

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



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The Beacon

The Beacon magazine is published every 2 months

Current and all past issues are available on the website www.missioncommunity.org.uk.

Articles for submission should be sent to the editor, Michael Price

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01803 813472.



At a time of increasing use of computers and artificial intelligence-

Welcome to the printed February - March edition of our Beacon magazine.

This covers the period from Candlemas on February 2nd through the season of Lent and Holy Week to Easter day on March 31st.

Andrew in his parish letter refers to the pleasure of visiting gardens, while Helen Pearce in her Woodland news refers to the appearance of snowdrops sometimes referred to as 'Candlemas bells'.

The English word Lent is a shortened form of the Old English word lencten meaning "spring season" which may have a reference to the lengthening of the days as characterising the season of Spring.

I am very grateful to all our contributors; perhaps I can mention special thanks to our regular 'news reporters' from the churches. We are fortunate in this edition to have a 14 year old's view from Torbryan!

Included in this edition are the obituaries of two much loved and greatly missed members of our Mission Community, Canon Tom New and Maureen Burley.

On a national note- AI will not replace vicars! The Church of England has reassured its vicars that they are "distinct and indispensable" and not set to be replaced by robotic reverends.

It comes after a government report suggested the role was among those that would be the most affected by artificial intelligence.

The prospect of robo-priests delivering computer-generated sermons was raised after the Department for Education warned that religious clerics are among those whose occupations are "most exposed to Al and large language models", which include ChatGPT, the text-generating system.

A spokesman said: "The Church is carefully considering the role of AI in our future. While people from many backgrounds are exploring AI, the clergy's role goes far beyond generation of written content. It is centred on human connection and spiritual guidance — it remains distinct and indispensable."

Praise be!

Articles and photos for the next edition are welcomed and should reach me by March 23rd.

Michael Price, Editor

The Beacon – Donations towards costs

The cost of printing the Beacon depends on the number of pages and print run for each issue, but over the year it amounts to between £2200 and £2700.

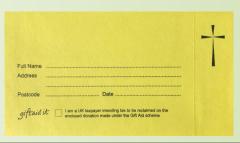
The costs are underwritten by each parish for their copies, and the PCCs welcome anonymous donations from individuals towards these costs.

Donations can be made direct to one of the PCCs in the usual manner [cash, cheque, bank transfer] or online via QR code below or the link <u>Give a Little – The Beacon</u>

Donations can, of course, be Gift Aided if you are a UK tax payer. This can be done when giving online or by filling in one of the little yellow envelopes in our churches.







From Andrew

I am not much of a gardener but I wish I was and hope that someday I will be. I love spending time with gardeners and going to gardens. Recently I spent a wonderful morning in the formal gardens at Dartington Hall with a friend. As we walked and talked the friend would stop at different plants and say look at this, smell this, have you noticed.....it was a real joy to see the garden through their eyes and be drawn into a deeper appreciation of



what was all around me. To do this required me to slow down and shut up!!! There is a lesson there I am sure.



As we journey through the end of winter and into spring greater and clearer indications of life blooming will be all around us in our gardens, hedgerows, woods and verges. It is at this point of the year that the Christian Church holds an extended time of preparation and reflection, which we call Lent. Lent is a 'shoulder' season in the church year, just like spring, where we look out for and make time to notice things that are starting to bud and bloom in our spiritual lives. We stop, slow down, and notice.

In my report to our Church Annual Meetings in the spring of 2023 (see page 32 where it is reproduced for you to read again) following another trip to Dartington, I wrote about gardens as a metaphor for what I was seeing and hoped for in terms of blossoming and growth across the parishes of Ipplepen with Torbryan, Denbury, Woodland and Broadhempston. This spring as we approach our annual meetings for 2024 I am heartened to see the fruits of what was looked and hoped for then. The reintroduced services at Holy Trinity Torbryan go from strength to strength, this year moving from bi monthly to monthly. What were relatively new ventures in the informal Come Holy Spirit Service, weekly silent meditation, Coffee and Chat, Denbury craft workshops have taken root and become established. There have been the often surprising splashes of colour offered by our one off events such as the Denbury Festival of Flowers and Mary Day, the Hospice talk, Woodland Quiet Days, Christmas Tree Festival. As in all gardens some things lie dormant for a while and then when time is right re-emerge so it is with joy that we are trialling again an 8am early morning communion service in Ipplepen, an Evening prayer with Benediction in Denbury, a Book of Common Prayer Evensong in Woodland and children's talks as part of our Eucharist's in Broadhempston. These are just a few things that come immediately to mind as I write this I wonder what blossoming you see and notice in our churches?

The season of spring will eventually lead to summer with longer days and extraordinary abundance and growth. In the church year Lent leads on to the season of Easter where we celebrate again how mourning and death is turned into joy and new life and are invited again to enjoy the amazing provision, abundance and friendship of God through all the seasons of life.

Andrew

Sunday and Ash Wednesday Services for February

Services planned at time of going to print. Please check website / Weekly Notices for updates.

Sunday February 4th Second Sunday before Lent

9.30 am Holy Communion - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

11.00 am Holy Communion with Children's Activities - St Andrew's, Ipplepen
 5.00 pm Simple Celtic Evening Prayer - Holy Trinity, Torbryan

Sunday February 11th Sunday next before Lent / Racial Justice Sunday

9.30 am Holy Communion - St John The Baptist, Woodland
11.00 am Holy Communion with Children's Activities - Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston

11.00 am Celtic Morning Prayer - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

6.00 pm Evening Prayer & Benediction - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

Wednesday February 14th Ash Wednesday

6.30 pm Mission Community Holy Communion and

Imposition of Ashes - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

Sunday February 18th First Sunday of Lent

9.30 am Holy Communion with Children's Activities - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

11.00 am Holy Communion - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

5.00 pm Come Holy Spirit: An Informal service of reflection - St Andrew's Church Hall, Ipplepen

Sunday February 25th Second Sunday of Lent

8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP - Book of Common Prayer) - St Andrew's, Ipplepen
9.30 am Celtic Morning Prayer - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

11.00 am Holy Communion - Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston

11.00 am Joint Service – All age - Ipplepen Methodist Church

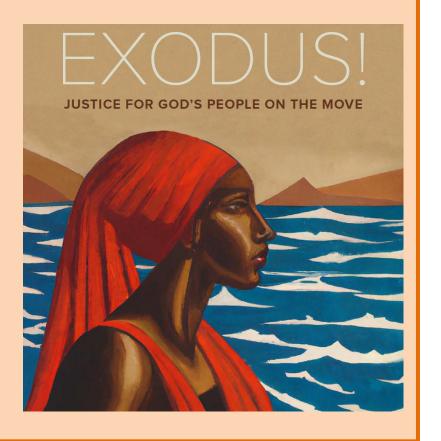
6.00 pm Evensong (BCP - Book of Common Prayer) - St John The Baptist, Woodland

Come and Celebrate Racial Justice Sunday

St Andrew's Church, Ipplepen

11am

Sunday 11th Feb 2024



Sunday, Holy Week and Easter Services in March

Services planned at time of going to print. Please check website / Weekly Notices for updates.

Sunday March 3 rd Third Sunday of Ler	f Lent
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9.30 am Holy Communion - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

11.00 am Holy Communion with Children's Activities - St Andrew's, Ipplepen
 5:00pm Simple Celtic Evening Prayer - Holy Trinity, Torbryan

Sunday March 10th Mothering Sunday

9.30 am Holy Communion - St John The Baptist, Woodland
11.00 am Holy Communion with Children's Activities - Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston

11.00 am Celtic Morning Prayer - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

4.00pm St Andrew's Outside – All age - St Andrew's Church Hall, Ipplepen

6.00pm Evening Prayer and Benediction - St Mary's Denbury

Sunday March 17th Fifth Sunday of Lent

9.30 am Holy Communion with Children's Activities - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury
11.00 am Holy Communion - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

5:00pm Come Holy Spirit: An Informal service of reflection - St Andrew's Church Hall, Ipplepen

Sunday March 24th Palm Sunday

8.00 am Holy Communion (traditional language) - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

11:00 am Joint Mission Community and Methodist Service - St Andrew's, Ipplepen -

starting in the church hall followed by procession to church

6.00 pm Evensong (BCP - Book of Common Prayer) - St John The Baptist, Woodland

Monday March 25th Monday of Holy Week

6.30 pm Holy Communion - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

Tuesday March 26th Tuesday of Holy Week

10.15 am Holy Communion - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

Wednesday March 27th Wednesday of Holy Week

6.30 pm Holy Communion - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

Thursday March 28th Maundy Thursday

5.30 pm Holy Communion followed by Watch - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury
7.30 pm Holy Communion followed by Watch - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

Friday March 29th Good Friday

10.30 am Joint service and Walk of Witness - Gathering at Ipplepen Methodist
 2.00 pm Reflecting around the Cross - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

Saturday March 30th Holy Saturday

8.00 pm Easter Vigil - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

Sunday March 31st Easter Sunday

9.30 am Holy Communion - St John The Baptist, Woodland 9.30 am Holy Communion - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

11.00 am Holy Communion - Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston

11.00 am Holy Communion - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

Other events

Sat 3rd Feb 10am - 12 noon Coffee Morning - The Parish Rooms, Woodland

(1st Saturday of each month)

Wed 7th Feb 12 noon Food for Thought Lunch Club - St Andrew's Church Hall, Ipplepen

1st Wednesday of each month

(To book a place please contact Maria Alsop on 01803 813110)

Sat 10th Feb 10 am - 12 noon Coffee & Chat! - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

(2nd Saturday of each month)

Wed 14th Feb 10.30 am Coffee Mates - Church Cottage, Denbury

(2nd Wednesday of each month)

Sat 2nd Mar 10am - 12 noon Coffee Morning - The Parish Rooms, Woodland

(1st Saturday of each month)

Wed 6th Mar 12 noon Food for Thought Lunch Club - St Andrew's Church Hall, Ipplepen

(1st Wednesday of each month)

(To book a place please contact Maria Alsop on 01803 813110)

Sat 9th Mar 10 am - 12 noon Coffee & Chat! - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

(2nd Saturday of each month)

Wed 13th Mar 10.30 am Coffee Mates - Church Cottage, Denbury

(2nd Wednesday of each month)

Sun 14th Mar 4.30pm – 6pm 'St Andrew's Outside' - St Andrew's Church Field, Ipplepen

Sun 17th Mar 2.00pm Folk Concert – 'Cobbler's Child' - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

Fri 22nd Mar 6.00pm Beetle Drive in aid of church funds - Denbury Village Hall

Beacon Parishes Mission Community Weekly Events

Private Prayer

Our churches are open for private prayer and reflection throughout the week from 9am to 5pm each day

Weekly Morning Prayer

Monday 12 noon (Silent Prayer & Meditation) - Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston

Tuesday 9.15 am (Book of Common Prayer) - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

Wednesday 9.15 am (Celtic Morning Prayer) - Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston

Friday 9.15 am (Celtic Morning Prayer) - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

Regular Midweek Events and Communion Services

Mondays at 3 – 5pm 'T-pot' - Church Cottage, Denbury at 4.15pm Sta*x Junior Choir Practice - St Andrew's, Ipplepen at 7.30pm Broadhempston ringers practice at various towers while Broadhempston bells not available, until further notice Tuesdays at 10.15 am Holy Communion - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

Wednesdays at 7.00pm Bellringing Practice - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury
Wednesdays at 7.30pm Bellringing Practice - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

Thursdays at 4.30pm Sta*x Youth Choir Practice - St Andrew's, Ipplepen

Fridays at 10.15 am Holy Communion - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

Life Events

We continue to pray for those we, as Beacon Parishes, have had and will have the privilege of supporting and accompanying, and also their family and friends.

Baptisms

There were no baptisms in December 2023 or January 2024.

Weddings

There were no weddings in December 2023 or January 2024.

Funerals

Thursday 7 th December 2023	Ipplepen	Raymond Wright
Friday 15 th December 2023	Denbury	Rev'd Thomas New
Friday 12 th January 2024	Ipplepen	Maureen Burley
Tuesday 23 rd January 2024	Ipplepen	Margaret Faulkner
Friday 26 th January 2023	Denbury	Dorrie Warner

Interments of Ashes

Wednesday 20 th December 2023	Kingsteignton	Margaret Sanders
Tuesday 23 rd January 2024	Ipplepen	Margaret Faulkner

How to keep in touch

Weekly Notices These contain up to date information of services and activities in our parishes. Published prior to each weekend, these are given out at services and also available to pick in the churches during the week. They are also emailed out by the office to those on the email circulation list.

Website The Beacon Parishes website <u>www.missioncommunity.org.uk</u> is the 'go to' place for information. It also contains the Weekly Notices and Beacon Magazine.

Videos Video recordings of some of the services held in our Beacon Community can be found on the website.

Facebook Three of our parishes keep up to date Facebook pages:

www.facebook.com/StAndrewsIpplepen/ www.facebook.com/denburyworship www.facebook.com/Broad20/

and the Beacon Community Discussion group:

www.facebook.com/groups/424938598594105

Email The Church Office has an email list which is used for sending out the Weekly Notices as well as any other important information. If you or someone you know would like to be included on this list, please contact the office.

Contacts Names and telephone numbers are to be found in The Beacon.

Rector Rev'd Andrew Down. Tel: 01803 813403 E: rev.andrewdown@gmail.com

Church Office Church Office, St. Andrew's Church Hall, Church Path, Ipplepen, TQ12 5RZ

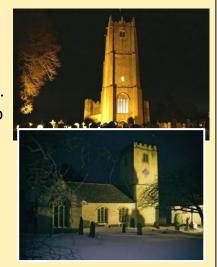
Tel: 01803 814178 E: office@beaconparishes.co.uk

Floodlighting

The towers at both Denbury and Ipplepen have floodlighting which needs 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.

Denbury:

For Denbury, contact Rachel Belringer 01803 812529 / 07751804007



Retrospective

Seona Wilson. With thanks to God for the Ministry of Holy Communion at home. Special thanks to Tessa and Steve, and also to Vanessa Bevan, St Andrews, for arranging it.

Ipplepen: For Ipplepen, the suggested donation is £5 per occasion per week.

- Sponsor forms are available in St. Andrew's and also at <u>www.missioncommunity.org.uk/floodlighting</u>
- Or write to the office or email: ippleflood@beaconparishes.co.uk
- Donations can be made by cash, cheque, BACS or via www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ippleflood
- If you are a UK taxpayer, please Gift Aid your donation

New

28 th Jan – 3 rd Feb	In memory of Paul Kemp on his birthday January 30 th with love from Sheila, Graham and Beckie Needs and Hannah Hopkins.
25 th Feb – 2 nd Mar	In remembrance of my dear husband David Hatten, who passed away two weeks after our 40 th wedding anniversary on 25 th February 2015. 40 wonderful years. God Bless you, my darling. Margaret Hatten.
	In loving memory of Wendy Osborn on her birthday on 26 th February, with love Liz and Bruce Hooker and family.
	Remembering Len Harber on 28 th February.
3 rd – 9 th Mar	From Val and Peter Sleight remembering her parents, Phil and Peter Monks, at the time of their birthdays.
	From David, Linda, and Katie Simmonds for Hannah's birthday on 5 th March
	For Grace Domoney who sadly passed away in January 2022. Remembering our Mum on what would have been her birthday on 9 th March. Phil, Wendy and family
	In loving memory of Margaret Kemp on her birthday on 9th March , with love Sheila and Graham Needs and family.
10 th – 16 th Mar	From Nick Wildgoose in memory of his dear mother Pat on her birthday.
	Thursday 16 th March - in loving memory of Rex Osborn, with love Liz and Bruce Hooker and family.
17 th – 23 rd Mar	In loving memory of a special dad, grampy and husband, Peter Quick on 17 th March which would have been his birthday and who is greatly missed.
24 th – 30 th Mar	In memory of Geoffrey Williamson, on the occasion of his birthday on 29 th March. He is missed so much and with us always.

News from Ipplepen

St. Andrew



The beginning of December saw the 'Christmas Tree Festival' with displays from various organisations in the village. Again it attracted many people into church to look and vote for their favourite. They were also able to enjoy a cup

of coffee, tea, and mince pie. It was difficult to pick a favourite as all displays were unique but the Memory Cafe were delighted to be the winners. Thanks to Pam Thomas for organising the event again this year.

The first Sunday of Advent was marked with the lighting of the first Advent candle on December 3rd. The Christmas Fair combined with 'the Coffee and Chat morning' was again very

successful. The church was buzzing as many people wondered around the stalls where they could buy tempting cakes, preserves, books and puzzles, toys, beautiful crafts and homemade cards. The tombola bottle stall was as always very popular and the grand raffle had a great selection of prizes. Refreshments were served; mince pies, shortbread, tea, coffee or juice with tables laid up cafe style. Thanks go to all the stall holders and helpers and to everyone who supported this event.



On Sunday 17th December there was a Holy Communion at 11am and at 6pm our Carol Service which following tradition started in candlelight with the carol 'Once in Royal David's City' the first verse sung by Katie and Rose from the Youth Choir Sta*x. Rev Andrew welcomed everyone to enjoy this Service with the story of the gift of Jesus. This was portrayed in the readings, carols and songs from both the Youth Choir and anthems from the adult choir. Musical accompaniment was from Dr Tom Morris on his guitar, Marilyn Ellis who played both the organ and clavinova and Katie played the flute. Many people stayed afterwards to enjoy refreshments- mulled wine, juices and mince pies.

On Wednesday 20th December villagers gathered at 7pm to sing carols around the Christmas tree in the square. Rev Andrew led this joyous event where we heard Christmas readings, prayers and good singing. Thanks to Stephen Major and his team for their musical accompaniment. The bells rang out before our gathering, and they were also rung twice on Christmas Eve for the 11am Joint Service and before the 11pm Midnight Mass Service and again on Christmas Day before the 10am Communion service. Certainly a busy time for the ringers, Rev Andrew and all involved with the many church services.

The 'Church's Together' Crib service took place at St Andrew's on Christmas Eve at 4pm, a popular service for young families in particular. The Service at 11pm conducted by. Rev Andrew was rather special and at midnight we were wished a happy blessed Christmas. On Christmas Morning the Communion service at 10am was led by Rev Anne Burden.

At the Communion service celebrating the Epiphany on January 7th Rev Andrew led the figures of the three wise men carefully carried by three members of the congregation to the crib. That

evening at 5pm he led the Epiphany carol service at Holy Trinity, Torbryan in candlelight.

Madeleine Fredrick played an organ voluntary 'Variations on Stuttgart' (Bethlehem, of noblest cities). The service included carols, readings and poems. It was a delight to hear Tom Morris accompanied by Madeleine sing 'The three Kings'. After the prayers and blessing we ended with the carol 'The First Noel' then an Organ Voluntary Chorale Prelude on 'How brightly shines the Morning Star'.



Celtic Morning Prayer on 14th January led by

Vanessa Bevan began with Dr Tom singing 'The Three Kings' with Marilyn Ellis accompanying him. The guest preacher was Alison Fisher a licensed lay minister from Totnes who gave us a thought provoking talk, and asked that we learn to recognise those 'Kingfisher' moments of revelation.

The days are starting to get longer and we can look forward to springtime with the appearance of beautiful flowers and budding shrubs and trees.

Marilyn Clark

Maureen Burley

These words were shared by Maureen to her son James last summer as part of her preparation for the completion of her earthly pilgrimage. It is her take on her story and what she wanted to share. Andrew.

Maureen was born in Bath, 3 days before Christmas 1936, the first child born to Freda and Maurice Garrett.

Maureen had been due almost two weeks earlier, just as the abdication of Edward VIII came to a head, and she always quipped that it was either she or her mum who decided that she should stay put until it was all sorted out at the palace.

The birth, when it came, was long and difficult— and Maureen wasn't expected to live. She was baptised privately at home on Boxing Day and but then miraculously she began to feed and began to thrive. There was much thanksgiving and rejoicing in the family, and on Easter Day 1937 she was publicly baptised in her beloved Cradley, at the parish church of St James the Great.



Three years later a little sister, Peggy, arrived and the Garrett family was complete - a happy and united quartet. Maureen enjoyed a very happy childhood, born into a loving Christian household, she couldn't remember wanting for anything. The family were, to all intents and purposes Anglicans, but the nearest church to where they lived in Bath was Claremont Methodist Church, a small chapel at the end of their road, and it was here that Maureen's faith was formed and nurtured. Maurice, her father, was very involved there and Maureen was at the church nearly as often has her dad was.

By the age of 5 or 6 it was clear that she had a talent for talking (one that she never lost). She loved to read and to recite and she first did this in public at Church when she was just 8 years old. She became well-known around the Methodist Circuit as the little girl who would read monologues.

Maureen also loved to sing (another life-long talent). As a young teenager she sang in the chapel choir and began to teach in the Sunday school.

Her aptitude for organisation, reliability and attention to detail was nurtured too, in church, when by the age of fourteen she was the Secretary of the Church Christian Service meeting: arranging the speakers, organising the programme, hosting meetings and leading devotions.

Although the family lived in Bath, they would often be found in a small village on the borders of Herefordshire and Worcestershire ... Cradley. This was where Maureen's mother's family lived - at Green Farm. Her grandfather farmed the land and kept livestock. She had happy memories of her time with her aunts and uncles, her sister, and her cousins at the farm. Christmas, Easter and the long summer holidays even through the war – always spent at Green Farm, Cradley. Richard, Adele and James have happy childhood memories too of Cradley – staying with their Great Aunt in the village.

After leaving school Maureen was encouraged into the Civil Service by her parents; she found the work dull and boring, but they thought it sensible and she often followed her parents' advice.

By the age of eighteen Maureen had met and fallen in love with the son of a Methodist Minister, and she and John Wilson were married in 1958. As a young married couple they moved to Cardiff close to her in-laws, and three years later, Richard was born.

Once Maureen became a mum herself, she realised that she really wanted, and needed, to be with closer to her family and so when Richard was young they moved back to Bath.

A couple of years later Adele was born and then her youngest son, James was born, on Adele's 4th birthday – what a special birthday present that was!

Being the mum of three children kept her busy and it was a role she relished. Although it was tiring, she still made time for herself, and kept up voluntary activities. She remained involved at the local Methodist Church, singing in the choir and as President of the Young Wives group. The talent that was first noticed as a child flourished when she joined a local amateur drama group – there were three productions a year a comedy a drama and a fantasy, and Maureen faced off stiff opposition in auditions and was given some very good parts – James and Alice have found lots of local newspaper clippings of productions she was in!

By the time all the children were at school. Maureen began part-time paid work ... at the Royal United Hospital in Bath in Medical Records. It was the perfect fit for someone so interested in people: walking the wards, collecting the admission and discharge forms. She loved it!

She loved being part of the hospital community and naturally offered some pastoral care and ministry along the way ... befriending people and helping people. Arguably an unofficial ministry of chaplaincy going on! She went on to work in the Child Assessment Centre – as secretary to a paediatrician who cared for children with physical and mental disabilities. Another perfect fit, it combined her organisational skills, her interest in people and her passion for babies and children.

Sadly, by the mid 1980s Maureen's and John's marriage had broken down and they divorced amicably and they remained friends even after both of them had remarried.

Maureen married Ed in 1986 and they started married life Wiltshire where Maureen kept herself busy:

- Running Mother and Toddlers at Melksham Methodist church
- Sitting on the Church Council
- Singing in a choir in Chippenham
- Attending keep fit classes
- And working as a volunteer at the Casualty Department at Melksham hospital.

Wherever she went Maureen enjoyed being with people and embedded herself into the local community. That's something that her friends here in Devon know all about.

Maureen and Ed moved to Ipplepen around 30 years ago, in order to be closer to her daughter and her young family, and both Ed and Maureen soon settled into Devon life. Unfortunately Ed's health and mobility was not so good but that didn't stop Maureen from joining in with activities in and around the village, keep-fit, swimming and walking groups, she was an active member of the WI, she was involved with the Hub right from the very beginning – indeed, she was one of the first librarians, and she kept that role up until lockdown.

She transferred her membership to Methodist Church here in the village, and enjoyed the fellowship and friendship in that church, and in more recent years she has enjoyed being part of the church family here at St Andrews, where she has continued to read and has taken on the duties of sidesman

All of this fulfilled her, but it was as a member of the local choir the Shipton Singers that she found delight and joy. In the choir she made life-long friends with whom she has had many adventures and holidays: travelling across continents to America, Canada, Austria, Tenerife, and there have been many, many UK breaks

It was through that choir that she met her dear friends Mary and Angela who have especially cared for her in recent months and for whom the family are very grateful.

Maureen's life wasn't always easy, but she filled it with good things. Her marriage to Ed, her children, her grandchildren, the church, her acting, her singing and leading a healthy lifestyle – all of which stood her in good stead for a long life. Testament to this was the successfully surgery for bowel cancer just two years ago, before a new diagnosis of pancreatic cancer earlier this year and her quiet determination to keep going for as long as she could.

Maureen Burley – an extra note

Sadly, on Friday 12th January at 2pm in St Andrew's Church family and friends gathered together to say goodbye to dear Maureen Burley. Rev Andrew Down conducted this lovely Service which Maureen had planned. Her first instruction that her children Richard, Adele, and James were told that she wished for her coffin to be in Church before the Service began. Also she wanted everyone to enjoy the beauty of the surroundings whilst listening to the organ music played by Marilyn Ellis. The music to start the Service was Finlandia Sibelius and the lovely hymns chosen were 'Great is thy faithfulness', 'In heavenly love abiding' and 'How great thou art'.

Son James read words from Psalm 139 then Ruth read from Romans 8. The poem Death is nothing at all by Henry Scott Holland was read by granddaughter Tasha. Rev Anne Burden read the Eulogy. We heard how Maureen joined the civil Service when she left school and then married and had three children. She came to Ipplepen about 30 years ago and joined in Village life, she enjoyed singing and joined the Shipton Singers for many years, and she attended Penny's Keep Fit Class at the Village Hall.

She had great Faith and was a loyal member of St Andrew's Church but also enjoyed going to the Methodist Church and the hub and I remember her helping in the library.

Maureen was on the rota of readers in Church and she always read clear and precise with meaning, truly understanding what she read and she was a pleasure to listen to.

She loved her garden and nature and walking around the lanes. She will be greatly missed by her close family, the Church family and friends.

God Bless Maureen!

Marilyn Clark

St Andrew's Outside-January 14th 2024

A couple of hours have passed since St Andrew's Outside ended yet I still feel overwhelmed at the extraordinarily beautiful time we had in our Church Field.

I shouldn't be surprised at God 'showing up' when we take steps of faith in what we feel He is asking us to do. I have to admit however that tonight I feel completely in awe of God's faithfulness to myself, to our selfless and committed St Andrew's Outside Team and to the community we seek to serve.

Our evening of 'Exploring Winter Light' opened with Psalm 19 v 1:

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the works of His hands."

... and then the show began!

Sunset provided a copper hue which, when reflected onto the trees lining the field and the church tower brought gasps of wonder from many. The changing moody, layered skies felt more

pensive. Excitement mounted at the initially brief appearance of the crescent moon and then again as Poppy won the prize for spotting the first star to appear in the sky. The crescent moon reappeared later much to our delight.

Lanterns crafted from paper bags, glass jars, flowers and foliage glowed like a trail of fireflies as their creators explored the field in the dark. Back at the fire-pit, Lin thrilled us all with a display of the 'Ipplepen Northern Lights'. One child decided to check if toasted marshmallows have a different flavour when cooked in green or purple flames. The jury is still out on this.

Themed campfire songs led by Tom and a farewell sung blessing of 'Peace to You' sent us all on our way having been part of something rather special.

Lesley Mawson





Save the Date

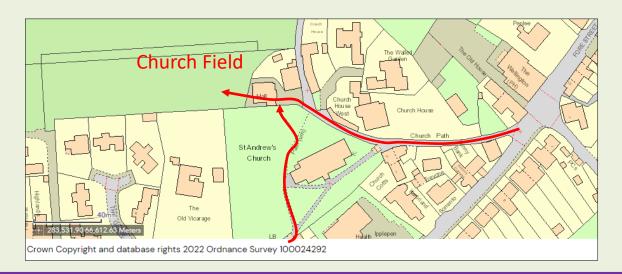
Sunday 10th March — Mothering Sunday 4pm to 5.30pm



'St Andrew's Outside' at the Church Field

FREE Event - Fire Pit - Activities - Food & drinks - all ages very welcome.

(Children to be accompanied by a responsible adult please – Sorry, no dogs)



Wise quotes

Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, once entertained a woman from Campania at her house.

Since the woman made a great show of her jewels, which were among the most beautiful of the time, Cornelia detained her in conversation until her children came home from school.

Then, pointing to her children, she said, "These are my jewels".

from Valerius Maximus (1st century)

She broke the bread into fragments and gave them to the children, who ate with avidity.

"She hath kept none for herself" grumbled the Sergeant.

"Because she is not hungry," said a soldier.

"Because she is a mother," said the Sergeant.

Victor Hugo

With thanks to Winnie Bryant for sending these in

Churches Together Family Service

Beacon Parishes Mission Community with
Ipplepen Methodist Church

At 11am on the 4th Sunday of each month

Alternating each month between St. Andrew's Church, Ipplepen, and Ipplepen Methodist Church

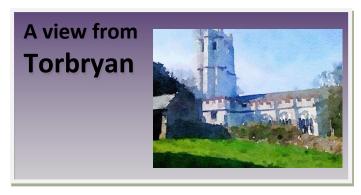
The Service will be held at St Andrew's Church, Ipplepen, in February, April, June, August, October and December

The Service will be held at Ipplepen Methodist Church in January, March, May, July, September and November

All welcome

Straplines

- And God promised men that good and obedient wives would be found in all corners of the world. Then he made the world round ... and laughed and laughed!
- Anyone can be a heart specialist. The only requirement is that you love somebody.
- Are people, who read the Bible a lot more when they get older, cramming for their finals?
- Artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity.
- As far as you can see is as far as you can reach.
- As you grow older, make sure you don't regret the chances you didn't take, the relationships you were afraid to have, and the decisions you waited too long to take.
- Asked what she thought about her first day at school, a little girl replied, 'Not very well; I can't read, I can't write and they won't even let me talk.



Rivers have supported people's lives for millenia in the UK. But only in the last hundred have we truly exploited and misused these vital ecosystems. Standing on the banks of the River Dart, watching the peat brown water bubble downstream to Dartmouth, it is easy to forget that sewage was poured into it 1145 times in 2022 for

a total of over 5850 hours not including the various tributaries snaking around the Devon lanes.

The water companies are not the only culprits, agriculture is also majorly responsible, a study by the Environment Agency last year found that 90% of Cattle farms in North Devon were breaching regulation and two thirds were polluting the local environment. 'Forever Chemicals', chemicals used to make grease proof, water-proof, stick-proof, and stain-resistant products, have also been found in the River Dart. Farms using high amounts of fertilisers and pesticides also pose deathly risk to the flora and fauna of rivers. We are lucky that many of the farms along the River Dart are organic. The River Dart is not alone, in fact it is one of the better ones. Only 14% of UK Rivers meet 'good' ecological status. This 'chemical cocktail' is not only detrimental to the health of swimmers and those who enjoy our rivers but is also putting 10% of freshwater and wetland species at risk of extinction.

We need to call upon the government and the water companies to stop fouling our rivers. The fish, otters, kingfishers and ospreys of the rivers may not have a voice, but we do and maybe we should use it. Friends of the Dart based in Totnes call for better health of the Dart to benefit those who use it, live in or by it and to the places it runs through. You can find them at friendsofthedart.org.

Lucas Brendon Aged 14.



Christmas gifts Grandfather was talking to his granddaughter, "When I was a child all we got for Christmas was an apple and an orange."

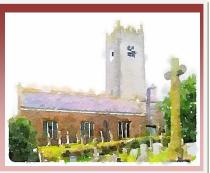
The little girl clapped her hands in joy. "Brilliant! I'd love a new computer and a mobile

Father Christmas Of course, I had expected that by the age of seven it was inevitable that my son would begin to have serious thoughts about Father Christmas. Sure enough, one day near Christmas he suddenly said: "Mum, I know something about Father Christmas, the Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy." Taking a deep breath, I asked him what that might be. "Easy," he said, "They are all nocturnal."

Runs over A father gave his daughter a young puppy for Christmas. An hour later, he found her in the kitchen, looking sadly at a puddle in the centre of the floor. "Look Dad," she said, "My pup runneth over!

News from Woodland

St. John the Baptist



I'm sure many of you are familiar with the Harvest Festival hymn "Come Ye Thankful People Come". The line "All is safely gathered in ere the winter storms begin" has been particularly apt this year as we have certainly had plenty of high winds, heavy rain and occasional thunder

throughout December. Despite this, however, our village lanes and gardens are filled with the early signs of the coming of spring. The wild snowdrops in our village hedgerows are out in bloom a full two weeks earlier than usual and primroses, periwinkle, snowflakes and even the odd daffodil can also be seen. Plenty of others, however, haven't even started to sprout and with today's temperatures down in minus figures I can't imagine that they will be coming up any time soon! The new born lambs beginning to skip around various fields throughout our village much prefer today's dry and crisp winter sun rather than the driving wind and rain of the past month, even if it is a bit chilly, and are likely to be much heathier for it.

Despite the winter storms, December was not all dull for Woodland residents and contained many village events and Christmas services. At our Library and Coffee morning we had a choice of mince pies from all the local major supermarkets to sample and see which we liked best. The church was beautifully decorated with winter greenery in time for our Candle Lit Carol Service. Our Christmas Carol Service followed on later in the month and we had a visit from an old friend on Christmas Day as Nicholas returned to take our Christmas Morning Communion Service. We have since met up at our January Library and Coffee morning and been able to wish each other all the best for the new year to come. Looking ahead, we have no particular plans for any major events on the horizon, but will, of course, continue our regular gatherings at our monthly Library and Coffee mornings and Sunday services. Like many others, I also intend to make the most of every scrap of winter sunshine we have, before the rain clouds roll over us once more, and continue to enjoy looking for the signs that spring is on its way.

Helen Pearse

What would you like for Christmas? A little girl went to visit Father Christmas in the local garden centre grotto. He welcomed her with a smile and the question of what she would like for Christmas. The little girl gasped and stared up at him in horror. "Didn't you get my email?!

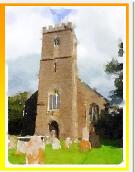
What do you get Dad? December is the month when the family begins to discuss what to get Dad for Christmas. Some argue for a shirt; others hold out for a pair of socks. But the argument usually ends in a tie.

Church rules Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother Joel sat together for the Christmas concert in church. Joel kept giggling and whispering until his big sister had had enough. "Be quiet in church!"

"Why?" Joel demanded. "Who is going to make me?" Angie pointed to the back of the church and said: "See those two big men standing at the door? They're hushers."

News from **Broadhempston**

St. Peter and St. Paul



Reflections from Christmas 2023

Broadhempston Primary School Birch Class performed their Nativity Straw and Order play while KS2 delivered a heart-warming festive treat. There were hand bells, carols in their original language and a few naughty church mice! It was a

real singing celebration. Followed by a Carol Service involving the primary school choir, a 'Pop Up' village choir, carols and readings telling us the Christmas Story.

On Thursday 21st December a very successful Carols in the Square was held in Broadhempston. A large crowd turned out to sing carols in front of the village Christmas Tree accompanied by several members of Totnes Town Band. Warm mince pies were served during the singing and mulled wine was available from The Monks Retreat. Thank you to all who helped on the evening.

£175.08 was raised in donations for the Church / Bell Tower Restoration Fund after we made a donation to Totnes Band.



Christmas Day



We had a lovely Christmas Day service at St Peter and St Paul this year. The church had been beautifully decorated by volunteers and candles were lit for the service. The wonderful Christmas tree looking resplendent with lights and decorations. The church was packed (not quite standing room only but almost). In total approximately 150 people and children attended. All which made for a very happy Christmassy atmosphere. The service was led by Hillarie. A telling of the Christmas story, interspersed with hymns and readings from the volunteered congregation, helped to give us an illustration of the full meaning of the day. Having such a packed church, meant that the hymns were certainly rousing so thank you all for attending. It seemed

that everybody left after the service with very Christmassy feelings and offerings of a Celebration chocolate, on the way out, hopefully added to the morning.

It was a lovely way to bring the community together on such a special occasion.

Currently our Christmas theme continues as our nativity scene stays in the church until the end of January. Please pop in to have a look if you haven't seen it already.



Looking forward to 2024

Anthony, our organist for church services over the last 10 years has retired, but is still hoping to join our congregation, we do not know how to thank him or replace him. We have 2 services a month, the second and fourth Sundays at 11:00am. If you think you may be able to play for these services (or one service) or know someone we might approach please contact PCC Secretary Maggie Sercombe 07749 298465.

Bring your PET to Broadhempston Church



We are hoping to organise a Pet Service in the Spring, so look out for more information.....coming soon.

St Peter and St Paul's PCC Team

LAUNCH OF FUNDRAISING FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE CHURCH TOWER AND BELLS

Please look out for information coming soon





News from **Denbury**

St. Mary the Virgin



All the traditional aspects of our lead up to Christmas were very much in evidence again this year. Throughout the month of December windows in many houses and cottages across the village were decorated with an Advent theme. In the past some very attractive and elaborate displays have been on show and this year was no exception. With each participating window being

allocated a number it was possible to view a different display each day as the month progressed.

The first main service as Christmas approached was the Nine Lessons and Carols service which this year included a few changes with some different poems and readings supplementing the well known lessons. The service also featured the Denbury Village Choir under the leadership of Chris Eastman who performed a number of Christmas themed songs themselves and also led the congregation in the rendition of the carols.

On 23rd December a hardy band of about 25 carol singers braved the cold night to sing a selection of carols to the residents of Brambledown Nursing Home in the village. The choir had to remain outside to sing but a number of appreciative residents were able to watch and enjoy the singing from their windows. The singers then retired to the church cottage to enjoy a warming glass of mulled wine and an impressive selection of nibbles.

The following evening saw a large group of Denbury families assembling on the village green outside the Union Inn for our annual "Carols of the Green" singalong. The evening was chilly but dry and a good number of carols were sung over approximately three quarters of an hour. Singers were again fortified by the availability of mulled wine and mince pies. Donations in favour of the Children's Hospice raised an excellent £147.

On Christmas Eve children and their families gathered in church at 4pm for the Crib Service. The service was led by Rachel and Tessa and the children helped with the preparation of the crib situated within the main altar by bringing the figures from the back of the church following the Christmas story. At the end of the service there was a bonus in that the village handbells were available in the chancel for anyone interested to have a try. This generated a lot of interest and before long some very reasonable peals could be heard.

Our Christmas Eve communion service was held at 9pm and ended at 10pm which, as Fr. Andrew pointed out, coincided with midnight in Bethlehem (given the time zone differences) and we were back in church the following morning to celebrate at our Christmas Day communion led by Anne Burden.

Throughout 2023 the PCC have been looking closely at how to develop the involvement of the community in church events. One of the several successful initiatives during the year has been the holding of folk music concerts in church taking advantage of the excellent acoustics. At the end of November the highly rated folk musician Jim Causley made a welcome return to the church to perform a Christmas themed show to a packed church. On the 28th January we will be visited by Mike Bosworth who will be performing stories and songs celebrating the life of Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould, the composer of "Onward Christian Soldiers" and "Now the Day is Over" and a prolific collector of folk songs. This promises to be a very entertaining and informative concert and a great way to get our event programme underway in 2024.

Mike Bray

St Mary's, Denbury: Concert Venue!

Over the last year-and-a-bit, a group of us at St Mary's have joined forces with Denbury Folk (session 8pm every Thursday down the Union!), to develop the church as a concert venue. With it's amazing acoustics, it is a small but perfect space for performance. From this, we have started a series of Sunday afternoon concerts, starting at 2pm, with refreshments served in the interval.

It all began back in 2022, with Jim Causley's Cream Tea concert at the end of October. Both audience and performer were delighted, with great feedback on the concert and the organisation. A full house and much needed funds for the church. 2023 was a big year for Denbury with the incredibly successful Festival of Flowers, where musicians played live throughout the weekend. But we still found time for two concerts. In May we hosted a fiddle and guitar



duo called Filkin's Drift (Google them!). A wonderful afternoon of original and traditional folk



music. Spotted as Up and Coming at the Summer Festivals, they did not disappoint! They told us they were planning to walk the Welsh coastal path, with a gig every night. They've since completed it and are as keen to return and tell us all about it as we are to hear it! They too loved the venue.... Then Jim Causley returned with his Causley Christmas show at the end of November. A wonderful start to the Christmas season.

And so to 2024, and we are building on this success. The concerts are getting St Mary's a reputation for excellent music, venue and refreshments on the wider music scene. We are keeping an ear and eye on what's good and developing and hope to bring you the best!! Here's what we've got for the first half of 2024...so far!

- 28th January Mike Bosworth on the life and song discoveries of Folk Song collector Sabine Baring-Gould (Centenary of his death). Premiere concert.*
- 17th March. Cobbler's Child. Up and coming Folk quartet, spotted at summer festivals last year. (Google them).
- 19th May. Maggie Duffy and Bob Thomson. Well known local duo. Very keen to come to us because they've experienced the acoustics!
- July 6/7th tbc. The Ashburton Singers. Regular visitors, Denbury is one of their favourite venues.

Keep an eye out for concert posters. Ticket sales are always in advance (the church is too small to have sales on the door). All profits for St Mary's Church. Details from me (07751804007/rachelbelringer@gmail.com) or Irene Davey (07767771590/imwdavey@gmail.com).

I hope you'll want to put these dates in your diaries. We can guarantee you a wonderful musical afternoon, with splendid refreshments. Perfect!

^{*} There is the possibility of a follow up concert from Mike in April. (more on https://theparsonandthesongmen.buzzsprout.com/)

Canon Tom New

Born on 30th September 1930, the Reverend Canon Thomas New died aged 93 on 30th November 2023 in Torbay Hospital. His early life was spent mainly in Highgate, North London before he went away aged 8 to The Pilgrims' School, Winchester where although not a chorister, the life of the Cathedral became hugely influential to him. Very sadly, whilst at prep school his family was involve in a severe car accident en route to visiting him which resulted in his brother, Ben(edict) who was only 5 years old at the time, having brain injury for



the rest of his life. This was a life changing event for the whole family. Between 1944 and 1949 he was enrolled at Lancing College. Over the years, he spoke with great affection of his time at Lancing. He was Head of House by the time he left, having clearly blossomed, and gained a place at King's College Cambridge to read Theology, where he matriculated in September 1949.

His time at King's was also often spoken of with huge warmth and love. Clearly his college was to him his family and his sense of belonging there for life was very much a part of who he was.

Graduating from Cambridge in 1952 he then went to Cuddesdon College for his full-time training for ministry. He was ordained Deacon in 1954, becoming curate in the Diocese of London, at Holy Cross, Greenford where, in joining the Gilbert and Sullivan Society to play Bunthorne in 'Patience', he met his lifelong love, Joan Mary Harding. They married on 27th December 1956 by which time Tom had become curate at Old St Pancras.



Two years later in 1958, having been introduced to Cosmo Pouncey, vicar of Woodham in Surrey, by his brother- and sister-in-law, he was offered and accepted the job of Curate, Priest in Charge, of St. Michael's Sheerwater. He built up this church with the help of the deaconess Joan Kitney until it was an extremely thriving church community. Having had a ministry in St Pancras he was well suited to the population of Sheerwater who were all people who had moved out of the much-bombed impoverished areas of London to start a new life. To qualify to live in Sheerwater, people had to have certain proven skills and qualifications so the place was full of a positive creative spirit which he harnessed with great effect taking pride in how many of the teenagers of his parish at that time later went into leading roles in the Church of England. Whilst in Sheerwater he also became a father to

two daughters, Katharine Elisabeth and Mary Frances.

He moved with his young family to Guildford in March 1964 where he became vicar of All Saints, Onslow Village. Once again, he took a very full part in the life of the village, not just the church. He was much involved with the local drama society and also greatly enjoyed being at the forefront of starting up a new Church of England junior school, Queen Eleanor's. He was also responsible for designing a new church building. He worked very closely with the architect and took an extremely active interest in the construction, especially of the curved roof the design of which he had been very excited about. As the son of an architect, Tom relished this whole

project and was delighted to be part of bringing into being an enchantingly light and stylish edifice.

His final move as a vicar was to the other side of the Diocese of Guildford to the Parish of All Saints, Banstead in 1972. With the then vicarage situated about a mile from the church, set in a large amount of land, the Church Commissioners allowed him to build another vicarage in the churchyard next to the church but that process took 4 years to complete. He took a great deal of interest in the construction and design of the new house; however, his main work was again in education and pastoral commitments. This time, instead of educating the children and teenagers of the parish through schools and societies, he was mentoring young curates and more mature lay readers. He was made Rural Dean in 1976 for four years and Honorary Canon of Guildford Cathedral in 1979. He had also been Chaplain to the Asylum at Banstead when he first arrived in 1972 and this then changed to being Chaplain to HM Downview Prison in 1988 until his retirement in 1993.

For the last 30 years of his life, he and Joan lived in the bungalow in Denbury that his Aunt Elizabeth left him in 1972. He and Joan have had a wonderfully fulfilling retirement as active members of the church and village life. Almost immediately on retiring he took on an interregnum for some months and this was the first of several over the next 15 or so years. He was more than just filling in on Sundays too by all accounts as people speak of his pastoral care giving them hope and inspiration. He enjoyed a wide circle of friends both in and outside the church congregation. With Joan's musical talents being used to join in and develop projects such as G&S rehearsed standing performances, he and she both contributed to the ongoing life of Denbury and thoroughly enjoyed the process of returning full circle to the kind of fun they had had in their early days together. He was a family vicar to the end putting out a hand to those in need around him.

Time for a smile



There was an editor from Fleet

Who thought his mag was complete

All done! It looks fine,

He reached for some wine

And somehow pressed alt/control/delete



Guess who I bumped into on the way to get my glasses fixed? Everybody.



St Mary's Church and Denbury Folk present....



Cobblers Child

St. Mary's Church, Denbury Sunday 17th March, 2pm

Tickets in advance. £10 to include interval refreshments. Contact Rachel (07751804007/ rachelbelringer@gmail.com)



"A magical blend of instruments and vocals full of vibrant sounds!" Chippenham Folk Festival

Memories and a Memorial

Most readers of the Beacon regularly travel on the road between Newton Abbot and Totnes, or some part of it. But it is a (comparatively) new road. As you come from Newton Abbot, past Baker's Park, you will see the Old Totnes Road going off to your left. The route to Ipplepen and Totnes was up this hill, then through Abbotskerswell and probably through Stoney Hill.

In 1759 questions were asked in Parliament about the state of this road which was said to be "ruinous and very incommodious and dangerous to travellers". The new Totnes - Newton Road Trust built the Turnpike road from Ogwell Cross to Totnes. It is a masterpiece of engineering, and although 250 years growth hides much of the embankments and cuttings, it was a major achievement. Tolls were charged - one toll house still remains at Ogwell Cross and the other one, built into the bank a mile on the Newton side of Totnes, has more recently been demolished. Presumably the road wasn't well maintained because in 1824 it was joined with the Totnes Bridgetown-Pomeroy Trust. Again questions were asked in Parliament about ".... particularly the Road from or near the West End of the Turnpike Gate near the Town of Newton Abbott in the Parish of Woolborough, to or near the West End of Pollexfens Barn in the Parish of Abbotscarswell; the Road from or near the Four Mile Stone in the Parish of Ippelspen, to or near Bow Bridge in the same Parish". (the names are as spelt in Hansard).

So what is this all about, you may ask. Is the article being written by that Private Eye masterpiece Mr Phil Space?

Well, No. I just wondered how anyone could travel from Combe Fishacre to India in the early 1800s and this is because we are trying to re-erect a monument in Ipplepen church. This wall monument was removed for safety reasons a long time ago leaving a rather messy bit of wall but revealing a Georgian text and some mediaeval decoration, and we are still working with the Diocese for permission to replace it in some form.

The monument is to John Shepherd Esq of Combe Fishacre House and members of his family, but in particular to:

Robert Butland their son, a medical officer in the Honourable East India Company's Civil Service who died at Chimulgee on the banks of the Kistna the 10th day of February 1820 aged 28 years, and was buried at Dharwar on the Madras Establishment where a monument was erected to his memory by many attached friends who were his associates in India.

There must be a fascinating story here - one assumes that Robert left Combe Fishacre as a teenager by stage coach or family carriage to Totnes or Newton. He would have joined a ship to take him to the Bombay area of India - probably via some other larger port. There was no local railway until the 1840s. It must have been a long tedious journey away from his home and family and so many questions remain. How did he manage to join the East India Company (family connections?) Where did he train as a medical officer? What did that post entail? How did he die? Is his monument still at Chimulgee?

I hope that the monument will be re-erected in the foreseeable future and perhaps we can find the answer to some of these questions. In the meantime if you are not completely bored stiff, next time you travel between Newton and Totnes, avoiding the potholes, be glad that it is no longer "ruinous and very incommodious and dangerous to travellers".

Steven Bryant

ven among men, when y we must be faved.

Happy Christmas! - still?

But it's over. Shouldn't the decorations be down? I know of some people who take down all their Christmas decorations on Boxing Day because they consider Christmas is finished. Someone told me they took their Christmas tree and decorations down on Boxing Day because they were fed up with it, after all, it had been up since the end of October! Another of my friends would put the tree up on Christmas Eve and take it down first thing on Boxing Day because he didn't like the 'clutter'!

A reminder that we can be missing the point of Christmas which is a Christian celebration to mark the first coming to Earth of God's only Son, Jesus. Unfortunately, there is a great deal of confusion about the actual length of the Christmas season. Some church traditions recognise the Epiphany on 6 January, with the following Sunday celebrating the Baptism of Christ, as being the end of Christmas, while Eastern Church traditions tend to give the Christmas season 40 days in line with the 40 days of Lent.

Generally, the seasons in liturgical western Christianity are Advent, Christmas, Ordinary Time (Time after Epiphany), Lent, Easter, and Ordinary Time (Time after Pentecost).

The 40 day Christmas season concludes with Candlemas which is also known as the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus Christ, the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or the Feast of the Holy Encounter. It commemorates the presentation of Jesus at the Temple as described in Luke 2:22–40. It was also the day, in years gone by when churches were lit by candles, that the candles to be burned in the coming year were purchased and blessed, hence the special service of Candlemas. The coming of electricity reduced the need for such huge supply of candles – and it also destroyed the local candlestick making industry!

And to add to the confusion, some churches today mark Candlemas with a Christingle service, the central candle of the Christingle representing the 'light' that the birth of Jesus brought into the world, and which fits in well with the 'Presentation of Christ in the Temple', while other churches celebrate Christingle as part of their Christmas celebrations during December. There is no right or wrong timing for Christingle, it is all down to your local liturgical calendar.

Michael Price

Edinburgh Fringe one liners

- My friend got locked in a coffee place overnight. Now he only ever goes into Starbucks, not the rivals. He's Costa-phobic.
- Nationwide must have looked pretty silly when they opened their first branch.
- When women gossip we get called bitchy, but when men do it's called a podcast.

A Christmas reflection for the New Year

The following is what I had to say at Denbury on the Sunday after Christmas. Some who were there thought it would be good to share it with a wider audience.

I pointed out that there are few things that divide Christians more than the Bible. Because there are no pure translations, being influenced as they are by the translators' personal theology and their historical context, we can too often try to make the Bible say what we want it to say; I'm as guilty of that as any other Christian. So I've tried to simplify the meaning of Christmas to its basics. Steve Sheldon

The Bible. It comes in two parts. On Christmas day we celebrate the dividing line between them: the birth of the Messiah as promised by the prophets of old.

The first part of the Bible, the Old Testament, tells the story of God's People *before* that first Christmas; the second part, the New Testament, tells the story of God's People *after* that day.

The Old Testament is made of up of lots of very different books written in different styles and languages, at different times and in different places. Some of the books are mostly rules by which God's People tried to live. Other books are histories, telling mostly how God's People failed to live by those rules.

Then there are the Prophets, God's messengers sent to *warn* His People about what would happen if they continued to not live by the rules. However... among those dire warnings, there are words of comfort, of hope, and of promise.

The promise was that one day God would send somebody very special to lead His People out of their troubles, to make them stronger and more loving. In Hebrew this special person was called the Messiah, in Greek, the Christ. This hope for a Messiah to come gave God's People courage to endure very hard times. And the times did get very hard. God's People were conquered and enslaved by the Babylonians, then by the Greeks, and then the Romans.

Many centuries went by, and the People started to forget what the prophets had said about the Messiah; in their troubles, they dreamed of a mighty warrior king who would come and rescue them.

The People dreamed of someone like Superman who would use all the power of God the Father: the power that created and sustains the universe; he would wield his mighty swift sword, and destroy all their enemies: just like a Saturday morning cartoon, where super heroes always win in mighty contests of strength. That is what the People expected, that's what they wanted. But God had a different idea. Instead of zapping out a full-grown Superman, which he could have done, he sent what we celebrate at Christmas: a baby.

An ordinary baby, born in poverty and humility. No grand palaces. No servants. Soon this baby was to be a refugee, like the millions of refugees in our world today, escaping from troubles not of their own making, victims of humanity's violence and greed, and the search for wealth and power.

A baby. And unlike the words to Away in a Manger, the baby Jesus *did* cry; just like the babies of families that might come to worship here with us. Another carol goes: "He was little, weak and helpless/ Tears and smiles like us He knew." Yet still within this ordinary baby there was concealed

all that power and glory of God the Creator. That's what the shepherds and Magi came to worship. "He came down to earth from Heaven/Who is Lord and God of all".

Then this baby Jesus grew into a man, still hiding God's glory and power within himself. And just how did Jesus use that power? He did not use it like Superman, Spiderman, Batman, the Fantastic Four, nor any other super hero you could name. Jesus was a different kind of super hero. A different kind of king. Not a warrior king but a servant king. Jesus came to show that God rules the universe not by Force, but by Love. And that's a Love that gives and sacrifices itself for others. Even unto death. Death on a cross.

But Jesus wasn't a victim; nobody made Jesus go to the cross; that was his choice, a difficult choice, made only after many tears had been shed. The cross was Jesus' choice, for as he himself said: "Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?" Not even Superman can call on armies of angels to do his bidding.

What would you do if you had all that power at your disposal? How would you use it? That's what the baby born in a stable is asking us.

This world we live in is run by strength and power and violence. It always has been. This is what God is trying to rescue us from, by showing us another Way: by rejecting the power of force and violence, in favour of the power of love and service; by refusing evil and choosing the good. It's not easy. It's not part of our natural instinct for survival. In the ways of the world, it is foolishness; it makes no sense at all.

Like 2000 years ago, some religious people today are looking for someone to come and fix all the world's problems for them. They want a New Messiah, a warlord Jesus, to come back and enforce their idea of what needs to be done. These are people who have failed to learn the lessons of the Old Testament or understand the lessons of the New.

As children grow into adults, they have more and more control over their lives; they discover certain talents and abilities, they acquire a certain amount of power, authority and agency in their lives and the things that they do.

The life of Jesus, from his birth in a stable to his death on a cross, serves as a model for us all on how to live our lives... a more useful model than that set down so long ago by Moses. The Old Testament teaches us about the barriers we create to separate ourselves from God; the New teaches us how to break down those barriers and live our lives as citizens of the Kingdom of God.

Every Christmas we hear that the shepherds "made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard were amazed."

Every Christmas that amazing little baby is there to ask us the question: what do we do with the power and authority that has been given to us in our lives? Do we use it to try and put ourselves ahead of others, or do we use our talents and abilities in the service of others?

How shall we respond today to Jesus Christ, the Messiah, our Servant King?

What's the best way to study the Bible? You Luke into it!

When is medicine first mentioned in the Bible? When God gave Moses two tablets!

• Did Eve have a date with Adam?
No, just an apple!

• What's a miracle that can be done by a complainer? Turning anything into whine!

The season of Lent

During Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday 14th February, we are called to take ourselves out of the comfortable zones we live in and experience discomfort to enable us to grow closer to God. A good Biblical example of this is the Book of Job, written 500-600 years before Christ. Job enjoyed a very comfortable life for his time. He lived according to the ways of God and was subsequently blessed because of his righteousness. He enjoyed good health, had a large happy family, and was one of the wealthiest men on earth with lots of land, huge herds of different animals, plentiful crops, and many willing servants. However, suddenly, all this is taken away from him, and he experiences the most uncomfortable life imaginable.

Job, however, gets advice from his close friends who, like him, were God-fearing people. It's not a comfortable story to read, which makes it ideal for Lent because it can take you out your comfort zone. His agony and lack of comforting words from his, at times, non-sympathetic friends, leads Job to seek help from God.

Today, we are more fortunate than Job because we have an arbitrator to seek help from, to comfort us and guide us through life. In fact, we don't have one, but two, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, who are one with God. But, even so, as followers of Jesus, we need to understand that our lives are not necessarily going to be comfortable all the time. Like Job we have to learn to take the rough with the smooth because it is through the bad times that we can recognise the joy of the good times.

In his second letter to the Christians in Corinth, Paul tells us that we have to expect, as he did, to face hardships so that we can appreciate the joyful times – 'sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, poor yet making many rich, having nothing and yet possessing everything.'

The possessions that Paul refers to are not the worldly possessions we associate with Job, but the heavenly possessions that we can read about in Matthew's gospel: 'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also'.

This Lent, try not to do only those things designed to comfort you personally, such as changing your diet or taking more exercise, but seek to store up treasure in heaven by doing some of those things that make you feel uncomfortable but that will bring joy to others. And if you need help in choosing what your Lenten task might be, try reading those parts of the Bible, such as Job, that you avoid because you think they will make you feel uncomfortable, you might be surprised how comforting that can be in the long run.

- You may not feel you have gained much from meditation, but you might well have lost anger, anxiety and depression.
- You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you.

Questions of Faith for Lent

The meaning of Christian faith is explained by St Paul in his letter to the Hebrews, when he wrote: 'Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see'. He explains the certainty of what we do not see as being the belief in the existence of God who is invisible to human eyes, although, of course, we can all, whoever we are, wherever we are, and whatever the time is - and all this without a phone - personally communicate with God through prayer. And it is through prayer that we can build our faith, that is our belief in the invisible God. But on the other hand, it is our faith that encourages us to pray. It's a perfect, which came first, 'chicken or egg?' situation. The two go hand-in-hand and are inseparable. We cannot have faith without praying, and we cannot pray without faith.

There can be no doubt that our personal belief in God, our faith, is intimately linked with our personal prayers to him. And as Jesus once said to his disciples, 'Whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith.'

But faith is not just about those big moments, in fact it is not about any single moment, it is about our ongoing relationship with God and our obedience to him every moment of our lives. As individuals and as church families we are called by Jesus to use the gifts that we have been blessed with, and this means being sure of what we want to achieve, continuing to pray for it and by stepping out in faith, and to use God's gifts to us both wisely, and to seek new and exciting ways to use what we have, in order to reach out to everyone - the young and old, families and the lonely, the fit, the disabled and the sick, the dying and the bereaved - and in doing so we can show them God's love and what it means to have their own faith in him through prayer.

Faith is hard to learn because we can only learn as much as we allow ourselves to have. A good starting placed is to ask ourselves two questions: How would I respond to what Jesus asked his disciples, 'Where is your faith?', and secondly, how much faith am I prepared to allow into my life?

Straplines

- Being an intellectual creates a lot of questions and no answers. You can fill your life up with ideas and still go home lonely. All you really have that matters are feelings. That's what music is to me. (Janis Joplin)
- Confession is often good for the soul, but may not always be good for career prospects.
- Dolphins are so smart that within a few weeks of captivity, they can train people to stand on the edge of their pool and throw them fish?
- Don't judge yourself by your past. You don't live there anymore.
- Friends are like angels who lift us to our feet when our own wings have difficulty in remembering how to fly.
- God isn't politically correct; He's just correct.
- If there is an occasion when you feel you cannot be kind, at least have the decency to be vague.

Extract from the Rector's report from 2023 AGMs

I want to start by sharing a story with you. Hillarie and I on a recent retreat/ planning day were confronted as we walked around the gardens at Dartington Hall with the sight of the twelve apostles – these are a series of famous and iconic yew trees - which had been drastically reduced to four feet high. It was quite a shock. The accompanying notice explained how this was being done so that these trees, which had been growing for 150 years, would be ready for the next 150 years of growth. The drastic pruning was letting light and air into the base's which was desperately needed if the trees were to continue to grow healthy. Near those yews crocuses and snow drops were blooming and all around the gardens there were signs that spring was about to get underway with new shoots beginning to emerge.

This says much about where we have been over the last couple of years and now where we are as the Beacon Family of Parishes. Due to the pandemic but also deliberately and importantly for the health of our whole Beacon Parish Family we have cut back and simplified many of our activities. This has at times felt drastic and shocking. This has been done to allow the light to get in and air to flow and very importantly to ease the weight bearing down on exhausted structures and people. It has been done deliberately knowing that such pruning is necessary for good healthy long term growth. In doing this we have been trusting God for the growth that will come.

During this time there has been much blooming and blossoming which has given hope and colour to the life of our Beacon Parishes. There has been the new evening services now regularly happening at Torbryan and in St Andrew's church hall, the coffee mornings returning to Woodland and Denbury and now just starting in Ipplepen, the community concerts we have put on across our parishes, the various small study and learning groups we have run and the development of regular joint worshipping with our Methodist sisters and brothers in Ipplepen.....that is before we even come onto St Andrew's youth choir and Christmas tree festival; Denbury's craft workshops and quiz night; Woodland's community lunches and recent amazing retreat day, Broadhempston's Village Nativity and the growing Broadharmony Choir - so so many beautiful things to marvel at and give thanks for.

In all this time the regular pattern of our church life continues – baptisms, weddings, funerals, morning prayer, midweek Eucharist's, Sunday worship etc.... these are the regular ongoing practices that make us and form us into who and what we are.

What Hillarie and I, through prayer, discussion and reflection, on that retreat day came to realise with greater clarity and conviction was that we are moving into a new season as a Beacon Family of Churches. This is a season of growth. It is spring time in the Beacon garden. This will involve certain tasks - protecting and nurturing new and young growth so that it can become strong and established. This fresh growth can be seen all around our Beacon family – new faces, new skills being developed and explored, new activities in worship, fellowship and service and still lots of new opportunities presenting themselves all the time. Having let the air and light in we now need to watch for, nurture and protect the growth coming from both old and new places. This will continue to require some weeding and as the garden develops more pruning and at times some dead heading. What a joy to see the beauty of God working amongst us and to be involved in God's garden here in the Beacon Parishes.

Andrew

I love to sing!!!!

Singing through the day: the canticles of the daily offices

I am a great one for singing at every opportunity....in the shower, the car, when taking the dog for a walk...whenever I get a chance. Depending on the time of day and my mood the choice of song will vary. Did you know the daily rhythm of the prayer of the church is guided by songs with biblical lyrics called canticles. These songs are taken from the early chapters of St. Luke's gospel and from stories that many of us have heard recently as we have taken part in Christmas gatherings and celebrations. These biblical songs form the high points of what are called the churches offices, that is morning, evening and night prayer.



The **morning** canticle is called the **Benedictus** and comes from **Luke Ch 1 vs 68-79**. It is the song of Zechariah, who looked forward to the birth of John the Baptist, the herald of God's Kingdom. As we pray/ sing the Benedictus we are tuned into expecting God to act in the day that lies ahead.

The **evening** canticle is called the **Magnificat** and comes from **Luke Ch 1 vs 46-55.** It is the song of Mary who praises God for turning the world upside down. At the end of the working day, as we look back on its achievements and failures we ask have I taken my part in casting down the mighty from their thrones or filling the hungry with good things?

The **night** canticle is called the **Nunc dimittis** and comes from **Luke Ch 2 vs 29- 32**. It is the song of Simeon who seeing the child Jesus and holding him in his arms prays 'Now Lord you let your servant go in peace'. As we go to bed we set aside the burdens of the day. At night prayer we hail Christ as the light of the world, and hand the world back to God.

Music and song are powerful and I guess that is why these three songs in many different versions, settings and genres of music have stood the test of time being used to help people pray at the different points of the day. I wonder what your versions of such songs (from the music and artists you love) would be. Songs or music to help you through the day.

Can you think of -

- a morning song/piece of music that would set you up for the day and get you tuned in and ready
- > an evening song/piece of music that would help you reflect and take stock
- a night song/ piece of music that calms you and would help you put things down

Andrew

Teach us to pray



Praying on behalf of others

As a church and as individual Christians we commit ourselves to say prayers on behalf of others. These are known as intercessions. In our intercessions we bring our lives and the lives of those around us, neighbours both near and far, to God for his love and care.

General weekly cycle of intercessions

Sunday We pray for... The universal church, that she proclaim the living Lord... The natural world, that we might use creation sustainably... The needy, that they might know

new life...

Monday We pray for... The people of God, for inspiration by the spirit... Traditional and

digital media, for healthy communication... Those who travel, for safety and

protection...

Tuesday We pray for... The persecuted church, for protection and faithfulness... The

criminal justice system, for wisdom and fairness... The world's displaced people,

for freedom and security...

Wednesday We pray for... All who follow Christ, for growth in discipleship... All in the medical

profession ... All who have no one to pray for them...

Thursday We pray for... Ministers of the gospel... Those who work for reconciliation... Those

in hospital...

Friday We pray for... The local church, for courage to take up the cross of Christ... Those

in authority, for the right use of power... Victims and perpetrators of violence, for

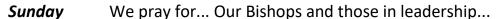
healing and repentance...

Saturday We pray... That Christians may live as citizens of heaven... That the nations of the

world will live in harmony... That the dying will know the joy of the resurrection...

Local weekly cycle of intercessions

We are set in a particular time and place and so we bring our local communities and relationships to God.



Prisoners and staff... Our own friends, family and

neighbours... Our Beacon Parishes that we may grow in... Prayer... Discipleship... and

Service...

Monday We pray for... The church community and villagers of Torbryan... Our schools... Those

in hospital and the housebound...

Tuesday We pray for... The church community and villagers of Woodland... Our pubs and

restaurants... Carers and those medical professionals...

Wednesday We pray for... The church community and villages of Denbury... Our residential and

care homes... Those who care for children and young people...

Thursday We pray for... The church community and villagers of Ipplepen... Our local shops and

post offices... Our Parish Councils...

Friday We pray for... The church community and villagers of Broadhempston... Local Farms...

Local clubs and societies...

Saturday We pray for... Our brothers and sisters of other denominations and none... Local

Businesses...

Intercessions for the Mission Community – February and March

Sunday	Mission Community	Ipplepen	Denbury	Broadhempston	Woodland
Feb 4 th	Hon. Asst. Priests	Blackstone Road	The Green	Main Street	Chardanay
Feb 11 th	Electoral Roll Officers	Bowden Road	Down View Road	Houndhead Way	Sunset Cottage
Feb 18 th	Servers	Bridge Street & Fore Street	Greenhill Lane	Vicarage Hill	Hawkes Farm
Feb 25 th	Eucharistic Ministers	Caunters Close & Harris Court	Fairview	Primary School	Orchard Cottage
Mar 3 rd	Sidespeople	Church Path & Paternoster Lane	Moorland Avenue	Community Shop	Pulsford View
Mar 10 th	Sacristans	Clampitt Road and Clampitt Close	Orchard Close	Radfords	Pulsford Farm
Mar 17 th	Organists	Clarendon Road & Motehole Road	Heathfield Road	Beaston	Wickeridge Lodge
Mar 24 th	Choirs and Musical Directors	Cooke Drive & Lang Way	Heathfield Terrace	Downe	Quarry Farm
Mar 31 st	PCCs & Rector	Parish Council & local businesses	Parish Council & local businesses	Parish Council & local businesses	Parish Meeting & local businesses

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