

Mission Community of Ipplepen with Torbryan, Denbury and Broadhempston with Woodland

A message from the Venerable John Rawlings, Archdeacon of Totnes

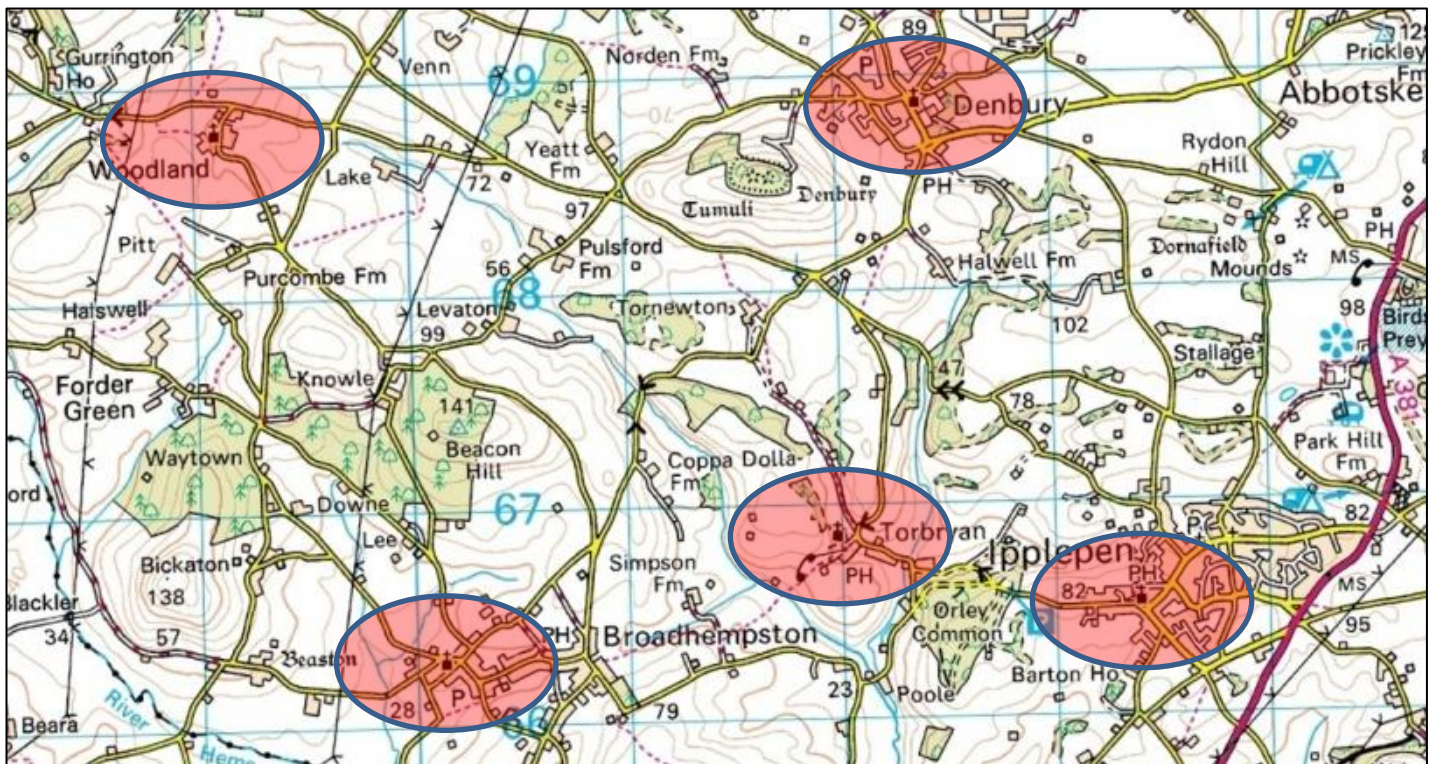
I am delighted to be able to write for this first edition of The Beacon – the new magazine for an enlarged grouping of parishes into what will be known as The Beacon Parishes Mission Community.

For some years the parishes of Ipplepen with Torbryan, Denbury and Woodland have been working together informally as a mission community and at the end of June will draw Broadhempston into its life. After that it will be possible to create a formal scheme for the future working of these parishes and institute and induct The Reverend Peter Ashman as the incumbent.

I know there have been many discussions leading up to the formation of the Beacon Mission Community and I must commend people from all the parishes who have worked towards this in such a positive way. This is very encouraging for the mission and ministry of the Church in these places and I hope it will become a beacon in the diocese shedding the light of Christ into every community and the lives of the people who live in them.

With my prayers and all good wishes for the future

John



Dear Friends,

With the launch of this new-look magazine and the start of a new Mission Community we have much to look forward to. They say that there is strength in numbers and I hope and pray that, as we work together, we might be stronger and more able to discern God's mission for us in these places.

Already we have started working together planning services, sharing wardens' experiences and deciding on our identity. We decided that we needed a more catchy name. Telling someone that we are the Benefice of Ipplepen with Torbryan, Denbury and Broadhempston with Woodland sounds like a catalogue of train station names!

Suggestions were sought and the one favoured by everyone was "The Beacon Parishes". We felt that "beacon" suggested that we were part of Christ's shining light in these places and that it had a positive and energetic feel. Each of the parishes has or has had a beacon at some time as well. We chose a simple logo which reflected the beacon. It has three flames for the three parishes, each of a different colour because, although we are all in the same spectrum, we are all individual. The green symbolised the rural nature of the parishes. Some people thought that the logo was like a sprouting bulb and that also reflected how we want people to see us as a living and growing community.

Part of my planning within the Mission Community is to make sure that we use our resources to best effect as we need to be efficient when there is so much to do. The weekly pew sheet takes a lot of time and is very repetitious. I am not sure it is used to best effect. So we have decided to develop our communications through what was the JAM magazine. To reflect our new name we have called the magazine "The Beacon" and we hope you like it. As well as your usual

features, it will include contact details for all the churches, dates ahead, parish intercessions and a centre page showing what services are being held and where they are. You might like to pull out that centre page and keep it on your fridge or wall for reference. All this involves a certain amount of thinking ahead. While we can acknowledge events and flood-lighting after the event we would much rather be able to advertise it in advance. Please do let us have the information as soon as possible. As with all changes we welcome your thoughts and ideas. These projects are dynamic in nature and will grow and evolve according to need. Readings will still be available at our Sunday services.

We have already begun looking at how we can best serve the churches by looking at what services we hold. The current pattern of services is unsustainable for one paid priest and I am very grateful for the help I get from our Hon. Asst. Priests and outside retired priests. Ultimately we have to come up with a pattern of services which is sustainable and fit for purpose. We have engaged the services of the new Mission Development Officer, Canon Andrew Godsall, to help us discern the way forward and he will lead us in an away-day in August when we will look at our vision, mission and resources. Again, if you have any ideas or suggestions do please let one of us know.

My thanks to Michael and Charles for all their hard work in putting this edition together – I am sure you will agree that it looks most professional.

Let us pray that in this new beginning we may glorify God through our work and witness.

With every blessing, in Christ
Peter



News from Denbury

St. Mary the Virgin



This time of the year is always a busy period for Denbury folk and 2014 is proving to be no exception.

In line with the whole Mission Community, Denbury parishioners have been doing their bit towards lowering our carbon footprint under the initiative for Lent proposed by the Diocese of Exeter. Although there was little scope to reduce the use of cars to get to church as the majority of attendees walk to services, we were urged to review how we use energy resources in all aspects of our daily lives and make savings wherever possible.

On the 8th of March the Church Cottage was the venue for a Fairtrade Day. This was held as part of the Fairtrade week and was an opportunity for villagers to stock up on groceries (including some very tasty chocolate items) whilst helping this excellent cause. The event ran from 10am to 1 pm and was very well supported with virtually all available stock being sold on the day.

As ever Holy Week was a very busy time for the church congregation. As the weather was kind this year we were able to process from Church Cottage around the outside of the Church and back inside on Palm Sunday to get the week off to a good start.

On Maundy Thursday a number of Denbury members joined with our friends from the Mission Community at St. Andrew's for a fascinating service which included our Priest in Charge Peter Ashman washing the feet of approximately a dozen of the congregation. Following this service a Vigil was held between 9pm and 12 pm in Denbury. With the

church lit only by an array of candles in the Lady Chapel, this period is always an ideal opportunity to meditate on the Easter message and to appreciate the power of silence.

Following the sombre Good Friday service held in a bare church, we held the very ancient Easter Vigil service on Saturday night. This is a very meaningful and complex service incorporating the lighting of the Pascal Candle. As the service starts outside the church with the lighting of candles from a brazier; we were fortunate that the gale force winds which have hampered this part of the service over the last few years were missing this time around. After the service we enjoyed a chat over a drink and nibbles in the Church Cottage.

A good congregation of all ages welcomed in Easter on Sunday and the service was followed by the traditional Easter egg hunt around the church and churchyard for the children. During the service the congregation place flowers they have brought along on a large wooden cross which is placed on the altar as the service comes to a close and with the Easter Garden provides a beautiful backdrop and is symbolic of Christ's resurrection.

The Annual May Fayre in Denbury was once again heralded by a Songs of Praise service held on the Green on the Sunday evening prior to the start of May Fayre on Bank Holiday Monday. This is proving to be a popular event and has become a fixture of the Mayfair celebrations. Some 15 villagers took part in singing some favourite hymns in a very friendly and convivial gathering.

Mike Bray

News from Ipplepen

St. Andrew



Back in January it was lovely to celebrate the week of Christian Unity with a joint service with our friends from the Methodist Church in Ipplepen. The Reverend Jon Doble, from the Methodist Church in Newton Abbot, preached at the service which was very well attended, the church was almost full and over 40 people from the two churches went on to the church hall for a buffet lunch afterwards.

The first Sunday in February marked a new start for St Andrews, not just the first Sunday Club, of which I am sure there is more elsewhere, but also the first of our new style services, with the new hymn books. There was some apprehension before the service about how the logistics would work, but it appeared to go without a hitch! The whole feel of the service was less formal, with some more modern music mixed in with traditional hymns and the prayers led by a member of the congregation, Marilyn Ellis. Some parents came whilst their children were in Sunday Club and it was lovely to see a mixed age congregation of over 70 people.

We were delighted on the 23rd March to welcome Toby and Nicholas who were baptized in the church and became part of our Mission Community, along with their older brother Oliver. It was such a lovely change to have a baptism during a normal Sunday service and to have the opportunity, as a congregation, to welcome some new young members of the church.

Like Christmas, Easter was a busy time of year, with Holy Week offering a wide range of styles of services. There really was something to suit everyone and the week culminated in a joyful celebration on Easter Sunday, when the church came together to celebrate.

Ipplepen held our own "Meet the Rev" evening in the middle of May. Despite the competing attractions of a most beautiful sunny Saturday evening and the FA cup final, it was well attended. Villagers were invited to submit questions for Peter, with some of the most challenging examples being submitted by the Brownies. We were relieved to hear that "The Rev" has never (yet!) dropped a baby during a baptism. It was good to see some faces of people who don't normally attend church and the whole evening was a happy and sociable occasion.

Liz Lamport



A couple of pictures from "Meet the Rev"



News from Woodland

St. John the Baptist



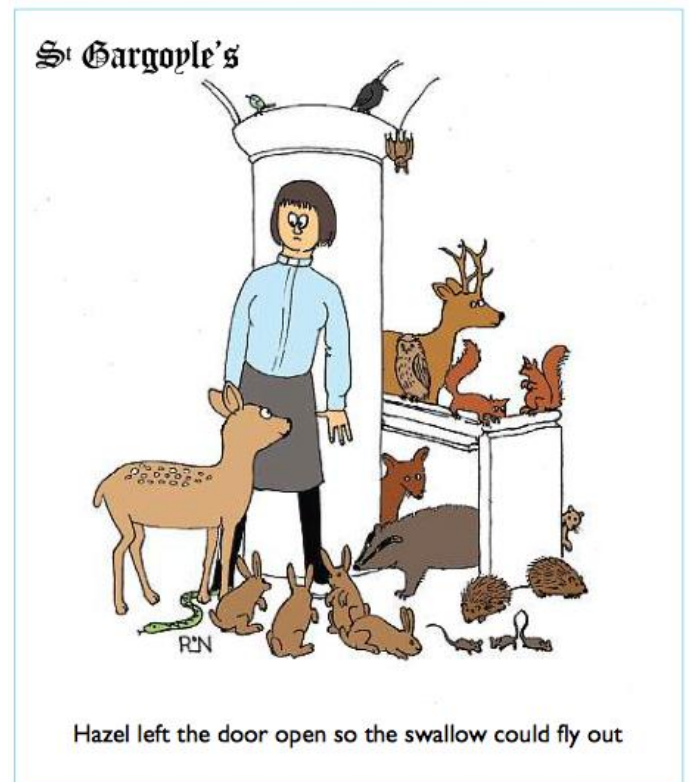
The warm sunny weather seems to have brought out so many flowers in the fields, hedges, gardens and woods of our little parish. There seems to be a new surprise around every corner as bushes that I hadn't noticed before are covered with blossoms. Crops in both fields and gardens seem to be growing at such a fast rate that all looks hopeful for harvest.

The monthly parish library and coffee meetings have continued to be a great success and have led to people bringing excess garden produce and plants to swap. The tomato plants which I brought home last month already have tomatoes on and are much bigger than those which I had planted in the cold frame previously!

The Easter services were lovely, as always, including the open air service on Easter Monday at the start of our annual village Easter Egg Hunt. Plans for our village fete are now being discussed, which is a huge fundraiser for both the church and village hall. Let's hope the weather continues to be kind.

Helen Pearse

Wedding at Woodland!



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Recently we were delighted to host the wedding of Jenna Chave and Aaron Theodore. One of the "extra" guests was a swallow which flew into the church during the service, much to the delight of all.

News from Broadhempston

St. Peter and St. Paul



As I started to write this article the words of the song “and the times they are a’ changing” came into my mind and they most certainly are!

During May & June the Hems Valley Benefice will be saying many fond farewells to Nicholas, our Rector, but we in Broadhempston are also looking forward to the times ahead when we join with new friends in Ipplepen, Torbryan, Denbury and Woodland.

We have had very well attended services over Christmas and Easter. On both occasions our church was beautifully decorated by our talented team of flower arrangers. The Broadhempston School choir sang for us at the Christmas carol service and the children have also enjoyed preparing the Easter garden plus, of course, hot cross buns and Easter eggs.

Thanks to the generosity of our congregations, we were able to make a substantial donation to the children’s charity “Chicks” and, in the new year with our

Christingle service, to the Church Children’s Society.

Over the winter months our enthusiastic group of bell ringers has competed with 3 teams in the Totnes Deanery winter league. Our ‘A’ team has recently qualified as one of 10 teams from across Devon to compete in the Devon Major 6 bell final.

In early May we invited Peter to join us at one of our regular Book Exchange mornings. These events are always well attended and enabled Peter to meet many villagers of all ages in an informal setting. We hope he enjoyed the coffee, cake & chat.

Our next big event will be our **Patronal Service to be held on Sunday 29th June at 11am**. The service will be held in the Church followed by refreshments in the Village Hall. We do hope that many of you will be able to attend and we can meet together for the start of a new Mission Community and the challenge of the years to come.

We would like to thank you for welcoming us into your Mission Community and special thanks to Peter for helping us to prepare our move to join with you.

Pam Perriman (Churchwarden)

The late Margaret Pearson

Mary Edmonds and Ruth Arber (Margaret’s step daughter) would like to thank Fr. Peter Ashman and Fr. Tom New and all the many people of Denbury Church who helped to make the funeral of Margaret Pearson so prayerful and we are sure just as Margaret would have wanted.

It was lovely to see so many people in the Church, a sign of how much she was loved and appreciated.

Lent Course 2014: An entirely personal reflection

One of my favourite quotes is the reported response of a frustrated lawyer confronting a particularly obtuse judge. Judge: "I'm sorry, but I'm none the wiser". Lawyer: "No milord, but you are better informed....!" I wasn't intending to go to all the Lent course meetings. Thought I'd drop in a couple of times, to learn a bit more about the service: history, traditions, and put in my two-penneth on points of controversy, such as what to actually call it.

Well, we did all that – often in brain boggling detail. We looked at different parts of the service and the theology underpinning it. We considered the ecclesiastical and ecumenical similarities (far outweighing any differences), and had a great input from the Ipplen Methodist Minister. We solemnly reviewed whether the Holy Spirit was invoked BEFORE or AFTER the commemoration of the Last Supper...

But it wasn't this that had me coming to every session. Was I better informed? Well yes, but for reasons I had never expected. Normally, when encountering what I'm inclined to dismiss as mere form over substance, I loudly proclaim "Does it matter?!" Well, I find actually that "Yes it does". The form – and familiarity – of the service provides the containment needed for my small intellect to deal with the huge mysteries encountered. In the first session, by sharing the prayers he uses privately – whilst robing for example – Peter brought home the need to "pray not say" the service for all of us. In another session, we were invited to consider the true nature of Grace – unconditional....undeserved....unlimited... And as for invoking the Holy Spirit: You might as well try to bottle a whirlwind!

So, if "it's not what you do, it's the way that you do it"* that truly matters – that is a big ask. As one who regularly fails to stay "on task" for the length of the Lord's Prayer, this could be unnerving. But once again, I found reassurance in what was discussed. Now, instead of seeing myself as being on a slightly dodgy phone line with me trying to focus while God waits (patiently) at the other end, I am reminded that I am part of the fellowship of the Communion. The Eucharist service proceeds like a bright rushing stream, regardless of my ability to pay attention. I may have wandered off to consider my aching back or what's for lunch, but when I come back – it's STILL THERE!

Yes, alright, I probably knew all this – in theory. But this Lent course has made it real. Our last session was a Eucharist (Mass/Communion/Lord's Supper) service. I would love to say I concentrated throughout, but that wouldn't be strictly true. So, not much wiser, but definitely better informed.

**As Bananarama so memorably put it!*

Rachel Belringer



A reminder of Bananarama - Ed

Messy Church 3 Years On – nearly!



This year has been a year of renewed growth in the numbers attending Messy Church but also some continuing challenges. Word of mouth recommendations meant that we saw peaks of 28 families and 53 children in December and January but we still need to find a way to reach out to more families, particularly in Woodland. We also need to make sure that families in Broadhempston know about Messy Church, not just when it is on but what it is all about. Anyone who fancies being our Messy Church ambassador in those villages, please get in touch with Tessa or myself.

Among our regular families we want to make sure that Messy Church stays relevant to them, especially as the children grow up. To help us do this we will be sending out a feedback request to all our Messy Church families and our team of volunteers asking them for their comments on the content, format and timing of Messy Church to see if there is any way that we can improve. We'd also welcome ideas and comments from other people in our wider church community so please talk to us about Messy Church or come and join us one month to see what happens!

Finally, while you are all enjoying the summer (and hopefully some lovely summer weather), spare a thought for the Messy Church team who will be using the break to try and think of lots of interesting themes and activities so that the fourth year of Messy Church in our Mission Community will be even bigger, brighter and better than ever before!

Linda Simmonds

So, What is Messy Church?

Messy Church meets once a month on the last Saturday of the month from 3pm to 5.30pm and is for everyone from 0-100 to enjoy a wide variety of crafts, prayers & celebration and a shared meal. Please note that Messy Church isn't a crèche or a traditional Sunday School - it's for the whole family & adults & young people too. Everyone is welcome from all the Mission Community parishes and beyond.

Messy Church is another way of worshipping which reaches out to our wider community and welcomes them in a way that they feel comfortable with. There is no expectation that Messy Church families will come to other services (though of course they are always welcome if they do) - Messy Church is their way of being part of our church family.

There is no charge to attend Messy Church though donations to help with our running costs are very welcome.

Contacts

Rector	The Reverend Peter Ashman	☎ 01803 813847
Hon Asst Priests	The Reverend Tony Meek	☎ 814370
	The Reverend Anne Burden	☎ 813520
	Canon Tom New	☎ 813775
Readers	Mrs Tessa Amies	☎ 813993
	Ms Tricia Stokes	☎ 762158
St Andrew's Church, Ipplepen		
Churchwardens	Dr Michael Price	☎ 813472
	Mrs Geraldine Dennis	☎ 813077
Deputy Warden	Mrs Jane Outhwaite	☎ 812879
Choir	Mrs Jo Innes-Lumsden	☎ 812654
Bellringing	Mr Colin Clark	☎ 01626 354561
PCC Secretary	Mrs Vanessa Bevan	☎ 812812
PCC Treasurer	Mr Roger Chamberlain	☎ 01626 352282
Church Hall	Mrs Shirley Northwood	☎ 813980
Flowers	Mrs Sheila Stacey	☎ 813609
Hospitality	Mrs Jane Outhwaite	☎ 812879
St Mary the Virgin, Denbury		
Churchwardens	Mr Steve Bassett	☎ 812537
	Mr Mick Sutherland Cook	☎ 813871
Deputy Warden	Mr Mike Bray	☎ 812941
Bellringing	Mr Steve Bassett	☎ 812537
PCC Secretary	Mr Mick Sutherland Cook	☎ 813871
PCC Treasurer	Mr Mike Bray	☎ 812941
Cottage	Mrs Fran Howells	☎ 812971
Flowers	Mrs Ann Toler	☎ 813255
Social	Mrs Tessa Amies	☎ 813993
Ss Peter & Paul, Broadhempston		
Churchwardens	Mrs Pam Perriman	☎ 812986
	Mr Chris Parker	☎ 762200
Bellringing	Mr Graham Pascoe	☎ 812102
PCC Secretary	Mrs Harriet Lawson	☎ 01626 337878
PCC Treasurer	Mrs Liz Harris	☎ 813734
Flowers	Mrs Jane Parker	☎ 762200
St John the Baptist, Woodland		
Churchwardens	Miss Sheila Ashford	☎ 01626 821288
	Mrs Jane Usher	☎ 01626 353454
PCC Secretary	Mr David Wrayford	☎ 01364 652323
PCC Treasurer	Mr John Usher	☎ 01626 353454
Safeguarding	Mrs Carol Robinson	☎ 812800
The Beacon		
Editor	Dr Michael Price	☎ 813472
Production	Mr Charles Quartley	☎ 812238

Services for July

Sunday 6th July – Trinity 3

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Ipplepen	PA
9.15am	Parish Communion	Denbury	PA + baptism
	No service - travel	Broadhempston	
11.00am	Parish Communion	Ipplepen	Rev. Anne Burden
6.00pm	Evensong (BCP)	Ipplepen	PA

Sunday 13th July – Trinity 4

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Ipplepen	PA
9.15am	Parish Communion	Denbury	PA
11.00am	Parish Communion	Broadhempston	PA
11.00am	Parish Communion	Ipplepen	Canon Les Harman
6.00pm	Parish Communion	Woodland	PA

Sunday 20th July – Trinity 5

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Ipplepen	Rev. Tony Meek
9.15am	Parish Communion	Denbury	PA
11.00am	Morning Worship	Broadhempston	Tricia Stokes
11.00am	Parish Communion	Ipplepen	PA
6.00pm	Evensong (BCP)	Woodland	PA

Sunday 27th July – Trinity 6

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Ipplepen	PA
9.15am	Parish Communion	Denbury	PA
11.00am	Parish Communion	Broadhempston	Rev. Tony Meek
11.00am	Morning Worship	Ipplepen	Lay-led
6.00pm	Parish Communion	Woodland	Rev. Anne Burden

Mid-week (CW) services are held as follows:

Wednesday	10.00am	Denbury	Holy Communion
Thursday	10.30am	Ipplepen	Holy Communion
Thursday	4.30pm	Denbury	Evening Prayer (said)

Intercessions for the Mission Community - July

6th July	Ipplepen Road, Ipplepen Broadhempston Community Shop	Denbury Down Lane, Denbury Woodland Cottage, Woodland
13th July	The Grange, Ipplepen Robert Owen Foundation/Radfords	Woodland Road, Denbury Wickeridge House, Woodland
20th July	Grange Close, Ipplepen Beaston, Broadhempston	Woodland Close, Denbury Oakdene, Woodland
27th July	Lang Way, Ipplepen Downe, Broadhempston	Shute Lane, Denbury Orleycombe, Woodland

Services for August

Sunday 3rd August – Trinity 7

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Ipplepen	Rev. Tony Meek
9.15am	Parish Communion	Denbury	Canon Tom New
	No service - travel	Broadhempston	
11.00am	Parish Communion	Ipplepen	Rev. Anne Burden
4.00pm	WW1 Commemoration	Ipplepen	Rev. Tony Meek

Sunday 10th August – Trinity 8

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Ipplepen	Rev. Tony Meek
9.15am	Parish Communion	Denbury	Rev. Preb. Alan White
11.00am	Parish Communion	Broadhempston	Rev. Anne Burden
11.00am	Parish Communion	Ipplepen	Rev. Tony Meek
6.00pm	Parish Communion	Woodland	Rev. Anne Burden

Sunday 17th August – Trinity 9

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Ipplepen	PA
9.15am	Parish Communion	Denbury	PA
11.00	Morning Worship	Broadhempston	Tessa Amies
11.00am	Parish Communion	Ipplepen	PA
6.00pm	Evensong (BCP)	Woodland	Tessa Amies

Sunday 24th August – Trinity 10

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Ipplepen	PA
9.15am	Parish Communion	Denbury	PA
11.00am	Parish Communion	Broadhempston	Rev. Tony Meek
11.00am	Morning Worship	Ipplepen	Lay-led
6.00pm	Parish Communion	Woodland	PA

Sunday 31st August – Trinity 11

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Ipplepen	PA
11.00am	Mission Community Holy Communion	Torbryan	Rev. Tony Meek & Rev. Anne Burden

Intercessions for the Mission Community - August

3rd August	Ledsgrove, Ipplepen Knowle, Broadhempston	Halwell Farm, Denbury Hillside, Woodland
10th August	Luscombe Close, Ipplepen Hemsford, Broadhempston	Bramble Down, Denbury Barton House, Woodland
17th August	Mayfair Road, Ipplepen Users of the Village Hall, Broadhempston	North Street, Denbury Rose Cottages, Woodland
24th August	Meadow Park, Ipplepen The Monks Retreat, Broadhempston	East Street, Denbury Wickeridge Mews, Woodland
31st August	The Mission Community	Torbryan

Dates ahead – July and August

July

5	10-12.00	Woodland Library in the Parish Rooms
	12.00	Wedding of Nick Buckland and Kelly Broadway, Ipplepen
	2.30 pm	Installation of +Robert as Bishop of Exeter, Cathedral
	3.00 pm	Thanksgiving service for Heston, Ipplepen
12	2-5.00 pm	Open Gardens, Denbury
13	2-5.00 pm	Woodland Fete
15	7.00 pm	Broadhempston PCC, Radfords
20	6.00 pm	Songs of Praise, Ipplepen Show
26	12.00	Wedding of Robert Allum and Louisa Locke, Ipplepen
	All Day	Broadhempston Bellringers' Outing

August

2	10-12.00	Woodland Library in the Parish Rooms
9	12-3.00 pm	Family Fun Day, Denbury
16	2.00pm	Broadhempston WI Produce & Craft Show
23	12.30	Wedding of Darren Greep and Donna Pearson, Woodland
26	9-4.00 pm	Mission Community Development Day (wardens, clergy, readers)
31	3.00 pm	Baptism of Lucas Baverstock, Ipplepen

Coffee Mates (Men of Denbury)

(and Friends)

this is your chance to become a 'Coffee Mate'
gather around a cup of coffee, biscuits and cake
2nd Thursday of each month at Church Cottage

10.30 to 12.00noon

Treat it as a 'coffee shop',
bring your newspaper, book, do the crossword

Monday T Pot

each Monday, 3.00pm to 4.30pm.
Denbury Church Cottage. All welcome.

Messy Church Appeal

*Anyone who would like to come along and help at Messy Church please get in touch with Tessa or Linda or just come to one of our Messy Church sessions. Volunteers are always welcome and there are a wide range of things we need help with: welcoming families, keeping the register, running a craft activity, making teas & coffees, making little cakes to celebrate birthdays, playing for the celebration songs, preparing the communal meal, serving the meal, clearing up afterwards - the list is extensive! Talk to Tessa or Linda or come to see what you could do to get Messy at our next sessions on **Saturday 28th June at Ipplepen Church Hall, Sunday 27th July at Orley Common and Saturday 27th September in Ipplepen Church Hall. Messy Church runs from 3pm to 5.30pm.***



Or could you help us to reach out to more families in the Mission Community? Please tell any families you know about Messy Church and encourage them to come along! If there is somewhere you could put up one of our bright and cheerful posters where they will be seen by families please let us know.

Linda Simmons 01803 812619

Tessa Amies 01803 813993

Coming soon

We hope to start a **Pastoral Care Team** for the Mission Community – in other words a group of people who the clergy can ask to visit those in our churches who are ill or lonely or distressed. Perhaps you are already a ‘good neighbour’ and can find a bit of time to show this on behalf of the Church. Perhaps this is something you are interested in – or would simply like to know more. Then look out for details in all of the Churches in the Mission Community – and have a think about whether this is something God might want you to do.

There will be a get-together in August, and some training sessions starting in October – and a list to sign to show that you might be interested. Visitors will be authorised by the Church, and support and guidance will always be on hand.

Questions or comments to Anne Burden (813520) or Gordon Kendall (814054)

Some impressions of Messy Church from a teacher in training

My first experience of Messy Church was a little bit of a trial by fire... I was placed at a table, with some vegetables, toothpicks and googly eyes. Then the children arrived. Creatures were formed with multiple heads, legs and eyes everywhere and before I knew it the vegetables were gone, the children had moved on and I was left with quite a mess!

One Saturday a month the Church Hall is taken over by food, children, paint and most importantly, glitter! I have been to help at quite a few Messy Church events, though I wish I had the time to do more. My favourite activity, so far, had to have been the glitter-covered angels (and children, parents and helpers!) at Christmas. Watching the children delight in the mess they made was brilliant and I think I was still shaking glitter out of my clothes weeks later!

I've always noticed a great variety of activities available, (from craft tables to painting and of course the obligatory messy food table) and often wonder at how much time Tess must put into organising and resourcing the activities on offer. I've always thought art is a great way for children to outlet their creativity and explore the different ways they can express themselves.

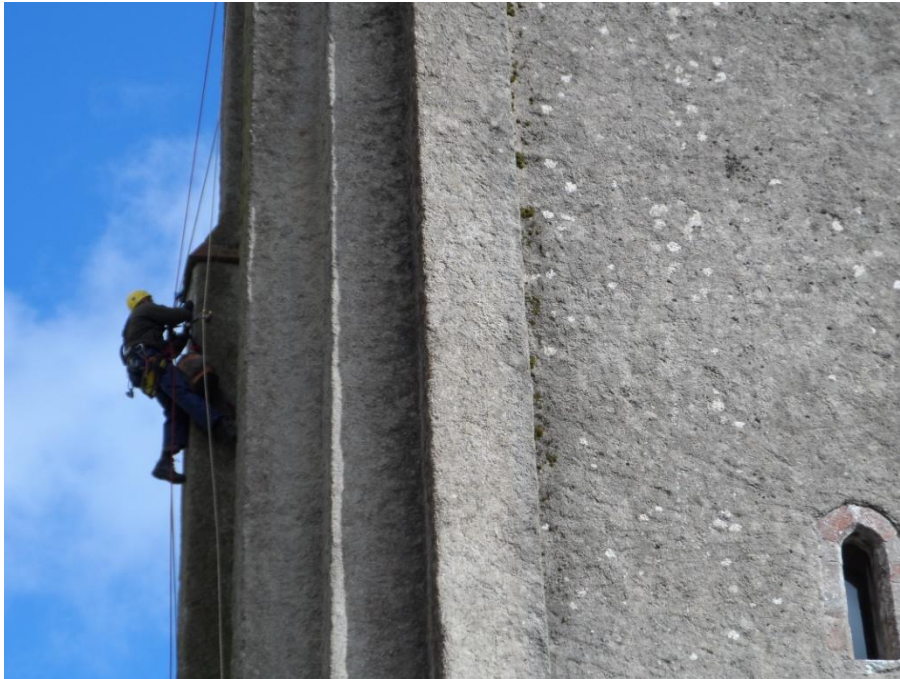


Messy Church offers something a little different for a Saturday afternoon and is a wonderful community offering, and I certainly could spend longer than a couple of hours creating things. In my experience on teaching placements, most children (especially once they get to Key Stage 2) don't have enough creative time in school, with exceptions of course. Messy Church provides a wonderful opportunity for children to make a mess and be as creative as they want to be in a safe environment with lots of choices on offer. I'm very impressed by Messy Church and the hard work put in by all the volunteers, and often finds myself wishing it could happen more often!

Natasha Standish

(Natasha and others have been volunteer helpers at Messy Church during their Post Graduate Certificate in Education year at Exeter University. We wish them all well in their teaching posts in September.-Editor)

Going up in the world - or coming down again



Did any one notice some hardy gentlemen hanging from St Andrew's church tower a short while ago? No, they weren't stealing anything but making good some storm damage.

You will remember the tremendous storms we had at the end of last year. During the onslaught we found that a large chunk of rendering had been blown or washed off the tower, some 60 feet up. Of course, nothing is that simple and the heavy plaster, falling from such a height, had seriously damaged the boiler house roof and the main metal roof of the church. By hook, crook, and lying on our backs in a very awkward position we managed to bend the main section of roof back into a shape which was watertight, if not very pretty, and certainly only as a temporary measure. By holding on tightly to the sides in a strong gale we managed to carry out temporary repairs to the boiler house roof until builders could come and patch it for the time being.

This still left a big problem with the tower - would more rain and perhaps frost weaken the damaged area further? Certainly there was nothing our Working Party could do at that height, and of course scaffolding would be a huge problem - access, height and cost.

We had good advice from our church architect, Russ Palmer from Honiton, who suggested a firm of steeplejacks could come down the outside of the tower and make repairs that way. But in the whole area only one firm was willing and capable of doing the work for us.

Eventually Western Access of Moretonhampstead agreed to make the attempt, and with a web of strong ropes attached to various sections of the top of the tower, they lowered workmen down to make an excellent repair - the steeplejack's equivalent of invisible mending. We are grateful to them for their daring and skill.

Luckily we had had a 5-yearly survey of St Andrew's a short while before this damage occurred, so the surveyor was able to confirm that everything was in good order before the storm, and we are insured for a great deal of the cost of repairs to the tower, the new boiler house roof, and specialist repairs to the main roof. We are left with a hefty bill of £1000 for the insurance excess, so some extra help from this year's Gift Day will be much appreciated!

Stephen Bryant

Beacons, Towers and Bells

The title 'The Beacon' is a very appropriate name for the new magazine for the enlarged Mission Community as St. Peter and St. Paul, Broadhempston joins St. John the Baptist, Woodland, St. Andrew, Ipplepen with Holy Trinity, Torbryan and St. Mary the Virgin, Denbury.

'A beacon was an early form of quick communication, even though it was limited in the information that was being sent. The earliest beacons were probably little more than a bonfire or barrel set on the ground. Over the centuries, five types of beacons developed. The first two needed to be placed on elevated land and they were 1) a bonfire and 2) a pole beacon – a fire placed in an iron frame known as a 'pitch basket' 3) a firebox on a tower 4) a stone enclosure and 5) a stone tower. Beacons were erected by order of the king, and were administered by the county sheriff or local administration. Their purpose was to provide, or pass on, warnings of peril and of the need to muster defensive forces.' (www.english.gov.uk)

Hill forts were sited on elevated land as they were excellent places to light bonfires which could be seen for miles around and could be used as a warning signal indicating that invading pillagers were near. The village of Denbury sits by Denbury Down, an Iron Age Hill fort. The church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Broadhempston was built on a level patch of ground half way between Beacon Hill and the River Hems. Perhaps the early residents of both these villages saw beacons lit in moments of danger?

All the churches in our enlarged Mission Community are very old and all have towers. Many churches were built on a raised piece of land and with a tower added have become like 'beacons' even if no actual beacon was ever placed on the tower. They can be seen for miles around and if the exterior walls have been white washed, e.g. Torbryan Church, it is seen clearly in the landscape.

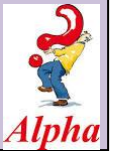
Not only are the towers ideal places for people to observe the surrounding countryside but to see if there are any signals that are being sent. Over the centuries bells have been placed in towers and used as another simple form of communication as their sound can travel for miles. The ringing of bells is a signal that a church service or a marriage ceremony or a funeral is about to start. In times of trouble the bells have been rung as a warning or in happy times as a sign of celebration.

Beacons, towers and bells have all been used for centuries to communicate simple warnings or messages. Today we have different ways of communicating anything and everything so we can suffer information overload and it can be difficult to discern what is important. Unfortunately television and newspapers concentrate on telling us about human tragedies across the globe. This can give the reader feeling that human actions are only dark, dangerous and destructive. Positive actions are not given the same coverage so it is even more important that as Christians we try to be better communicators in our daily lives and to use any opportunities that will allow us to bring the 'Good News' of Jesus Christ ' to our families and village communities.

As an enlarged Mission Community with our new Rector, The Reverend Peter Ashman, there is also a need to join together in many ways e.g. sharing our resources and using the skills we have to help each other. We need to ask other Christian groups, which are growing in size what they are doing to be successful? Reading and even writing articles for the new magazine 'The Beacon' will play a part, in hopefully be a new and growing Mission Community. Like the fires of the beacons, the lights from the churches and the peals of the bells, our new Mission Community magazine 'The Beacon' can be used to send out the 'Good News' that Jesus Christ brought to mankind.

Madeleine Fedrick

Alpha Course - Holy Trinity, Cambridge



The Alpha Course was first introduced in 1977 and is an eight-ten week course which aims to introduce the basic principles of the Christian faith to anyone regardless of their beliefs. I attended an Alpha Course at Holy Trinity Church in Cambridge at the beginning of this year and have found the whole experience extremely enlightening.

Each week began with a dinner with about twenty individuals and was followed by a talk on a set topic for the week for example, "Who is Jesus?" which was often supported by anecdotal evidence of how God has worked in everyday life. The group was then divided into smaller discussion groups where you would be asked to comment on the talk and a discussion would develop. The discussion groups were especially interesting as we were able to talk about subjects that are normally too intense to talk about in everyday life such as your beliefs on love, death and values.

A variety of people attended the course including students, young parents, retired adults and the expertise and faiths of the people varied from a mixture of Christians, atheists, theologians and scientists which made the discussions especially challenging at times. This helped me to understand that you do not have to choose between believing in science or religion which often seem to be portrayed as opposites, but in fact the two considerably overlap.



The course has widened my perspective to the depths that a relationship with God has impacted people's lives and has also taught me that it is acceptable to question the Bible and beliefs that you either don't understand or find it difficult to agree with. Overall I think that the discussion groups have been fundamental to seeing a growth in faith because it allows the teachings of the Bible to be brought into everyday life and strengthens relationships with those with whom you feel comfortable discussing these fundamental topics.

Jazz Austin

(Jazz will be well known to St Andrew's congregations where she had been a regular reader at the Family Service, not to mention acting roles at Epiphany and Passiontide.

She is now just finishing her final year at Sidney Sussex College Cambridge reading Architecture)

How churches can create a good first impression

An essential read for all sidesmen and sideswomen?

Elizabeth Burdon gives a synopsis of an article by Philip North:

The writer was once told by a church organist that when- on ten weeks' sabbatical leave from his parish- he visited a different church each Sunday, he found himself able to decide almost immediately whether he could ever belong there, whatever splendid qualities emerged later.

Musing on this, Philip North came to the conclusion that, disregarding the highfaluting language and theories of modern evangelism, a simple approach is best: make one's building an inviting place, with clear directions, up-to-date notices, access for the disabled etc.-and most of all-provide the right sort of personal, smiling greeting from one of a trained team, establishing the names of newcomers and showing them to seats. If the church has chairs, it is important to consider an attractive

and inviting layout of roughly the expected number, but with chairs or pews it is vital not to allow anyone to be able to claim "That's my seat"!

The next thing to consider, he thought, was what new arrivals should be given on entering: not a confusing collection, but preferably a simple order of service (and some churches even have a weekly booklet containing the liturgy, readings, notices ,etc; or even a big screen!). The best atmosphere to aim for?-prayerful, with gentle music, perhaps; and sometimes a pre-service music practice, to suggest a feeling of togetherness ready for devotion.

So, instead of all the theorising, he feels that "Church growth is manageable and do-able even for the humblest parish if we focus on doing a few things well"-and we should all consider those "first thirty seconds".

Presentation at Torbryan



Like many churches, Torbryan church depends on volunteers to keep it clean and in good order. Pictured here is Vi Lowdell who was recently presented with a certificate of thanks for 22 years of outstanding voluntary service. With her is Churches Conservation Trust Regional Director Colin Shearer and the certificate has been signed by Loyd Grossman OBE, Chairman of CCT.

Torbryan church is maintained by the CCT and the Mission Community is allowed to have a limited number of services there.



Floodlighting

The towers at both Denbury and Ipplepen have floodlighting which requires sponsorship to cover the cost of electricity and maintenance. Sponsorship is usually for a week at a time, and people often like to sponsor to mark a special occasion.

For Denbury, contact Mick Sutherland Cook on 01803 813871

For Ipplepen, contact Winnie Bryant on 01803 812066

Denbury:

For two weeks commencing 20th July

Mary Head, 'In memory of her late husband Peter's birthday and in celebration of her daughter-in-law Clare's birthday'

Week commencing 27th July

Fran and Glyn - celebrating Joe's wedding on 27th July

Ipplepen:

Week commencing 13th July

The late Diana Brooks who wished to celebrate the birthday of her great-grandson Tom Welch on 17th July

Week commencing 20th July

The late Diana Brooks who wished to celebrate the birthday of her grand daughter Sara Welch on 19th July

Also Michael Price and family to celebrate Hilary's birthday on July 21





WW1 commemoration in Denbury

Josh Day 'watering in' Flanders Poppy seeds of Remembrance commemorating WW1 at the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Denbury. Packets of seeds were supplied to all churches in the Exeter Diocese. Sunday 1st June 2014.



Editor's corner

We are very grateful and pleased that the Venerable John Rawlings, Archdeacon of Totnes, has written an introduction for us.

The new magazine will continue to have articles of review from each of the four churches (and Torbryan, we hope) and events that have previously occurred as well as contributions from parishioners on different aspects of our churches and Christian life.

However to enhance our ability to provide the best communications between us all we need you to let us have your contributions for future events eight weeks in advance where possible to ensure their relevance.

Don't wait until deadlines to send in your articles, and any photographs are always welcome as they do add colour and interest to the articles.

The next edition will be issued at the end of August, so copy deadline is the middle of August

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"The Beacon" is produced at no cost to the parishes of the Mission Community

