JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2022

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HOPE FOR 2022.

sentences are doors to worlds.' up.' In other words, first lines are really important.

They grab your attention. They created.' make you want to read more, while I sit here, staring at the lived a hobbit.' computer, trying to think of a really good first line that will grab your attention, and get the Today Magazine off to a cracking start for 2022, let's have a quiz to begin!

Here are the first lines of some famous books. Do you know the titles?

- April, and the clocks were striking Darkness, it was the spring of God, and the Word was God.' thirteen.'
- 2. 'It is a truth universally had nothing before us, we were look to the New Year we can have acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, were all going direct the other is with us. must be in want of a wife.'
- 3. 'The past is a foreign country, 10. 'In the beginning was the they do things differently there.'
- 4. 'Mr and Mrs Dursley of number four, Privet Drive, were proud to say that they were perfectly normal, thank you very much.'

- Ursula Le Guin wrote that 'First 5. 'All children except one grow I think the last two quotes are the
 - 6. 'The story so far: In the If I am honest, it does feel like it beginning

 - 8. 'There was a boy called almost deserved it.'
 - 9. 'It was the best of times, it was a the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of I believe that it is only possible to belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of hope, it was the winter of despair, way.'

Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'

I wish I had written these! I didn't. But I have read the books from which they have come - and I can even remember something about them!

ones which grab me most.

the Universe was is the best of times and the worst of times. I hope you have been able to have the best of times until you finally get to the end. So, 7. 'In a hole in the ground there celebrating and being with your families and friends, and that we will be protected from the worst.

> Eustace Clarence Scrubb, and he As we look towards the spring I want it to be 'the spring of hope' and that we will leave the 'winter despair' behind. with everything before us.

have a true and certain hope because 'in the beginning was 1. 'It was a bright cold day in Light, it was the season of the Word, and the Word was with

> we had everything before us, we Whatever lies before us as we all going direct to Heaven, we hope for the future because God

> > With love and prayers to you all for a bappy and peaceful bope-filled 2022

> > > Steph

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EDITORIAL

Some disappointment throughout the Exe Valley as some Carol Services were cancelled due to the Omicron variant.

As I go to print we are waiting to hear if there are to be further Government restrictions over Christmas and New Year.

Whatever the outcome let us look forward with hope into 2022

Dawn

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FROM STEPH



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Andy Humm ~ Steph Gordon-Jeffs



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Steph's Soup Lunches - 21 Jan and 18 Feb

See Steph's Weekly Updates for more information.

Lent Ask Questions - 9 March - 30 March



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FROM STEPH

Ronald Gregory Tidball 14th September 1934 - 7th November 2021

I may only have known Ron for the last five years, but I feel I know him well. Most weeks we spoke on the phone. He was always encouraging and supportive. He believed in the power of prayer. Whenever we had a prayer meeting Ron and Margaret were always there. He prayed fervently for the world, particularly Israel, the persecuted church, the nation, the church, the Mission Community – but especially for Loxbeare – his beloved Loxbeare.

He loved to sing – and he loved to sing loudly, with his arms outstretched in praise. 'He is Lord' was a particular favourite. He was a passionate supporter of children and young people – and cricket. He never forgot the teaching he received from Mr Salter, when he was a boy. He and Margaret loved to be involved in the Holiday Club, Margaret serving endless cups of tea while Ron got on with the sports.

On the day before my interview as Rector here, I visited all nine churches. When I arrived at Loxbeare, Ron was ready to greet me. He was like an excited little boy, Tigger, bouncing all around me. He pointed to a plaque by the front door. 'Can you read that?' he asked me. It was the words of John 3: 16. 'God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but shall have eternal life.' I read it to him. 'Can you preach that?' he asked. 'Can you preach the gospel?' I said that I thought I could! Then he said, 'I don't care who you are, whether you are a woman or not! If you can preach the gospel, that's good enough for me!'

And I have had those words ringing in my ears today. Preach the gospel. Preach the good news of Jesus Christ.

When we first went into lockdown Ron encouraged people to say Psalm 91 every day. It was one of the psalms Margaret read to him just before he died. It is one of the most tender and intimate of Psalms, which describes the confidence that those who love God may have throughout life, with all its joys, dangers and challenges. In the first four verses of this psalm, the psalmist gives us seven powerful pictures of God's protection:

God is a shelter to those who believe. We hide in his shadow. How wonderful it is when torrential rains fall to find shelter. When the sun is beating down, there is nothing better than to find shade. And the shade the psalmist speaks of is not the shade of a tree, or an umbrella, or a canopy but it is the shadow cast by El Shaddai, the Lord Almighty. He is that close, covering those he loves. God is pictured as a refuge, a safe place that protects from danger, he is like a fortress protecting a city from enemy attack; he is like the ramparts of a fort, and a shield for those in battle. But, the psalmist says, the Lord Almighty is also gentle and kind, like a protective bird, guarding its young with her feathers.

This is, the psalmist says, 'My God, in whom I trust.'

As Ron read these words, over and over again, I know he wasn't just quoting what the psalmist had written. He was saying those words for himself – as if they were his. He was declaring them. He was proclaiming what he believed and how he lived his life. Those words were written on his heart. 'My God, in whom I trust'.

As far as we know, those were among some of the last words Ron heard and some of the last words he uttered in his heart and mind, in this life. 'My God, in whom I trust.'





and Friday 6th November 2020

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NATURE NOTES

Some time ago we were given two old cases of Malaysian butterflies and they hang on the wall in our living room. Unfortunately there is no example of the Raja Brooke butterfly which must be the most exotic and colourful one. In the dark of winter and in the glow of lamplight it is impossible not to be drawn into looking at their detail and admiring them. Despite only cream, yellow and brown colours being on show, the beauty of their detail, fragility and unexpected size is inescapable. It would be hard for any artist to provide a decoration to compete.

Butterfly farms are not confined to tropical countries and though I have rarely found them, the experience is invariably the same. Necessarily they are filled with lush vegetation and are unsurprisingly, comfortably warm and still. Within a few steps a feeling of calm comes over you as the peaceful environment envelops you. Even excited and noisy children soon descend into silence as they are captivated by the gentility of movement or reduced to statues if a butterfly chooses to land on them.

James Brooke and the other white Rajahs rest in peace on the edge of Dartmoor. It is reported that he protected his people from pirates and from exploitation by Western business men [!].

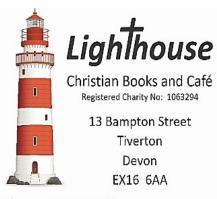
I find such histories fascinating but I refuse to pass any judgement on previous generations as it seems highly likely they were just like us – neither wicked nor better.

Growing up as an urban child it was not uncommon to taste sulphur in the air but butterflies were plentiful in number if not in variety. Normal was just normal and Joni Mitchell's song was simply something tuneful.

I little thought I would be reduced to washing plastic bags for re-use or questioning whether putting butterflies in cases is part of an unthinking mindset.

I hope we are all doing our bit as we are able, and see fit – the ambition of ordinary and extraordinary people from the British Isles led the World down this path and it is our responsibility to change the direction

Thomas More



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Answers from Steph's Quiz

- 1. 1984 by George Orwell (1949)
- 2. Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen (1813)
- 3. The Go Between by L.P. Hartley
- 4. Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone by J.K. Rowling
- 5. Peter Pan by J.M. Barrie
- 6. The Restaurant At The End Of The Universe by Douglas Adams
- 7. The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkein
- 8. The Voyage of the Dawn Treader by C.S. Lewis
- 9. A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens
- 10. The Bible, John Chapter 1 verse 1 by John

(son of Zebedee, apostle, disciple of Jesus Christ)

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CALVERLEIGH

It was with sadness that we learnt of the passing of Ann Longbottom, who for many years lived in Lurley. Ann was often to be seen at social events, supporting both the village hall and St. Mary's. Our thoughts and prayers are with Ann's family and friends.

Also in November the burial of Mrs Penny took place in the churchyard. Our condolences go to Valerie, Andrew, family and friends at this sad time.

On 26 November St. Mary's Church had the priviledge of being one of three venues for the funeral of Ron Tidball from Loxbeare. The service was relayed, from Loxbeare church to Loxbeare village hall and Calverleigh church with a live link of picture and sound. It reflected well the spiritual life led by Ron and the encouragement he gave to others. Over the years Ron has had very strong links with Calverleigh and was always pleased when the two villages joined together for social events and carol singing. Our thoughts and prayers are with Margaret and family at this most difficult of times and with all others who are mourning the loss of a loved one.

A Remembrance Sunday service was led by Rev'd Georgie Bell who was assisted by our Curate Rev'd Claire Curtis. It was a lovely and thought provoking service. Thank you to you both.

The Autumn Fayre took place on 20 November and was well supported. It was lovely to be able to hold this event

once again, after a break because of Covid-19 last year. All the normal stalls were present and a constant stream of visitors made for a lovely day. Our thanks go to all the stall holders, the people working hard in the kitchen providing tea, coffee and light lunches and especially to all who came out on what was not the nicest of days. A total of over £1,000 was raised towards the running and upkeep of the church.

28 November saw a Holy Communion Group service held at Calverleigh. Rev'd Claire Curtis led the service with Rev'd Steph Gordon-Jeffs presiding over the communion. We were pleased to welcome Dave Edwards and Sue Rivett who provided the music on this occasion.

Our Christingle service which took place on 5 December was led by Nikki Burton and we were pleased to see so many of you there. It was especially lovely to see so many children, many of whom had family connections with the All the children present village. received a Christingle to take home as did a great number of grown ups. Our thanks go to Doreen who kindly donated the Christingles once again. A donation from the collection is sent to the Children's Society to help towards work with vulnerable or disadvantaged children and young people.

Over the Christmas period a collection is made of dried and tinned goods along with toiletries which will go to CHAT in early January for distribution amongst those who are in need. Thank you to all who have contributed. Anything that is collected is always

greatly appreciated by CHAT and the recipients of those goods.

We would like to welcome Steph and Steve to Lurley and hope they will be very happy in their new home.

A very happy birthday or happy anniversary to anyone celebrating in January or February, whoever you are! (Do let us know!)

Events Coming up

As you probably know, each month we hold a time of prayer on the first Saturday of the month between 9am and 11am. In January this will be the 1st (unless otherwise advertised), in February the 5th.

Cleaning Rota 2022

It is hoped that a church cleaning rota can begin again in the new year. Cleaning had been happening but with a very small band due to restrictions that were in place during the past year and the concerted effort that was made to keep people safe. If there is anyone else who would like to come onto the cleaning rota please contact Aubrey on 255248. Thank you

3 - 15 Jan: Mrs J Goldsworthy 17 - 29 Jan: Mrs N Burton 31 - 12 Feb: Mrs A Webber 14 - 26 Feb: Mrs M Furneaux

Flower Rota 2022

9 - 16 Jan: Mrs N Burton 23 - 30 Jan: Mrs A Webber 6 - 13 Feb: Mrs L Thomas 20 - 27 Feb: Mrs M Radford

continued overleaf →



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Do you have anything to share in the magazine? Please send us your photos, news, birthday messages, anniversary congratulations, stories, poetic verses (or anything else) to Dave Burton by calling 01884 561499 or by email: calverleigh@exevalleychurches.org.

Please see the centre pages of the magazine the website or (www.exevalleychurches.org/calverlei gh) for any update information on services or activities.

CRUWYS MORCHARD

s I write in early December and you Awill read this issue of the magazine well after CHRISTMAS.

I hope you will all have been round the Churches in the mission community to see their Christmas tree trail displays in each of their porches. All based on a book written by Steph in 1991. Our verse is:

I've been shopping, Buying and spending; I've been shopping For a special Christmas tree. I wanted a big one. All covered in silver. I wanted a big, **Brightly covered Christmas tree!**

But all they had Was a little green bare one, And that is the one I've brought home with me.

At the last verse, it all ends happily!

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TODAY Magazine

FOR WITH POSSIBLE Do go and see them before Twelfth niaht.

On 14 November we had Remembrance Service in aide of the Royal British Legion.

Our Carol Service is, as yet, to be on 19 December at 11.00am. Hopefully with Christingles.

Di and Dave's quiz was on Monday 6 December, had 6 teams with 6 people in each team. They made £287 in all for the Parish Hall funds.

The results were; 1st Pennymoor Youth Club 2nd The Knights of Witheridge 3rd Rhubarb.

CRUWYS ARMS GARDENER ANNUAL DINNER was held on Wednesday 1 December.

This year we decided to do it differently. In past years we have chosen to eat in a pub or restaurant but in view of the uncertainty surrounding covid we chose instead Puddington Village Hall and a delivery from the Thai Herb Kitchen of Nomansland. Order on line in advance 24/7. Delivery free on orders within 5 miles or over £75.

It turned out to be a great choice: we were all able to sit around one table with plenty of space between us and the food came on time with each meal labelled so we didn't have to remember what we ordered! Chrissie Grainger did a magnificent job of sorting the room, decorating the tables, heating the plates and not least turning on the heating!

Gerry was in charge of drinks and seemed to have provided for everyone. By some telepathic magic Sonia and Clare had both chosen to make Lemon Mousse for dessert, perfect after a spicy meal.

Conversation and laughter provided the convivial atmosphere and even the washing up didn't feel like a chore.

Our next meeting will be on the first Wednesday in February when we will all be turning our thoughts to the new gardening year. Newcomers will be very welcome to join us.

FLOWER & CLEANING ROTA

Flower and Cleaning Rota

3/10 January Cindy Trick 17/24 January Denise Standen

and Jo Hilton 31 Jan/7 February

Sue and Pauline Guscott

14//21 February Anne Gillbard Lorna Warren 28 Feb/7 March

YOUNG **CRUWYS MORCHARD FARMERS**

The club has been up to all sorts the past couple of months. Taking part in the Brainstrust competition, where Oscar Gibbs and Ross Parkhouse were picked to compete at County and came third.

We have a team entered in the junior public speaking at County. The club also has had members taking part in various sports competitions.

The club have also enjoyed themselves bouncing and slipping about the place with trips to flip out and ice skating with

continued overleaf



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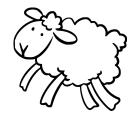
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any members attending, We have a Christmas meal planned at the Red Lion in Crediton for around 60 of us.

Members have been making craft items and selling them at the local Christmas Craft Fairs.

Next meeting on Tuesday 4 January 2022 at Cruwys Morchard Parish Hall, starting at 7.30pm.

YOGA: on Thursday mornings in the Parish Hall. To join ring Hilary on 01363 866245.

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. North Street, Pennymoor.

Sunday services are now at 4.00pm, half an hour earlier than it used to be.

BEST WISHES and PRAYERS TO ALL THOSE who are not well in the parish.

WELCOME to Helen and Andy who have recently moved to the parish, and all others who we have not yet met.

LOXBEARE

ur love thoughts, prayers and sympathy are with Margaret, Angela, Julie, Marilyn & families on the sad loss of Ron on November 7. A very moving funeral service held on the 26 November was taken by Rev Steph Gordon-Jeffs with lessons read by Rev Godfrey Bell and Rev Clare Curtis and a poem was read by Linda Heywood. The organist was Mr Andrew Herniman and some of Ron's favourite hymns were sung or played.

Ron was born and lived in Loxbeare all his life and always attended Loxbeare

Church. He served faithfully as Church Warden for 48 years and hardly missed a service unless he was ill or visiting We all have our special ∆ustralia memories of Ron and the tributes paid to him received by the family in word, card and at the funeral has shown how highly people thought of him and respected him.

'A man of prayer & faith', 'kind, helpful & generous', 'A man who lived by his principles', to name but a few. All his life Ron has had the great desire that the gospel of Jesus Christ, God's word to be always preached in Loxbeare.

Ron got on well with all age groups and encouraged everyone 'to get involved' whether at Church services, activities, or village life. He organised with great enthusiasm the Harvest Festival Sports, Holiday Club games, including the famous and much loved by the children the tug of wars and the many games with Aubrey at the New Year parties. The children will I am sure, particularly remember 'throwing the potato' game.

Many years ago, Ron instigated the 'Sunday special' meetings for the Young People with many other Church denominations becoming involved to encourage and teach the word of God. He organised the carol singing every vear around Loxbeare and Calverleigh which has been going for all of Ron's life, raising lots of money for various charities, only giving up this year, passing the 'baton' on to Sue and Aubrev pleased that it was carrying on.

Ron and Margaret kept hens and Ron was often seen delivering eggs to shops, butcheries etc and became known as 'the egg man'! They ran two holiday

lodges and Margaret did some B&B with many returning for several years for holidays.

He loved to play cricket and played many years for Stoodleigh and then set up and organised the Loxbeare cricket which still plays, always encouraging the young people to get involved and enjoy sport.

Ron would be the first to say that what he achieved in his life was only possible because of him and Margaret working and helping each other for all their 61 vears of marriage together. Ron will never be forgotten and will be greatly missed here in Loxbeare, the Exe Valley and the wider community.

From Margaret: Dear friends, Margaret and family would like to thank you for the cards, messages and letters of sympathy and donations for Loxbeare Church following Ron's sudden death. God bless you all.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Maurice Taylor who at the time of writing is in hospital also Marlene and We also remember all the family. anyone else who is feeling unwell, having treatment, or waiting for appointments/treatments.

Please see middle pages for dates and times of services but the Plough Sunday service will be held in Loxbeare on 23 January at 11.15am.

Shoeboxes were donated to Blythwood destined for the Ukraine for poorer children in time for Christmas. Thank you to those who came to the Village Hall and helped pack them or donated towards it.

continued overleaf



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Happy Birthday to all who have birthdays in January/February and anyone who will be celebrating special occasions.

Many thanks and much appreciation to all who have kept the Churchyard so nice and tidy during the year and for any general maintenance of the Church etc.

Also thank you to those who have helped, supported and contributed in any way to running of the Church. For time and commitment given for those who have taken and helped in various ways in our Church services.

We are continually grateful for the work of all medical care workers as they nurse and care for patients and the elderly. We pray that the vaccine will continue to be a help in protecting us from the Covid and the new strain. May the scientists continue to be able to produce the necessary vaccine to prevent serious illness and hospitalisation.

The Christmas Fayre on 4 Dec was scaled down to a Christmas cream tea with a bring & buy stall etc, and with some donations approx. £200 was raised.

If you receive this magazine before Christmas, we wish you all a Happy and Blessed Christmas and New Year. We pray we will all keep safe and continue to support and look out for those who need it.



OAKFORD

very Happy New Year to everyone.

Whilst we hope 2022 will be a better year than last, our thoughts and prayers are for all NHS workers facing a difficult winter. We thank them for their care and dedication from the bottom of our hearts.

On 7th November the baptism took place in St Peter's of Benedict Duncan Franklin son of Philip and Dianne Cockayne. Steph officiated and Dave Edwards, Lévon Stephan and Mary Shere accompanied the singing. Welcome Benedict to your church family.

A service in church followed the traditional Remembrance Day service held around the war memorial in the village. Parish Council chairman, Geoff Bayliss, laid a poppy wreath on the step of the memorial. Thanks to Wendy Boynton for leading the service and to Sean Mayer and Paul Chappell for their participation. Thanks also to those who decorated the village, the lych gate and the church.

The Exe Valley Mission Community Christmas tree trail is ongoing until Twelfth Night. The theme this year is taken from a children's book written by Steph in 1991. St Peter's tree in the porch shows the Wise Men and the gifts they brought to the baby Jesus.

Many congratulations to Mary & Brenda's Fundraising Group which since its launch on 15 May last year up until 4 December had raised an unbelievable £2769 for the church bells

restoration fund. It now has 199 members locally, nationally and worldwide. What an achievement in fundraising and friendship from a simple idea. From small acorns mighty oaks do grow.

A Christmas afternoon tea was held in church on 11 December. Thank you to all who helped. Just under £300 was raised for church funds.

The Moorland Club:

In an attempt to get life back to normal the annual Christmas Fayre was held in the village hall on 27 November. Club members provided lots of stalls and delicious lunches. With the generosity of all who worked so hard to make this happen and the visitors who came to support £1174.50 was made. Grateful thanks all round. A donation will be made to Marie Curie.

Unfortunately the Antiques Talk & Valuation by Bonhams due to take place in January has had to be postponed until the autumn.

The meeting on 20 January will now be hosted by Sue Vigus and titled 'ARE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY....' The meeting is 7pm for 7.30pm.

The ever popular Fish & Chip Supper & Fun Quiz will take place in the village hall on 17 February starting at 6pm. Please secure your order by contacting Jennie Chappell (01398 351666) or Jennie Benians by the end of January.

Quiz Nights at The Red Lion will be on Sunday 16 January and Sunday 20 February at 8pm.

continued on page 12

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2 JANUARY

10am Zoom Service

CALVERLEIGH

11.15am Morning Worship

CRUWYS MORCHARD

11.00am Morning Prayer

LOXBEARE

11.00am Morning Worship

OAKFORD

See Stoodleigh

RACKENFORD

See Stoodleigh

STOODLEIGH 11.15am Holy Communion Georgie Bell

TEMPLETON

10.45am Morning Service

WASHFIELD

See Stoodleigh

WITHLEIGH

10.30am Family Service

9 JANUARY

10am Zoom Service

CALVERLEIGH

See Washfield

CRUWYS MORCHARD

See Washfield

LOXBEARE

See Washfield

OAKFORD

10.15am Morning Praise

RACKENFORD

11.00am Morning Praise

STOODLEIGH

11.00am Morning Prayer

TEMPLETON

See Washfield

WASHFIELD

11.15am Holy Communion Steph Gordon-Jeffs and Claire Curtis with Dave Edwards

WITHLEIGH

10.30am A Service for Plough Sunday

16 JANUARY

10am Zoom Service

CALVERLEIGH

11.15am Family Service

CRUWYS MORCHARD 11.15am Holy Communion With Baptism Steph Gordon-Jeffs With Dave Edwards

LOXBEARE

11.00m Morning Worship

OAKFORD

10.15am Morning Worship

RACKENFORD

See Cruwys Morchard

STOODLEIGH

11.00am Morning Prayer

TEMPLETON

See Cruwys Morchard

WASHFIELD

3.00pm Evening Prayer

WITHLEIGH

See Cruwys Morchard

23 JANUARY

10am Zoom Service

OUR MISSION COMMUNITY GROUP HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE is at 11.15 am in LOXBEARE Steph Gordon-Jeffs

and Claire Curtis

with Dave Edwards

Everyone welcome

Join us for our weekly

Coffee Morning via Zoom

This takes place every Wednesday morning at 10.30am Join us when you can and leave when you have to!

On the first
Wednesday each month
we meet in person.
Check out Steph's weekly
update or the website.

30 JANUARY

10am Zoom Service

CALVERLEIGH

No Service

CRUWYS MORCHARD

11.00am Family Service With Claire Curtis

LOXBEARE

No service

OAKFORD

No Service

RACKENFORD

No service

STOODLEIGH

No service

TEMPLETON

10.45am Family Service

WASHFIELD

11.15am Prison Service Guest Speaker Steph Gordon-Jeffs

WITHLEIGH

10.30am Songs of Praise

6 FEBRUARY

10am Zoom Service

CALVERLEIGH

11.15am Morning Worship

CRUWYS MORCHARD

See Oakford

LOXBEARE

11.00am Morning Worship

OAKFORD

11.15am Holy Communion Steph Gordon-Jeffs with Dave Edwards

RACKENFORD

See Oakford

STOODLEIGH

See Oakford

TEMPLETON

See Oakford

WASHFIELD

See Oakford

WITHLEIGH

10.30am Family Service

13 FEBRUARY

10am Zoom Service

CALVERLEIGH

11.15am Holy Communion Georgie Bell With Dave Edwards

CRUWYS MORCHARD

11.00am Morning Praise

LOXBEARE

See Calverleigh

OAKFORD

10.15am Morning Praise

RACKENFORD

9.30am Worhip for Everyone Steph Gordon-Jeffs

STOODLEIGH

11.00am Morning Prayer

TEMPLETON

10.45am Family Service

WASHFIELD

See Calverleigh

WITHLEIGH

10.30am Service of the Word

20 FEBRUARY

10am Zoom Service

CALVERLEIGH

11.15am Family Service

CRUWYS MORCHARD

See Withleigh

LOXBEARE

11.00am Chat, coffee and cake

OAKFORD

See Withleigh

RACKENFORD

See Withleigh

STOODLEIGH

11.00am Morning Prayer

TEMPLETON

See Withleigh

WASHFIELD

3.00pm Christingle

WITHLEIGH

11.15am Holy Communion with Baptism Steph Gordon-Jeffs and Claire Curtis

with Dave Edwards+

27 FEBRUARY

10am Zoom Service

OUR MISSION COMMUNITY HOLY COMMUNION GROUP SERVICE is at 11.15 am in OAKFORD

Steph Gordon-Jeffs and Claire Curtis With Dave Edwards

Everyone Welcome

STEPH'S SOUP KITCHEN

It was lovely to see so many of you over the summer for lunch. During the winter months on the third Friday of the month, I will be holding a bread and soup lunch, with pud. It will be a great opportunity to meet up for a chat, the next two dates are FRIDAY 21 JANUARY AND FRIDAY 18 FEBRURY between 12.30-2.30. Please let the office know if you would like to come.

BIBLE STUDIES

Will begin on Wednesday 12
January at 7.00pm on Zoom
or Conference Call. Put the
date in your diary and come
and join us.

LENT ASK QUESTIONS

March 9 - 30

See website and Update for more information.

Baptism and Confirmation

We have a wonderful number of Baptisms booked in this year.

What a joy it is to welcome so many families into our churches.

Do please get in touch, if you or your child, would like to be baptised.

Maybe you have been baptised but never confirmed.

If you are interested in being confirmed and would like to find out more, do please contact the church office and



speak to Steph.

Forward dates:

Join the party for 'The Great Oakford Taste Off' on Friday 18 March in the village hall from 7pm. Bring your legendary sloe gins, a full flavour alternative spirit or a non-alcoholic cordial. Enter the savoury section – Homity Pie – is yours the best ever? We'll be the judges of that! A fun filled evening with cheese and biscuits to soak up the alcohol. £3 per person entrance fee.

Rehearsals have begun for the Oakford Players spring production 'The Vicar of Dibley' which is to be performed in the village hall on 24/25/26 March. Tickets £15.00 please contact Dawn 01398 324035.

In this deep midwinter we pray especially for anyone who is feeling unwell, depressed or lonely and for those who may be grieving the loss of a loved family member or friend. May you find comfort and love through our saviour Jesus Christ.

RACKENFORD

↑ belated happy and healthy new year

We hope you have enjoyed Christmas however you spent it, maybe with family and friends if possible, for some it may have been lonely, it's been a difficult year in many respects for so many.

We are all battling on together to help and support each other through the unknown, but also remembering we have come a long way. So together we stand to face the future with support, love, prayers and a kind word.

As mentioned in the previous issue we managed to hold a Harvest Tea, all warmly welcomed at Graham and Ruth's home on December 9. People enjoyed a selection of savory, cakes and cream teas kindly donated by the PCC and friends. A bonus was the music from Rackenford Rascals (a six piece brass ensemble) playing in the garden and mingling with new families. Thank you Annette for running the draw for us and to Graham and Ruth for your hospitality and to all who supported us. £420 was raised from our Harvest collection and tea combined.

We are really pleased to report our sponsored walk took place on Saturday October 2 (after the first date had to be postponed) and what a stunning day it was, beautiful views, good company and conversation as we enjoyed the beauty of Dartmoor, not forgetting our picnic.

When the walk was completed we enjoyed a cuppa and cake together at a local farm shop.

The circular walk around Haytor, visiting a number of Tors was organized by Liz, who pointed out places of interest en route. Thank you Liz for all the planning and walking you did proceeding this day.

Thanks also to Graham and Roy for driving and being on hand just incase. £1,917.00 was raised for our funds, thanks to you our sponsors,who were so generous without you and our walking boots we would not have achieved the above.

We are most grateful to Fred, Brian and George once again for giving their time to cut the church hedge, it looks great, thanks also to Ruth and Helen for helping to clear up the debris. We really appreciate your hard work.

On October 22 the funeral service was held for David Cocks where family and friends gathered to support Sarah and family during their sad loss. Moving tributes were paid to David and we learned so much about his life. We continue to support Sarah and family at this most difficult time with our love and prayers

A memorial service took place on November 6 for Michael (Mike) Lane. The church was full and we listened to numerous stories of Mike over many years. Some amusing memories were recalled throughout the service with many photos to view later during refreshments.

Michael's life ended with Helen and family at home in Rackenford. We hope you felt the love and support Helen.

A belated warm welcome to Debbie and David at Higher Bulworthy. We hope you are enjoying life in and around Rackenford.

To anyone else we haven't heard of welcome to you also.

Halloween saw some amazing costumes and faces appearing in different places, being treated to little goodies. Hope you had fun and kept safe.

Another village tradition, Bonfire Night, keeping warm by the fire, comforting food and enjoying the sky so full of







beautiful lights.

Competitions also took place. So many people attended that the laughter and excitement could be heard around the village. Thank you to everyone for all the hard work put into this evening.

Our Remembrance Service at the War Memorial was very well attended and so good to see young people (our future) all coming together to pay their respects to all those who gave their lives for us. Local names were read by Derek. We thank Derek and Jackie for leading our service again and all the preparation it takes. Sharon played The Last Post, followed by music from the Rackenford Rascals Brass Band. Roy had the honour of laying the wreath which is organised each year by Richard and Christine.

It's so important to us this service is recognized and the collection of $\pounds 260.10$ was sent to RBL.

We continue to pray for all who are bereaved, in hospital, receiving treatment, unwell in any way or awaiting treatment and those we have heard about, Christine and Richard, Des, Les, Robert, Gordon, Olive, Margaret, Jaques and Joan.

If you know of anyone you would like mentioned, please let us know.

We would like to send Daphne Weston our love and very best wishes in her new home. She was a regular worshiper in our church and will be very much missed.

Our continued recognition to all the shop volunteers for all they do above and beyond running our village shop and newpapers. We are so lucky to have you all.

Rackenford Rascals suggested a fund raising concert. This took place in church on 27 November. Free entry and refreshments. Donations were optional but £240 was given and shared between Air Ambulance and Rackenford Church. Thank you so much to them for this kind gift.

You missed a treat if you were unable to attend but they would like to hold another in the Spring and hopefully with nicer weather. Their six piece brass band ensemble played a wide range of music and a great compare who had us tapping and stamping our feet. Many thanks to Sharon and the other Rascals. A big thank you to Joy for all her home grown beautiful flowers.

This year the Exe Valley Mission Community churches joined together in a Christmas Tree Trial. The trail was taken from a book written by Steph in 1991.

Our tree adorned with angels was placed in the porch, organised and decorated by some PCC members. We hope you enjoyed viewing it and the inside decorations for Christmas, many thanks everyone and to Liz and Tim for the beautifully decorated tree at the altar. By the time you receive this we will have had our December 5 Service / Holy Communion with Rev Steph and also welcoming David Edwards singing and playing his guitar and Sue playing the violin which was so very enjoyable Also welcoming friends from other parishes.

Our Lay Led Christmas Eve Service will have taken place with Rackenford Rascals, Graham and musicians. More information in the next issue.

What a delight to walk through the village and see the beautiful display outside Little Angels.

We may have been fortunate enough to have had a visit from Carol Singers too. Father Christmas will have been and now having a well earned rest, bless him.

We hope you have all had the opportunity to enjoy Christmas and maybe caught up with family and friends.

As we know Covid is still amongst us and we continue with our prayers and respect for each other. We thank all the NHS who are working so hard under difficult conditions for us all.

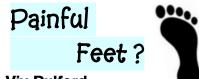
Happy birthday or anniversary to anyone who has been or will be celebrating.

STOODLEIGH

aving to submit the entry for the magazine nearly a month before publication means that reporting on Christmas Festivities will not appear before March! (But it has always been thus!)

So, at St. Margaret's, we have a Christmas Coffee/Wine morning in the

continued overleaf



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church on Saturday 11 December with a Mystery Raffle and the church decorated for Christmas. Then on Thursday 23 December, there is the annual Carol Service with a small choir and children performing a Nativity Play. This is the main Christmas Service for Stoodleigh as this year there is no service here on Christmas Day.

First, a very big thank you to all those who turned out on a blustery Saturday morning (the day after storm Arwen) to clear up the churchyard. The wind had helped the leaves blowing them across to pile up by the wall but even so there was a lot of raking to do. Many thanks to Ray for kindly taking them away. A thanks to John W who lent his trailer and disposed of the grass cuttings. Without this help and the mowing by the Berry family, our churchyard would not look as pristine.

We were sad to say farewell to Christine and Peter Broadbent who have left the village. Both were members of the PCC Peter as Churchwarden and Christine as Treasurer. We are so grateful to them for their enormous contribution over the years.

Moving into Champles are Charlie, Therese, Ida and Isobel and we wish them well as they start their new life in Stoodleigh.

With arrivals, there are always departures, and we send our condolences to Jill on the death at the end of November of her mother Emerald at the age of 98.

But we also welcome the arrival of a daughter Esme to Emily and Tom, a sister for Lucas.

Next year we hope to have more events in and for the church and these will be published on the community email and on the web pages of the village and Exe Valley Churches.

Since opening the church, we have had quite a few visitors and I thought I would share with you a note which was left for Carol Shore from Betty James (nee Woodwards).'Thank you for this wonderful book about Stoodleigh. It has brought back many happy memories of my short time there; firstly at Hutswell Farm then at Barnoon. Possibly only five years as we left when I was seven. I will never forget school and Mrs Palmer who was a wonderful teacher and so kind. I also have a feeling that I went to Carol's 6th birthday party as we were the same age but I might be mistaken. I have taken a copy for my sister June (now 88) who I know will love it; also for my brother Peter (now 80). With many thanks again for the great pleasure you have aiven me.'

Cricket Club

Sadly, the cricket club had а disappointing summer and as suggested in the last issue, we were indeed demoted to division three of the West Somerset League. However, the season ended on a fantastic note thanks to the efforts of Liz at the Inn. A scratch team of drinkers narrowly lost to a Stoodleigh team in a 20/20 match at the ground. Liz provided a bar and needless to say there were more festivities back at the Inn after the game. It was a very welcome fundraising day for the cricket club and huge thanks go to Liz for organising the

We all agreed that it should become an annual event, so if you missed it this year, we'll see you next September if not before! We are always keen to recruit new members so if you are interested, please contact our secretary Matt Shaw (http://www.stoodleigh.play-cricket.com)

Garden Club

The Garden Club have had a well attended AGM at which Pat Pennington retired as Chairperson. She was presented with a bouquet of flowers and life membership after many years of service to the Club.

As no one was willing to take on the leadership role from Pat, it was decided to form a leadership committee to take the Club through the coming year. They are looking forward to a full programme of events including the Annual Show. New members are always welcome. Information available on the garden Club page of the Stoodleigh website.

The Swap-Box in the old telephone box has been operating through the Autumn for the exchange of surplus produce and other items. Thank you to all those who supported it. It is now closed for the winter.

The Parish Hall

The Hall AGM was held on 16th November and the draft minutes are available on the Parish Hall pages of the Stoodleigh website. Viv Menear has taken on the chairmanship of the Management Committee for 2021/22 as Linda Brice has stepped down after several years as Chair but she remains

continued overleaf



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on the committee. Details of membership, contact information and booking arrangements can be found on the Parish website. (https://www.middevonparish.co.uk/st oodleigh/)

The Parish Hall will be open for coffee on Saturdays on a monthly basis from January. Some events for the year have been arranged including a Lunch and Walk in early March and an Easter Market and Coffee Morning in April. Other events are planned for 2022, information about which will be on the parish website and circulated via community email in due course.

The Hall car park has been resurfaced and the extension exterior has had some repairs and a new coat of paint which have received many compliments.

Welcome to new residents

Goodbye and best wishes to Catherine lan and their boys who have moved from Barton House. Welcome to Neil, Louise, Harrison, Maisie and Sienna who have now moved in. We hope you will be very happy in your new home and enjoy living in Stoodleigh.

And finally...Thank you everyone who joined in with the Christmas Tree Lighting Event on Friday 3December. Over 70 attended including more than 20 children. It was fabulous to see so many of you, adults and children decorating the tree with items you had bought. Refreshments were served inside the hall where we sang carols. Amazing folks!! Thanks to our musicians, Arby, Lana and Matt.

Thank you too for your donations to the fund and the foodbank for the Churches Housing Action Team (CHAT) We'll let you know the final results when we deliver to CHAT.

We hope to see you at the Christmas Coffee Morning and the Carol Service. Happy Christmas everyone.

TEMPLETON

ello and Happy New Year!

January is the time for new beginnings. We can think of this month as an opportunity; a clean slate, a chance to reflect, set new goals and to set the mood for the year ahead. Whatever your new years resolutions, or how many jobs you have on your list now the days are getting lighter again, try to remember to take some time to be kind to yourself.

St Margaret's Church, Templeton – update and events

Can you imagine Templeton 100 years ago, in 1922? I

n those days, Templeton had its own thatcher, tailor, village shop, village pond, school, blacksmith at Temple Cross, carpenter, postal service, a central village pump and, of course, the church. The population of Templeton at this time was about 170.

Today, we number about 140. The Rector of St Margaret's was John Finlay Rutherford until he moved to Chelmsford in 1930. In 1922, it had already been 40 years since St Margaret's Church had undergone a previous renovation, in 1878. It's incredible to think that St Margaret's Church was first built over 700 years ago by the Knights Templar in the 13th Century, yet remains such a focal point today.

If you'd like to know more about St Margaret's Church and its history, there is a very interesting booklet for sale in the church. All proceeds will go toward maintaining the church.

Maintaining St Margaret's Church This spring, St Margaret's Church will need to have some repair work carried out on the interior walls and we are grateful for all your generous donations which will help to achieve this. Some of the 'relatively straightforward' repairs may possibly be carried out by local volunteers from the parish.

The extended burial area has matured and looks beautiful and over the next few months, a beech hedge will be planted along the new fence. A wooden bench is also planned for a corner of the churchyard.

The Remembrance Day Service

On Sunday 14 November, the congregation paid their respects to all those who died in conflicts around the world, and observed the two minutes' silence. During a moving service, Reg Coffin talked about the soldiers from Templeton who died during the First World War. They were all in their 20s. Two brothers, Sidney and Frank Cruwys, who died within six months of each other, lived at Town Cottage in Templeton.





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Reginald Warren lived at Coombe Mill (now Dartcoombe Mill) at Templeton Bridge.

The Sunday Services

The Sunday services for January and February are published in the centre pages of this magazine. The lay-led Sunday services at St Margaret's are held at 10.45 am and usually last about 30 to 40 minutes. If there is no Sunday service at Templeton, there should be a group service at one of the other parishes. If you or your family have any favourite hymns that you'd like to sing at one of the services, just let Reg or William know (contact details on page 2).

Knit and Natter

The ever popular Knit and Natter takes place on the last Wednesday of each month between 10.30 am and 12 midday. Bring any knitting, sewing or repair work or just come and have a chat over a cuppa. (£1 donation for church funds). Dates for the next two months are Wednesday January 26 and February 23.

Events

Plans for fundraising events over the past year have been limited, with so much uncertainty, but two events are planned for the spring, that hopefully will happen!

Safari Supper

A safari supper is planned for February possibly on Saturday February 27. This is a social event where different courses of a meal are eaten at different people's houses. In this way, the cooking is shared, and it's a great way for people to meet up with neighbours. More news of this event to follow!

Templeton Tractor Run

Roland is organising another highly popular Tractor Run for some time over the next few months. This is a fundraising event with tractors, old and new, invited to take part. The owners drive their tractors along a planned local route, often with lunch and refreshments served before or after the tractor run. Further details, including the time and the route, will be available soon as a date is finalised.

Templeton Village Hall and Social Club Update

Over Christmas, Templeton Village Hall held its darts, pool, table tennis and skittles competitions. New pool cues were purchased for the occasion but at the time of writing, we are still waiting to take delivery of our new table tennis table!

As always, to commemorate the event, the names of the winners will be engraved on the silver shields at the club. Why not come up on a club night for a drink and a chat? Or maybe, have a game of darts, pool, table tennis or skittles - to get into practice for next December's competitions. Club nights Mondays and Saturdays from 8.30pm to 11pm. Club membership is £2 and the drinks are very reasonably priced.

If you would like to book the village hall for a birthday party, meeting, or any other event, please contact Bindy on 01884 860655.

Thoughts, prayers and all good wishes Our thoughts, prayers and all good wishes are with all those who are unwell, who have been in hospital, who are awaiting or recovering from surgery, or who are having a tough time at the moment. We hope that you will be feeling better soon.

Church Flowers and Cleaning Rota for January and February 2022

Teresa Pancherz Cleaning Gloria Woollacott Cleaning Ginah Palmer Cleaning Bindy Linden March Flowers and Jan 16 – 23
Flowers and Jan 30 - Feb 6
Flowers and Feb 13 – Feb 20
Lent begins 2 – no flowers and Feb 27 – March 6

WASHFIELD

Remember: One kind word can warm three winter months.

Winter is the time for comfort, for good food, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home.

Once more uncertainty is upon us in the current stage of the pandemic, but we are, at the time of writing, planning to go ahead with our two Christmas Services, but with all the necessary restrictions in place and a new risk assessment drawn up.

It feels a priority to celebrate the wonderful event that the birth of Jesus means. We are just the same people under our masks! We have found that is actually possible to sing with a mask on, too!

The last two months have seen Services in all our churches getting



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back to something like normal and Steph and Claire have been circulating around the valley with Holy Communion services for us all. The on-line or phone Services have continued each Sunday for those who have needed them, and are much appreciated.

Compline has been said each Wednesday on- line throughout Advent, following on from the Bible study course, when we followed Abraham throughout his amazing life.

Steph's Soup Kitchen is a very pleasant way to meet up over a delicious lunch and to get to know each other better.

We look forward to being all together on Christmas Day at Cruwys Morchard.

We send our love and prayers to those who are stressed, anxious or unwell at this time and we hope that in our very caring village no-one feels lonely. Help is always at hand if you need it.

We have said farewell to Martin and Anna Hansford who have gone to live near family, and we wish them a long and happy life in their new home in Wales. Martin and Anna have done so much for our churches in the many vears they have been with us, with Anna fulfilling her role as a Reader and PCC Member, and Martin filling many roles in Washfield and as Treasurer of the Group, PCC Treasurer and Secretary and Lay-Leader. Washfield Reflection Group was formed by Martin, and together they started our Thursday Service of Morning Prayer. Their support for all our activities will be missed very much. Our very grateful thanks go with them.

Please keep in mind the Christingle Service at Candlemas in February when it will be lovely welcome children with their families again.

Many thanks for all the support for the church Coffee Morning which resulted in agrand total of £306.50.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

Thank you all for your generous financial support of the church in these difficult times.

The Social Club has once again, in the past few months, organised special events for members and guests alike.

The first, at the end of October, was the annual Pumpkin weigh in competition. The earlier part of the evening was a celebration for the children with pumpkin carving, fun, games a Halloween pinata and food. It was greatly enjoyed by all. The second part of the evening turned more serious when months of growing a pumpkin from a given seed suddenly became very important!

The great weigh in resulted in winners; Dave Bowden coming 1st with an amazing weight of 82lbs, Kipper coming 2nd with 53lbs and Eric close behind with 50.5lbs.

In the children's classes Eden and Caleb Hubery were first with 39.5lbs and Eva and Zak 2nd with 33.5lbs. Eva and Zak also won the title 'Prettiest pumpkin'

Well done to all growers and everyone who took part in this evening. As a result of this community participation £217.43 was raised on the night and this will now be added to last year's

total of £92.00 and sent to E.L.F. Well done!

The second Social Club event took place in December when the children of the parish were invited to a Christmas party.

The Christmas tree at the hall was in place (and decorated in time) and provided the perfect, Christmas feel in the village once again this year. The many children who came had the most wonderful time and this culminated with a visit from Father Christmas bearing a gift for all. How wonderful that these types of events can take place this year and that we have such kind people to organise them.

We also plan to have Carol singing around the tree on 21 December in aid of the Exeter Hospice followed by a 'bring and share' supper. We will update you next time.

Events for your diary in 2022 are: 29 January 2022 – Social Club 'Burns Night' from 7.30pm. Tickets are available at the Club @£15 for members and £20 for non-members for a 3-course meal with Ceilidh. Get yours now!

ADVANCE NOTICE – Hopefully we can have our traditional Easter Saturday 'Egg decorating and rolling' and also the Coffee morning in the hall next year. This will have all the usual stalls including Plants so please get sowing and growing in preparation for this crucial fundraising event for the P.C.C.

We wish all those with special celebrations and birthdays our sincere wishes and, if you are not well, having treatment or awaiting operations, we



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wish you many get well wishes for a speedy recovery.

WITHLEIGH

No doubt, by the time you read this, Christmas will have come and gone, and we sincerely hope that it has been a good one for you all, after all the disappointments and restrictions of last year. May we wish you all a Happy New Year, and hope that Covid mutations will not prevent life in 2022 from being far more normal.

It was great to see so many of you back in the Village Hall for our Community Lunch on the 2nd November - an event we will repeat in the spring.

We held a Charity Raffle at the Lunch which raised £93 for the Mid Devon Messenger. Many thanks to all the cooks for providing the main course and the various desserts.

The Quinquennial Inspection of St Catherine's took place on 11 November, carried out by our architect. We are currently awaiting his report.

Our Remembrance Day Service was, as usual, well attended, with the congregation being greeted this year by the sound of bagpipes, courtesy of Giles. Fortunately it was a fine morning! Once again, candles were lit for each of those listed on our war memorial as their names were read out prior to the two minute silence.

Our Christmas Bingo, the first Bingo for two years, was really well supported. Thank you, Christine, Janet and Frances for organising the event, and for getting the prizes, and again to Christine for calling the numbers on the evening.

Great News!! Withleigh has a Defibrillator, given in Memory of Gerald Luxton by his wife Frances and the rest of Gerald's family. Our thanks go to them all for their kind gift, and also to Julian Lee for giving his time to fit it up for us, to the left of the Village Hall door. Just let's hope it's not needed, but it's there to use if the need arises. In an emergency please call 999 and follow their instructions.

Our Christmas Fayre, held in the Village Hall on Saturday 4 December, was a great success, and it was great to be able to meet together again in this way, having missed out on last year's Fayre, and our Summer Fêtes - both last year and this.

Our grateful thanks go to all who supported the event by coming along, including the stallholders, those serving refreshments throughout the day, and those who donated prizes for the raffles. A special thank you to Margaret who, in addition to selling preserves, etc. on the day, had been selling from her door to help make up for the summer fête. As a result of all of these efforts, the total sum raised for church funds was £1,983.60.

Christingle seems to be as popular as ever, and our service at the beginning of December saw the introduction of technology, thanks to the efforts of Stephen with his Powerpoint display which ran throughout the service. Our grateful thanks go to him for adding an extra dimension to the service. The retiring collection raised £120 for the Children's Society.

It is with sadness that we have said goodbye to Peter and Anne who have moved to Whimple, downsizing in the process. We very much appreciated their allowing us to use their garden for the summer fête a number of times. Peter was also very involved in dealing with financial matters in relation to recent works to our church, and the refurbishment of the Village Hall.

For upcoming Services at St Catherine's in January and February see centre pages.

We are hoping to have a Late Christmas Meal (Covid permitting) on Saturday 8 January, 6.00pm for 6.30pm. Please bring your own drinks. Tickets are £15 each, please call Christine 257571 to book your ticket as we do have a limit on numbers.

Congratulations to anyone who has a special anniversary, and to any who have special birthdays.

Get well wishes go to all those known to us who are receiving treatment, recovering from operations, or who are unwell at the moment.

Forthcoming Events:

Saturday 8 January – Late Christmas meal in the Village Hall, 6 for 6.30pm

Flower Rota:

January 2, 9, 16 - Sara Kittow January 23, 30, February 6 - Michaela Luxton

February 13, 20, 27 - Rosie Edmondston-Low

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CHILDREN'S PAGE

The Little Christmas Tree Trail



Follow the story of 'The Little Christmas Tree' page by page around the churches of The Exe Valley Misssion Community and tell the story of Christmas. Why not take a photo of each tree and its part in the story and send them to us?

Page One - Cruwys Morchard Page Five - Loxbeare

Page Two - Withleigh

Page Three - Rackenford

Page Four - Stoo∂leigh

Page Six - Templeton

Page Seven - Oakford

Page Eight - Washfield

Page Nine - Calverleigh





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