and Church life, all of which was carried out with a smile. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with David, Jessica, Diana and all the family.

Our thoughts and prayers are also with the family of Rachael Channing-Pearce, whose ashes were interred in her late husband's grave, in October.

Our Remembrance Sunday Service with Holy Communion was led by Rev'd Christopher Rowley.

We look forward to the Institution of Rev'd Steph Jeffs as our Mission Community Rector/Team Leader and to welcoming her in the coming weeks, when she joins us to lead us in worship. We hope that you will be very happy in your new post.

Our thanks go to everyone who has helped to keep Church life running smoothly during the vacancy, especially to the churchwardens, PCC members and all the worship leaders, visiting clergy and readers. Our special thanks go to Paul and Elizabeth Iliff who have worked tirelessly and patiently to keep everything on track through the whole process. Your work has been very much appreciated and we hope that when the time comes, you will enjoy your well earned rest.

Over the past few weeks some of our parishioners have been unwell or awaiting treatment. We hope that you are now feeling much better and looking forward to better health in the New Year.

Coming Up:

On Sunday 4 December we are holding another of our informal get-togethers in Church at 10am for coffee, company and chat. We welcome all who would like to come along and join us.

A Christingle Service is being held on Sunday 11 December at 3pm. This is a lovely service for the young and not so young. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

Our Carol Service will be on Sunday 18 December also at 3pm. This is a traditional Service of well known Lessons and Carols, followed by refreshments to include mince-pies.

Our Christmas Day Communion Service is at 9.30am. Please join us to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus.

Church Cleaning Rota:

28 Nov / 10 Dec:	Miss S Goldsworthy
12 / 31 Dec:	Mrs J Goldsworthy
2 / 14 Jan:	Mrs A Webber
16 / 28 Jan:	Mrs R Tapp
30 Jan / 11 Feb:	Mrs S Greenslade

Altar Flower Rota:

20 / 27 Nov:	Mrs M Furneaux
4 / 11 Dec:	Mrs M Herniman
8 / 15 Jan:	Mrs N Burton
22 / 29 Jan:	Lady L Amory
5 / 12 Feb:	Mrs B Hill

If you feel that you would like to be included on the church mowing or cleaning rotas, please contact Aubrey Goldsworthy on 01884 255248. Any more offers of help would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Have we missed something? If there is anything that you think we should have

mentioned, or you have anything for the next magazine? please send them to Dave Burton by calling 07817 851856 / 01884 561499 or by email: calverleigh@exevalleychurches.org. Get the latest at: www.exevalleychurches.org/calverleigh.

CRUWYS MORCHARD

CHRISTMAS is nearly here and by then Steph Jeffs will be with us as our new Rector. Her Service of Institution is to be on WEDNESDAY 14 December at 7.30pm. To learn more please ring Diana on 01363 860227.

Christmas is on a Sunday and we have our Christmas Service, as always, at 10pm on Christmas Eve. We are very lucky to have Steph, our new Rector, taking it.

This year the Carol and Christingle Service at Cruwys Morchard will be held on Sunday 18 December at 11am. We would be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to take part in the Service. We will once again be putting on a Nativity play and would like to hear from any children who would like to take part, please contact Cindy 01363 866621 or Diana 01363 860227, so we can organise rehearsals. During the service we will collect for CHAT, who distribute food and essential supplies to the homeless and those in need, in the Tiverton area. Tinned and dried foods, cereals, UHT milk, toiletries and cleaning products are the most useful. Please make sure all donations are in date, please no fresh food or Christmas gifts

continued overleaf →

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PARISH ROUND-UP

as donations will be delivered after the New Year. Please stay and join us for refreshments, which include coffee and Mince pies after the Service.

We will be making Christingles on Saturday 17 December at Cindy Trick's, Valley View, Pennymoor from 2pm. If you are able to help please come along and join us.

Flower and Cleaning Rota.

December 5 - Lorna Warren
 Dec 12 - Decorators for Christmas, before 14th please.
 Dec 21/ 28 - Diana Vincent /Val Randerson
 Dec 2 / 9 Jan - Cindy Trick
 Jan 16 / 23 -Judith Taylor/Anne Gillbard
 Jan 30 / Feb 1 and 6 - Sonia Notley

Stove Rota – 2016-2017

December - Mr J. Carter
 January - Mr M. Trick
 February - Mr G. Cruwys
 March - Mr J. Lake
 Please light the Church stove on Saturday (Morning if possible). If you are unable to, please contact:
 Cindy Tel: 01363 866621 or Diana Tel: 01363 860227

The Young Farmers

The Club held their Annual General Meeting in mid September and heard what a successful year they had - doing various events and competitions. Jake Hill stood down as Chair and Tom Palmer was duly appointed as the new Chair. Good luck to Tom and all the new officers. The Club held a Presentation Evening at the Parish Hall, where all the cups for the year were handed out. A cheque was presented to Jake Henson, the County Chair, for the new YFC building. A new members evening was recently held which brought in some new members. The Club are now rehearsing for a Street

Dance Competition and then will be busy practising for an Entertainment Competition, in January. Bingo will be held on the last Saturday of January and February at the Parish Hall. Please come along and support the Club. Doors open 7.30pm - eyes down 8.00pm. Meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday of every month at the Parish Hall, so come along if you are interested in becoming a member.

“YIN YOGA” STYLE WORKSHOP Weds 7 Dec. 7.15pm - 9pm in the Parish Hall. An evening of quiet, deeply held, relaxed postures to encourage stretching of connective tissue and help free up joints. No yoga experience needed. £7 for the evening. Contact Hilary for more information and what to bring. 01363 866245. hil.tosdevin@btinternet.com

Sat 3 Dec. Di and Dave's Annual Christmas Quiz at the Parish Hall Cruwys Morchard. Teams of 4 to 6 people. Cash prize for winning team. £5 per person to include light supper. Bar opens at 6.45pm. Quiz starts 7.30 prompt. Please book your team in, on 01884 860620, Text 07773 36 23 05, or email cruwysmorchardwebsite@btinternet.com Please leave Surname, postcode, phone number and how many in team, also special dietary requirements. Please book by noon on Fri 2 Dec for catering. Friday 23 Dec. Christmas Bingo at Cruwys Morchard Parish Hall for Hall funds. Doors open 7.15pm Eyes down 8pm.

Details of Parish events can be found on the parish website www.cruwysmorchardparish.co.uk

Community Lunch on 14 October was an enormous success with over 30 people coming for a very enjoyable hot meal.

Thank you everyone who cooked and helped with the event.

The Christmas Fayre was 12 November, with 14 stalls in the Parish Hall and lots of people coming, both to buy and have tea and coffee, soup and rolls. Thank you Angela, Carol and all your helpers. Over £977 was made for the Church.

Cruwys Arms Gardeners. In October there were 9 of us. We had open discussion on subjects of importance to each of us; wild flower meadows, pruning, composting and watering. We learnt a lot from each other. As we did in November when the subject was mainly perennials and bare roots planting. Our next meeting is on 7 December, in the Cadeleigh Arms. all group members and their partners have been invited.

Pennymoor Congregational Church

Services at 4.30pm followed by tea
 4 Dec Family Service. Rev R Green
 11 Dec Mr O Mears
 18 Dec join Way Village at 2.30pm
 25 Dec join Nomansland 10.30am
 1 Jan Family Service Rev R Green
 8 Jan Mr J Green
 15 Jan join Way Village 2.30pm
 22 Jan Praise & Prayer
 29 Jan Christian Theatre night.

We would like to inform everyone who may not already know, that the Chapel Hall is available for Community use, for a small donation to cover electricity etc.

Future Events.

3 December Saturday Quiz Night
 Wednesday 14 December The Institution of The Rev'd Steph Jeffs.
 18 December The Carol and Christingle Service

We welcomed Ashleigh Margaret Berry, daughter of Amanda and Matt Berry,

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(Isaiah ch.9 v.6 N.I.V.)

The joyous festival of Christmas is once more approaching. We look forward to helping you celebrate the miracle of Jesus birth with your family, friends and neighbours. We hope we will be welcoming you as you look for your last minute gifts and cards and perhaps enjoy Penny's special for December while you browse – a hot drink and a mince pie for £1.60 (£1.85 with clotted cream)

We have some delightful books for children. Lion Hudson special offer of 3 books for the price of 2 is a wonderful opportunity to spread the Gospel message to the young ones. For older readers we have a lovely book by local author Nick Pannell "Devon's Spiritual Places – the search for God in an Ancient Landscape" at £9.99 Pam Rhodes latest book "Hear My Song – Meditations on Life through Favourite Hymns" is also £9.99 as is a book with 20 contributors called "True Scientist, True Faith"

Have you seen the new colouring books for adults? With a spiritual theme they make lovely gifts. Or maybe an annual subscription for Bible Reading Notes would be a good idea. There are also diaries and calendars with a heart-warming message for every day and, of course, those special Christmas cards.

We hope you have a happy and blessed celebration. We shall close at 5pm on Friday 23 December and re-open on Tuesday 3 January 2017 at 9.30am. Please remember to pick up any orders and bible notes before then.

Please pray with us:

- 1) for the dreadful situations all around the world;
- 2) that families and friends will have a happy and peaceful time together to celebrate Jesus birth at Christmas, and the New Year 2017;
- 3) for volunteers to come forward to serve here on a regular basis or go on the list of occasional helpers when a regular is ill or away. Thank you.

Our area, our country and the world need so much prayer. Our upper room is open for you to use. Everyone is welcome to come in, either individually or with a group, for a time of prayer and praise. For special prayer please mark 12 January in your new diary or calendar. At 12 mid-day UCB has asked us to pray the Lord's Prayer, especially "Your Kingdom Come", that God would impact all areas of our society, now and in the future.

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.

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR

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PARISH ROUND-UP

granddaughter of Dave and Shane, into the Church at her Baptism on Sunday 6 November. Congratulations Ashleigh.

We look forward to welcoming Otterlie June Sadek, daughter of Belinda and Christopher Sadek, and granddaughter of Guy and Sarah, on Sunday 20 November, at her Baptism.

Our prayers and good wishes are with all those who are unwell or who grieve at this time.

LOXBEARE

Our Harvest Celebrations were held over the weekend of 17-18 September. Our speaker at the Saturday Service was Mr Bealey from the Leprosy Mission, to which the offering of £150 was given. The sports and tea followed which was enjoyed by all. Our Sunday Service was taken by John with various people having chosen hymns. The Harvest Supper was on the following Tuesday when Kathlyn Tucker from Exford gave an interesting talk on the Rival Church Community. The profit from the Supper raised £118 split between the Church and the Hall. The produce was auctioned by Steven Radford with help from Ron and raised £71 which was given to Chat. Thank you to everyone who helped in anyway for the Harvest Celebration, as we gave thanks to God for his wonderful and plentiful provision.

On 23 October the Group Service was held at Loxbeare instead of Stoodleigh. The Church was almost full and the speaker was a representative from "Open Doors", who spoke on the work they do in supporting the many Persecuted Christians around the world.

continued overleaf →

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PARISH ROUND-UP

The international organisation was founded from the work of Brother Andrew who risked his life many times smuggling Bibles to secret Christians in 1955. Open Doors provide Bibles, food, medical relief and shelter where needed. A very interesting talk and, for some, an eye opener to realise what some Christians suffer, in countries opposed to Christianity. An offering of just over £300 was given to Open Doors.

Our Evening Praise Service on the 6 November was taken by John with a short video clip on the wonderful work that Tear Fund do in supporting many needy people. An offering of over £200 was given to the Tear Fund work.

On 13 November our Remembrance Service was taken by Ron, who spoke on them being soldiers of Christ. It was also a Family Service and Linda did a talk for the Children. Richard Vickery led the Remembrance Prayers and a two minute silence, as we remembered those who gave their lives for our freedom.

On 10 November we thoroughly enjoyed a lovely supper at the New Creation Christian Bookshop. There were many Christmas Cards./gifts, CD's books etc on display. Well worth a visit.

The Exe Valley Women's Bible Study Group meet on alternate Tuesdays at Christine Weatherley's, at Churchill House from 2-4pm. All ladies welcome. Contact Marion on 01884 256302.

Christmas will soon be upon us with many Services and celebrations of Christ's Birth. Our Christingle Service will be on the 11 December in the Village Hall, preceded by a continental breakfast from 9.30am, with the Service beginning at approx. 10.30am. The Carol Service will be on 18 Dec at 6.30pm, to be taken by John with the offering going to The Children's Hospice S.W. Decorating the Church will be on Sat 17 Dec from 10.30am. An open invitation to anyone wishing to help. Please contact Carol on 01884 881480. Christmas Day Service will be a Family Communion at 10.30am, to be taken by John.

Carol Singing evenings will be on the 19, 21, 23 December, meeting at Loxbeare Garage at 6.30pm for the first two nights and Calverleigh Village Hall on 23rd. The collection will be for Cancer Research, Tear Fund and Syrian Refugee Fund.

We continue to pray for Rev. Stephanie Jeffs as she will soon be ministering to us after her Institution on the 14 Dec. On 17 Dec at 7.30pm we will be holding a Cheese & Chat etc in the Village Hall, when Steph will be coming. We encourage and invite all in the Parish to come and meet her. Food and drink to be provided by the Church. Steph's first service at Loxbeare will be Evening Praise at 6.30pm on 1 Jan.

A P.C.C meeting was held on 25 October. Date for the next meeting is 24 January. On Sunday 20 November we will be having a special prayer time for Syria and Iraq - with different people saying prayers for the tragic situation in these Countries. The service will be at 9.30am.

We offer our sympathy to Mike and Sheila Watson of Deepaller on the death of Sheila's mother.

We give thanks for those who have experienced improvements in their health but we continue to pray for all still undergoing treatment : Claudine Lear, Trish Bending, Steve Troake, Derek McManus and all who are feeling unwell.

Congratulations to all celebrating special occasions and Happy Birthday to all with birthdays in December and January.

Many thanks and appreciation to all who have helped to keep the Churchyard looking so nice and tidy during this past year and with the general maintenance of the Church. Also thank you to all who have helped, supported and contributed to the smooth running of the Church and to those who have taken Services.

On 8 October, at the Cream Tea afternoon, a total of £110 was raised with a bring and buy stall and donations for the Samaritans Purse Christmas shoe boxes. The next Cream Tea will be 10 December, at 3-5pm.

Christmas Bingo will be on the 12 December 7 for 7.30pm. Contact Carol on 01884 881480.

Loxbeare Ladies:

26 November Christmas Fayre in the Village Hall 10.30 - 12noon.

8 December Village Christmas Meal at Bickleigh Mill 7 for 7.30pm. A meeting to be arranged in early January to discuss 2017 monthly activities. Contact Sue on 01884 259496.

The Village Party will be on 14 January at 7pm. Contact Ron on 01884 881362.

OAKFORD

The Church was beautifully decorated with flowers and produce for the Harvest Service, which went well, with tea at the back of the Church afterwards. The Harvest Supper took place on the Monday evening, with an auction of produce at the end. £433.75 was raised to share between Tearfund and the Church. Many thanks to Ian who took the service and did the auction on the Monday evening, assisted by Mike and Jean. Our thanks to Brenda for organizing the tea on the Sunday and Dawn for organizing the supper on the Monday - not forgetting all those who made cakes, apple pies, or helped and supported this traditional event.

The vestry is at long last finished and everything back in its place (we hope)! Many thanks to all those who moved furniture, tidied up and gave the Church a good clean. The PCC are very grateful for all who support the Church in so many ways.

It was nice to see so many people pay their respects at the War Memorial on 13 November. Two of Oakford's residents, who both served in WW2, took part in this short commemoration. The wreath was laid by the Chairman of the Parish Council. This was followed by a service in the Church and the collection was sent to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

We send our love and prayers to all who are not well at this time and hope that

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PARISH ROUND-UP

Brenda Burrows is recovering well after her operation.

Christmas will soon be here and there are a few events taking place:

We will be decorating the Church Christmas tree on Saturday 17 December at 4.30pm. Bring your children along to help us decorate the tree. This will be followed by Carols at 5.30pm - round the Village tree with mulled wine and mince pies.

Carols by Candlelight Service with its traditional Readings and Carols will take place on **Sunday 18 December at 5.30pm**. Mulled wine and mince pies after the service. We look forward to seeing you at this most enjoyable time.

There will be a **Christmas Day Family Communion at 10.30 am**. Everyone is welcome to come and celebrate.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy and peaceful New Year.

Moorland Club : Friday 9 December at 12 noon Christmas Lunch at the Red Lion, Oakford

Thursday 12 January at 2.30pm. Afternoon tea and dance demonstration

Thank you to everyone for all the hard work that made the Christmas Fayre very successful. It was well supported and many stayed and enjoyed the lunch. The proceeds will be divided between The Devon branch of the Alzheimer's Society and E.L.F.

RACKENFORD

We have been blessed with the stunning colours of Autumn but along with that we also have the darker evenings again.

The Gardening Club held their Autumn Show in September at West Backstone. As always, amazing exhibits were on display from adults and children, too numerous to mention, but many leaving with beautiful trophies. Delicious cream teas and refreshments were available and also a raffle.

Our Harvest celebrations began with the decorating of the Church. Thank you to those who gave their time to make our Church look so beautiful and to those who gave flowers and produce. Rackenford school children also brought generous gifts which they were able to put in place themselves.

On Friday 7 October we were welcomed to the Children's Service by Mandy Lewry and once again we were in for a treat, as the children gave us their production of "Bite back at Hunger" with lovely songs, acting, verses and prayers - so clearly delivered and what lovely costumes. A collection was taken for Christian Aid. Kate Dunning thanked the children for their hard work amid generous applause from a full church of proud families and friends.

Our Harvest "Songs of Praise" on 9 October was taken by Rev Keith Gale. We all enjoyed our choir singing praises at this special time and also the young children playing the Bell Plates. Many thanks to Marjorie for encouraging the children. It is always an enjoyable addition to any Service.

The Harvest Supper was held on 10 October and again our thanks to Jacque and Mary Cann for welcoming us to Lower Tidderson. (So nice to see you home again Jacque).

Meat, salads, potatoes and all the trimmings were enjoyed, followed by delicious puddings. It was all so tempting and what a wide variety, cheese and biscuits, tea and coffee ended our supper. Many thanks to all the ladies and to everyone for the home-made puddings and all who helped in any way at all. Then the banter began, as once again Stafford Sampson our auctioneer started the sale of produce and gifts donated. Such fun and laughter throughout the evening.

Over the Harvest period with the evening Church collection, supper, raffle and auction, a total of £1,652.72 was raised. Very many thanks to everyone involved for your continued support and help.

Sadly, we have seen the closure of The Stag and would like to wish Anita and Rod

Shaddick all the very best and thank them for the work they put in for Village functions.

On 16 October Amy, Tim, and Ellie Heywood brought Bobby George to be Christened. This special Service was taken by Rev Jane Wilson who welcomed him into the Church with the love and support of his family, friends and congregation. We also enjoyed the children playing their Bell Plates.

Our very best wishes to Daphne Weston, Karen and Sally after the car accident, which was a terrible shock for you.

Congratulations to Caroline and Gerald who have renewed their wedding vows. We hope you enjoyed your day and wish you continued happiness.

Many thanks to Glenn Hookins and Brian Phillips for re-assembling the weather vein and flag pole - which is not an easy task. Also continued thanks to Glenn for keeping our clock ticking.

At the time of going to print the work continues on our Church roof, to prevent the rain from coming in.

Our best wishes to Mike Lane who is recovering from a knee replacement operation and also to Peter Turpin who has suffered a stroke and to anyone else who is not well.

Thank you to those who have helped to upright some of the headstones in our Churchyard, the work continues and we could really do with some younger folk with muscle power to join us. If you can help just for a short while at anytime please contact Herbert Smith on 881375.

Sadly we have several bereavements to mention.

Horace Moore who many years ago lived in Rackenford and was our postman has passed away and we send our deepest sympathy to Mary, Patricia and Brian and all of the family.

Also Rose Downing has died. Rose used to live at The Lodge with her husband

continued on Page 12 ➔



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STEPH REFLEXE ...

This morning I was reading the letter of Jude. What a wonderful letter it is – and not just because it's short! In the opening couple of verses Jude explains to his readers exactly who he is and who he is writing to – 'those loved by God the Father, called and kept safe by Jesus Christ'. And I feel the same about you too, and hope that you know how much God loves you. In the second verse Jude prays that the recipients of his letter will know God's mercy, peace and love.

As Eugene Petersen translates it, 'Relax, everything's going to be all right; rest, everything's coming together; open your hearts, love is on the way!'

And that's exactly what we mark and remember each and every Christmas time, as we celebrate Jesus coming into the world, to show God's love to us. What more could we ask for as we face a new year?

As Jude writes towards the end of his letter, 'carefully build yourselves up in this most holy faith by praying in the Holy Spirit, staying right at the centre of God's love, keeping your arms open and outstretched, ready for the mercy of our Master, Jesus Christ. This is the unending life, the real life'.

My arms are open and outstretched!

I hope yours are too!

Steph

Prayer for the beginning of the Year

**Creator God, in the beginning
your Spirit hovered over the waters.**

**Renewing God, in the valley,
you breathed the breath of life
into those dry bones.**

**Refreshing God, You created the wind
to blow wherever it please.**

**People of God, begin the New Year
in the power of God's Spirit.**

**Be renewed by the breath of God
and know that your clouds
are blown away
by the wind of God.**

**Today and all your days,
Thanks be to God.**

Amen

OAKFORD

4 December

9.30 am Holy Communion

11 December

9.30 am Family Service

18 December

5.30 pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve

No Service

Christmas Day

10.30 am Family Communion

1 January

9.30 am Holy Communion

8 January

9.30 am Morning Prayer

15 January

9.30 am Holy Communion

22 January

See Washfield

29 January

9.30 am Holy Communion

RACKENFORD

4 December

9.30 am Holy Communion
by Extension

11 December

9.30 am Morning Worship

18 December

9.30 am Family Service

Christmas Eve

7 pm Carols and
Holy Communion

Christmas Day

No Service

1 January

9.30 am Family Service

8 January

11 am Holy Communion

15 January

9.30 am Morning Worship

22 January

See Washfield

29 January

No Service

STOODLEIGH

4 December

11 am Family Service

11 December

11 am Holy Communion

18 December

7 pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve

No Service

Christmas Day

11 am Holy Communion

1 January

11 am Family Service

8 January

11 am Holy Communion

15 January

11 am Morning Prayer

22 January

See Washfield

29 January

No Service

CALVERLEIGH

4 December

No Service

11 December

3 pm Christingle

18 December

3 pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve

No Service

Christmas Day

9.30 am Holy Communion
by Extension

1 January

No Service

8 January

9.30 am Holy Communion

15 January

11.15 am Family Service

22 January

See Washfield

29 January

3 pm Evening Prayer

CRUWYS MORCHARD

4 December

6.30 pm Evening Prayer

11 December

11 am Holy Communion

18 December

11 am Carols and
Christingle

Christmas Eve

10 pm Holy Communion

Christmas Day

No Service

1 January

6.30 pm Evening Prayer

8 January

11 am Holy Communion

15 January

11 am Family Service

22 January

See Washfield

29 January

11 am Morning Prayer

LOXBEARE

4 December

6.30 pm Evening Praise

11 December

11 am Christingle

18 December

6.30 pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve

No Service

Christmas Day

10.30 am Family Communion

1 January

6.30 pm Evening Praise

8 January

11 am Family Service

15 January

11 am Family Communion

22 January

See Washfield

29 January

No Service

TEMPLETON

4 December

11 am Family Service

11 December

No Service

18 December

4 pm Christingle

Christmas Eve

7 pm Carol Service with
Holy Communion

Christmas Day

No Service

1 January

11 am Family Service

8 January

No Service

15 January

9.30am Morning Prayer with
Holy Communion

22 January

See Washfield

29 January

No Service

WASHFIELD

4 December

11 am Holy Communion

11 December

3 pm Evening Prayer

18 December

11 am Family Service

Christmas Eve

6 pm Carol Service

Christmas Day

9.30 am Family Communion

1 January

9.30 am Holy Communion

8 January

11 am Morning Prayer

15 January

11 am Family Service

22 January

10.30 am Group Service
with Commissioning of
new Lay Leaders

29 January

No Service

WITHLEIGH

4 December

4 pm Christingle

11 December

10.30 am Morning Worship

18 December

6.30 pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve

11.30 pm Holy Communion

Christmas Day

No Service

1 January

10.30 am Family Service

8 January

9.30 am Holy Communion

15 January

11 am Plough Service

22 January

See Washfield

29 January

No Service

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

18 -25 January 2017

CROSSING BARRIERS

“For the love of Christ urges us on ...”

The material for this year’s “Week of Prayer” has been prepared for worldwide use, by the German churches, based around 2 Corinthians 5:14-20. The passage urges us to be people of reconciliation, because through Jesus God has reconciled the world to himself.

This year, throughout the Exe Valley Mission Community there are opportunities to meet together to pray for peace and reconciliation both globally and locally. Please feel free to join me at any or all (!) of the following Church venues, with the exception of Loxbeare, which will take place in the Hall.

If you wish to follow the week at home please do.

Wednesday 18 January

9.00am Rackenford
3.00pm Cruwys Morchard

Thursday 19 January

11.00am Oakford

Friday 20 January

6.00pm Witleigh

Saturday 21 January

9.00am Loxbeare - with breakfast!

Sunday 22 January

10.30am Washfield Group Service with Commissioning of Lay Leaders

Monday 23 January

12.00pm Stoodleigh

Tuesday 24 January

2.30pm Templeton

Wednesday 25 January

7.30pm Calverleigh

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stephanie.jeffs@yahoo.co.uk



PARISH ROUND-UP

Trevor. Our love and thoughts to him and all the family.

Our deepest sympathy to Sue Kingdon and family on the death of Cliff who had lived on the outskirts of Rackenford for many years before moving to Tiverton. At one point Cliff used to be our Churchyard caretaker.

We also send our prayers and deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Doris Nott who died in September aged 94. Doris was born and brought up in Rackenford and still regarded it as “home”, even after moving to Tiverton many years ago. A private cremation was

held, followed by a Service of celebration. Doris' ashes were interred alongside her husband and family in our churchyard. We also send our love and deepest sympathy to Mary Tucker at the passing of Ken. You are very much in our thoughts at this difficult time.

It was with great sadness that we have said goodbye to Jenny and John Sleep, who have moved to South Molton. Jenny has served Rackenford Church in a variety of ways, cleaner, church choir, flower rota, PCC member and will be greatly missed. Thank you for everything Jenny and we wish you and John good health and happiness in your new home.

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DOIVE DESIGNS

PARISH ROUND-UP

Lots of dates for your diary.

Rackenford School Christmas Fayre on Friday 2 December at the School from 5pm to 6.30 pm. You can enjoy a Barbeque, Mulled Wine, Mince Pies, stalls and games and maybe buy some Christmas presents !!!

Rackenford Church Bingo on 8 December 7.30pm to be held at Rackenford Club. Meat dinners for a full house.

Rackenford Club Christmas Craft Fayre on Saturday 17 December, 11am to 3.00pm. Tables for hire at £5, phone Debbie on 07830 148999 to reserve a table. Visit Santas Grotto (£2) and say "Hello". Tea / coffee, cakes etc will be available or if you don't fancy that, the bar will be open.

From 3pm to 5pm on the same day there will be a **Children's Christmas Party** with an entertainer and party food. This is open to all children and again, please phone Debbie on the above number to reserve a place.

Rackenford Club Christmas Bingo is 21 December at 7pm. There will be no raffle or flier but you can enjoy mince pies and mulled wine at half time for £1.00. The bingo will be followed by The Club Christmas draw. Tickets are now on sale. Rackenford Club would like to thank you all for your continued support this year.

Calling all churches ... If you are ever in need of an electric organ, you are welcome to borrow one from Mary and Jacque Cann 01884 881696. Thanks for this kind offer.

We hope all the Hallowe'en callers enjoyed the treats they were given and enjoyed themselves in their amazing costumes.

So many people gathered on the common to enjoy the amazing firework display and warm themselves by the bonfire, while tucking in to refreshments. We hope you had a safe and enjoyable evening. Thank you to all those who were a part of putting this together, so that the tradition could continue.

Rev Steph Jeffs will be instituted by Bishop Sarah at Cruwys Morchard on Wednesday 14 December. The Service begins at 7.30pm. It will be a great pleasure for us to welcome Steph when she takes our Christmas Eve Carol Service. Let's give her a warm Rackenford welcome.

Our thoughts and prayers go to Muriel Blinman, Joan Clark, Peter Reynolds and Jacque Cann and anyone who is not well, lonely, or depressed.

Many thanks to Jenny and Geoff Parnell and all the team who help to produce this magazine.



**EVELYN BROWN SOUNDING
THE LAST POST**

It was with great pleasure that we welcomed Evelyn Brown and her parents, who had travelled from the Scottish Borders to our Remembrance Service at the War Memorial on 13 November. It was a very moving Service, especially as Evelyn sounded the last post on her trumpet amid the silence of the folk gathered to pay their respects to all who lost their lives. This included her Grandfather, William Brown who was killed in Holland in 1944 and prior to that had held the position of Head-gardener at Rackenford Manor. Evelyn's father laid the wreath during the Service. Sincere thanks to Derek and Jackie Herniman for taking this service so thoughtfully for us and all the attention to detail that was included. It means so much to us. Thank you also to Cyril Blackford for providing us with the music which is much appreciated. A collection of £260.00 will be sent to The Royal British Legion.

Although it may seem a little early we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all, including our friends in all Parishes of The Exe Valley, a very happy, healthy and peaceful Christmas and send our prayers and blessings for the New Year.

STOODLEIGH

In about three weeks' time we will welcome our new Rector, the Rev'd Stephanie Jeffs, to St Margaret's Church, Stoodleigh. On Sunday 18 December, her fourth day in charge of the nine parishes in the Exe Valley, she comes here to lead our Carol Service. We have not had a Rector for two years and, of course, this is the first time a woman has been appointed. Steph carries a considerable burden of hopes and expectations – and

continued overleaf →

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PARISH ROUND-UP

our very warmest wishes. This will be quite an occasion, so do come and join in the Service of Lessons and well-known Carols, with the singing supported as usual by Jennifer's band of singers. The Service starts at 7pm this year.

Having practised singing carols on the Sunday, you are invited to come and join carol-singing round the village on Tuesday 20 December, meeting at the Parish Hall at 6pm.

The Service on Christmas Day is Holy Communion at 11am, taken by the Revd Ian Johnson.

There is an important date earlier in the month. The Christmas Fayre will be held in the Parish Hall on Saturday 10 December from 10am to 12 noon, in the presence of Father Christmas. Entry is free and mince pies, sausage rolls and mulled wine will be available. There will be many stalls of items mostly made in Stoodleigh and the annual raffle of valuable prizes donated locally. Do bring the family to this popular annual event.

Looking back over a busy autumn, September started with a coffee morning at Furzeclift. This was a great success and £213 was raised for the Church flowers. Many thanks to Enid Hamidullah for hosting this annual event. Ten days later there was a service of Songs of Praise, with hymns chosen by parishioners and descriptions provided by Margaret Cuningham.

The Barle Singers' performance of the "Drawing Room Gondoliers" at Champles Barn, hosted by the Broadbents, was enormous fun and raised £291 for the church. Steven Pugsley led a group of some twenty singers and soloists and Jennifer Rowlandson provided the accompaniment.

Swiftly on the heels of this came our Harvest Festival and Harvest Supper at the beginning of October. The auction of Harvest produce raised £100 for the Devon Air Ambulance.

Sadly, Stoodleigh had to cancel the Group Service at the end of October because the pump in the heating system had broken and the church was really too cold. Loxbeare very kindly hosted this Service instead but we look forward to welcoming all members of the Group to Stoodleigh early in the new year.

Apologies to those who find bell ringing a bit intrusive, as the annual peel of 5040 changes was completed by six ringers of the Guild of Devonshire Ringers in late October. In case you were wondering, they rang 14 methods of "Spliced Surprise Minor" in 2 hrs 36 min!

On 30 October we were delighted to welcome Rosie Weeks to the Church for her Baptism by the Revd John Fairweather. Like all good babies she cried briefly but otherwise seemed to take Baptism very much in her very young stride. It was lovely to have a full Church of young families and children.

October saw the departure of the Titchener family from The Old Farmhouse. We welcome John and Yvonne Lang who moved in there from Twickenham, also Andrew and Lesley Thwaites who have moved into Hazel's Lodge, and Jony and Becky Hardy and their four children who have moved to Stoodleigh from Witheigh.

We send best wishes for a speedy recovery to Richard Johnston, who has recently had a fall and is currently spending some time in hospital. We hope he will be back at home in the village before too long.

At the Parish Hall

The Autumn Market and Coffee Morning in October welcomed stallholders from Stoodleigh and the surrounding area. £419 was raised for Hall funds so thank you to all who came and helped to make it a Community success.

The Hall is open for the monthly Afternoon Board Games on Monday 5 December from 2-4pm. Bring your favourite board game or come and play a new one.

Christmas Draw tickets are now available and there are some super prizes again this year. You can get your tickets from Parish Hall Committee members and the Draw will take place at the Christmas Bingo on Monday 19 December, in the Parish Hall. Doors open at 7pm, eyes down 7.30pm. Everyone is welcome to come and play, with a chance of winning some great festive prizes.

Stoodleigh 100 Club:

Prizewinners for September – 1 Jo Shepherd, 2 Eileen Fewings, 3 Clare Torrance, 4 Heather Burmeister; October – 1 Pat Pennington, 2 Ann Smith, 3 Linda Brice, 4 Cathy Thorpe.

Church Flower Rota

4/ 11 December	Trish Fish
18 December	Christmas - all help please
1/ 8 January	Betty Wotton
15/ 22 January	Trish Fish
29 January	Phyllis Hill

TEMPLETON

Templeton extends a warm welcome to our Rector Steph Jeffs, who begins her ministry with us in the Exe Valley in December.

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PARISH ROUND-UP

December means that Advent is upon us and as we prepare for Christmas, let us not forget why we celebrate it. We encounter the true spirit of this season in the first of our two Christmas Services: Christingle. In this Service, we remember gifts of light and love sent by God and the Spirit of giving to others, as we bring our gifts for the children in Tiverton area who would not be so fortunate, without your generosity this Christmas. The new presents should be wrapped, labelled in pencil, with the gender and age appropriateness of the gift.

The Service will be held on 18 December at 4.00pm and will be taken by Rev'd Steph Jeffs, on the first day of her ministry in the Exe Valley. Our second Christmas Service, held at 7.00pm on Christmas Eve, will be our Carol Service, followed by Holy Communion. It's a wonderful way to start your Christmas celebrations and we look forward to seeing you all there.

Looking back to the Harvest Supper in October, the Community came together to share a good meal in a warm and friendly atmosphere. We send our thanks to all who contributed to this occasion.

Our Harvest Festival Service on the Sunday saw our Church beautifully decorated with both flowers and produce. We took your gifts to The Haven Day Centre in Tiverton and received a thank you card for your kindness.

In November, our Reader, Anna Hansford took a Taizé Service amidst candles and beautifully accompanied chants by guest musicians.

In December we are starting a Church Coffee Morning to hopefully include some more male members of our community! It will be held on the first Friday morning of the month from 10.30am - 12 noon. There will be books, jig-saws, DVDs and

CDs to borrow. Just come along anyway, enjoy a coffee / tea and biscuits and some good conversation with your neighbours. Do call in at the Church anytime between 10.30am and 12 noon; we'd love to see you.

The Church windows are still in the process of being repaired. Hopefully we will have them restored by Christmas. The tower carpet has been removed to allow a drying out period. It revealed terracotta tiles that need cleaning. The church door has been linseeded and the metal paintwork painted, as have the fascia boards around the porch and the south wall. The next project will be the vestry which may cost about £2,000; it is in a bad state of repair and the east wall needs pointing. The 'Bells' fund stands at approx £416. We will need a minimum of £10,000. We will be pursuing grants as well as raising money for the 'Bells Project'.

We are really sorry to announce the death of Gracie Layton on 4 November. She had been ill for quite some time. Gracie & Ted had lived at Linneridge Moor Farm for 35 years before moving to Abbotsham, North Devon. Gracie was very much part of and involved with the community here and she will be sadly missed by all her friends in the area. Our thoughts and prayers are with Ted at this sad and difficult time.

On a happier note we would like to congratulate Jake Pancherz and Jade on the birth of their second son, born on 5 November, a welcome brother for Lucas. It would seem that the whole village celebrated his arrival with a bang (many of them!) at our annual bonfire and fireworks night on the day of his birth! Many enjoyed the display and the hot dogs etc. A huge thanks to those who worked so hard for such a successful event.

Flower & Cleaning Rota

Jan Heptinstall Advent Cleaning only 27 Nov/4 Dec
 Teresa Pancherz Cleaning only 11 /18 Dec
 Gloria Woollacott Flowers & Cleaning 25 Dec/1 Jan
 Teresa Pancherz Flowers & Cleaning 8 Dec/15 Dec
 Gill Rose Flowers & Cleaning 22 /29 Jan

WASHFIELD

Somehow, not only for Christmas but all the long year through, The joy that you give to others, is the joy that comes back to you

As we write these notes, Christmas will soon be with us. How time flies! Most of us lead such busy lives and it is not until the clocks change that we realise Winter is creeping up on us. The beautiful Autumnal sunshine and the stunning colours of the foliage has been a bonus.

We are all looking forward so much to the Rev Stephanie Jeffs joining the Mission Community on 15 December - after her installation on Wednesday 14 December at Cruwys Morchard.

On Remembrance Sunday, a good congregation came to pay their respects to those who gave their lives in past conflicts. Mr Maurice Balment reverently read out the names of the fallen from the Parish and laid a wreath in their honour. The Service was led by Mr Martin Hansford who gave a very appropriate and thoughtful address, with the theme "Prepare for action". The collection will go to the British Legion.

In Washfield, the lead-up to Christmas will begin, as is usual, with a Coffee

continued overleaf →

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PARISH ROUND-UP

Morning at The Cottage - when Jeanne Jones will welcome us all, once again. It is always a popular and successful event in aid of Church funds - with a bring and buy, produce, cake stalls and a raffle. Please come if you are able.

Your help and support would also be appreciated between 17 December and 24 December (at your own convenience) in decorating the Church for the Christmas period.

On 18 December there will be a Family Service at 11am, when we hope that the children and young people will enjoy decorating the Christmas Tree and bringing any decorations they have made themselves, to make the Church even more festive.

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols will be held on Christmas Eve at 6pm followed by coffee, mince pies and biscuits. All are most welcome.

At 9.30am on Christmas Day, we will welcome our new Rector, the Rev Stephanie Jeffs, at the Family Holy Communion Service. It will be a very special day, so don't miss it.

Washfield residents and friends are amazing at supporting local events for worthwhile causes. Just read on, to appreciate just how much money has been raised at these three recent events.

Allison and Paul would like to say a big thank you to everyone who supported their Coffee Morning in September, in aid of Hospiscare. This was the first year that Hospiscare have held a Coffee Morning campaign and, with your support, we were able to raise £500 at ours! This money will go to help fund in-patient care and home visits from the Community Nursing Team.

Many congratulations must go to Tony and Ann Roberts and those who helped organise the *Fantastic Festival of Froggy Fun and Frolics* at Washfield Village Hall on the evening of Saturday 1 October. Washfield residents enjoyed an evening of highly competitive and entertaining frog races but there was also a serious purpose to the evening, as the proceeds of the evening, an amazing £2000, was divided between two very worthy charities - Save the Children and Medicins sans Frontieres (Doctors without Borders). What a fantastic achievement!

Pumpkin Competition

Congratulations to this year's prize pumpkin growers. The results confirmed on weigh-in night at the Social Club on 29 October were:

1st Maurice Balment 117 lbs - 2nd Andrew Heard 98 lbs - 3rd Chris May 96lbs

Prettiest Pumpkin Sattie and John Burton. This popular annual event also raises money for charity and £145 was raised on the evening, for E.L.F.

Well done to all the organisers and growers for their efforts.

We are sorry to hear of the death of Mr Mike Hunt, a long-term resident of Courtenay Cottages, who died recently. Sincere condolences are sent to all of his family at this sad time. He will be sadly missed.

Best wishes and loving thoughts are sent to everyone who is struggling with health problems at this time. You are all remembered in our prayers,

Congratulations are sent to anyone who has celebrated, or is about to celebrate, a birthday or special occasion.

Washfield W.I. extends a warm invitation to anyone who would like to join them for

their Christmas Dinner on Friday 9 December. The evening, which is renowned for its happy atmosphere, includes local entertainment, after a delicious meal, which will cost £18 for three courses (please bring your own drinks). For more details, or to book and make your menu choices, please phone Jenny Raynes on 01884 257872. Numbers are needed no later than 1 December.

Look out for posters about the Christmas and New Year events at the Social Club. The Club will not be open on Christmas Eve but it will open, as usual, between 11am and 12.45pm on Christmas Day - and from 8.15pm on New Year's Eve.

Parochial Church Council

The PCC would like to extend its thanks to the many people who do so much for the Church and churchyard throughout the year. Our beautiful Church always presents a tidy exterior and a clean, warm and welcoming interior and it could not look like this, or function effectively, without the team of volunteers working away diligently behind the scenes.

This includes Chris May who has made his last climb up the Tower steps, every few days, to wind the Clock - and to James Herniman who has taken on this task. James says that he likes to imagine that his Grandfather may have done this job when he was Rector in the Parish.

We thank each and everyone of you and also the Today magazine distributors and editors, Church readers, Lay Leaders, organ players and bell ringers.

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

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PARISH ROUND-UP

Dates for your diary

Sat December 3 Coffee Morning at 'The Cottage' (kindly hosted by Jeanne Jones) in aid of church funds Bring & Buy, cakes, produce, raffle 10am - 12 noon. All welcome.

Fri December 9 W.I. Party 7pm for 7.30 prompt. Ring Jenny Raynes on 257872 to book a place and make your menu choices (no later than 1 December)

Tue December 13 teatime@thehall from 2.30pm. All welcome

Sat 17 December Decorating of the Church for Christmas.

Sun 18 December Family Service and decorating of the Christmas Tree 11am.

Tue 20 December Carol Singing around the Village. Meet at the Hall at 6.30pm. The singers will return to the Social Club later for a 'Bring & Share' supper in the warm Hall. All welcome to join in. The chosen charity for money collected this year, is 'KIDS WHO CARE' (Young Carers of Mid-Devon).

Sat 24 December Carol Service of Nine Lessons and Carols 6pm followed by coffee and mince pies.

Sun 25 December Come and meet Rev. Stephanie Jeffs at the Family Communion Service, at 9.30am, on this very special day.

2017

Tue 10 Jan teatime@thehall from 2.30pm. All welcome.

Thu 12 Jan W.I. in Hall 7.30pm. Members evening with roll-call quiz.

Altar Flower Rota

Dec 4/11	Mrs Smith
Dec 18/25	Mrs French
Jan 1/8	Mrs Trout
Jan 15/22	Mrs Jones
Jan 29/Feb 5	Mrs May

Cleaning Rota

Nov 28/Dec 5	Mrs French
Dec 12/19	Mrs Arnold
Dec 26/Jan 2	Mr & Mrs Parnell
Jan 9/16	Mr & Mrs Walton
Jan 23/30	Mrs Harding/ Mrs Jones

WITHLEIGH

We have had two Baptisms at St. Catherine's. On 16 October we welcomed Mason Oliver Griffin, son of Alice and Neil Griffin, and grandson of Edward and Judy Palmer. Then on 30 October we welcomed Freddie Butcher into the Church family. Freddie is the son of Tommy and Laura Butcher, grandson of Ken and Shirley Headon, and great-grandson of Jim and Emma Headon. The Services were taken by Keith Gale and Jane Wilson respectively, and to whom we extend our grateful thanks.

The Annual Skittles competition was held on Friday 26 October. Everyone entered into the spirit, and we all had a really good evening. The scores after 4 hands each were remarkably close, but the two teams in the final were Margaret Reed's team from Cadeleigh, and a team from Withleigh and Stoodleigh, who came out the victors, the team members being Brian & Alison Palfrey, Sue and Gerald Schroeder, Christine Luxton and Sara Kittow. Thank you Sara for organising the evening and to everyone who helped out with the food and brought draw prizes.

The sound enhancement system has now been installed in Church. We are on a learning curve with its operation, but the system will be of particular benefit to those with hearing difficulties, though the greater spread of sound will be an advantage for all members of the congregation. Susie was the guinea pig,

using a microphone when she led our November Family Service. Thank you, Susie for a thoughtful Service on saints. The system was put to good effect for our Remembrance Service which was well attended. Candles were, once again, placed on our war memorial - one being lit as each of the thirteen names were read out.

If this issue of Today reaches you in time, may we remind you of our Craft Fayre in the Village Hall on 26 November from 10.30 am to 3.30 pm. There will be the usual cake, chutneys and jam stalls and draw for Church funds, plus many other craft stalls attending - some new to Withleigh this year. Coffee and biscuits will be served in the morning, ploughman's lunches and soup at lunchtime with cakes in the afternoon. Please come along and do some of your Christmas shopping!

Our Christingle Service will take place on 4 December at 4 pm - supporting the work of the Children's Society.

Carol Singing will take place around the village on Monday 12 December - meeting at the Village Hall at 6.30 pm. We will be collecting for the Devon Air Ambulance.

We are all looking forward to meeting Rev. Steph Jeffs at her institution at Cruwys Morchard on Wednesday, 14 December, at 7.30 pm.

On 18 December we have our Carol Service at 6.30 pm, followed by mince pies and mulled wine. Again we will be asking for donations of non-perishable goods, which will be given to CHAT.

Our Christmas Service of Holy Communion will be, as usual, on

continued overleaf →

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QUOTATIONS, JOKES AND MISCELLEANOUS

Thoughts for Everyday
by Patience Strong ~
for 11 December

Little mustard seeds of faith
can work great miracles.
Moving mountains that you
thought were mighty obstacles.

Breaking down old barriers
and making all things new.
Little mustard seeds of prayer
can change the world for you.

KEEP SMILING ...

A minister told his congregation
"Next week, I plan to preach
about the sin of lying. To help
you understand my sermon,
I want you all to read Mark 17".
The following Sunday, before
he started his sermon, he
asked how many people
had read Mark 17.
Every hand went up.
The minister smiled and said
"Mark has only 16 Chapters ...
I will now proceed with my
sermon about lying!!"

Thoughts for Everyday
by Patience Strong ~
for 1 January

May the way that lies ahead
be lit with sunny gleams
And prove to be the road to the
fulfilment of your dreams.

May it lead you to the place
where lost hopes are restored.
Where love is true and life is
good
and faith has its reward.

BE JUST

Before you pass a judgement
On a fellow human being,
Make sure you have the
broadest view
Of everything you're seeing.

Use kindness and forbearance,
Use understanding too ~
The qualities that God would use
If He were judging you !!

Advice for Preachers ~
"If, after 10 minutes you don't strike oil ~
Stop boring!!"



Parish Pump

*The views expressed in this
publication are not necessarily
those of its readers.*

A Christmas Carol

A child this day is born
A child of high renown
Most worthy of a sceptre
A sceptre and a crown.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Nowell, sing all we may
Because the King of all kings
Was born this blessed day.

A New Year Carol

We greet with joy the glad New Year
We hail its dawn without a fear,
For Christ will guide us from above
And fill us with His perfect love.
In deepest strife He'll give us rest.
The more we love, the more we're blest.

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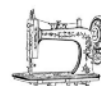


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