

# December 2014 / January 2015

Price 40p

# **AN UNWANTED GIFT**

We all know how it feels. We spend time, energy and money finding the perfect gift for a loved one. We imagine how happy and grateful they will be when we give it to them. But when Christmas comes and we offer the gift, all we get in return is a forced smile and an insincere 'Thank you'. We're pretty sure that in a couple of weeks our carefully chosen gift will be donated to Oxfam or sold on eBay. And it hurts to know that our gift was not wanted.

On the very first Christmas, God gave the world an extraordinary gift. He loved this broken and fallen world enough to give us his only Son, so that we can know his mercy and grace. The angels announced the good news of peace with God and goodwill towards men. But despite God's amazing generosity, his greatest gift to the world was not wanted.

The Lord Jesus was turned away from the inn and he was hunted by Herod. Later, he was mocked and rejected. He was branded a madman or a demon. He was betrayed by a close companion, abandoned by his followers, stripped, whipped and hung up to die. Jesus came to bring us heaven, but we gave him hell. He is the Christmas gift which nobody wanted.



Still today, many people do not want the real Jesus. He is too challenging, too disturbing, and too holy for us. We prefer a counterfeit Jesus, who fits in with our ideas, supports our opinions, and massages our egos. So we exchange God's greatest gift for a cheap imitation, and we take offence when people suggest that our version of Jesus may be a fake.

In fact, those who follow the real Jesus find that the world often treats them in much the same way as it treated him. We don't like to be reminded of the gift that we rejected. But the Bible teaches us that God will treat us exactly as we treat the Lord Jesus Christ. If we reject God's greatest gift and follow a fake instead, then we will find ourselves rejected. We can never know peace with God, if we turn our backs on the one true Prince of Peace.

The good news of Christmas is that if we will accept God's greatest gift, the real Jesus who we only meet in the pages of scripture, then God promises that he will accept us. No matter who we are or what we have done, if we receive Jesus, then God will receive us. If we welcome Jesus into our lives, then God will welcome us. If we follow Jesus, then God's love will follow us. This amazing gift is still given to all who accept the real Jesus.

So what will we do with God's greatest gift to the world this Christmas?

Steve

*Copy Deadline for the February / March issue - Monday 12 January 2015* 

# THE EXE VALLEY MISSION COMMUNITY

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

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



### **EXE VALLEY TODDLERS**

(For under 5ives) Friday mornings during Term-time at Calverleigh Village Hall 10 am - 12 noon Toys, snacks, songs and more !! For more information contact Liz Heywood on 01884 881583

You can also find us on Facebook

### **CHURCHWARDEN CONTACT DETAILS**

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# EDITORIAL

### A TIME FOR THANKS

Reading all your "Round-ups" at this time out-pouring of thanks going to the many people who have helped, in their various ways, to keep our parishes alive. We would like to add our own thanks to our readers, contributors, distributors, advertisers and printers ... without **any** of whom, we could not survive.

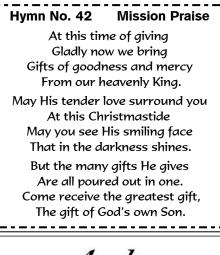
We are sorry that we have had to use smaller print but you all had such a lot to say and we didn't want to leave anything out. We are also pleased to have some new advertisers, whose payments help to keep the TODAY magazine going.

We wish Steve and Sarah a happy, healthy and successful move to Fremington and thank them for their endeavours, on all our behalves, over their time with us in the Exe Valley.

It is going to be difficult to fill the void left by Steve and Rob, so, if Services have to be changed at short notice, we (and Paul Iliff) would ask for your patience and understanding.

We wish everyone a peaceful, healthy and happy Christmas and New Year.

### Jenny and Geoff



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# **ALL CHANGE**

By now, most of you will have heard the news that Sarah and I will shortly be leaving the Exe Valley in order for me to take up a new post in North Devon. We feel a mixture of sadness and excitement at the prospect of all the changes that the next few months will bring. We will miss our good friends in the Exe Valley, but we do feel the time is right for a new start.

Before I moved to Mid-Devon, a friend said to me that he thought I was taking on impossible task by becoming an incumbent of nine parishes. I've often felt that he might have been right! I have no doubt that I have made many mistakes and that I have simply not been able to satisfy all the different hopes and expectations of the nine parishes. However, I have felt for some time that there is also a deeper problem, namely that the kind of ministry that I feel called to offer, is not the kind of ministry that the parishes wish to receive.

When I accepted the position of Rector of the Exe Valley Mission Community, I made it clear that I did so on the understanding that the nine parishes were open to change. Over the four years that I have been in the post, it has become increasingly clear that this is not generally the case. I have often been saddened and surprised at how averse to change our parishes can be, and how personally hostile people can be towards those who suggest change.

Most of us find change difficult, to a lesser or greater degree, but resistance to change can also be a reflection of a misplaced faith. Instead of putting our faith in a God who never changes, we put our faith in a church that we hope will never change, and we are consequently deeply threatened by the thought that it might change. This is highly unfortunate, as change is absolutely essential, if churches are to prosper and grow.

I would like to say a very big 'thank you' to all those who have supported me in the



changes that I have tried to make. Your love and kindness have made an immense difference in some challenging times, and I will leave with many happy memories of the fellowship that we shared. I am especially grateful to those who have been willing to embrace change even when they have found it difficult and costly to do so.

One of my own favourite verses in the bible is Hebrews 13v8: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever". It's wonderful to know that in the Lord Jesus Christ we find a solid rock on which we can anchor our lives and our eternal destinies. True security only ever comes from putting our faith in the right place: not in an unchanging church, but in an unchanging God. May we learn to trust him more deeply in the many changes that the next few months will bring to our mission community.

### Steve

### THE SHORT TERM FUTURE

n view of Steve's illness and imminent departure, it is most unlikely that we will be able to maintain the pattern of services to which we have become accustomed. Please note, therefore, that all services in December and January may be subject to change from those listed in the centre pages, if appropriate cover cannot be found.

Churchwardens will be meeting to discuss the situation, and the service pattern beyond January, since it is likely that the Vacancy will last for at least a year. Rest assured that everything will be done to ensure that as many services as possible take place within our parishes.

general administration, As regards Elizabeth and I have, as before, agreed to act as a point of contact.

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# Paul Iliff

### **EXE VALLEY CENTRAL - ONE** YFAR ON

t is now a full year since the Bishop of Crediton cut the celebratory cake at the first Exe Valley Central Service in Templeton Hall. In this time EVC, as it has become known, has established itself as the largest regular congregation in the Mission Community.

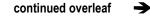
Those worshipping with us have become accustomed to Steve's dexterity with audio visual presentations, his music, his jokes and his u-tube clips.

But above all we have appreciated the regular Bible teaching week by week. The Apostle Paul tells us that the purpose of the Bible is for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3. 16) and I for one have experienced all these, as I have sat under Steve's ministry this past year. Thank you Steve!

In addition to the regular adult teaching, the children have benefitted immensely from weekly Bible teaching under the care of Donna Hibberd and Linda Heywood. As an example, at the Sunday Club service last week Linda told the story of Zacchaeus, illustrated with a wonderful Sycamore tree, based upon an Aluminium step ladder and branches cut from a tree in her garden.



These photos are of the sycamore and "Zacchaeus" up the tree. He was, of course, called to come down, whereupon





### for the odd job or regular visits 3

he repented of his sinful lifestyle, and entered into a real relationship with the Saviour.

I have been asked to be responsible for EVC during the coming interregnum - I hasten to add that I will not be preaching there every week, as we will invite guest preachers but, regrettably, this will mean that I am somewhat less available for services in the parishes.

# John Roberts

# NATURE NOTES

Winter sleeps – nature creeps. In fact nature protects itself from Winter by hiding from it, and we are warned by the climate change specialists to expect wild swings in our weather even during a single season. However, whenever I think of Winter I always think of stillness, frosty mornings, the silence of snow in a land asleep and a survival challenge for many animals.

It is amazing to remember the feverish activity in our garden of only two months ago. When one bent to a gardening task the ground would be teeming with the movement of small creatures - spiders, wood mice, frogs, slow worms, slugs, worms, beetles. All are seemingly intent on their immediate business or preparation for winter and ignoring my presence. Of these the slow worms are the most handsome and as they are relatively common in the South West many will be aware of how quickly they wriggle away when not basking in warm spots. They are legless lizards and though their common name is a misnomer in terms of speed of movement, they are indeed leisurely in clearing slugs from our garden.

As we approach the depths of winter, all goes quiet although the pheasants do tend to return and settle nearer the house, garden and in the lane. This is readily

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understandable as they raise their young and forage in more distant fields and woods during the rest of the year. By winter they have hopefully gathered enough reserves to survive, and they are also beginning to learn how to avoid the shooting parties, so hence their colourful and welcome return to civilization. Throughout last winter two beautifully marked males enriched our days and their harsh calls punctuated both waking and sleeping hours. They would regularly stroll together in a perfectly amicable arrangement like two venerable gentlemen off for their regular game of bowls. We watched their mood change as the breeding season approached and although the walks continued, they would abruptly stop and fight without any warning. I cannot say it was very vicious as they tended to face each other and perform what I called repeated "chestoffs" - those balletic and comical jumps into each other that modern male sport stars on both sides of the Atlantic perform by way of celebration.

To carry the sporting analogy further, Winter is a time for all to take "time out" and nurture friendships, recharge and consider survival of the weakest.

### **Thomas** More

# PARISH ROUND-UP

# CALVERLEIGH

On 13 and 14 September we had our Harvest weekend. On Saturday evening the Harvest Supper in the Village Hall was enjoyed by 60 people. The evening started with hymn singing, followed by a delicious meal prepared by Mandy Cotter, Mary and Jackie Herniman and helpers which was enjoyed by all. We then sat back and listened to Ukulele Crazy, a duo who played and sang George Formby classics along

# PARISH ROUND-UP

with other songs. It was a perfect finish to a lovely evening. Our thanks go to all who contributed in any way to the evening. Our Sunday morning Harvest Thanksgiving service which was led by Julie was very well attended.

Gerald and Joan Blackmore have become Great Grandparents on 12 September. Grandaughter Denise and Andy Fowler presented them with a Great Grandaughter Isabelle Rose. Sir Ian and Lady Amory have become Grandparents again. On 12 September, son Patrick and Thiery presented them with a Grandson Joseph. They now have 3 little Grandsons. Keith Hayes's daughter Lisa and Owen Cronk have just had another little girl, Annabel Joyce. A welcome little sister for Rosie, Lily and Georgia.

We must thank Aubrey Goldsworthy for making a new Baptism record board as the last one is now full up. Thanks also to Alison Webber for updating the names on the board with her lovely Calligraphy. There is another big thank you to Aubrey for providing and making the new village notice board. We no longer have to wade through stinging nettles to attach a notice on the board. The flower tub with the lovely flowers underneath the board really looks nice - we have to thank Julie Hugo for putting it there. Thank you Julie.

Congratulations to Natalie Waddington on her epic cycle ride of 300, miles finishing at Calverleigh. Natalie's Dad Michael died of cancer in August and this inspired her along with her friend Lily Swan to do this cycle ride, in support of Marie Curie Cancer Care. Family and friends were ready to welcome them at Calverleigh Village Hall on completion of this challenge. Congratulations young ladies what a marvellous achievement.

Gerald and Joan Blackmore will be celebrating their Diamond Wedding on 24 December. Congratulations to you both, 60 years is a great achievement. Gerald will also celebrate the big 80 on 29 December. Well done Gerald.



We ask you to pray for and think of all those who are poorly at the present time, those who have been in Hospital and those who are having treatment. We are thinking especially of Alan Holder, Mavis Pope, David Evans and anyone else who is known to you.

Please join us on Sunday 7 December from 10am onwards for an informal time of friendship, fellowship and reflections over a cup of tea or coffee. As we have no service on the first Sunday of the month the PCC thought that it might be nice if we could get together over a cuppa, just come and go when you like. Anyone is very welcome to come.

The Loxbeare and Calverleigh Carol Singers will be doing their annual calls around the villages on 20, 22 and 24 December. They will meet at Loxbeare Garage on the first two nights at 6.30 pm then on Christmas Eve at Calverleigh Village hall at 6pm. They are looking for more people to join them, the more the merrier ... just turn up at the meeting venue and you will be more than welcome.

We were all surprised to hear of the forthcoming departure of our Rector Steve. We hope that he will be happy in his new post in North Devon. We expect that it will be quite a while before we have a replacement.

#### CALVERLEIGH VILLAGE HALL.

A substantial grant towards repairs and refurbishment to the hall has been allocated by Virador Credits Environmental Company. The Village Hall Committee anticipate that the work will be undertaken by a local builder starting in April 2015. Fundraising events for this project started 28 November with a Quiz Night. Many thanks to John and Audrey McInerny, who organised the quiz.

MORE FUNDRAISING EVENTS FOR THE HALL.

Friday 16 January 2015. Skittles Night. Saturday 11 April 2015. 50/50 Auction.

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Saturday 30 May 2015. Duck Race and BBQ. All details later.

# CRUWYS MORCHARD

After four and a half years, sadly, we have to say "Good Bye" to Steve, as he leaves us for the United Benefice of Fremington, Instow and Westleigh in North Devon. We wish him and Sarah "Good Luck" and many happy years there. As I write I hear that Steve is in hospital in Exeter for tests, we wish him well and a speedy recovery.

Our Harvest Festival celebrations were held this year in good weather, the Church was full for our afternoon service taken by our Rector Steve Goodbody. After the service, great fun was had on the field with the usual sports events, then our first Harvest Tea in the new Parish Hall, around 100 people sat down for tea. In the evening we had a family evening of disco and games organised by Brian and Maureen Gibbs and Linda Lake. At Sunday's Harvest Festival Service, Melissa and Darren Jewell brought their son Rupert for baptism. We welcome him into our church. Thank you to everyone who helped make the weekend run so well. Thank you to all who gave donations of food and fresh produce, which was taken after the Harvest Festival to Charlton Lodge. They were very grateful and have sent a letter of thanks.

#### THE YOUNG FARMERS

The Club held their Annual General Meeting in September where they celebrated a very successful year. The new officers are: Chair - Sam Edworthy; Vice Chair -Tom Palmer; Secretary - Layla Hill and Treasurer - Ed Hosegood. It has been agreed that, after a very active year with many fundraising events, we would donate £1000 to R.A.B.I. and £1000 to the Devon Air Ambulance. £1300 has already been presented to the Committee of Cruwys Morchard Parish Hall. It was agreed that the charities to benefit from any fundraising this year will be MIND

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or contact judith on 01363 860056 / 07970590352 e-mail judith@tivertonsausage.co.uk and the New Country Young Farmers Club Building. If you would like to know more about Young Farmers, please come along to our monthly meeting on the first Tuesday of every month, at Cruwys Morchard Parish Hall.

**SENIORS LUNCH** on Wednesday 22 October was a great success with 30 sitting down in the Parish Hall for a two course hot lunch. We look forward to our next Senior's event.

#### **BELL RINGING**

In September we arranged what was, as far as we know, the first ever Cruwys Morchard tower outing. We invited the Rackenford ringers to join us and fifteen people, mostly ringers, drove down to Dartmoor on a misty, autumnal Saturday, where we enjoyed ringing at Sheeptor, Whitchurch and Brentor, with a pub lunch in the middle. There was some handbell ringing in the church yard after lunch.

In October we rang for Louise's wedding, the following weekend a visiting band came and rang a peal, lasting over two and a half hours. The first week in November was the Guild Quarter Peal Week, when our branch tried to involve as many ringers as possible in ringing quarter peals in aid of the Devon bell restoration fund. This gave people the opportunity to try new things and improve their ringing. This year four of our ringers took part, including Claire, who rang her first quarter peal on the tenor bell. Congratulations Claire.

#### **FUTURE EVENTS**

**DECEMBER** we have four Services. On the second Sunday - Holy Communion, the third Sunday - The Christingle and Carol Service (see below) and **Christmas Eve 10pm** Holy Communion and Carols

**DECEMBER 28** we have a Group Service in our Church at 10.30am

**Christingle Service** will be held on Sunday 21 December at 11.00 am. This will be

continued overleaf

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followed by refreshments. We would love to hear from anyone who would like to take part in the service. We would like children to perform a Nativity Play, so please contact Cindy 01884 866621 or Diana 01884 860227 if you have children who would like to take part. During the service we will collect for CHAT, who distribute food parcels to the homeless and to needy families in the Tiverton area during the year. Tinned and dried foods, cereals with UHT milk, toiletries and cleaning products are especially welcome. No fresh food please or Christmas gifts as donations will not be distributed before the New Year.

We shall be making Christingles on Saturday 20th from 2pm At Cindy's house, Valley View, Pennymoor. Please come and help.

Saturday 6 December Dave and Di's quiz in aid of the Parish Hall

JANUARY 2015 we have the usual three services in the church, please see middle pages.

Saturday 7 March Church Jumble Sale AGM Tuesday 10 March in the Church 7.30pm

#### Flower and Cleaning Rota

8 Dec - Lorna Warren - Decorators for Christmas 15 / 22 Dec - Diana Vincent / Val Randerson 29 Dec - Vine Spragg 5 / 12 Jan - Cindy Trick / Pat Cross 19 / 26 Jan - Judith Taylor / Anne Gillbard

#### Stove Rota

Dec - Mr J Carter Jan 2015 - Mr M Trick Feb - Mr G Cruwys.

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

#### **Congregational Chapel -**Services 4.30pm

Sat 6 Dec Christmas Craft & Card Sale 11.00 - 12.30

Sun 7 Dec Family Service with Christmas Crafts.

Sun 14 Dec Carol Service at Way Village at 2.30 where New WayV will be singing.

Sun 14 Dec New WayV singing in the Cruwys Arms for 'Community Carols in the

Pub', from 7.00 pm with mulled wine & mince pies.

Sun 21 Dec Musical Christmas Tea Party. Sat 3 Jan 2015, Coffee morning (weather permitting)

Sun 4 Jan Family Service & tea

The Parish Library, is going ahead, slowly, watch this space.

#### **Cruwys Morchard Got Talent Final**

Saturday 7 March 2015 at 7pm. At the Village Hall, Proceeds to Cancer Charities, Tickets £6 adults £3 child. (for all enquirles ring Jackie on 01363866751)

OK all you talented Parishioners it's your turn to shine! Don't be shy!

Auditions to select the finalists will take place on Saturday 31 January 2015 2.30pm until 6.30pm at Pennymoor Congregational Chapel. Two categories, under 16's and over 16's. Prize money for the over 16's winner. Open to all parishioners born or living in the parish. All audition entries to Jackie by 28 January 2015 call 01363866751 email or wackyjacks@btinternet.com. Tickets for the Final will be on sale after 10 February.

Jackie Mitchell a local born parishioner has decided to try and get all the talented people in Cruwys Morchard (many of you) to come forward to make this evening a success. The talent show is in memory of her father Jim and brother Philip Vinnicombe and many more Parishioners who have sadly passed away from cancer related illnesses. It will be 20 years since her father's passing and 5 years for her brother. They were both born and lived in the parish and often enjoyed and spoke about the fun and laughter Cruwys Morchard parishioners could offer. So Jackie thought it would be fitting to organise a talent competition in their memory.

This is a way for everyone to enjoy and experience the talented people we have here in Cruwys Morchard. So come on, don't be shy - call Jackie today. The show needs you.

We were very sad to hear the news that Gill Timmins, who faithfully and joyfully played the organ for us here at Cruwys Morchard for many years, has passed away. We send our condolences to her family.

We were sorry to hear that Elliott Hallett, who farmed at Pennymoor, has passed away. His funeral was held at Cruwys Morchard Church and we send condolences to his family.

Our prayers are with all those who are not well, or going through troubled times.

# LOXBEARE

t was good to give thanks to the Lord for a plentiful harvest this year at our Harvest celebrations which were held over the weekend of 20 & 21 September. The Saturday service was taken by Steve and was followed by sports and tea. Our Sunday service at 6.30 was a Songs of Praise taken by John with various people having chosen hymns. The Harvest Supper was held on Thursday 25 September when Brian Warren from Farm Crisis Network gave an interesting and informative talk on their work. Steven Radford very ably auctioned the produce. Many thanks to all who helped in any way and for decorating the Church. The offerings, at the Harvest and at the Tear Fund Service on 19 October, amounted to £251 and were given to Tear Fund. John led this service being joined by some from Rackenford with Helen Williams from Tear Fund speaking about Child trafficking quoting Bible verses about not offending children and how much God loves them. A donation of £87.60 has also been sent to the Leprosy Mission.

Christmas will soon be upon us, with many services and celebrations of Christ's birth. Our Christingle Service will be on 7 December at 3pm with light refreshments. Carol Service will be on 21 December at 11am. Christmas Day Service will be at 10.30am with communion taken by John. Carols will be chosen by the congregation. Carol Singing evenings will be on 20,22,24 December, meeting at Loxbeare Garage at 6.30pm for the first two nights and Calverleigh Village Hall at 6.30 on Christmas Eve. The collections will be for the Ebda Disaster Emergency Committee. Anyone wishing to provide the singers with supper on any of the nights please contact Ron on 881362.

At the time of writing we are planning an evening at New Creation Christian Bookshop on 20 November, with supper and a browse amongst the well stocked shelves for cards, books, CD's etc well worth a visit.

The Woman's Bible study Group continue to meet on alternate Tuesday afternoons. For venues & more details contact Marion Roberts on 256302.

A PCC meeting was held on 30 October at East Sidborough and the next meeting will

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#### SPECIAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHES

to celebrate with friends and family. Thursday 11 December is now fully booked. However Penny is willing to do an extra day if there is enough demand, so please ring and talk to her a.s.a.p. if you wish to come. BOOKING ESSENTIAL.

Just a thought! What about giving BIBLE READING NOTES as a present for a friend or even for yourself? We are pleased to receive any order requests by phone (01884 255769) or e-mail (<u>shop@newcreationtiverton.org.uk</u>) but to avoid disappointment the earlier your order is placed the better chance you have of receiving them in good time for Christmas.

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#### **Christmas Opening Times**

New Creation will be open on Wednesday 24 December from 9.30 am– 1.00 pm. The cafe will only be serving drinks and biscuits.

We will then be closed over the Christmas period, as staff and volunteers enjoy a well earned break (and stock taking !! ) between Christmas and New Year. The Shop and Cafe re-open for business on Monday 5 January, 2015 at 9.30 am.

#### **Topics for Prayer**

- that volunteers will come forward to serve on a regular basis <u>or</u> on a list of occasional helpers when a regular is ill or away;
- 2) that the roof repairs will be done before the bad winter weather;
- 3) that families and friends can have a happy and peaceful time together to celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas, and the New Year 2015.

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

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#### be on 8 January at the Village Hall.

Our oldest member of Loxbeare Village, Pauline Cowderoy will be leaving us to take up residence in Castle Grove Residential Home in Bampton, although she assures us she will be back at times to have fellowship with us. We wish her well and pray she will soon settle in her new home. We have been really blessed and inspired by Pauline over the years and thank her for her faithfulness as our organist. She is a great encourager and well able to relate and talk to all ages and has opened her home to prayer and praise meetings, Bible studies and just anyone who wished to call. Thank you so much Pauline, you will be greatly missed,



but we pray God may bless you and use you at Castle Grove.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Steve Goodbody, Jack Page, David Hartwell and all who are unwell and/or receiving ongoing treatment. We send sympathy to Margaret Lashbrooke and any who have recently lost loved ones. It is good to hear Margaret Radford and Muriel Ferris are continuing to improve. Margaret Radford wishes to take this opportunity to thank all her family and friends for their prayers, messages, cards and gifts during her recent health problems.

Many thanks and appreciation to all who worked so hard cutting the grass in the



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# PARISH ROUND-UP

Churchyard and also to those who have helped in any way with the general maintenance of the Church and Churchyard. Also to all who have helped, supported and contributed to the smooth running of the Church during the past year.

Thank you to Chris and Jan Bardes-Payne and family who organised and hosted the bonfire evening on 1 November. An enjoyable evening. Donations were for Water Aid.

Loxbeare Ladies will be involved in running the Christmas Fayre in the Village Hall on 29 November 10.30am-12.30pm for Village Hall Funds. <u>11 December</u> Village Christmas Meal at Bickleigh Mill 7 for 7.30pm. A meeting to be arranged in early January to discuss 2015 monthly activities. Contact Sue on 259496. <u>1 December</u> Christmas Bingo will held in the Village Hall 7 for 7.30pm. Contact Carol on 881480. Village Party will be in January, date to be arranged. Contact Ron on 881362.

Forthcoming event. Arthur & Liz are holding an event at Loxbeare Barton on the Bank Holiday in May when the Worzels will be performing, together with a hog roast. Further details contact them on 881238.

# OAKFORD

The Harvest Festival and Supper were enjoyable occasions. The church was beautifully decorated with flowers and produce and we thank all those who helped and supported the service and the supper. Particular thanks go to Dawn, Brenda, Jean, Connie, Joy and Wendy for all their help in organizing the tea and supper, making cakes and apple pies etc. After a successful auction by Mike, ably assisted by Jean, we were able to share £519 between the Church and Tear Fund.

In October the funeral of Phyl Billingsley was held in the church. Phyl and her late husband, John farmed in Oakford for many years and Phyl took part in all aspects of village life: the W.I. and then the Moorland Club, the Reading Group, the Village Hall Committee, not forgetting the Oakford Players in which she took an active role for many years. We send our sympathy to Alan and family.

The Remembrance Service took place on Sunday 9 November. It was nice to see so

### Continued on Page 10 ->

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# **EXE VALLEY CENTRAL**

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- a place to hear God's word
- a place to follow God's ways

We are a new Church of England congregation, made up of people of all ages, from across the nine parishes of the Exe Valley Mission Community.

Sundays at 11am in Templeton Village Hall

### MISSION COMMUNITY HOME-GROUPS

(Alternate Wednesdays)

See fliers for details

### OAKFORD

**7 December** 9.30 am Holy Communion

**14 December** 9.30 am Morning Prayer

**21 December** 5.30 pm Carol Service

**Christmas Eve** 11.30pm Holy Communion

> Christmas Day No Service

28 December See Cruwys Morchard

**4 January** 9.30 am Holy Communion

**11 January** 9.30 am Morning Prayer

**18 January** 9.30 am Holy Communion

**25 January** 9.30 am Family Service

# **HOME GROUPS**

<u>COFFEE PLUS</u> Alternate Thursdays 9.30am - 10.30am. Prayer for the Exe Valley at Church Cottage, Stoodleigh 01398 351364

LOXBEARE PRAISE AND PRAYER MEETING 3rd Tuesday in month at 7.30pm. 01884 881362 - for venues

EXE VALLEY WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY GROUP Alternate Tuesdays 2-4pm at Highgate Cottage, Loxbeare Contact Marion 01884 256302, or Alison 01398 351552 for details

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

# **EXE VALLEY CENTRAL**

Each Sunday

Templeton Village Hall At 11 am

When there is no service in Parish churches, all are encouraged to attend Exe Valley Central

IMPORTANT NOTICE In view of Steve's illness and imminent departure, please note that all services, throughout the nine parishes, may be subject to change,

if appropriate cover cannot be found. Paul lliff

### RACKENFORD

**7 December** 9.30 am Morning Worship

> **14 December** 3 pm Christingle

21 December No Service

**Christmas Eve** 7 pm Carols and Holy Communion

Christmas Day No Service

28 December See Cruwys Morchard

> **4 January** No Service

**11 January** 9.30 am Morning Worship

**18 January** 9.30 am Family Service

**25 January** 9.30 am Holy Communion 11 am Morning Prayer 21 December

STOODLEIGH

7 December

11 am Family Service

14 December

6 pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve No Service

**Christmas Day** 11 am Holy Communion

28 December See Cruwys Morchard

**4 January** 11 am Family Service

**11 January** 11 am Morning Prayer

**18 January** 11 am Holy Communion

**25 January** 6.30 pm Evening Prayer

### CALVERLEIGH

7 December No Service

**14 December** 3 pm Christingle

**21 December** 3 pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve No Service

**Christmas Day** 10 am Holy Communion

28 December See Cruwys Morchard

> **4 January** No Service

**11 January** 9.30 am Holy Communion

**18 January** 11.15 am Morning Worship

> **25 January** 3 pm Evening Prayer

### **TEMPLETON**

**7 December** 11 am Family Service

> **14 December** 5 pm Christingle

21 December No Service

**Christmas Eve** 7 pm Carol Service And Holy communion

> Christmas Day No Service

28 December See Cruwys Morchard

**4 January** 11 am Family Service

> **11 January** No Service

**18 January** No Service

**25 January** 9.30 am Morning Prayer and Holy Communion

### **CRUWYS MORCHARD**

7 December No Service

**14 December** 9.30 am Holy Communion

**21 December** 11 am Carols and Christingle

**Christmas Eve** 10 pm Holy Communion with Carols

> Christmas Day No Service

**28 December** 11 am Group Service

> **4 January** No Service

**11 January** 11 am Holy Communion

**18 January** 11 am Family Service

**25 January** 6.30 pm Evening Prayer

### LOXBEARE

**7 December** 3 pm Christingle

14 December No Service

**21 December** 11 am Carol Service

> Christmas Eve No Service

**Christmas Day** 10.30 am Family Communion

> 28 December See Cruwys Morchard

**4 January** 6.30 pm Evening Praise

> **11 January** No Service

**18 January** 9.30 am Family Communion

> 25 January No Service

### WASHFIELD

7 December 11 am Morning Prayer

**14 December** 3 pm Evening Prayer

**21 December** 11 am Christingle

**Christmas Eve** 6 pm Carol Service

Christmas Day 9.30 am Holy Communion by Extension

28 December See Cruwys Morchard

**4 January** 9.30 am Holy Communion

**11 January** 11 am Morning Prayer

**18 January** 11 am Family Service

**25 January** 3 pm Evening Prayer

### WITHLEIGH

7 December No Service

**14 December** 4 pm Christingle

**21 December** 7.30 pm Carol Service

**Christmas Eve** 11.30 pm Holy Communion

> Christmas Day No Service

28 December See Cruwys Morchard

> **4 January** No Service

**11 January** 11 am Plough Service

**18 January** 9.30 am Holy Communion

**25 January** 11 am Morning Worship

many people at the War Memorial and then at the Service in the Church afterwards. We will be sending the collection to the British Legion Poppy Appeal.

We are now looking forward to Christmas and this year we are having a Christmas Festival. All those who are Tree participating can put the trees in the Church during the week of 8 December onwards. We would like them all in place by Friday 12 December. The Christmas Trees will be on view Saturday 13 December and Cream Teas will be available from 2pm - 4.30pm. Please come and see them and enjoy a cream tea at the same time! The Christmas Trees will remain in the Church over the Christmas period.

On Friday 12 December we will be decorating the Church Christmas Tree at 5pm. Bring your children along to help us decorate. Parents can help too! This will be followed by Carols around the Village Tree at 6pm, with mulled wine and mince pies. All welcome.

21 December Carols by Candlelight service at 5.30pm. Readings and Carols telling the Christmas Story followed by mulled wine and mince pies after the Service.

24 December at 11.30pm. Holy Communion celebrating the birth of Christ. Evervone welcome.

Other events: **Moorland Club:** Friday 12 December **Christmas Lunch at Petroc** Thursday 8 January 2pm - 4.30pm. Afternoon Tea & Slide Show of Landscapes and music with Margaret Wallwork.

# RACKENFORD

We were shocked and saddened to hear of the death of Gwendoline Arscott. Gwendoline lived for many years at East Nutcott with her late father Jack and mother Joan, before moving to St George's Residential Home with her mother. Our love,



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prayers and deepest sympathy to Joan and family at this difficult time.

Our thoughts and pravers to Graham and Ruth Fennell on the death of Ruth's Mum and also the family of Mrs Crowe, formerly of Manor Cottages, who has died and been buried with her late husband in our churchyard.

Several in and around our community have either been or are in hospital, so we wish Charlotte West's Mum, Rob Coleman, Marjorie and Herbert's granddaughter Lucy, Neil Hayes and Rev Steve Goodbody a speedy recovery. A warm welcome home to Muriel Blinman, you are in our prayers.

Sadly Alistair Baillie has decided to step down as our churchyard caretaker and we would like to say a huge thank you to him for all the many hours of hard work he has put in. It's been very much appreciated and noticed by many what a good job you have always done. If anyone feels that they can take on this paid job, we would love to hear from you. We don't want it to become a jungle !!! Please contact Herbert Smith 881375 or Mary Cann 881696 as we would like to have someone ready to start next year, if possible.

Our Village Shop has asked me to mention that they are in urgent need of helpers. So if you have any spare time, please call in the shop and have a word with someone. Every little helps!! They do such a good job for us.

Belated best wishes to Rob and Alison Brewis and family who have now left us. We do hope you will be happy. Thank you for everything you did in the Exe Valley. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Rev Steve Goodbody for all his work in the Exe Valley and wish him and his wife every happiness as they prepare to move to Fremington, You will both be remembered in our prayers.

On 9 October the start of our Harvest celebrations began with our school children bringing produce and gifts into church- so many lovely things. Thank you. During the afternoon the decorating of the church was

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completed. Thank you to those who came to help and to anyone who left flowers and produce. On 10 October the school children were back in church to give thanks at their Harvest Service. Rev Steve Goodbody welcomed the large congregation and gave a little talk and the children continued with the singing, acting and prayers and the costumes were just lovely. We enjoyed it very much. The service concluded with the blessing and the collection went to Water Aid. After the Service everyone was invited back to school for yummy cakes, tea and coffee.

On 14 October our Harvest Evening Service took place with our Bellringers welcoming everyone. It was so good to hear you ringing. There was a combination of past and present people in the congregation - so nice to see you all coming together to give thanks for a good harvest. Rev Steve Goodbody led the Service and welcomed Rev Godfrev Bell to do the sermon. On Monday the venue was prepared for the Harvest Supper, once again many thanks to Jacque and Mary Cann for having us all and also thanks to Leslie and Frances Kelland for the loan of the tables and chairs and to Tim Paxton and Mark Moore for all the hard work in transporting them, and to all who helped with the moving of produce ready for the auction on Monday evening. It was amazing to see so many supporting us once again and a delight to see you all enjoying yourselves and tucking in to a lovely meal and all those delicious puddings and cream, cheese and biscuits, tea and coffee - all kindly prepared by our lovely ladies and various friends who kindly gave the puddings and helped in many ways. Many thanks to the ladies for all the hard work they put into this so that we could all enjoy the evening together. Thanks also to Stafford Sampson, our auctioneer and his helpers, what fun it was with competitive bidding and lots of laughs along the way. Thank you Annette for running the draw for us - very kind of you. In total, the Harvest profit was £1,632. An amazing result. Thank you everyone. We hope YOU enjoyed vourselves.



We were very lucky to have Bishop Nick of Crediton to take our 9.30am Service at the beginning of October. What a wonderful way he interacted with the children - it was a delight to have him with us. A very special service and our thanks to him. Thank you to Willam and Thomas for their contribution. Our Remembrance Service took place at the War Memorial on 9 October. Once again we were very lucky to have Derek Herniman to take our Service accompanied by Jackie and Cyril Blackford on his accordion. Thank vou Derek for all the valuable information vou collect, so that we can all share and understand a little more about what people experienced in our community and have the opportunity to pay our respects at this very important service. It was heart warming to see so many gather together and also so many young people and children. Jean Cole laid the wreath. The collection of £240.20p will be given to The Royal British Legion.

Rackenford Village children up to 12years of age are invited to a Christmas Party at Rackenford Club on 20 December from 2 to 5pm. On 21 December they will be holding a Christmas Lunch at 1pm (2 courses £14.00) It is essential to book for either of these two functions - you can ring 881301 or 881363 and always leave your name and a message if no reply. The Club will also be having a New Years Eve disco 8pm to 1am. Keep your eyes open for the posters.

We hope you all enjoyed 5 November on the Common with the bonfire, amazing fireworks and the lovely refreshments. Many thanks to the Community Shop for all the hard work that is involved in keeping up this tradition for us. You may have had some little unrecognizable faces knocking on your door for Hallowe'en. Hope you all enjoyed your treats.

Although it seems early this is the last opportunity we will have to wish you all a very happy Christmas and happy and healthy New Year and it would be lovely to see you at our Christmas Carol service.

As always we remember our friends with love and prayers Percy Stone, Ken Blackford, Mrs Clark and Mrs Arscott.



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# STOODLEIGH

Bishop Nick McKinnel was the (rather brilliant) preacher at the well-attended Harvest Thanksgiving Service at St Margaret's on Sunday 5 October. The church was most beautifully decorated with flowers, fruit and vegetables. Many thanks, as ever, to all who helped. The Harvest Supper and produce auction the following evening raised £245, shared equally between the church and Devon Air Ambulance. This well supported event was a very happy time together. Our grateful thanks go to everyone who came and gave so generously, to all who provided dishes for the supper and who helped with the preparations and the clearing up, and particularly to our genial auctioneers Peter Broadbent and Alastair Morison!

The Coffee Morning on 4 November at Furze Clift was most enjoyable and successful, raising  $\pounds 223$  for church funds.

A sad and moving event was the funeral, on 3 October. of John Shepherd. The service was taken by Revd Robert Gordon. John had been ill since the Spring. The church was filled with his friends and his family, with Jo in their midst. John was a keen follower of the Buck Hounds and as his coffin was carried into the church, there was a guard of honour of hunt officials and a couple of hounds – who voiced their own spontaneous fanfare.

We were deeply saddened to learn of the sudden death of Sue Bryce on 27 September. We send our love and prayers to Mervyn, his two daughters, Jennifer and Sarah, and to all the family and friends. We also send our love and condolences to Richard and all his friends on the death of 87-year-old Ron Jeffery (Jessamine Cottage) on the 17 October. The cremation service took place at Taunton Crematorium on Friday 7 November.

Many people comment on how nice the churchyard at Stoodleigh looks and we are grateful to Dave Berry and his team for



Post Office Service Tuesday & Thursday mornings. A friendly and traditional village shop solely run by Volunteers providing a service to the community.

Tel: 01884 881740 Or Email: Rackenford.shop@btconnect.com keeping the grass under control. At the time of writing the annual churchyard clearance has not (quite) taken place but it is a good time to thank the willing volunteers who clear up, in particular Richard Hill for his help with tractor and trailer.

Looking back a bit further, 72 people were treated to wonderful singing at a Choral Evensong at St Margaret's on 14 September. It was staged by the 20-strong Exeter based Heritage Singers, comprising not only singers but their own organist and preacher, retired bishop and singer Martin Shaw, who delivered a most spirited sermon.

#### Important dates

Sat. 6 Dec.: Christmas Fayre, Parish Hall, 10.30-12.30. Father Christmas will be there! Fri. 19 Dec.: Carol singing around the village. Meet 6pm, parish hall. Please contact Jennifer (01398 351402) if you would like to join this group or would like the singers to visit you.

Sun. 21 Dec.: The Carol Service in the church, 6pm.

Christmas Day: Holy Communion, 11am.

There are many new faces in the village. A warm welcome to the Low family at Webland – Julien, Rachel, Amelia, Isaac and Toby; to Dee and Richard at Ford Barton; and to Jacqui and family at the former Vicarage in Court Gardens. Karen, David and Robert have moved from Finisterre at the top end of the village – we wish them well. Matt and Ellie will be moving in there in the New Year.

Congratulations to Nigel and Lynn Fisher, Lower Ford Cottage, who were married on 4 October.

#### Parish Hall

Thanks to everyone who supported the Autumn Market and Coffee Morning, which raised over £400 to help maintain and improve the Hall. Grand Christmas Draw tickets are now on sale from Parish Hall Committee members or ring 01398 351391. The draw will take place at

### Continued overleaf 🔶

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**Stoodleigh Christmas Bingo at the Hall** on 22 December. Doors open 7pm, eyes down at 7.30. **Walking for All** event coming up early in the New Year.

#### Stoodleigh Inn

Village Quiz Night, Friday 5 December, 7pm. The idea is to get a team from each of the village groups (Church, SWAG, Hall, cricket, bells, history, etc.), £2 per person entry, winning team takes the money for group funds. Please let Lizzie know who is coming.

**Children's Christmas Party,** Friday 19 December, 5-7pm. Free party food and games for the under 10s, Father Christmas. Please contact Lizzie beforehand.

Christmas Eve: 1pm till late. Closed 25th and 26th.

New Year's Eve: from 8pm. Very lucky this year to have "Nigel" music, dancing and usual mayhem, free supper. New Year's Day: 5 till 10.

**Stoodleigh 100 Club:** Prizewinners, September - 1 Jo Shepherd, 2 Felicity Green, 3 Doreen Wyatt, 4 Diana Honnor; October -1 Mervyn Brice, 2 Beth Byles, 3 Audrey Rigg, 4 Paula Hullett; November - 1 Sally Holland, 2 Audrey Rigg, 3 Betty Wotton, 4 Dorothy Ayre.

#### **Church Flower Rota**

7 / 14 Dec	Trish Fish
21 Dec	All help please
5 / 12 Jan	Phyllis Hill
19 / 26 Jan	Betty Wotton

# TEMPLETON

Our Harvest Supper held on 4 October was a great success. It was good to return to this tradition after a gap of many years. There was an alternative vegetable competition where people brought their misshapen or ugly garden produce and the judges, Mike Childs and John McInerney selected the best. Among the winners were Julie and Anthony Dent, Ann Rickard, William Withers, Audrey McInerney also



David and Margaret Bush. On 5 October it was our Harvest Festival Service which was well attended. The church was beautifully decorated for the occasion, with an abundance of flowers, fruit and vegetables which were later taken to Charlton Lodge. The PCC received a letter of thanks from them which we pass on to all who kindly donated. Thank you to all the ladies for their decorative skills and the time so freely given.

Sunday 14 December at 5.0pm is our Christingle Service. In exchange for a Christingle, will you please bring a gift for a child, wrapped, with a label and on the label in pencil please write the sex and age that the gift is suitable for. If you cannot attend the service but would like to donate a gift, then could you please either drop it in to Jan Heptinstall at The Wolery or to Gloria Woollacott at Church Farm, the week before the Service. All donated gifts will be going to the Salvation Army.

The Christmas Eve Carol Service will be at 7.00pm.

Bonfire Night was held on 8 November the theme being Noah's Ark. Despite rather threatening weather that day, a good time was had by all. A grateful thank you to all who made the bonfire, ordered and let off fireworks and helped with the catering.

From Monday 1 December Christmas competitions (skittles, pool, darts and table tennis) will start at the Village Hall. Look for more details at Templeton Social Club.

There will be a Children's Christmas Party at the Hall on 13 December starting at 3.00pm, for ages 9 years and under. This is organised by Tony Loosemoor. Father Christmas will be there. A Christmas Charity Draw will also take place at 6.30pm on that day, in aid of Children's Hospice S.W. Please contact Sara Stone on 251102 for more details of the Children's Party Also to raise money for the CHSW, a marrow competition was held in September and won by Phyllis Hill of Stoodleigh.

We welcome Sue and Shaun Gammon to The Hayloft at Town Farm. Sue has lived



most of her life in Templeton and it is good to have her back with us again.

Lastly and by no means least, we send our love and prayers to our Rector Steve, as he is in hospital as I write. We wish him a speedy recovery.

#### Flower and Cleaning Rota Cleaning only

30 Nov/ 7 Dec Teresa Pancherz 14 Dec/ 21 Dec Gloria Woollacott 28 Dec/ 4 Jan Gloria Woollacott Flowers and Cleaning 11 Jan/ 18 Jan Teresa Pancherz 25 Jan/ 1 Feb Gill Rose

# WASHFIELD

If you scan the Winter sky and cannot see a golden glow, Make some sunshine for yourself and take it with you where'er you go

We are sorry to be saying goodbye to Steve and Sarah quite soon. We thank Steve for all his hard work for us, for his thoughtful and inspiring teaching, his patience and good humour in coping with his many duties and his courage on starting a new, parallel congregation at Exe Valley Central. We send Steve and Sarah our very sincere hopes and prayers for a happy and rewarding new life in North Devon and a swift return to good health for Steve.

By the time you read these notes the countdown to Christmas will have begun. With Winter comes the chance to attend many social gatherings. At St Mary's we will have Advent, Christingle, our traditional Carol Service and of course Christmas morning Holy Communion Service, to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

The Christingle Service will be held on Sunday 21 December at 11am and will be led by the families of the Parish. The children will make their own Christingles



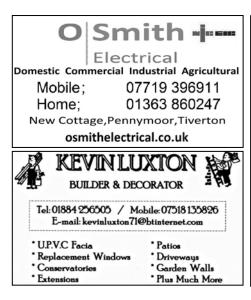
and the meanings of their parts will become clear. This will be followed by drinks and biscuits. The Christmas tree will be decorated on Saturday 20 December from 10.30am -all are welcome to help. Could flower arrangers please have their Christmas pieces in the church on that day? Thank you.

Our Carol Service will be held as usual on Christmas Eve at 6pm, followed by coffee and mince pies.

On Remembrance Sunday a large congregation came to pay their respects to those from our Parish who gave their lives in past conflicts. Mr Maurice Balment read out their names and laid a wreath in their honour. Mr Martin Hansford led a very reverent service and gave a thoughtful sermon. Thank you Martin.

The whole village was saddened by the death of Gill Robinson in September. Gill was a friend to everyone, having lived in the village for many years with her late husband, Frank, and their children Antony, Michael and Joy. Gill was so very much involved with village life and had served on many committees. A very talented lady, Gill had many hobbies and was a keen quiz goer who every team wanted in their number. Gill's positivity during her illness was an inspiration and an example to us all. Her respect and popularity was reflected in the overflowing church at her funeral, after which Gill was laid to rest with Frank in our churchyard. Our heartfelt sympathies are with all her family including her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. She will be sadly missed by everyone who knew her. Friends of Gill's have planted daffodil bulbs at the entrance to the village as a lasting memory of her.

Much sympathy is also sent to the family of Gill Timmins. Gill was one of St Mary's organists, mainly for the Communion services. Gill was a very brave lady as she continued to travel to carry out this role as often as possible in spite of her illness. Our love, prayers and thoughts are with Rachel



and Simon and her family. We were all very fond of Gill and miss her very much.

Best wishes are sent to everyone who is not enjoying good health at this time. You are in our thoughts.

Congratulations to everyone celebrating birthdays and other special events. How time has flown since last year at this time when we had two Ninetieth birthday celebrations. Congratulations to everyone celebrating - 'enjoy your special days'.

Jeanne and Garth will once again host their Christmas Coffee morning at The Cottage on Saturday December 6 from 10am. Produce, cakes, Christmas wrapping paper and gifts will be on sale and there will be a raffle. Contributions are most welcome. Proceeds will go to the church. All welcome - please support this friendly get together.

The Women's Institute's annual party will be held on Friday December 12, 7pm for 7.30pm. This is open to everyone. The festive three course meal is £16.95 and will be followed by local entertainment. Please contact Mrs Jeanne Jones on 01884 254306 to book and choose your choices from the menu.

The 'Village Centre' Carol singers will sing around the village on Tuesday December 23. All are welcome to join in. Meet at the Hall at 6pm. A 'bring and share' supper will be enjoyed at the Social Club after and, on the same evening, the 'Higher Washfield' Carol singers will set off from Courtenay Cottages at around the same time to sing to the top of the village and their proceeds will go, as usual, to the Children's Hospice South West.

The Social Club held their annual Pumpkin Judging evening at the end of October, when many families and children came along to enjoy the pumpkin carving. Once carved, their beautiful efforts lit up the hall. In the growing stakes, the honours for the heaviest Pumpkin were shared between Paul Crease and Eric Webber who both managed to swell their beasts to 90lbs. Ali Fathi's pumpkin was judged to be the prettiest. The wide range of curries on offer



from The Ceylon Curry Van (including pumpkin curry) were so popular, that the van ran out of rice! Very many thanks to Sattie Burton and Will Diggle for saving the day with more rice boiled up in the kitchen! The much enjoyed evening raised  $\pounds 163$  for E.L.F. Thanks to all who helped organise this great night.

Mandy Cotter would like to extend her thanks to all who attended the lovely meal she prepared on behalf of the Children's Hospice SW. Thanks to those who sat down to roast turkey and all the trimmings £741.36 was raised for this great cause. Thanks go to Mandy and Jackie for all their hard work in organising this evening, well done!

The teatime@the hall afternoons have been going well and are a great place for intergenerational socialising. With teatimers ages ranging from 2-90 there is a special atmosphere of a coming together for the mutual benefit of all with chat, games and laughter (and tea and cake!) If you haven't been yet come along and see for yourself. The dates of the forthcoming teatimes are in the Dates for your Diary below.

The Social Club's New Year's Eve celebration looks like it will have all the usual good fun and laughter it normally has so, if you resolve to do anything, make a promise not to miss this! Look out for more details closer to the evening.

There is to be a Coffee Morning in the Hall on Saturday January 24 from 10-12noon. All usual stalls including cakes, jewellery, raffle etc. For EVBH. All welcome.

The Parochial Church Council once again sincerely thank everyone who helps to keep St Mary's church functioning, open and welcome. The bell ringers who call us to worship and all the other volunteers who go about their tasks to keep our church relevant and well cared for. There are the flower arrangers who add their special touches to services, the cleaners who,



despite not being in the first flush of youth, take turns to hoover, dust and leave the church tidy and fresh. We have good congregations which, without the dedication of our Lay readers, organists and readers, would not have a service in our beautiful village church.

The Today distributors deserve a mention for keeping us all in touch with Parish news and Jenny and Geoff Parnell who work so diligently to make all this happen for **all** our parishes.

We wish all our readers, near and far, a very blessed Christmas and a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

#### Dates for your diary

**Sat 6 Dec** Christmas Coffee Morning at Jeanne and Garth Jones' (The Cottage from 10am. Lots of stalls including Christmas wrapping paper and gifts, cakes and produce.

Tues9Decteatime@thehallfrom2.30pm. All welcome to join in.

Fri 12 Dec W.I. Christmas meal and party. Book and choose menu choices by phoning Jeanne on 254306. All welcome

Sat 20 Dec Decorating church Christmas tree from 10.30am

Sun 21 Dec Christingle Service 11am

Tues 23 DecVillage Carol singing. Meetat 6pm at hall (Bring item for shared supper)Weds 24 DecService of Readings andCarols in the church 6pm followed by coffeeand mince pies.

Tues 13 Jan teatime@the hall from 2.30pm. All ages welcome

Sat 24 Jan Coffee morning in village hall 10am - 12noon with cakes, jewellery, raffle and lots more (In aid of EVBH)

Tues 10 Febteatime@the hall from2.30pm.Come along and partake in tea,cake and friendship.

#### Flower Rota

Nov 30/Dec 7	Mrs E Arnold
Dec 14/21	Mrs A Trout
Dec 28/Jan 4	Mrs J McCahon
Jan 11/18	Mrs J Parnell
Jan 25/Feb 1	Mrs J French

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Dec 14/21 Dec 28/Jan 4 Jan 11/18 Jan 25/Feb 1

Mrs French Mrs Arnold Mr & Mrs Parnell Mrs Harding & Mrs Jones Mr & Mrs Ellis

# WITHLEIGH

We were all taken aback at the announcement of Steve's imminent move to Fremington, Instow and Westleigh in North Devon. We send our best wishes to him for a speedy recovery from his present illness, and wish both Steve and Sarah better health, and God's blessing on their ministry there.

Harvest seems a long time ago now but we had a good Harvest Festival. On Sunday, 14 September we had an afternoon service conducted by Steve followed by a delicious tea in the Village Hall. Thank you to those who decorated our Church so appropriately with the colours of harvest and vegetables, and also thank you to all those who prepared and served the tea. On 15 September, we enjoyed our harvest supper in the Village Hall. £213.31p was donated to the Tiverton Hospital League of Friends (who were represented at the supper) as a result of the auction of produce from the church, and many items brought by people on the night for which we say thank you to them and those who bid so well. Thank you Tom, Valerie and your helpers for providing us once again with a lovely supper, and thanks to our Auctioneer, Henry, for his entertaining banter. A letter has been received from the League of Friends expressing their thanks.

Our informal service on 12 October was capably led by Susie, and was based around the theme of Pilgrimage. Well done, Susie.

At our Remembrance Service on 9 November, a candle was lit as each name on the war memorial was read out, and during the course of the service, more about each man, gleaned largely from the internet as well as Tiverton Museum, was also read out.

We are so sorry to report the death of Gill Timmins, our organist. Although Gill lived in Tiverton, she was a great part of our Church for several years and, we will miss her. Our sympathy and prayers are with Rachel, Simon and their families. At Gill's funeral service, those present were invited to take away one of the camels from her collection. One of them will now grace our crib at Christmas.

Our Annual Team Skittles competition was well supported this year which proved to be a fun evening. Taking the honours this year were the Stacey and Sampson team, playing in the team were Ron & Janet Stacey, Shelia Sampson, Tanya Sampson, Christine Luxton and Peter Inman. Well done to you all. Also a big thank you to all who helped out on the night, it made it all go with a swing.

We say farewell to Jennifer Palmer who has moved from Duxmoor to live in Halberton. We wish her well in her new home, and we do thank you, Jennifer, for delivering the Today magazines around your area of Withleigh.

We welcome the new occupants to Duxmoor and all others who have moved into Withleigh. We hope you will all be happy in your new abodes, and look forward to seeing you at future events in the village.

Hopefully you will be reading this before Saturday 29 November, so don't forget that it is the annual Christmas Fayre in the Village Hall from 10.00am to 4pm. Come and browse all the different stalls. You may find those Christmas presents that you are looking for. There will be a draw, cakes, chutneys and jams and book stall, run by the Church among the craft stalls. Coffee, biscuits and mince pies will be served in the morning, soup or ploughman's lunch at lunchtime followed by cakes and tea in the afternoon.





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The children's Christmas Party in the Village Hall is on Saturday, 6 December, 3.00pm -5pm. This is always a fun afternoon for the children so do bring your children or grandchildren along and enjoy it yourselves, as well as the children. Please contact Brenda, 252431 for further details.

Weather permitting, we shall be carol singing around the village on Monday, 15 December. We are meeting at the Village Hall at 6.30pm, so do please join us. It is difficult to say how far we will get along the main road but we will go as far as we can without it getting too late.

Our Christingle Service is on 14 December This is a special service, at 4pm. especially when all the Christingles are lit. Our Carol Service is the following Sunday on 21 December at 7.30pm.

Gifts of non-perishable food and cleaning items may be left under the Christmas tree at this service (to be taken into C.H.A.T). Mulled wine, orange juice, mince pies and shortbread will be served after the service.

The Christmas Eve service will be at 11.30pm. We shall be pleased to welcome you at one, two or all of these services.

We send get well wishes to all those known to us who are not well. Our love and prayers are with you, as well as all those who are bereaved, sad or feel lonely at this time of the year.

We wish you all a Joyous Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year

#### **Forthcoming Events:**

Saturday 29 Nov - Christmas Craft Fair 10am - 4pm







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Monday 1 Dec - Christmas Whist Drive at 7.30pm. Thursday 4 Dec - Christmas Bingo, eyes IThe week before Christmas, two young down 7.30pm. Saturday 6 Dec - Children's Christmas Party 3pm to 5pm. Sunday 14 Dec – Christingle service at 4pm Monday 15 Dec – Carol singing around the village Sunday 21 Dec – Carol service at 7.30pm Sunday 11 Jan - Plough service at 11am Flower Rota: 7 / 14 Dec Janet Stacey 21 / 28 Dec Cathy Luxton CHRISTMAS, Tree 4 / 11 / 18 Jan Margaret Gale 25 Jan / 1 Feb Brenda Tucker Monthly Diary Dates: First Thursday - Bingo Second Monday - Whist Drive Second Thursday – W.I. WISHING YOU ALL A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A JOYOUS **NEW YEAR BLACKERTON** CROSS GARAGE Under new management Barry & Kim Simpson REPAIRS CAR SALES VEHICLE SALES, SERVICING, REPAIRS & MOT Cars, 4X4s & Vans We still have Martin for servicing, repairs, MOT preparation 01398 341405 East Anstey EX16 9JT On the B3227 between South Molton and Bampton Little Whitstone Farm Local produce, from local people, for the local community Fresh Lamb and Poultry boxes Delivered to your door Little Whitstone Meshaw South Molton EX36 4NH

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boys were spending a night with their grandparents. At bedtime, the two boys knelt beside their beds to say their prayers. The youngest boy began praying at the top of his voice ...

#### "I PRAY FOR A BICYCLE" "I PRAY FOR AN IPAD" "I PRAY FOR A MOBILE PHONE"

His older brother leaned over and said Why are you shouting? God isn't deaf" to which, the little brother replied

"No - but Grandma is !!"

... and the greatest of these is Love

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