



TODAY

The Parish Magazine
for the
Exe Valley
Mission
Community

December 2019 - January 2020

Price 50p



FOLLOW THE STAR



Well, it's happening already, and we still have some time to go. That Christmas thing! As soon as the pumpkins have gone, the novelty gifts appear, and I'm trying to think positively about it all. Soon everywhere you go you'll hear the same music, a glorious mixture of the old (Hark the Herald), the seasonal (Deck the halls) and the popular, with the Pogues and Slade stealing the show, all competing for the top sing-a-long slots, as you queue up at the checkout. And I really, really, really don't want to get fed up about it, because I think that the Christmas story is one of the best stories ever - when God became a human being and said to each one of us (before Mariah Carey had sung a note), 'All I want for Christmas is YOU!'

So - come and join us - and "Follow the Star" - as we sing and worship throughout the Mission Community. The times, dates and venues are in the middle pages.

And in the meantime, just to whet your appetite, put on your Christmas Jumper, and croon along with me!

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
Just like the ones I used to know
Where treetops glisten and children listen
To hear sleigh bells in the snow



I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
There's not a freezing church in sight
With all heating working
And plumbers lurking
To keep us warm through Christmas night.



I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
Where every church is full of song
And the people love it
And rise above it
If they cannot sing along.



I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
And there's a love for old and new.
Where there's no complaining
No spirits waning
And a bum on every pew.

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
With shepherds starring in a play.
And in striped pyjamas
Three kings on llamas
Bring socks for Jesus in the hay.



I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
With stockings full of precious things
That we bought last summer
Each one a stunner
Don't search in vain for diamond rings!



I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
That just keeps going on and on.
And the love of Jesus
It thrills and frees us
Despite the length of each sermon !!

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
Blessings to each community.
And this rhyme is tricky
It's very tricky..
To rhyme and scan like Calverleigh ...

... unlike Cruwys Morchard, Loxbeare, Oakford,
Rackenford, Stoodleigh, Templeton, Washfield or
Withleigh !



Wishing you peace and joy this Christmas
and throughout 2020

Steph

Please read additional information from Steph
on Page 3, 10 & 11

Copy Deadline for February / March 2020 issue

Monday 13 January 2020

THE EXE VALLEY MISSION COMMUNITY
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Morchard, Loxbeare,
Oakford, Rackenford,
Stoodleigh, Templeton,
Washfield and Witleigh
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EDITORIAL

*Keep the Christmas message
in your heart throughout the year,
Let the feelings of goodwill,
of charity and cheer
Be continued through the seasons
that before us lie,
Let Christmas be forever
and its "Spirit" never die.*

Patience Strong


We are very fortunate this year, that Steph has waved her magic wand and conjured up three opportunities for us all to take Holy Communion this Christmastide. Two are on Christmas Eve and one is Christmas Day morning. You are welcome to attend whichever is most convenient for you and your families. It would be wonderful to hear packed Churches singing all the rousing Carols and joining together in love. Please check the Middle Pages for full details of these and all the other Services for December and January.

We would like to wish you a wonderful Christmas and a very happy New Year. 2020 already!!! It only seems like yesterday that it was the Millennium.

Jenny and Geoff

BROWN ENVELOPES are enclosed

ADULT BALLET CLASSES

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FROM STEPH



You are invited to attend



A MARRIAGE PREPARATION DAY

A day of preparation for your married life together, at Cruwys Morcharð Village Hall on Saturday 1 January 2020

10.30am - 2.30pm

Tea, Coffee, Lunch provided - please inform us of any special dietary requirements

RSVP:- office@exevalleymissioncommunity.org

Andy Humm ~ Robert Gordon ~ Steph Gordon-Jeffs

Create space for prayer in ADVENT

at The Rectory, Withleigh
Preparation – Examen – Lectio Divina - Reflection

Still

Friday 22 November 2019 at 12.00 noon
or Wednesday 27 November 2019 at 7.00pm

Still waiting

Friday 29 November 2019 at 12.00 noon
or Wednesday 4 December 2019 at 7.00pm

Still waiting here

Friday 6 December 2019 at 12.00 noon
or Wednesday 11 December 2019 at 7.00pm

Still waiting here and now

Friday 13 December 2019 at 12.00 noon
or 18 December 2019 at 7.00pm

Everyone welcome

It would be helpful to let the Office know if you are hoping to come - on 01884 250417 or office@exevalleymissioncommunity.org

PRAYER BREAKFASTS

Come and meet to pray over a Croissant and Coffee 25 January 2020 at 9am in The Rectory, Withleigh Everyone is welcome ! No Prayer Breakfast in December



The times they are a-changing!

From February 2020, our Morning Service pattern is changing. All Services throughout the Mission Community will take place at either 9.00am or 10.45am.

This is to allow Steph enough time to get from one Service to another, for organists to play at more than one Service, and for everyone to have an earlier lunch!



Sing Praise!



NO "SING PRAISE" in December 2019 or January 2020



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FROM THE ARCHIVES

'TODAY' 50 years ago

December, 1969 / January, 1970

December's editorial spoke of the Nativity Scene that is familiar to us, all clean and sweet-smelling, a far cry from the reality of the situation – cobwebs, insects, dirt, squalor, and smelling of the animals and all that goes with them; the last place in which you would wish to give birth. And, amongst all the clamour of the season, a plea, "Oh hush your noise, ye men of strife, and hear the angels sing".

January's put forward the suggestion that airport runways should be circular(!), since life is rather like going round in circles, with the cycle of seasons, days and phases of the moon, all akin to the book of Ecclesiastes. But, in going round and round, we shouldn't remain in the same plane, but our lives should be ever spiralling upwards towards our Heavenly destination. Arctic weather and a flu bug had combined to make life difficult across the Valley.

A simplified Evening Service took place at both Stoodleigh and Calverleigh on 28 December, followed by the screening of the film "The Candle-Maker"

Christmas Fayres / Sales were in full swing, Rackenford's having raised £60 for Church Funds, and that at Stoodleigh having raised £63.

Oakford's Halloween Sale had raised £32.9s.0d. A special Service had seen the dedication of the Girl Guides' new colours.

Rackenford's Carol Singers raised £20 to be split between the Blind and the Children's Society. The Young Anglicans had excelled with their Carol Service.

The singing at Stoodleigh's Carol Service had been boosted by choirs from Rackenford, Washfield and Witleigh.

It looked as though Templeton had now reached the point where a screen could be erected to separate the draughty belfry from the main body of the Church. A boom of children in the community had resulted in appropriate changes to Services and Sunday School.

Washfield's very successful 'First Annual Pantomime' took place over three nights during December. The Carol Singers braved terrible weather on 20 December, collecting for Blind Housewives. The children's party took place on 3 January.

Witleigh's Sale in Tiverton Market had raised £30 for Church Funds. The Choir and Sunday School Party took place on 20 December, and the Witleigh Orchestra gave its first public performance at the Carol Service. Organised by the Kingstons, two full evenings of Carol Singing at every house within the effective boundary of the Parish had raised £15

Paul Iliff

NATURE NOTES

In these dark days of Autumn it is hard not to sympathise with a pagan's yearning for the return of light or indeed question whether some arks may not come amiss in the West Country. Most look for something to celebrate, and in this time the Jewish faith enjoys their festival of Sukkot. It was originally associated with the wanderings of the children of Israel combined with giving thanks for the annual harvest, but now it seems to an outsider to have more subtle overtones.

In particular it is the use of the Sukkah and an emphasis on 'getting back to nature' whilst reflecting on the ephemeral nature of life. The sukkah particularly epitomises this, and is a temporary structure built outside the house, often of the thinnest plywood but with a roof of plant material. Those celebrating the festival eat and sometimes sleep in these bivouacs that would not withstand a gale, leak and have sometimes been burnt down by a well meaning granny who drags in an unsuitable electric fire.

I have witnessed genuine attempts by adults during this period to impress on children the importance of nature. The message (especially in towns) in the dark and cold with the smell of gently rotting vegetation is stark, and helped by the contrast of the inaccessible but inescapably warm home nearby.

I cannot report on the success of these lessons but the excitement of the children in unusual surroundings lifts everyone. However I find you do not have to suffer hardships or look far at this time of year to have your spirits raised. An individual tree whilst dripping and holding on to its remaining leaves and colour, shimmers and is covered in fairy lights if the low lying sun manages to beam down the valleys. The cuttings in yoghurt pots on the kitchen window-sill continue to throw wispy blond roots. Similarly, the discarded branches chopped from laurel gamely sprout emerald green roots that become snakelike in search of a home. Wizeden bulbs from last year show signs of life and have joined firmer, younger contemporaries and sit comfortably in pots in a dark corner. Yes, light can always be found.

Thomas More

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PARISH ROUND-UP

CALVERLEIGH

See Dates for Your Diary for details ...

With the clocks now changed and the nights drawing in we look forward to a time of reflection and celebration as we prepare for the arrival of the Christ child.

To begin with an apology for printing a wrong name. Our congratulations go to Daniel and Lorna on the arrival of Evelyn, a granddaughter for Eric and Alison Webber. Congratulations also go to Jess and James Robison who have welcomed the arrival of their first child, a son, Chester Ivan, a grandson for Maureen and Paul Furneaux. It is lovely to see Myrtle's excitement as each new great-grandchild comes along.

Our Harvest Thanksgiving weekend took place on 14/15 September. The Harvest Supper was well attended and the guest speaker was Kevin from Devon Freewheelers who gave an insight to the valuable volunteer work that they do around the county, delivering blood and breast milk to hospitals and homes. They are an out of hours service and our speaker was going to be on duty when he left us. A donation from the evening was given to them, along with the contents of a collection tin.

On the Sunday our Service was led by Julie, who brought back memories of school dinners with the Grace that was sung at the beginning of every dinner-time, "Thank you for the world so sweet. Thank you for the food we eat. Thank you for the birds that sing. Thank you God, for everything" Visions of soggy cabbage and Frog's Spawn (sorry Tapioca or Sago) sprang to mind.

We held one of our Informal get-togethers in the Church on 29 September. These are held occasionally throughout the year, where we gather for coffee (and tea), cake and conversation.

On 5 October a Quiz Night was held at the Village Hall. There was a great turnout and with a bit of jiggling, we managed to fit in enough tables and chairs for all the teams that had signed up. Quiz Master Mr Busby set a good variety of challenging questions. Well done to the Amory family and friends on winning the quiz and also to all who took part to help raise over £400 towards the Window Restoration Fund. Our grateful thanks go to Barbara and helpers for organising this event and also to Mr Busby for an entertaining evening.

The Funeral Service of Mary Gard-Richards took place at North Devon Crematorium on 8 October. Mary lived in Calverleigh, growing up, with her parents at Manitoba and for a number of years at Woodlawns before moving away. Our condolences go to all her family and friends at this sad and difficult time and to all who are mourning the loss of a loved one.

A Songs of Praise Service was held on 13 October with nine favourite hymns being chosen and sung. It was also good to hear the choir singing once more. Thank you to all who picked hymns and to Dave for spending the time to get them uploaded on the laptop - we are very lucky to have you.

A pilgrimage by the Presentation Sisters, Brothers and Christian Brothers took place on 22 October. Founder Joseph Nagle has a memorial in Church, with his and family graves in the churchyard. A short Service was held in Church followed by a light buffet lunch in the Village Hall. Parishioners were invited to join them and lunch was provided by a group of willing helpers. Thank you to all who had a part in helping this to happen.

Over the Christmas period there will once again be a collection box under the Christmas Tree for dried or tinned goods and toiletries for CHAT. This has proved to be popular and CHAT are extremely grateful for all contributions, which will be delivered to their office in early January for distribution.

We remember at this time all who are going through difficulties with ill health or numerous hospital appointments and pray that the skill of doctors and nurses will help to ease the anxiety or pain.

Thank you to all who are on any of the Church rotas, who give generously of their time to make the Church and churchyard look clean and tidy for all our visitors throughout the year.

The Calverleigh and Loxbeare Carol Singers will be doing the rounds as usual in the weeks leading up to Christmas, do contact your Churchwardens for details if you want to get involved.

We would like to wish all our readers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May God Bless you this Christmas.

Dates for Your Diary:

1 Dec - Christingle Praise Party at 3.30pm in Calverleigh Church, followed by craft and refreshments in Calverleigh Hall.

22 Dec - Christmas Coffee, Cake and Company at 10am in Church. All parishioners are welcome to come for some pre-festive refreshments and fellowship. It is a chance to sit and talk to neighbours, friends and to meet new people from far and near.

Please see the middle pages of the magazine or view the website for our Christmas and New Year Services.

continued overleaf ➔

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PARISH ROUND-UP

Cleaning Rota

25 Nov / 7 Dec - Miss J Herniman
 9 / 21 Dec - Mrs M Furneaux
 23 Dec / 11 Jan - Mrs J Goldsworthy
 13 / 25 Jan - Miss S Goldsworthy
 27 / 8 Feb - Mrs A Webber

Altar Flower Rota

1 / 8 Dec - Mrs A Webber
 15 / 22 Dec - Mrs M Furneaux
 5 / 12 Jan - Mrs S Greenslade
 19 / 26 Jan - Lady L Amory

Have we missed anything? If there is something that you think we should have mentioned, or you have something for inclusion in the next Magazine, please contact Dave Burton 01884 561499 or calverleigh@exevalleychurches.org and get the latest on the website at: www.exevalleychurches.org/calverleigh

CRUWYS MORCHARD

FIRSTLY THIS MONTH, we must say Thank you, Thank you, Thank you to Shelby Parris for his very beautiful CROSS which he made and gave to the Church, where it stands proudly in front of the Altar. Steph blessed the Cross at a Family Service on 13 October.

(See PHOTO on Page 18)

HARVEST FESTIVAL

We celebrated Harvest Festival with a Service on Saturday 28 September followed by sports. Fortunately the rain held off until after the sports and afterwards we had tea in the Hall, which was enjoyed by all. Thank you to all helped to organise and to those who helped on the day. On Sunday 29 October, these celebrations were

COMMUNITY LUNCH

The Community Lunch held in October was the largest held so far, with many of our parishioners enjoying a three course meal. A big thank you to Judith for organising the menu and to all the ladies who helped with the preparation and serving. Hopefully we will have another Community Lunch in the Spring.

CAROLS and CHRISTINGLES

This year's Carol and Christingle Service at Cruwys Morchard will be held on Sunday 22 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 and any children wishing to take part should, please, contact Cindy 01363 866621 or Diana 01363 860227 There will be a rehearsal on Saturday 21st in the Church at 10am.

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. No fresh food or Christmas gifts please, 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 21 December at Cindy Trick's house, Valley View, Pennymoor from 2pm, if you are able to help please do come along and join us.

CLEANING and FLOWER ROTA

Nov 25/2 Dec - Denyse Standen/Jo Hilton
 Dec 9 - Carole Chisholm/Jackie Mitchell
 Dec 16 - Decorators for Christmas
 Dec 23/30 - Diana Vincent/Val Randerson
 Jan 6/13 - Cindy Trick
 Jan 20/27 Sonia Notley/Claire Miller
 Feb 3/10 - Sue and Pauline Guscott

MOWING ROTA

Thank you everyone who has helped to keep the Church Yard well mown and clean and tidy all this year, especially the Berry's who tuck it up ready for the Winter. We badly need more volunteers for 2020. Please ring Sonia on 01363 866864 if you would like to help.

APPLE DAY

Apple Day was held on Saturday the 26 September. It was a day that was notable for persistent rain and a successful semi-final rugby match when England beat New Zealand. It was attended by those who wished to have their Apple crop pressed and also by others who enjoyed it as a social occasion with mulled cider, pasties and hot dogs. The people taking part brought their apples, had them washed, diced (or more correctly "scratted") and pressed with the juice being returned for them, to bottle and take away. Some people used the juice for cider making and others for drinking. Apparently Apple juice freezes well. There were not as many participants bringing apples for pressing as usual. This was probably accounted for by apple scarcity, the rugby and the rain but there were plenty of apples to press. It was accomplished thanks to the great efforts of the Flower Show committee who provided willing helpers and expertise. Thanks goes to them for a very enjoyable and social day at Cruwys Morchard Parish Hall with the donations and proceeds of a draw and the catering profit going to the Flower Show funds.

CRUWYS ARMS GARDENERS

In October Gerry brought some apples to try, all Devon varieties. There were also some figs, as well as pickled garlic. The previous month, we took things we had grown, for a sampling session. Clare had potatoes, tomatoes and beans to try.

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LIGHTHOUSE NEWS

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Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life".

John 8:12 (NIV)

Billy Graham, when asked during a radio interview, what his first reaction would be when he got to heaven replied, "Relief! Relief that I actually made it".

We had similar feelings at 9:30 am on Monday, 28 October when Lighthouse opened its door to the public for the first time. The previous few weeks had been hectic as the long awaited move to premises closer to the town centre became ever nearer. There were times when it looked like we might not be ready, but Penny and Kim, with a band of volunteers, worked long hours and managed it, just. We still had the carpenter and kitchen fitter finishing off their work on the Saturday morning. But finally, praise the Lord, we were ready to, at least, open the shop and café on time.

Downstairs and in the rooms beyond the "black door" there was still some work to be done. And we had to completely clear out the old New Creation premises ready to hand back to the landlords.

There will be an "Official Opening" from 9.30am to 1pm on Saturday 30 November, to include a drink and mince pie for all our customers. It will be your last chance to buy your Christmas cards etc. Now that we are in the new shop, Penny has been able to put out the Christmas stock, including a good selection of cards that convey the true meaning of Christmas. We always have a few customers who leave it till the last minute and then wonder why we have so few cards left. Our aim is always to sell our last cards just before closing on Christmas Eve.

Please remember that we will be closed the week following Christmas, not opening again until Thursday, 2 January, 2020. Don't forget to call in for your January Bible notes etc. before Christmas.

While in the shop, why not take a look at the updated menu. Kim has had some new ideas and so we now have paninis, wraps and toasties, all with a choice of various fillings. Unfortunately, we have had to drop the omelettes, as the much smaller kitchen has thrown up some restrictions on what can be produced, although most of your favourites are still available. You can check out the new menu on our website, www.lighthouseiverton.org.uk.

The staff, volunteers and trustees of Lighthouse would like to wish all our supporters, customers and prayer partners a truly blessed Christmas and a Spirit filled New Year.

God bless you all

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PARISH ROUND-UP

CRUWYS MORCHARD YOUNG FARMERS

The Young Farmers held their Annual General Meeting in September. Jess Parkhouse has taken on the role of Chair. An End of Year Presentation Evening was held which proved to be a very successful evening.

The Club will be holding Bingos on the last Saturday of January and February 2020. If you are interested in becoming a member, please come along to our monthly meetings, which are held on the first Tuesday of every month at 7.30 pm at the Parish Hall.

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

Congratulations and thank you very much to Carol for such a successful event on 11 September, making £325.50 for MacMillan Nurses.

YOGA

Yoga continues every Thursday morning split in two groups, the first at 9.30am-10.55am, which is a general Hatha class.

The second 11.05am-12.30pm. A similar class set at an easier more gentle pace. For further information ring Hilary 01363 866245. hil.tosdevin@btinternet.com

A DATE FOR THE NEW YEAR

Friday, 24 January 2020

7pm at Cruwys Morchard Parish Hall
BURNS' NIGHT SUPPER WITH A DEVON TWIST

Dancing to Dumbo's Feather

Bar & Raffle

Tickets £17.50 with proceeds going to Hospiscare

To buy tickets contact Angela Culverhouse after 1 December on: aculverhouse74@gmail.com or phone 01363 866143

Please come and join us.

continued overleaf →

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PARISH ROUND-UP

PARISH HALL NEWS

Bingo, Saturday 21 December, eyes down at 8pm

Di and Dave's Annual Christmas Quiz on Saturday 7 December. Book your team, from 1 November from Mary, text 07773 362305, or ring 01884 860620,

Welcome and congratulations to Poppy, daughter of Louise and Nathan Horne upon her Baptism on 13 October.

Welcome to Anna and Guy Anderson and baby Genevieve to Sandpipers; Bob and Louise Hamilton in the Smithy and also Ollie and Lydia Rowlands in Lower Lugsland.

Our prayers and best wishes to all those in the Parish who are suffering and not well, especially Pat Cross.

PENNYMOOR CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

First Sunday All ages Service

Second Sunday Communion service

Third Sunday Join Way Village at 2:30

Fourth Sunday Prayer & Praise

Fifth Sunday Film

Coffee Morning every Wednesday 11 - 12:30

Watch Notice board and Facebook for Special events, or contact Rev. Ruth on 01363 83451

speaking. Harvest Supper was on the Monday with Rev Jane Wilson as the after supper speaker. The produce was auctioned by Steven Radford and Arthur Haywood. The evening raised £210 for CHAT. Thank you to everyone who helped in any way for the Harvest Celebrations and we give thanks to God for His wonderful and abundant provision.

A PCC meeting was held on 30 October and the next meeting will be in February.

Christmas will soon be upon us, with many Services and Celebrations of Christ's birth. This year we will be joining with the Christingle Praise Party on Sunday 1 December at 3.30pm in Calverleigh Church. The Carol Service will be on 15 December at 6.30pm with the offering being given to the work at Vranch House. Do come and join us. On 22 December there will be an informal time at 11.00am in the Church. There will be no Christmas Day Service at Loxbeare, or Washfield but see middle pages for details of Christmas Service in Calverleigh.

Carol Singing evenings will be on 19/21/23 December. The collection will be for 'Open Doors and Mind'. Do come and join in. Details from Ron 01884 881362.

There will be a Family Service on 12 January and a Morning Praise Service on 19 January - both at 11am.

It is good to hear that the New Creation Christian Bookshop, now called the Lighthouse, have agreed their new premises at 13 Bampton Street and moved in.

We give God thanks for his guidance and provision and we pray for his blessing on their work of providing a place of refreshment and encouragement to all. Well worth a visit.

On 19 October a Coffee Morning was held at Jean's to raise funds for the Blythwood Shoe Boxes, for Christmas. A sum of £275 was raised. Thank you to everyone who helped, supported and also gave ready filled boxes.

Bottle Top Re-cycling for Charity

Jean Heard is very disappointed to report that she can no longer re-cycle the bottle tops for Charity. I have enquired with the Council and they advise that we "Wash and Squash and replace the Top" before putting our bottles, complete with tops, into our normal re-cycling, as the tops can now be re-cycled by them. If anyone knows where they can still be re-cycled for Charity, please let Jean know on 01884 881400.

Many thanks and much appreciation to all who have helped keep the Churchyard looking so nice and tidy during the past year and with the general maintenance of the Church. Also to all who have helped, supported and contributed in any way to the smooth running of the Church, to those who have taken Services, played the organ, cleaned the Church, provided flowers etc.

It is good to hear that Graham Radford has recovered from his finger injury and stay in hospital. Our thoughts and prayers are with Leslie Tidball, Derek and Avril McManus recovering from operations and anyone else who is not well or awaiting operations/treatments.

Congratulations to Henry and Hannah Frankpitt on the birth of their precious little girl Martha Florence in September. We send our prayers and good wishes to you both.

Also congratulations to all celebrating special occasions and Happy Birthday to all with birthdays in December/January.

LOXBEARE

Our Harvest Celebrations were held over the weekend 28/29 September with the Rev Andy Humm from St Paul's speaking at the Saturday Service, led by Ron, followed by Sports and Tea. The offering of £220 was given to Tear Fund.

The Sunday Harvest Songs of Praise was led by Jean and Carol with Harvest hymns chosen by the congregation, with Steph



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PARISH ROUND-UP

The Christmas Fayre will be on 7 December 2-4pm in the Village Hall for Village Hall Funds.

Bingo Evening on the 9 December 7 for 7.30pm. Contact Carol on 01884 881480

Village Party will be the 12 January at 7pm in the Village Hall with Bring and Share Supper. Contact Ron on 01884 881362.

Social Evening, also in the Hall, will be 25 January 7 for 7.30pm.

OAKFORD

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Supper and Auction following the Harvest Service. A most enjoyable evening.

Christmas Carols by Candlelight will be on Sunday 22 December in St Peter's at 6pm. All are welcome to join in singing traditional carols, in the decorated Church and stay to chat over mulled wine and mince pies, afterwards.

There will be no Service on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day in St Peter's, so do come along to celebrate the Season with the Carol Service at 6pm on 22 December, which will include Holy Communion.

There has been an encouraging response to the Parish Giving Scheme recently launched. You can pledge to give as little as £1 per week through the scheme which will help towards the maintenance of the Church and restoration of the Bell Tower. We are particularly grateful to all the non-church goers who have signed up to the scheme. Thank you to all who feel the value of having a Parish Church at the hub of our community. Your generosity is helping to keep alive our plans for the future of St Peter's which in some way will benefit everyone in the parish of Oakford. Contact Mary Shere 01398 351154

oakridgepork@gmail.com or pick up a leaflet at the back of the church if you would like to join the many others in supporting the church.

Next Bell Tower Fundraiser – Afternoon Tea with author Liz Shakespeare on Saturday 1 February. Liz was born in Bideford and has written five books set in Devon. She draws her inspiration from the North Devon countryside. Her talk this afternoon will be focussed on, but not limited to, her book 'The Postman Poet'. Oakford Village Hall will be the venue. Further details from Mary Shere 01398 351154.

We are saddened to hear of the death of Dawn Patricia Caesar, mother of Tracey Holmes, on 20 October. We offer condolences to Tracey, her sister and their families and friends. A Service was held at Taunton Crematorium on 4 November.

The two patches of garden by the Church Lych Gate have gone wild and are looking neglected. Are there any kind souls who would be prepared to have a go at restoring these areas – mainly weeding and forking over. If so please get in touch with Jean Marcus 01398 351241. Thanks.

Quiz Nights
18 December – The Christmas Quiz

15 January – normal Quiz Night. Both at The Red Lion, 8pm for 8.15pm start.

The Moorland Club
17 December – Christmas Lunch at The Toucan, Bampton. 12 noon for 12.30pm. Contact Jennie Chappell 01398 351666.
9 January at 2pm – a talk by David Jury entitled 'A Pilgrim's Walk'. Meet in the Village Hall. New members always welcome.

Village Hall Events – Burn's Night Race Evening on Saturday 25 January. Look out for posters or contact Dawn Williams 01398 324035.

Forward date:
Friday 6 March – Taste Off – prizes will be awarded in the following classes: Sloe Gin, Fruit Vodka, Flavoured tippie such as Brandy, Rum or Whisky, Non-alcoholic Fruit Cordial. Start foraging. Go hunt and gather! Details in the next edition of 'Today'.

Christmas is coming at last. The retail industry has been promoting it since September (or late August in some cases) so maybe the idea of it in commercial terms is wearing a bit thin by now. One thing for sure is that as you advance in years, it comes around a lot quicker. Leaving aside the 'hard sell' there are many meaningful things to enjoy in the festive season. And love is at the heart of it. We wish you love this Christmas and happiness and good health in the New Year.

RACKENFORD

Firstly, we pray for better health for the following who have needed hospital treatment, operations and undergoing regular checks, Peggy Hookins, Graham Fennel, Dennis Soupe, Herbert Smith, Vera Sutton, Eileen Defew, Philippa Fraser and Andrew Shovelton and not forgetting Jacques Cann. Our prayers also go to Vera Sutton's daughter Heather, living in Leamington Spa, who is very poorly.

Our Harvest was once again a great celebration as we gave thanks for all the

continued on Page 12 ➔

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FOLLOW THE STAR THROUGH DECEMBER



1 DECEMBER

CALVERLEIGH

11.15 am Cluster Service
See Washfield

3.30 pm Christingle Service

CRUWYS MORCHARD

9.30 am Morning Prayer

LOXBEARE

11.15 am Cluster Service
See Washfield

OAKFORD

3.30 pm Christingle, Calverleigh

RACKENFORD

9.30 am Morning Worship

STOODLEIGH

11 am Morning Praise

TEMPLETON

10 am Morning Service

WASHFIELD

11.15 am Cluster Service
with Holy Communion
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

WITHLEIGH

10.30 am Advent Service

8 DECEMBER

CALVERLEIGH

11.15 am Family Service

CRUWYS MORCHARD

11 am Family Service

LOXBEARE

11 am Family Service

OAKFORD

11.15 am Cluster Service
See Rackenford

RACKENFORD

11.15 am Cluster Service
with Holy Communion
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

STOODLEIGH

11.15 am Cluster Service
See Rackenford

TEMPLETON

No Service

WASHFIELD

3 pm Evening Prayer

WITHLEIGH

4 pm Christingle Service
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

15 DECEMBER

CALVERLEIGH

3 pm Carol Service

CRUWYS MORCHARD

11.15 am Cluster Service
See Templeton

LOXBEARE

6.30 pm Carol Service
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

OAKFORD

No Service

RACKENFORD

9.30 am Family Service

STOODLEIGH

6.30 pm Evening Praise

TEMPLETON

11.15 am Cluster Service
with Holy Communion
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

WASHFIELD

11.15 am Family Service

WITHLEIGH

11.15 am Cluster Service
See Templeton

21 DECEMBER

STOODLEIGH

6 pm Carol Service
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

All Welcome

You are invited to a
Christingle Praise

Party

on Sunday

1 December

**at 3.30pm in
Calverleigh Church**



**We do hope you can
join us !!**

22 DECEMBER

CALVERLEIGH

10 am Informal Get-together

CRUWYS MORCHARD

11 am Carols and Christingles
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

LOXBEARE

11 am Informal Worship
with Carols

OAKFORD

6 pm Carol Service
with Holy Communion
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

RACKENFORD

6.30 pm Carol Service

STOODLEIGH

11 am Morning Praise

TEMPLETON

No Service

WASHFIELD

9.30 am Morning Prayer

WITHLEIGH

6.30 pm Carol Service

24 DECEMBER CHRISTMAS EVE

**PLEASE ATTEND WHICH
SERVICE IS MOST
CONVENIENT FOR YOU**

6 pm

WASHFIELD

Carol Service

6.30 pm

STOODLEIGH

Holy Communion
for Christmas

Steph Gordon-Jeffs

7 pm

TEMPLETON

Carol Service

10 pm

CRUWYS MORCHARD

Holy Communion
for Christmas

Steph Gordon-Jeffs

11.30 pm

WITHLEIGH

Welcome in Christmas

25 DECEMBER



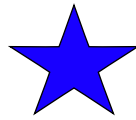
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St Mary's Church**

CALVERLEIGH
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

**Let us all welcome
Christmas together
in love**



29 DECEMBER



**OUR LAST
MISSION
COMMUNITY
GROUP SERVICE
for 2019**

**is at
10.30 am in
St Margaret's
Church**

TEMPLETON
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

**Happy New Year
Greetings**

5 JANUARY

CALVERLEIGH
See Loxbeare

CRUWYS MORCHARD
9.30 am Morning Prayer

LOXBEARE
11.15 am Cluster Service
with Holy Communion
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

OAKFORD
10 am Morning Praise

RACKENFORD
9.30 am Morning Worship
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

STOODLEIGH
11 am Morning Praise

TEMPLETON
No Service

WASHFIELD
See Loxbeare

WITHLEIGH
10.30 am Family Service

12 JANUARY

CALVERLEIGH
9.30 am Morning Worship
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

CRUWYS MORCHARD
11 am Family Service

LOXBEARE
11 am Family Service

OAKFORD
11.15 am Cluster Service
with Holy Communion
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

RACKENFORD
See Oakford

STOODLEIGH
See Oakford

TEMPLETON
10.30 am Morning Service

WASHFIELD
3 pm Evening Prayer

WITHLEIGH
10.30 am Morning Worship

19 JANUARY

CALVERLEIGH
11.15 am Family Service

CRUWYS MORCHARD
See Withleigh

LOXBEARE
11 am Morning Praise

OAKFORD
6.30 pm Evening Praise

RACKENFORD
9.30 am Family Service

STOODLEIGH
6.30 pm Evening Prayer
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

TEMPLETON
See Withleigh

WASHFIELD
11.15 am Family Service

WITHLEIGH
11.15 am Cluster Service
with Holy Communion
Steph Gordon-Jeffs

26 JANUARY

**GROUP SERVICE
to celebrate
PLOUGH
SUNDAY
with
Steph Gordon-Jeffs
in WITHLEIGH
10.30am**

**Please come to
join us, and the
Young Farmers,
as we ask for
God's blessing on
the land and all
who work on it.**

PARISH ROUND-UP

crops and produce that we are so lucky to enjoy. Thank you to Rackenford Church of England school who brought their gifts into the Church. These were a great benefit to the auction and enhanced the beauty of the church, along with all the other gifts received. We much appreciate the flowers and foliage left in the porch. This was a great help to the ladies who came along to help decorate - so many thanks to you.

Our Harvest Praise on 13 October was a joyous time with the bells ringing, children playing their Bell Plates and a song beautifully sung by our choir. Many thanks to them and to Marjorie for all her work in practising with the choir and children. Rev'd Steph Gordon-Jeffs took our Service and gave an interesting talk.

The following morning our preparations began for the Harvest Supper, dismantling everything in Church and transporting it to Mary and Jacques spacious barn ready for the supper and auction. A delicious salad, meats, pasta, veggie options, mashed potatoes, bread rolls and pickles followed by a wide choice of puddings and cream with cheese and biscuits, tea and coffee to complete the supper. We were once again blessed to have Stafford Sampson as our auctioneer who gave us many laughs with his wit and humour and he was assisted by our kind helpers. Thank you to all the amazing bidders for their fun and generosity, to Annette Reed for running the draw, for all the food and puddings given so kindly and of course, to Jacques and Mary Cann for their hospitality. A wonderful profit of £1,740.50 was made over the Harvest. Thank you all so much. We hope you all enjoyed our Service and supper.

On 27 October a Group Service with Holy Communion was held in Oakford where Rev'd Steph Gordon-Jeffs welcomed

Bishop Jackie, who gave the sermon. Representatives from all parishes made up a large congregation to enjoy this special Service. A chat with refreshments was available, and enjoyed by many, after the service.

The PCC held a get-together with a lovely buffet, pudding and drinks to thank Herbert for his 42 years as Churchwarden. He was presented with a money gift towards a holiday and flowers were presented to Marjorie. Liz made a speech thanking Herbert, who has worked tirelessly over those 42 years and has been at the helm for the celebratory and sad occasions, seeing many changes within the Church and Village during this time. We hope you enjoyed your holiday Herbert and will enjoy taking a step back from Churchwardens duties. Herbert has decided that, at the moment, he would like to stay on the PCC. Many thanks to Graham and Ruth Fennel for hosting our celebration. Mary Cann was also presented with flowers as a little thank you, in appreciation for all she is doing. We will be very sad when the time comes for Mary and Jacques to leave us.

At the present we no longer have a Churchwarden. We hope the following names and numbers may be of help should you need to contact someone concerning Church matters.

Ruth Fennel (Secretary) 881488, Elizabeth Paxton 881331, Hilda Nott (Church key holder) 881248, Fiona Maddocks 881204, Herbert and Edward Smith 881375, Joy Moore (non PCC)881219, Mary Cann 881696. We are all happy to assist if we can.

Once again we had children visiting on Hallowe'en, dressed in amazing costumes and very grateful for the treats they received. Hope you enjoyed your evening.

Many people enjoyed the spectacle of the bonfire, fireworks lighting up the skies and the food available on Bonfire night. A big "Thank you" to all involved in keeping up this Village tradition.

The following people have moved to Rackenford. Sorry we are late welcoming you but we don't always get the news till later, so welcome to Mr & Mrs Bloomfield, Peter and Jane Wood (Little Acres), Jeremy Bazley and Jasmine [Woodpeckers], and anyone else who has joined us.

How sad to hear that in the future we will be saying goodbye to Geoff and Jenny Parnell. We hope and pray someone will come forward to take on this position - they will be blessed to learn from the best.

Congratulations to all who have celebrated any special occasions. As early as it may seem this is the last opportunity to wish everyone amongst us and our friends in the Exe Valley a very happy Christmas and healthy New Year, as we celebrate our Lord's birth and enjoy Services together.

Look out for our Recipe Book which should be on sale soon. It could make an ideal Christmas Present.

Last but not least, Rackenford hit our television screens - with Rackenford Tales - back in October. If you saw it you may have recognised some faces and places that were mentioned.

STOODLEIGH

Work on repairing the Church Tower is progressing well and those living by the Church have had the thrill of seeing the two abseilers descending from the top of the tower, battling winds and rain but

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PARISH ROUND-UP

also enjoying some sunny days, in order to carry out the repair work. It is hoped that it will be finished by the middle of November. We have missed the sounds of the bells on Thursday evenings and on certain Sundays, but we know that when it is safe to do so, the bell ringers will return to the tower. We hope that the bells can be rung for Christmas. The lime pointing needs about three weeks to settle after completion. Funding has been coming in and we are particularly grateful to the Allchurches Trust, the Devon Historic Churches Trust, the Cooper Legacy Church Repair Fund, Viscount Amory's Charitable Trust and the Prince of Wales Trust Fund. In addition, special thanks are due for a number of generous private donations from people in the village. The final target to cover the overall cost of £33,000 has yet to be met and further fund-raising will be undertaken in 2020.

The Church looked wonderful for Harvest Festival and many congratulations and thanks to our group of Church flower arrangers, who seem to excel themselves for every event. The Harvest Supper and Skittles evening in the Parish Hall was a great success, with around 45 people enjoying cottage pie followed by a variety of fruit crumbles. Many thanks to the talented cooks who provided the food. The skittles were popular and the final 'killer' match was tense, with Michael Brice being the final winner and donating his winnings to our chosen charity, the Devon Air Ambulance Trust. The evening raised £270 for the charity.

Our annual churchyard clearance is 10am Saturday 23 November. This event to tidy up for the winter could not take place without the help of our volunteers, in particular, Angela and Richard Hill. Please come to help if you can.

The following events are coming up: the **Church Christmas Fayre** in the Parish Hall on Saturday 7 December, from 10.30am to 12 noon. Father Christmas is again expected and there will be a variety of stalls and the usual generous raffle. Please do come and support this annual event.

The **Church Carol Service** will be held on Saturday 21 December at 6pm, when we will welcome the Rector who hopes to have something exciting up her sleeve for the children.

Carol Singing in the village will be on Monday 23 December, starting at 6pm and departing from the Parish Hall. Please let Jennifer Rowlandson (351402) know if you would like to join the singers or would like them to call at your house that evening.

The Autumn Market and Coffee Morning was held on 26 October. Despite bad weather and the compelling England v New Zealand rugby semi-final, it was great to see everyone who came to the Parish Hall. Our thanks go to the stallholders and the many visitors who shopped and enjoyed the coffee and cakes. We are also grateful to the bakers for their cakes, the gardeners for their plants and the volunteers who helped with stalls and ran the Kitchen Café. This was an enjoyable morning for all and just over £400 was raised for Parish Hall maintenance and improvements. The Stoodleigh Parish Hall Management Committee would like to thank all those who helped make the event such a success.

The **Christmas Bingo** evening will be held on Monday 16 December at the Parish Hall. Doors open at 7pm, eyes down at 7.30pm. There will be a great selection of festive prizes.

The **Christmas Draw** will also be held on that evening. Tickets are already on sale and again there will be some fabulous prizes including a luxury hamper, vouchers from local businesses, spirits, chocolates and more. Members of the Parish Hall Committee will be calling on you so that you can buy Draw tickets or you can ring Sheila Davis (351756) for more information.

Stoodleigh welcomes Mike, Jake, Tom, Cee, Tiger and Pippin who have come to live at Aldridge Mill and we also welcome the new residents at Ford Cottage. We hope you will be very happy in Stoodleigh and we will look forward to seeing you at forthcoming events in the village.

Classes at the Parish Hall

New – Yoga sessions for beginners: Wednesdays at 7.30pm, from 13 November until 18 December. Pay as you go or subscribe for six sessions. Ring Claire Weeks (07793 289461) to find out more.

Zumba/Aerobics/Toning classes: Thursdays from 7 to 8pm. All abilities welcome. Ring Kim Grimston (07773 019564) for more information.

Pilates classes: Mondays from 7 to 8pm. This class is currently full but ring Karen Sharpe (01392 439660) for information.

For dates and events taking place in Stoodleigh, please see the parish website <https://parish.middevon.gov.uk/stoodleigh/events-calendar/>

Stoodleigh Inn

Christmas opening hours :-

Christmas Eve: open from 3 to 11pm. Chinese Buffet around 6pm. Cost £7.50 per person. Please come to the Inn to reserve and pay by 5pm.

Christmas Day: closed.

Boxing Day: open from 4 to 9pm.

continued overleaf ➔

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PARISH ROUND-UP

New Year's Eve: open from 8pm to late. Free buffet and music.

Wednesday 1 and Thursday 2 January: closed. Thereafter open as usual.

Church Flower Rota

1 & 8 December Linda Sharrock
 20 December Christmas Flowers – all help please
 5 & 12 January Betty Wotton
 19 & 26 January Phyllis Hill

Congratulations to the following prize winners in the **Stoodleigh 100 Club**

September: 1st Yvonne Lang; 2nd David Wotton; 3rd Cathy Thorpe; 4rd Nonie Neusinger

October: 1st Alison Palfrey; 2nd Betty Wotton; 3rd Pat Robinson; 4th Jeannie Morrissey

Finally, may we wish a very Happy Christmas and the very best for 2020 to all our readers.

by the village for the Haven Centre (Age UK) in Tiverton. The Haven Centre was delighted with all the food and they have passed on their thanks to all the Templeton Community for their generous donations.

Bonfire and Firework Night on Saturday 2 November. Will they, won't they? Well, yes we did! Templeton Weather Centre monitored the conditions very carefully and identified a sweet spot between 18:00 hrs and 20:00 hrs. Sure enough, right on cue, the winds settled, the rain stopped, and the skies cleared in time for another brilliant firework display and bonfire! Hot dogs, hot drinks and a full bar completed the evening to make it another great Saturday night out for all the family! This is one of those special times in the Templeton calendar when our small community comes together and does us proud. It takes many volunteers to run this event and we would like to thank all those who gave their time to help and support us.

Remembrance Sunday Service on 10 November will have been and gone by the time this magazine goes to print. Martin Hansford has once again kindly agreed to lead the service, which honours the sacrifices of our Armed Forces, veterans, and their families, from the two World Wars and later conflicts. During this Service, there will have been a two-minute period of silence which will be reflected throughout the country at 11am.

Future events in Templeton

A Festive Christmas-themed (paper) Quiz Night Friday 6 December at 7pm (doors open at 6.30pm) Bruce and Chris Pearson have kindly agreed to run this so please come and take part and join in the fun. £7.00 adults, £3.50 children under 14. Teams of up to six people so get your teams together now!

Delicious pasties and puddings. Supper at half time.

Contact Bruce and Chris (881408) bpearson@holmeaddental.co.uk christinepearson56@gmail.com, Bindy (860655) belinda.linden@ntlworld.com or Allyson (860868) allyson@uuebb.com to book a place at the quiz (deadline Wednesday 4 December) or for more information.

Christmas Children's Party (with you-know-who at around 5.30pm) in Templeton Village Hall!

Saturday 14 December from 3pm - 6pm This is a wonderful annual family event organised by Tony Loosemore. If your children would like to join the children's party, please let Tony know beforehand so that he can cater enough food for everyone (07510128683). Please remember to bring a wrapped and named gift for your child. This year, by popular demand, there will be a special Christmas disco and yes, we are expecting the big man in the red hoodie. But shhhh - it's a surprise!

The **Annual Christmas Bar Games** (table tennis, pool, darts and skittles) will be held at Templeton Village Hall every Saturday evening in December from Saturday 7 December until the Grand Finals on Saturday 22 December. Please come and take part in this fun event – still plenty of time to practice on club nights!

A **Candlelit Carol Service** will be held in St Margaret's Church, Templeton, on Christmas Eve, Tuesday 24 December at 7pm. This is such a lovely Service where the whole village joins together to celebrate Christmas. And for those who wish to join a later Service with Holy Communion, the Cluster Service is in Cruwys Morchard. 10pm on Christmas Eve.

It's Burns' Night! Saturday January 25 in Templeton Village Hall, 6pm for 6.30pm start.

TEMPLETON

The Harvest Supper at Templeton Village Hall on 5 October was a great success with good food, good company and great music by Andrew Curtis, organist and music director of St Peter's Church, and his talented friends, Sue Rivett, Paul Vickery and Peter Searle, who form the folk band called 'Stick the Fiddle'. The communal singing was especially popular and enjoyed by all. The draw made £143 and the ticket sales were £432. A huge thank you to the band and to all who came and made it such a fun evening.

The Harvest Festival Service on Sunday 6 October, was led by Reg and William, and was well attended, with lots of fresh, packaged and canned produce donated



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PARISH ROUND-UP

This will be an entertaining evening and a great opportunity to catch up with friends and neighbours. Hamish and Corinne Miller, who used to live in Stoodleigh, have kindly agreed to lead the evening with a Ceilidh, and there will, of course, be plenty of delicious food, including Haggis (non-liver), sausages, and vegetarian alternatives. Please come and enjoy the Scottish Dancing. You are most welcome to join in or just watch the fun! The Haggis will be serenaded prior to supper. The evening will start early at 6pm so that the whole family can take part! Book your tickets now! £8 for adults, and £4 for children 14 and under. Please contact Lynda (881318), William (251153) or Bindy (860655) for tickets or any more information.

In our thoughts

Our thoughts and best wishes go to those who are unwell, in hospital, receiving or awaiting treatment, or going through a tough time, and hope that they will be feeling better soon.

Church Flowers and Cleaning Rota

Teresa Pancherz Advent -
No flowers 24Nov/1 Dec
Gloria Woollacott Advent -
No flowers 8/15 Dec
Ginah Palmer Flowers & Cleaning
22/29 Dec
Teresa Pancherz Flowers & Cleaning
5/12 Jan
Gill Rose Flowers & Cleaning
19/26 Jan

We need something cheerful to think about in these 'dark days before Christmas' and we can think back to that beautiful sunny day in September on which Abie Gill and Daniel Ayre were married. It was a great day of celebration in Washfield Church and their Reception in the Village. We send them every good wish for their life together. They will have many happy memories!

We had a wonderful Service in Oakford on 27 October when Bishop Jackie joined us for a Group Holy Communion Service. Steph gave her a very warm welcome and she was an inspiring preacher. She stayed to talk to everyone afterwards and we do hope she took away with her a hopeful picture of rural ministry.

Christmas will soon be upon us and that is a hopeful and happy thought, too! It will be good to see families returning and children getting excited.

Our traditional Carol Service will be on Christmas Eve at 6pm, followed by refreshments and chat! This year there are three Holy Communion Services with Steph Gordon-Jeffs, across the Mission Community and you are welcome to attend which Service is most convenient for you and your family.

On Christmas Day we are invited to Family Holy Communion in Calverleigh, where we shall have a warm welcome, as always, when we join together with them and Loxbeare to celebrate Holy Communion, with our three churches together. This is the only way we can all have a Communion at Christmas because our Rector has nine congregations to serve and we are learning to be flexible. We hope your returning families will understand and enjoy the necessary break from tradition. Our turn will come to host another year.

The **Christingle Service**, followed by a Party and Tea, is on Sunday 1 December at 3.30pm in Calverleigh, when all our children can meet, together with the Toddlers Group and others who came to Holiday Club.

The **Annual Coffee Morning** at The Cottage is on 7 December and we look forward to seeing you there if you can manage it. Contributions for the stall and raffle will be gladly received, but most of all your company is needed!

The departure from Washfield of Jenny and Geoff will leave a huge hole in our Church and wider community, not to mention our friendship. Farewells will come later but for the moment we send them every good wish for their future plans.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all those going through a difficult time. If the Church can be of help at any time, please do ask. The Rector, too, would like to know if she is needed for a visit.

We were saddened to hear of the death of Robert Julier at the end of September. Robert and Mary had lived at Marsh Cottage for many years before leaving Lower Washfield to live in Culmstock. One of Robert's legacies will live on in the Village with a fine example of his exquisite calligraphy (documenting past clergy) on display in the Church. A lovely man and former neighbour, sadly missed.

We wish all those amongst us who are not feeling well, receiving or awaiting treatments at present, our heartfelt good wishes. Somehow illness in Winter (and especially around Christmas) seems to be magnified and can cause greater discomfort and mental anguish. We hope our caring community can reach out to you if this is the case. Just talk to us ... we are listening. It's OK not to be OK.

continued overleaf ➔

WASHFIELD

December's Wintry breath is already clouding the pond, frosting the pane, obscuring Autumn's memory. It is growing cold. Winter is putting footsteps in the meadow.

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PARISH ROUND-UP

To those celebrating special birthdays or anniversaries we wish you many good wishes.

We have some new residents in the village. We would like to welcome Alan and Sally and also James, Byron and the dog !! We hope you will all be very happy living in Washfield.

Two events have taken place at the Social Club. Firstly, the culmination of the annual pumpkin growing competition at the end of October which saw Ann Roberts declared the winner of the largest fruit. Ann's pumpkin weighed in at 102lbs! Well done you and all the other growers. The evening also incorporated children's activities, food and fun and all of these elements meant that a sizeable donation of £240 was raised for the charities, FORCE and E.L.F. Thanks to all the volunteers who made the evening a success.

The second event didn't have quite such a positive outcome ... well, not for the England rugby team anyway! A group of ardent supporters gathered early in the Social Club for bacon sandwiches to watch the final, with high hopes of a win - but sadly it was not to be! Thanks to the ever confident James for organising this and for cooking the sarnies.

Events to look out for: Christmas Draw tickets available from the bar. Draw date: Saturday 21 December. Club bar open as usual at lunchtime on Christmas Day. Also, the Social Club is upgrading its licence to show films. With luck its first film night will be in December. Look out for posters.

Remember: Social club subs are due on 1 December and are now just £5. Please join to help the club grow and thrive and continue offering the best of social interaction it can for its members; thereby lessening social isolation in our community.

Carol Singing will take place around the Village, as is customary. The songsters will gather outside the Hall at 6pm on Tuesday 17 December and return to the Social Club later (and hoarser) for a bring and share supper. Proceeds will go to charity. Wrap up warm and join them.

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 26 November Social Club AGM in Hall. Current members welcome plus new members of club, volunteers and committee members always welcome
Friday 13 December W.I. Party in Hall. 3 course Christmas meal plus entertainment £22. Ring Jean 257703 for menu, further details and booking
Saturday 21 December Social Club Draw

2020

Thursday 9 January W.I. in Hall at 10am.
Tuesday 14 January teatime@thehall. It may be cold outside but there's a warm welcome awaiting you at teatime. All welcome for tea, cake and companionship from 2.30pm

Church Altar Flowers Rota

Dec 1/8 Mrs A Trout
Dec 15/22 Mrs Jones
Dec 29/Jan 5 Mrs Ellis
Jan 12/19 Mrs Parnell

Church Cleaning Rota

Dec 2/9 Mrs French
Dec 16/23 Mrs Harding/Mrs Jones
Dec 30/Jan 6 Mrs Albery
Jan 13/20 Mr & Mrs Ellis
Jan 27/Feb 3 Mrs French

WITHLEIGH

On the 8 September, Withleigh lost a good friend with the passing of Janet Stacey. Renowned for her 'dialect dialogues' with Janet Sellick, she was also responsible for the productions of

'Withleigh Entertains' in 2016 and again in February of this year, including the writing of the plays performed at each. Our thoughts and prayers go to Ron and the rest of the family.

By the time you read these notes, the redecoration of St Catherine's should be complete. From the fact that nobody can remember differently, it seems that this will be the first redecoration since the church was repaired and refurbished in the 1960s. Inevitably there have been additional works, by way of repairs, which could not have been foreseen when the original quotation was submitted, and which have delayed the completion. Dare we hope that the present work will last another fifty years? Our thanks to the committee for letting us use the Village Hall for our Services while the Church was 'out of bounds'.

Our grateful thanks to Brian King for providing the handrail at the entrance to the Village Hall.

Our Team Skittles competition held on Friday 25 October, in the Village Hall, was won by Tania Sampson's team and the gallant runners up were Christine Luxton's team. Well done to everyone who took part and made the evening so enjoyable. Thank you, Duncan, for organising the skittles and Sara for providing the refreshments.

Our Community Mid-day Lunch seems to be growing in popularity. This year's Autumn Lunch was held on Tuesday 5 November, when 53 people sat down to Beef Stew or Chicken Pie, with Roast Potatoes and vegetables, followed by delicious home-made desserts and a cup of tea or coffee. Many thanks to all who helped produce the meal and supplied the desserts.

We are back again for the Winter months with **Giles' Scottish Dancing classes**.

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PARISH ROUND-UP

Do come along and join in the fun, beginners welcome. The classes are Monday evenings starting at 7pm. The next dates are 9 & 16 December and after the Christmas break we resume on 6 January, then 20 & 27th of January. For more information please call Giles 01884 257123.

Our **Christingle Service** will take place in Church on the afternoon of Sunday 8 December at 4pm.

Our **Carol Service** will take place on the evening of Sunday 22 December, at 6.30pm. The Service will be followed by mulled wine, coffee, mince pies and shortbread. During the service, gifts of non-perishable food, toiletries and cleaning items will be collected for CHAT.

Due to an ongoing lack of retired clergy available to help out, Steph will now be conducting just three cluster Holy Communion Services over Christmas. The Service for our cluster will be at Cruwys Morchard at 10pm on Christmas Eve. Please do try to attend this Service. There will be no Communion Service at St Catherine's but, for those who are unable to go to Cruwys Morchard, we will be holding a non-Communion Service at 11.30pm on Christmas Eve to 'Welcome in Christmas', led by our own Church members.

Just to make Christmas last a little bit longer, we are having a Late Christmas Meal on Saturday 11 January, in the Village Hall. Hopefully the Turkey will last that long!! Please bring your own drinks, 5.30pm for 6pm. Tickets are £12.50 each for a three course meal. Please book your tickets from Sara 252949, Christine 257571 or Brenda 252431. Numbers are limited, so do book your tickets early.

Our **Plough Sunday Service**, when the plough is brought into our church to be

blessed, will be a Group Service at St Catherine's on Sunday 26 January at 10.30am. Do join with us as we seek God's blessing on another farming year.

An advance notice that, as from February next year, the normal time of our Morning Services will be changing from 10.30am to 10.45am. Churchwardens' Council recently agreed to the times of Morning Services within the Mission Community being standardised at 9am and 10.45am. See the centre pages in each issue for the times of all our Services.

Get well wishes go to all those known to us who are receiving treatment, recovering from operations, or who are not well at the moment.

Our best wishes to those recently married in our Church. Christopher Bennett and Beverly Langdon on 31 August, and Patrick Jeffs and Imogen Turner on 7 September.

Congratulations to Henry and Hannah Frankpit on the birth of Martha – first grandchild for Mark and Cathy Luxton, and first great-grandchild for Christine Luxton and Harry and Sylvia Hann. Congratulations, also, to all those celebrating special birthdays or anniversaries.

Congratulations go to Richard and Becky Tucker on the birth of Annabel Elizabeth on 5 November, first grandchild for Nigel and Brenda.

Wishing you all a Joyous Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Witleigh WI meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month, at 7.15pm. The new program will be out in December. For more information - Rosie 01884 257123.

Thursday 12 December - Xmas Party with Secret Santa.

Thursday 9 January - New Years Lunch, venue to be confirmed.

Forthcoming Events;

Monday 2 December - Christmas Whist Drive, in the Hall at 7.30pm.

Thursday 5 December - Christmas Bingo, in the Hall, eyes down 7.30pm.

Sunday 8 December - Christingle Service at 4pm.

Monday 9 December - Scottish Dancing in the Hall at 7pm.

Thursday 12 December - WI Xmas Party in the Hall at 7.15pm.

Sunday 15 December - Carol Service at 6.30pm, followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

Monday 16 December - Scottish Dancing in the Hall at 7pm.

Christmas Eve - Holy Communion Cluster Service at Cruwys Morchard at 10pm.

Christmas Eve - 'Welcome in Christmas' in Church at 11.30pm.

2020

Thursday 9 January - WI New Years Lunch, venue to be confirmed.

Saturday 11 January - Late Christmas Meal in the Hall, 5.30 for 6pm.

Monday 20 January - Scottish Dancing in the Hall at 7pm.

Sunday 26 January - Group Plough Sunday Service in Church at 10.30am.

Monday 27 January - Scottish Dancing in the Hall at 7pm.

Flower Rota:

December 1, 8 - Linda Taylor

December 15 - CHRISTMAS

December 29 - Margaret Gale

January 5, 12 - Margaret Gale

January 19, 26 - Brenda Tucker

Weekly Events;

Tuesdays - Yoga in the Village Hall at 7pm.

Wednesdays - Short Mat Bowls in the Village Hall at 7.30pm.

Monthly Diary Dates:

Second Monday - Whist Drive

Second Thursday - W.I.

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FORCE offers physical, emotional, psychological and practical support to patients but we recognise that their families and carers also suffer so we're here for them too. Whether it's advice on how to tell your child that mummy or daddy isn't going to be looking or feeling like they usually do for a while, getting information on what money you might be able to claim when you can't work or simply taking an hour for a relaxing complementary therapy session, **FORCE** is here to help.

We have a Cancer Support and Information Centre in Exeter and we also offer support and information and fund the delivery of chemotherapy once a week in Okehampton, Tiverton and Honiton.

We fund local research and buy equipment to improve patient care at the RD&E.

All of this is done without NHS or Government funding. We rely completely on voluntary donations from the communities we serve.

We are very keen to spread the word as widely as possible about the all the things that **FORCE** can offer.

That's where we need your help..

We would like to be able to use your magazine/community and website to let people in your area know more about **FORCE**.

Kay Jeffery
Fundraising Assistant
FORCE Cancer Charity
Phone: 01392 402875



LIGHT UP A LIFE APPEAL
Light up a Life this Christmas and support Children's Hospice South West and North Devon Hospice

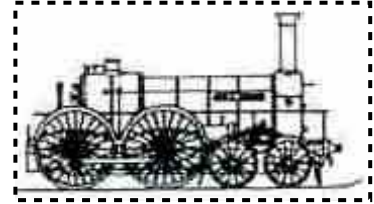
This year's Light Up a Life Appeal will be launched at the Barnstaple Christmas Lights Switch-on Event in Barnstaple Pannier Market on 28 November 5.30pm.

You can light a candle in memory of your loved ones, at one of the special Services taking part across the region throughout December. These Services are open to anyone and the most local dates are :

Sunday 8 December: Cheriton Fitzpaine, St Matthew's Church 6pm (CHSW only)

Wednesday 11 December: South Molton Methodist Church 7pm

For more details go to either
www.chsw.org.uk/lual
www.northdevonhospice.org.uk/support-us/events/light-up-a-life or
andy.keeble@chsw.org.uk 01271 325270



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The club meets twice monthly at our track at Worthy Moor, Rackenford.

At our open day on Sunday 20 October we were pleased to entertain 8 members from the Salvation Army Men's Group from Tiverton. 3 Electric locomotives and one steam locomotive were running, and the visitors enjoyed plenty of rides around the track, and one or two even tried their hand at driving a train.

On Saturday 26 October we had a stand at the Exeter Garden Rail show where we displayed many steam, diesel and electric trains, stationary engines and other model engineering items.


The club welcomes visitors and the "just curious". We meet throughout the year. Please see our website for details. <http://tivertonmodelengineering.org.uk>

A New Cross made and presented to Cruwys Morchard Church by Shelby Parris. It was Consecrated by Rev'd Stephanie Gordon-Jeffs on 13 October




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A brief outline about Saving Aluminium Cans and what two teenage boys are doing to help raise funds for the Church Bells Appeal in Oakford.

Earlier this year Mary Shere had an idea to save aluminium cans with a view to raising money for the Tower Fund. When Jack Otton and David Murphy (who both live in the village) heard about this, they decided that they would like to get involved and help out.

Without any prompting, they built an amazing cart and started going from door to door collecting aluminium, which Mary can sell for recycling and donate the proceeds to the Tower Fund

Their 'service' soon caught on and now every Tuesday evening they can be seen trundling up and down the hilly roads in Oakford collecting cans for the Church Bells appeal.

Jack and David's support is about more than just collecting cans for recycling. Their commitment to a weekly round is enabling the whole village to play an active part in the fund-raising appeal and is a great way to encourage us all to pull together ! Well done them !!



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John and Marion Roberts
Marion and I are so thankful for people's generosity. We have bought a beautiful Persian rug, second-hand of course, but in perfect condition and just right for our dining room. It will be a constant reminder of our happy 27 years in the Exe Valley.



'FALLING UPWARDS' A Retreat Day for Church Officers The Old Deanery

David Wells, an inspirational and very well-known speaker worldwide, was the speaker at this extremely helpful and interesting day run by the Diocese. Everyone there went home feeling much encouraged and lighter in spirit!

He advised that we all should bring joy into what we are doing; not to take ourselves too seriously, not to feel stress or compare ourselves with others and not to feel guilty about doing nothing sometimes!

He spoke with great humour and understanding and told lots of amusing anecdotes which illustrated his points. We all exchanged experience and gained from hearing about other churches in Devon. It was all very relaxed, with coffee breaks and lunch. It was a very worthwhile day indeed.

Jeanne Jones
Churchwarden Washfield

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