



# TODAY

The Parish Magazine for the Exe Valley Mission Community

DECEMBER 2020 - JANUARY 2021

Price 50p

## READY? READY FOR WHAT?

Are you ready? Are you prepared? Have you got everything you need?

'For what?' I hear you cry.

Well for the big day, of course? The Very Big Day. One of the BIGGEST DAYS of the year. The day we all look forward to.

You know – that day when millions of people around the world celebrate, either religiously or culturally. The day when friends and families gather together and eat and drink, feast and party. That day.

That day when shops are closed and churches are full. That day we call Yuletide, Chrissie, Chrimbo, Noel, Xmas or Christmas. Christmas Day.

By this time in years past, I would definitely be getting ready for Christmas. Services would be planned. Visual aids made. Outrageous costumes purchased. Treats stashed in the freezer, and in the unreachable parts of the kitchen. Presents secreted under beds and on the tops of wardrobes. Invitations would have been sent. Sleeping arrangements organised. And

all because I want to celebrate THE DAY in the best possible way, and I need to be ready to do so.

But not this year. I really don't know what I am preparing for, or what will be allowed, or who will be able to come, or how many churches will be open, or how to celebrate without singing, or how to see family, or how to see as many of you as possible, or..or..



And that is one of the reasons why we have produced this magazine but not included the details of any services because until 2nd December (or probably a few days later) we just don't know what will be possible. So, we will produce a supplement in mid December which will include the missing information.

However, don't wait for that. If you're not sure what's happening do please look at the Exe Valley Mission

Community website which is updated weekly.

Of course, not being able to rush around buying treats, filling the freezer and making stuff should give me time to get ready for the most important thing.

Christmas may not happen this year as it has before, or how I would like it to be, but it will still happen, and it is worth celebrating. And maybe, just maybe it will give us a chance to think and pray about the wonder of it all – that Jesus, God's Son was born as a baby in Bethlehem, and he is Emmanuel – God with us.

Whatever happens, whatever the circumstances, may you and those you love and care for be 'lost in wonder, love and praise' this Christmas.

*With my continued love and prayers,*

*Steph*

Please look at the website for any updates regarding health guidelines for churches.

Copy Deadline for February / March 2021 issue

Monday 11 January 2021

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**EXE VALLEY  
WEBSITE**

[www.exevalleychurches.org](http://www.exevalleychurches.org)

It's the best place to go for updates about what's on and what we do.  
A recent addition to the website is a monthly **Prayer Diary** with a topic to pray for, each day of the month.

**EDITORIAL**

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the Today magazine.  
Unfortunately due to the current lockdown restrictions we do not have any information for December services.

A supplement will be printed after Boris has let us know what is allowed!!

Don't forget to check out Christmas Online (page 5) and look out for the Christmas Trail map in the supplement.

I would like to wish you all a Happy Christmas and I hope lockdown restrictions will be lifted to allow us to spend time with our families.

Dawn



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**FROM STEPH ... ..**

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*God of our work and rest,  
 Bless us with courage and wisdom  
 this Advent  
 That we may lay down that which  
 we have no need to carry  
 Pick up that which will enrich  
 our journey  
 Reach out to those in need of  
 companionship  
 And embrace each new challenge  
 with hope. Amen*

# CHILDREN'S PAGE

## The 12 days of Christmas

### THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

ELEVEN PIPERS PIPING, AS NO-ONE IN THE MUSIC GROUP CAN PLAY THE GUITAR

FIVE GOLD BISHOPS' RINGS IN THE SAFE IN THE VESTRY

FOUR CALLING BIRDS BEING SILENCED BY A CHURCHWARDEN

A PARTRIDGE IN A PEAR TREE - THE VERGER FORGOT TO ORDER A CHRISTMAS TREE

TWO TURTLE DOVES TRAPPED IN THE ROOF

TWELVE DRUMMERS DRUMMING, TO THE CONSTERNATION OF THE CHOIR

SIX GEESE A-LAYING IN THE ECO-AREA OF THE CHURCHYARD

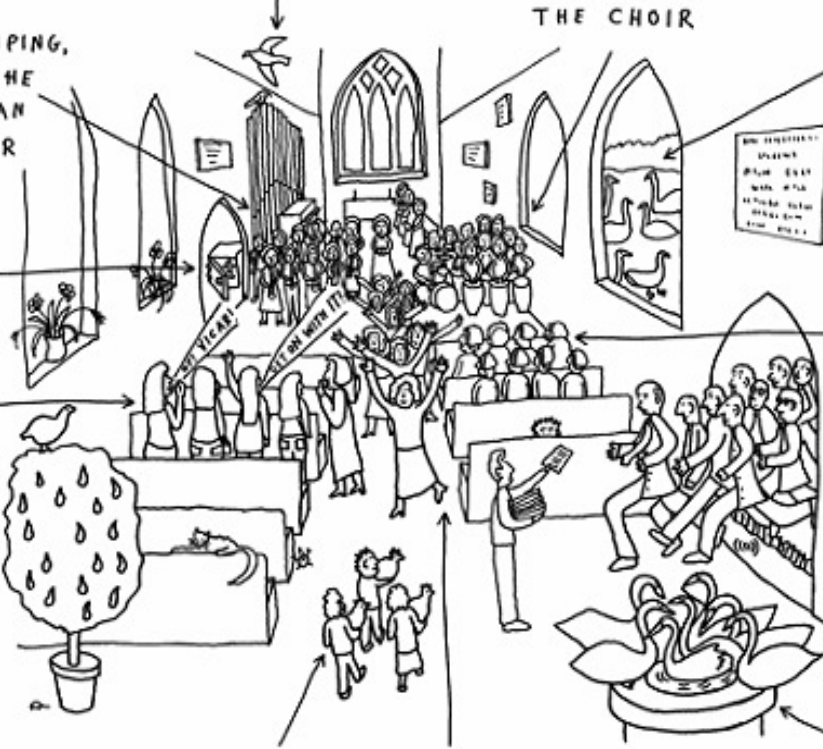
EIGHT MAIDS WHO HAD BEEN A-MILKING, BUT WHO MANAGED TO COMPLETE THEIR DUTIES IN TIME FOR THE 10AM.

TEN LORDS A-LEAPING OVER THE MOAT DUG BY THE YOUTH GROUP

THREE FRENCH HENS- PROPS FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL PLAY

NINE LADIES DANCING DURING ONE OF THE MORE MODERN CHORUSES

SEVEN SWANS A-SWIMMING IN THE FONT



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**FROM STEPH ... ..**



**Christmas Online**

We have had a great response to our online services, which have been watched all over the UK and abroad. So, get ready to watch our Christmas Celebration which should be available online on the Mission Community website from the beginning of December. You will hear some familiar voices and see some familiar scenes!

If your broadband speed is slow (!) there are instructions on the website how to download it. Alternatively, if you are really struggling, please contact Dawn Williams or the Church Office and we will try and get it to you on a memory stick.

My thanks to everyone who has contributed to it and to Stephen Roche who makes this stuff happen!

**Weekly Services Online**

Our Zoom/Conference call services are proving very popular. Many people join us from across Tiverton and our Mission Community – and beyond.

Details how to access them are on our website. These will continue into 2021. In addition, we will record each Sunday service, which should be available to listen to on the website on the following Monday. Click ‘Resources’ and a drop down box should appear which says ‘past services’. That’s where it will be!



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## FROM THE ARCHIVES

### 'TODAY' 50 years ago December 1970 / January 1971

December's lead article spoke out against the watering down of our faith, criticising those members of the clergy who did not accept the gospel in its entirety, but suggested that there were some parts that were 'optional', for example the virgin birth. Also, as we had become a multicultural society, we were no longer a Christian nation.

The dangers of smoking were the subject of the Rector's article in the January magazine, smokers being twice as likely to suffer an early death than non-smokers. In the same way that the health service can only advise, and cannot force you to give up the habit, so God doesn't force us to stop sinning. That is also up to us, in the knowledge that sin will destroy our souls just as smoking will destroy the body.

The December column, 'Between ourselves' dispelled the belief that the Christmas tradition of excessive eating was down to the Victorians. Apparently this goes back at least to Elizabethan times, when the recommended fare was, "Beefe, mutton and porke, mince pies of the best, pig, veale, goose, capon and turkey well drest, cheese, apples and nuts". (Phew!!).

The January issue mentioned the imminent closure of the Lamb Inn in Tiverton, then talked about how many inns feature animals in their name. Also mentioned was the existence

(then!) of 1,099 named 'The Rose and Crown'.

A quote from the Children's Society magazine, related to the cost of living going up, stated that, as an example, the 1d increase in the cost of a pint of milk would cost the society an extra £4,600 a year.

Winter colds and 'flu may have been with us again, but throughout the Exe Valley carol singing was very much to the fore.

An appeal was made for the collection of used postage stamps for missionaries.

Calverleigh were to show the film "John Wesley" in the village hall.

Loxbear's New Year's party was held in two parts – one for children, and the second for everybody.

Oakford had set up a fund to buy Christmas flowers for church, it being considered unfair for one flower arranger to have to bear the cost when flowers are at their most expensive. A Christmas lunch, organised by the W.I., was served to no less than sixty senior members of the parish. The Christmas Fayre raised just over £58. The Guides went carol singing to raise money for Save the Children.

Rackenfords Christmas Sale had raised £120. The sacred concerts at both the church and the chapel were well attended. The carol service was taken by the Young Anglicans, enabling Rev. Tull to sit in church "amongst his flock".

At Stoodleigh there was concern that about £120 would need to be raised for duplicating equipment, so that production of this magazine could continue. Social events included poultry whist-drives, and a dance in aid of the Shillingford Kidney Unit. Also asked was the question, "is it too much to for a more modern, or convenient, church heating system"?

Templeton's Carol Service was augmented by Withleigh choir.

Washfield's Children's Christmas party was free to children, with a charge of 3/- for adults.

The Last Post and lowering of the flag really made Withleigh's Service of Remembrance. The Country Sale in Tiverton Market had raised over £24 for church funds, while the Guy Fawkes Bonfire had raised £3.10.0 for the Sunday school. So many turned out for the carol singing that they were split into two groups, raising £18 for the National Children's Home.

*Paul Iliff*



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and leave your contact details.

We will get back to you.

**NATURE NOTES**

The lovely colours of Autumn have now left us but a newspaper article and our local farmer recently reminded me of how long they lasted.

The article suggested this was due to the mildness of the weather that allowed the leaves to last longer. I was also informed that the red colours in particular was due to the formation of anthocyanins and further research said that these compounds are responsible for all the darker, richer colours in all those vegetables whose antioxidant effects are especially good for you.

It is comforting to know I knew nothing and now know twice as much, with my knowledge even superior to my spell check which has decided the word for this group of chemicals is not in the dictionary.

I strongly recommend taking extra walks as an antidote to the stress of enforced isolation. The sight of flocks of rooks and seagulls when you reach more open countryside is very calming if the weather is kind and still. The soft ground provided for juicy, rich pickings and it was perfectly clear to all involved there was no need to rush or squabble.

Our neighbouring blackbirds and thrushes similarly enjoyed this time of plenty.

We meet many others on our walks and it is clear we all have had the same idea. It is obviously a nice surprise if we know them, and inevitably many tales of the countryside are exchanged.

*continued overleaf* ➔

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## PARISH ROUND-UP

Stories of noisy owls and stags and sightings of hedgehogs seem to be the most popular this year.

It is equally rewarding to walk further afield and come across riders or walkers you don't know. Being Devon, they are only too happy to take time to share their knowledge of their territory and promote things you might miss. Extraordinary attempts to domesticate wild deer and protect commercial fish ponds come to mind.

The welcome home provided by blackbirds and coffee completes the reward. I trust the blackbirds do not regret their needless profligacy with the holly berries come Christmas. I wish them and all a Happy Christmas, safe in the knowledge that we may be isolated but we are never alone.

*Thomas More*

## CALVERLEIGH

Well what can we say? last month we were starting to think about December services and now we will have to wait and see. By the time most of you receive your magazine we should be in a better position to know what is going to happen for the rest of the year and if Christmas is going to be what we are used to or just a little different. We hope that through this very difficult time of understanding what we can and can't do, where we can go and who with, who we can see etc that you are keeping well and occupied especially now that the clocks have changed and the nights are slowly getting longer.

### APCM

As we were unable to hold the meeting in April it was postponed until we were given guidance as to when we could meet. The APCM took place in September, but not in Church. Technology took a hand this time and the meeting was held by Zoom (which was interesting). The Churchwardens elected were Aubrey Goldsworthy and Jackie Herniman, Treasurer Jackie Herniman, PCC Secretary Julie Goldsworthy and PCC members David Burton, Shirley Goldsworthy, Sheila Greenslade, Rita Tapp and Lorna Thomas. Thanks were given for all that they have contributed to church life over the past year and also to everyone who has helped organise and support fundraising events, those on the different church rotas and those who have taken part in services. It couldn't be done without all your input, thank you once again.

### Loxbeare/Calverleigh Carol Singing

Unfortunately we will be unable to do any of the 3 nights carol singing this year due to Covid-19. There have been very few occasions when this enjoyable seasonal event has had to be cancelled, unless because of extremely bad weather. For many of us this has become part of our Christmas tradition and are already looking forward to being able to meet up again next year.

The charities that were chosen are Cancer Research and Children's Hospice South West. If you would still like to give to these charities please contact Jackie Herniman at 9 Kabale Close, Tiverton, EX16 5QB or Tel: 01884 255814. We are sure that both charities will be extremely grateful

for any monies raised in this most difficult of years. Thank you

It was with great sadness that we learnt in September of the passing of Marylee Ravnkilde. Marylee lived in the village, with her family, for many years and had been attending Calverleigh Church all through that time, whenever she was able to and her faith shone through in worship and throughout her illness. Marylee, along with husband Mark, was a great supporter of the church, the village and it's activities and there are many people who will miss her very much. I am sure that we will be listening for the lifting of the door latch once the service has started and the cheeky little grin as she made her way to her seat, for months to come. Our thoughts and prayers are with Mark and all of Marylee's family at this time.

Brian Longbottom also passed away in September with his funeral and committal taking place in October.

Mr and Mrs Longbottom lived for many years in Lurley, bringing up their family, before moving away in recent times. They too supported village activities over a long period of time and our thoughts and prayers are with their family also.

We would like to send congratulations to Pat and Anthony on the birth of their first grandchild, Ned.

We say goodbye to Michelle and Richard who have, over the years, helped judge the Annual Duck Race and we would also like to welcome the new residents of Calverleigh Mill.

A Holy Communion Group Service took place at Calverleigh Church on

*continued overleaf* ➔



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## PARISH ROUND-UP

27 September which was the first service to be held inside since lockdown began back in March. It was lovely to welcome people along with all the safety measures that had to be in place. Thank you Steph for a service with time to reflect on the music and your words (though no singing was allowed) and the opportunity to be able to meet together for fellowship and communion even though in a reduced form.

On 18 October we held our first self-take Evening Worship Service. There was a good sized congregation, all socially distanced of course, with Jackie Herniman leading and 3 worship leaders taking part with the readings, prayers and talk. Thank you to all who attended and taking due regard of the safety systems that had to be put in place. We hope that it did not feel too sterile and regimented. We now look forward to when we can begin to plan for services once again.

We are continuing with our monthly time of prayer which was started at a most appropriate time in February. It is two hours of prayer on the first Saturday of the month, with prayer suggestions sent out in the days leading up to it. Anyone that joins in can do so for as long or short a time as you wish, wherever you are. If you are interested in taking part please contact Julie Goldsworthy: email [thegoldsworthys@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:thegoldsworthys@yahoo.co.uk) to be included in the mailing list.

If you have been celebrating a significant birthday / wedding anniversary / birth, our congratulations go to you all.

For all those who have been unwell or are awaiting an operation or treatment, our very best wishes are with you for a speedy recovery.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all who are going through a bereavement at this most difficult of times.

Our thanks go to all those who have been on the mowing rota this year. With the uncertainty of whether we could even travel to the Church at the beginning of lockdown to keep the churchyard tidy, a wonderful job has been done over the months and once again your time and efforts have been much appreciated by many.

At this time of year our thoughts would be turning to collecting donations for CHAT. If we are unable to hold any services in Church before Christmas would you consider taking any dried goods, tins, toiletries etc directly to their office in Becks Square. We have heard a lot about the hardship that many families are facing this year with employment ceasing, the furlough scheme or redundancies and am sure that anything that can be given to be distributed would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

If we are unable to meet up in person before Christmas, at a social gathering or Church Service, may we take this opportunity to wish all readers a Merry Christmas however you get to celebrate it and pray that the coming year will be a much more enjoyable and social one.

### Calendars / Nativity Competition

A number of fridge/notice board calendars are available for 2021 – with all proceeds to the church. Please see the website for details.

Likewise, as mentioned last time, Dave and Nik Burton are organising an Advent Competition as a bit of fun. Can you make a nativity character? – big or small

– inside or outside – made of anything! Please see the website for more information about how you (or your children/grandchildren) can enter. We've seen how competitive and creative you can be from the Produce Show! Contact Dave or Nik on 01884 561499 or use the email below.


**Have we missed anything?** If there is something that you think we should have mentioned, or you have something for inclusion in the next Magazine, please contact Dave Burton 01884 561499 or email:

[calverleigh@exevalleychurches.org](mailto:calverleigh@exevalleychurches.org)  
and get the latest on the website at:  
[www.exevalleychurches.org/calverleigh](http://www.exevalleychurches.org/calverleigh)

## CRUWYS MORCHARD

As I write it is a sad day, as today 14 November was to be the day for our Christmas Fayre to be held, outside, in the car park of the Parish Hall, each stall with it's own gazebo, table and chair, there would have been tea and coffee through the window of the parish hall. But then there was "lock down". Hopefully it will happen in the Spring with some of the same stalls.

Cindy has been knitting Christmas decorations for the Church, anyone interested in them should ring her on 01363866862. All money to go to the church. Many of the stall holders who would have been with us are, at the moment, in Thorne Hill Farm Shop.

*continued on page 12* 

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# CHRISTMAS CRYPTIC QUIZ

by Chris Whitehead

Answers in December Supplement



Cockney eyes eaten now (5,4)	M																		
Level air service (8)	E																		
Polish prelate - no work - what rot! (7)	R																		
Ran for deck somehow in this parish(10)	R																		
You'll hear the water coming and going this time of year (8)	Y																		
Ask for alterations to the bell ringing (4,7)	C																		
Name question heard in Kent (3)	H																		
Cause concerning offspring (6)	R																		
You'll hear I give voice on top of the cake (5)	I																		
<u>Vivien</u> unseated in this parish(10)	S																		
Sam, hot, became a doubter (6)	T																		
Stamina somehow without a morning service (6)	M																		
Billboard briefly at the opening of this time (6)	A																		
Investments where malefactors were put (6)	S																		
Typist with the French not back in this parish	T																		
No longer emotional about historical novelist above the fireplace (10)	O																		
Stay - with me	A																		
So underhand he's in the river (6)	L																		
Wisdom lost nothing about the animals of this parish (8)	L																		

# Merry Christmas

## Attending Worship in the Exe Valley Mission Community During COVID-19 What to Expect !

Calverleigh, Cruwys Morchard, Loxbeare, Oakford, Rackenford, Stoodleigh, Templeton, Washfield, Withleigh

### Before you arrive:

We can only accommodate a certain number of people at a service, so it will be essential that you book a seat via the church office 01884 250417 or email [office@exevalleymissioncommunity.org](mailto:office@exevalleymissioncommunity.org) or by leaving a message on the answer phone. When you book, we will take some contact details. These will be kept for 3 weeks after the service and given to Track and Trace if someone from the service later tests positive to coronavirus.

### When you arrive:

The doors will open 15 minutes before the service.

Before that you will need to wait on the church path, 2 metre markings will be chalked on the path to help you stay a safe distance from others in the queue. The welcomer will let people into the building in households/bubbles. Face coverings will be required and you will be asked to sanitize your hands on arrival, then go immediately to a seat in church. The seats in church will be arranged in ones and twos at 2m intervals from each other. We ask you to go straight to a seat and to remain there for the duration of the service. Gentle music will be playing to help you pray as you wait for the service to begin. Windows and doors may be left open to allow some ventilation, so you may notice it is a little cooler than you expect.

### During the service:

Single use service sheets will be placed on the pews and we ask you to take these home with you, and bring it with you next time you come to a service.

Due to aerosol spread, there will be no singing during the service.

We ask that when you are saying the responses that you speak quietly and prayerfully  
- again to reduce risk of droplet spread.

When we share the peace, we cannot move from our places - we will simply wave or make a sign of peace to those in other households. During Communion, only bread will be distributed. The priest will wash her hands before and after distribution. The bread will be brought to you at your seat.

If you do not want to receive communion for any reason, that is absolutely fine

- just hold your service sheet in front of you and the priest will pray a blessing instead.

### After the service:

After the priest has processed out, the welcomer will ask people to leave a row at a time.

Please wait for the welcomer to ask you to leave. Please take any orders of service home with you.

Please do not stop to chat while leaving the building. Once out of the building you are welcome to talk in small groups of not more than 6 in the churchyard. Please do not block other people's exit from the building and remember to stay 2m apart from people from other households.

If you test positive for coronavirus up to three weeks after the service, please let the office know.

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# PARISH ROUND-UP

We would like to say a big thank you to Steph for keeping Church Services going and for her help and support during the pandemic. We were just beginning to have lay led services in our Church and were looking forward to celebrating Remembrance Sunday there, however that was not to be as lockdown restrictions meant that we were not able to hold it. Thanks to Steph and Robert we were able to join the group service on the phone or on Zoom.

We are hoping to hold two Christmas Services in December on the 13 and 20 at 11.15am. These will be a simple service in order to comply with regulations. Sadly we are not able to make and distribute Christingles this year. In order to follow the Covid rules we are limited to the number that can attend which is why there will be two services and you will need to book a seat in church for your preferred date. To book a seat please call Diana Vincent on 01363 860227

At both Harvest and Christmas we normally support CHAT by collecting at these services. If our Christmas Services go ahead we will collect non-perishables for CHAT. Donations for CHAT can also be dropped into them at Beck's Square Tiverton or put into the collecting box in the supermarket.

To join the Conference Call or Zoom service at 10am on Sunday, with Steph and Robert, call 0330 336 0036 and enter PIN 586191, it is best to ring a little earlier.

If you would like to join the email list for the Church Updates weekly, they are very good and useful, including information on coffee mornings, bible

studies and any special services. Either email the church office office@exevalleymissioncommunity.org or Diana Vincent, our Church Warden; vindrv@hotmail.com 01363860227

Very exciting news, for the first time since March The Cruwys Arms has been opened, if only for four evenings, from 1 November until 4 November. A big thank you to Paul and Carol, we look forward with optimism to December 2, when it might be able to open again.

CHRISTMAS is coming, we might even be allowed into the Church again, to decorate it with lights and flowers and perhaps a big lit tree in front of the Church, like the decorations we had for VE day. Decorating for Christmas is scheduled for December 14.

I wonder how many were able to hear the Last Post and (two minutes later) The Reveille on Remembrance Sunday 8 November, from Puddington. It was very moving.

YOGA is continuing, how wonderful it was to be back in the Parish Hall for yoga classes throughout September and October, we are looking forward to returning in December. Ring Hil on 01363 866245 for details.

CRUWYS ARMS GARDENERS We have not met since July, remember the first Wednesday in the month at 8pm in the Cruwys Arms as soon as we open up again. Complying with Covid regulations. I have just ordered my bare root strawberry plants.

THE ANNUAL FLOWER SHOW. There is a small stall outside Chrissie's

house, next to the Pennymoor Timber Yard, with face masks made by Pauline for sale via a donation box in aid of Flower Show.

On Saturday 3 October Sarah Waterman ran a brilliant cake stall outside her house, in a tent, fortunately as it was tipping with rain! She made over £420 for the Leukaemia Trust, well done Sarah and thank you very much.

## THE CRUWYS MORCHARD YOUNG FARMERS CLUB

The club has had their AGM with members keen to take up office with in the club. Before the recent lockdown the club had a safe distance gathering of fun and games, We are still having regular meetings via ZOOM to keep in touch and organise events.

Members have been busy taking part in speaking competitions, the first being Call My Bluff with the two club teams entered being placed first and second, with a team going on to the County round. At present the club has three teams training for junior public speaking competition which is in mid November. We had a pumpkin carving fun evening with a cake stall at the end of October in aid of the charity CHAT. And are planning an online ZOOM quiz in December (possible the 12th)

We are always welcoming new members, so if you know anyone between the ages of 10 - 26 who might be interested please contact Jess Parkhouse 07940 332586 for more information or find us on Facebook or Instagram.

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, is closed at the moment, please watch their notice board in North Street for future and Christmas plans.

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## PARISH ROUND-UP

It is a pleasure to welcome Jenny, Harish and Harry, we hope they will be happy in Pennymoor.

We also welcome Susan, Daniel and Abigail Maier, every happiness to them as well.

It is with sadness that we said "good bye" to Ollie and Sarah Smith, their little boys and Mouse. Good luck with your new house.

It is very good to see Jo so much better now. Our prayers go to Nigel Paris who is so unwell at this moment with pneumonia and our love to Ann. Our Prayers and best wishes to all that are not well at this time and to anyone who is grieving.

A little PS: Starlings, is our new holiday cottage, for two, at Chapple Farm. It will be available for rent as soon as we leave lockdown. Ring Allan on 01884 861278 for further details.

## LOXBEARE

At the time of writing, we are a few days into lockdown once more. We hope and pray that by the time the magazine is out, it will be lifted or at least eased. We pray for those who have suffered with Covid and the restrictions that have been placed on many people's lives. We remember and are very grateful to all the medical staff, care workers and all who are supporting and looking after others in various ways and pray that they may have the strength and protection they need at this time. May our government be guided to make the right decisions to bring this virus under control and

that a vaccine will soon become available.

We were able to hold a Harvest Festival Service outdoors on Saturday 19 September. The offering and donations for produce went to church funds. We also held an evening praise service in the Church in October.

Two donations have been given from the church, £300 to Tear Fund and one for Help the Heros, donations still coming in at the time of writing.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of Brian Peace of Rackenford, who passed away in October. He is remembered as one of the founders of the Mole Valley Farmers which started in November 1960.

Ron & Margaret wish to say thank you to friends in Loxbeare for the lovely basket of flowers given for their Diamond Wedding anniversary in September.

We wish a Happy Birthday to all with birthdays in December and January and also congratulations to those celebrating special occasions albeit in a restricted way.

Loxbeare & Calverleigh carol singing. Unfortunately, we will be unable to do any of the three nights carol singing this year due to Covid-19. There have been very few occasions when this enjoyable seasonal event has had to be cancelled unless it was extremely bad weather. For many of us this has become part of our Christmas tradition and we are already looking forward to being able to meet up again next year. The Charities that were chosen are

Cancer Research & Children's Hospice S.W. If you would still like to give to these charities please contact Jackie Herniman at 9 Kabale Close, Tiverton, EX16 5GB or tel: 01884 255814.

We are sure both charities will be extremely grateful for any money raised in this most difficult year - Thank you.

As with all villages, Loxbeare has been in receipt of a grant from the Government and is in the process of acquiring, with some of the money, a defibrillator.

Many thanks and appreciation to all who have kept the churchyard nice and tidy during the year and any general maintenance of the Church. Although very limited this year, to all who have helped, supported and contributed in any way to the running of the church and to the Churchwardens and PCC members.

So, keep safe and well. Happy Christmas to everyone as we celebrate Jesus' birth in whatever form that may take in these uncertain times.

## OAKFORD

This year's eye-dazzling Autumn display has offered some cheer as we follow the Covid path through another lockdown and into an uncertain winter. However good news comes today with the announcement that a vaccine is imminent which has proved to be 90% effective against the virus. So let's keep hopeful and positive as we go into a new year.

*continued overleaf* ➔

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## PARISH ROUND-UP

Congratulations to Bun Burrows who celebrated his 85th birthday on 21 October. On that same day John Phillips presented Bun with a plaque to recognise his 70 years as a bell ringer at St Peter's and the bell Bun had learned to ring when a teenager was rung to mark each one of those years. Thank you Bun for your loyal service to St Peter's bells.

Keeping it in the family, more thanks were offered to Brenda Burrows on her resignation from the PCC in October. We are grateful, Brenda, for all the ways you have served the church over the years. In recognition of this the Rev' Jane Wilson presented a very surprised Brenda with a lovely flower card following the Group Holy Communion service at St Peter' on 25 October.

On Remembrance Sunday, 8 November, Richard Brain, Chair of the Parish Council laid a wreath on the War Memorial and two minutes silence was observed. Villagers wanting to pay their respects to the fallen were restricted to standing on their doorsteps as public gatherings were banned. Thank you to Sarah Otton and her team for cleaning the memorial.

A warm welcome to John, Kay and family who have moved in to the village. We hope you will be very happy here in Oakford.

Oakford Parish Council have been informed that the refuse collections are now taking small electrical goods from households. All the information including collection times can be found on the MDDC website.

It is planned to have a Carol Service at St Peter's on Christmas Eve afternoon at 3pm but of course all will depend on

what social rules prevail when lockdown ends. Details will appear on the EVMC website and in a Today Magazine supplement to be distributed after December 2.

Talking of the website thank you to the team who put together the Remembrance Day Reflection – a very moving experience with lovely photos, music and singing. Watch the website for the Christmas Reflection and enjoy it in the comfort of your own home.

This strange year of 2020 is drawing to a close and its impact has been felt by everyone in many different ways.

As Christmas approaches, spare a thought especially for those who have lost their jobs and face hunger and possible homelessness. Please consider giving generously to CHAT. Tinned and packaged food, toiletries and seasonal goods can be left in the Church porch and will be taken to Tiverton. Thank you.

Keep safe and well and God's blessings for Christmas and the New Year.

## RACKENFORD

All being well when you receive this we will be nearing the end of lockdown and making plans to celebrate Christmas with our Church Services, Zoom and loved ones.

Such a special time in many ways for many, however not forgetting those less fortunate and how we can make a difference to others.

We are so very proud of our NHS, Carers and Care Homes who have to continue their work as we strive in our

own community to help others in some small way.

We continue to thank all the volunteers at our shop for the wonderful work they undertake for us. You are much appreciated. What would we do without you.

On Sunday October 4 our first Service since the March lockdown took place.

A joy to worship inside our Church and meet friends. Our Holy Communion Service was taken by Steph and received in our seats. Sadly no hymn singing, but meaningful prayers throughout to remember in the weeks and months ahead.

It was a pleasure to see the inside decorating completed and the heating keeping us warm was another bonus.

At our AGM we discussed safe ways forward within our Church and made tentative plans for the future.

Fiona Maddocks, Herbert Smith and Edward Smith all stood down from the Parochial Church Council, but we were pleased to welcome on Helen Hyland. Mary Cann is our Church Warden, Liz Paxton Treasurer and Ruth Fennell Secretary. Many thanks to them for taking on these time consuming tasks.

Sadly we heard of the death of Brian Peace on Tuesday October 13.

Brian had worshipped at our Church for many years with his late wife Jen, at one point helping her with flower arranging, determined as ever to take part and make a difference to any part of village life, health permitting. Always pausing for a chat as he drove into the village on his travels. Our deepest sympathy to Jane, Nicki and all the family.

*continued overleaf* ➔



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## PARISH ROUND-UP

Some will still remember Don Beele who lived for several years at The Old Police House. Sadly Don passed away on October 26 having lived at Willand with his wife Gwen. Our deepest sympathy to Gwen and all the family .

Our very best wishes to any who are not well or receiving hospital treatment, thinking especially of those we know of Richard, Les, Flora and Jacques.

We also pray for the lonely and depressed at this difficult time.

Halloween and Bonfire Night ... Both non-events this year, so we had to eat the treats ourselves and Guy Fawkes escaped!!!

We have now completed the grass cutting time at our churchyard. Our thanks to Andrew Parker for all his hard work keeping it so neat and tidy over the years. Sadly due to Covid and no fundraising permitted, we suffer lack of funds so we do not feel able to continue in the same way next Spring.

We are now asking for volunteers to maintain our churchyard , so if you have any time to spare and could maybe form a rota with others we may be able to overcome this problem. It would mean so much. If you can help please contact Mary Cann Churchwarden 01884 881696.Thank you

Harvest was another casualty of our times. Jenny had kindly prepared her pickle for us, a great fund raiser, so after making a few phone calls Jenny's Pickle was sold and donations were received for the harvest that didn't happen, thank you everyone for your kindness.

What a treat to receive the new Rackenford News, Autumn 2020 1st edition. It was such a pleasure to read all the contributions and we so look forward to the next issue. Many thanks to Viv for all her hard work and time, a great idea.

Luckily we did manage to get our sponsored walk in eventually. Limited walkers and social distancing had to take priority. The circular walk around Baggy Point with stunning views and kind weather helped us enjoy our day. Many thanks to Liz, Roy and Graham and mostly to our wonderful sponsors who helped raise £1,115. Amazing !!!

To anyone moving in or out of our village (sometimes it happens and we are not aware of it) we wish you every happiness.

Gathering at The War Memorial for our Remembrance Service had to be cancelled, along with the Service we planned to have in Church to enable those who wanted to, to pay their respects, but sadly lockdown put a stop to that too. However some may have heard the Last Post being played at The War Memorial by Sharon Saupe on Sunday 8. Richard and Christine kindly organized a wreath as always and Richard laid it in place. Many thanks to them for their thoughtfulness and offering to fill a big void.

*Poppy Prayer.  
God of life and love, we remember  
those who lost their lives at war,  
We're grateful for their sacrifice  
and we give thanks for those who  
work for peace and justice today.  
Help us to follow their example,  
And to work to bring about a better  
world for us all. Amen*

A little reminder with Christmas looming, we still have the little Cookery Books, including tips and ideas available for purchase in the shop. Mary Cann and Hilda Nott also have some if you have missed out. Only £5 each, a bargain.

Our last opportunity to wish you a happy and enjoyable Christmas as we all pray for a healthier year to come. Stay safe everyone.

## STOODLEIGH

**A**n excellent but low-key Harvest Festival Service was held at St Margaret's Church on 4 October, led by our hard-working Churchwardens, Margaret Cuninghame and Chris Whitehead. It was good to have some harvest hymns played by Jennifer Rowlandson on the church organ, even though no singing was permitted due to current Government guidelines.

The Church was beautifully decorated by Phyllis Hill and a small team of talented flower arrangers. It was a tonic to have the Church back to its best with flowers around the inside and in the windows. A huge thank you to Phyllis and her helpers.

The Service of Remembrance which was due to be led by Peter Broadbent on 8 November had to be cancelled. However, at 11.02 am Jennifer tolled the fifth bell eight times to remember those in the village who died in the First and Second World Wars and a further 57 times for those others who served in WW1.

*continued overleaf* ➔




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## PARISH ROUND-UP

While thanking people, we must mention Dave and Matt Berry who have kept the churchyard looking pristine throughout the year - this is such a boost to our morale in this difficult time. Also thank you to Richard Hill who quietly helps out in a crisis and particularly for his help with the churchyard clearance which hopefully will take place on Saturday 12 December at 10.00am. Volunteers are most welcome. Please phone Jennifer on 351402 in case numbers need to be restricted. Thank you to the two Churchwardens whose tasks have not ceased with lockdown - and probably have increased. Also thank you to the small band of our regular congregation who go each week to whichever parish is holding the group service.

Finally, thank you to Steph who works tirelessly to keep everything together and everyone in touch with activities in the Exe Valley Group of churches.

Many people will know that Eileen Fewings has been in the Larches in Tiverton for some time and will now be staying there permanently. We miss her from the village and are sad that visiting is restricted at present. Eileen has been a loyal member of the PCC for many years, supporting her late husband John throughout all his time on the PCC.

At long last the Church clock no longer records the time as 1.04. The hands were removed by an abseiler and repaired, so not only do we know the hour by the chimes but the time by the clock. More thanks are due again to the group of three helpers who weekly trail up the tower to wind the clock.

With conflicting announcements about lockdown and the length of time it will last, it is difficult to know what to do about Christmas arrangements, so please keep an eye on the Stoodleigh community emails. A further thank you goes to Geraldine Talbot for running this wonderful means of communication on so many fronts and finally to Sheila Davis for editing our magazine entry. We are sorry to hear that she and John are leaving Stoodleigh to be closer to their family.

The Parish Hall closed again on 5 November in line with Government COVID-19 guidelines. It had re-opened in September and was used by the community for weekly Yoga and Zumba classes. These were very successful and those taking part followed official advice and guidance, including all the carefully positioned socially distanced floor markings during classes.

Thank you to the amazing instructors Kim Grimston and Claire Weeks, the enthusiastic participants and "the cleaners"! Thanks too to the neighbours from whom we received no complaints of Zumba music emanating on Thursday evenings from wide open doors and windows (as per Government guidelines). In the meantime, Yoga, Zumba and Pilates sessions are being provided via Zoom by our local instructors. For more information visit the parish website at <https://www.middevonparish.co.uk/stoodleigh/parish-groups-organisations/>

We extend a warm welcome to the village for Beckie and Robert who have moved into Dagrenel.

Pat Pennington has sent a message regarding the Garden Club. In this

difficult year all plans have had to be shelved, so Stoodleigh Garden Club has put the 2020 programme on hold until next year. Hopefully we will be back to normal after we have coped with whatever the winter season brings. However, we have not disappeared without trace but have used technology to keep in touch with each other. We are lucky to have some ingenious members whose ideas have kept us interested and informed.

The online Garden Club Chat emails were started in April. They have encouraged members to share photos, advise on problems, identify plants and creatures and to take virtual tours of members' gardens. Members have done a great job in clearing Himalayan Balsam from The Drive whilst keeping a safe distance from each other.

Shirley Cope instigated the online Stoodleigh Alternative Show and with 11 classes to choose from. Garden club members and others from the village sent in their photos of flowers, vegetables, cakes and handicrafts. They also submitted poems. The traditional class of "Weighing the Potatoes in the Bucket" was retained. Members voted online and the overall winner was Laura Parkman. This was a most enjoyable way to spend August and hopefully will encourage more villagers to join the Garden Club. Many thanks go to Shirley for her endless patience and organisation during this pandemic year.

The Stoodleigh Inn is now closed for lockdown but Lizzie would like to send a massive thank you to all her wonderful customers who filled the Inn, often to capacity, since July. All her customers have accepted the current

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# PARISH ROUND-UP

rules and guidelines without question and she thanks them for working with her to keep everybody safe.

Since this is the last edition of the Today Magazine in this memorable and difficult year of 2020, may we wish our readers a very Happy Christmas and all good wishes for the New Year.



## TEMPLETON

**W**e have passed from Autumn, nature's grand finale to the quiet splendour and captivating charm of Winter. Let's try to spare ourselves a moment to celebrate and enjoy this season.

"To appreciate the beauty of a snowflake it is necessary to stand out in the cold."  
- Aristotle

St Margaret's Church, Templeton update and events

Over the past few months, St Margaret's Church, Templeton gradually opened its doors for services, initially for private prayer, including for Holy Communion Services and lay-led services. We would like to thank Martin Strong for making such a positive difference to the services by playing the hymns that we were not allowed to sing together. With the recent surge in cases of COVID-19, the Church will be open only for private prayer until Dec 2.

If you wish to spend some quiet time for prayer in the Church, please contact William (251513) or Reg (860246) for an appointment so that they can unlock the Church for you and ensure that the Church is cleaned and sanitized before and after your visit.

The weekly conference call and Zoom Sunday services, coffee mornings and Bible study evenings will continue, led by Steph and Robert. For more information on the times of any events just go to the website: [www.exevalleychurches.org](http://www.exevalleychurches.org).

CHAT support (Churches Housing Action Team) Thank you to everyone who contributed so generously with produce and packaged food for Tiverton's Churches Housing Action Team (CHAT). The charity was very grateful for all the donations for their food bank. CHAT has supported people experiencing housing difficulties in mid Devon since 1995. Their food bank is managed by volunteers and provides vital food and household items for people and families going through financial hardship.

Templeton Village Hall and Social Club Update

Templeton Village Hall and Social Club also opened and closed several times in the last few months. When allowed to open, there are strict protocols in place, including social distancing and earlier opening and closing times. The committee has done its best to balance

the two sets of government guidance: guidance for pubs and guidance for multi-use community venues, which have been described by some as non-dissecting circles. Sadly, there was no bonfire and firework night this year; an event which has always served to bring

everyone together. The limited access to our Church and our Social Club remind us how important these intuitions are to our community and how lucky we are to have them.

Christmas preparations  
Christmas will soon be upon us. We are looking forward to a very different Christmas Carol Service this year on Sunday December 20 with readings, music and carols. Numbers will be limited due to social distancing, but more information about this will be available in December. If you would like to know about any services in Templeton please call William (251513) or Reg (860246).

Welcome to Templeton, kind thoughts and best wishes  
Welcome to Joe, Laurel, Darcy and Johnny O'Brien, who have just moved into the Beeches. We hope you will be very happy in Templeton.

Our thoughts and all best wishes are with those in the village who are unwell, in hospital, recovering from illness or awaiting surgery.

At the time of writing this, we are in Lockdown 2#. Although we live in such a beautiful part of Devon, and have much to be grateful for, lockdown is not easy. There may be times when we have to remind ourselves that we cannot simply pop round to see our neighbours – something we tend to do more at this time of year. Despite this, neighbours have continued to look out for each other. Lynda (tel: 881318) would like everyone in Templeton to know that she is on the end of the telephone for anyone who would like to chat or has any concerns (all completely confidential, of course).

*continued overleaf* ➔

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 6 / 13 Dec  
 Gloria Woollacott            Cleaning only  
 20 / 27 Dec  
 Kate Martin                    Flowers / Cleaning  
 3 / 10 Jan  
 Teresa Pancherz            Flowers / Cleaning  
 17 / 24 Jan  
 Gloria Woollacott            Flowers / Cleaning  
 31 Jan / 7 Feb

## WASHFIELD

*Winter will come,  
 but not before Autumn has worked  
 hard to ensure every coloured leaf  
 has reached its destination.  
 Stockpile their colours in your mind  
 before winter mutes the landscape.*

It seems so cruel that, only in the last issue, we reported the death of Margaret Elston and, just two months later, we are having to convey the equally sad news of Joe's death.

Joe was born at Hatherland Mill and went to Bolham School. After moving to Hatherland Farm he took over the dairy herd of 29 cows from his father. He met Margaret at Young Farmers Club and they farmed there together after their marriage. He later decided to plant some trees in woodland at Hatherland and a successful forestry business was born to run alongside the farm. He even won an award for his Forestry skills in 2003.

Joe was active on the Parish Council for many years and, as was Margaret, invited to a Buckingham Palace Garden Party for his dedication to the Parish

Council. He was involved in the sale of the Old School and, as a result of its sale, the setting up of the Social Club where he took his turn with bar duties.

He latterly enjoyed his garden and died just 3 days after his 91st birthday. Joe will be sorely missed by all who knew him and we send sincere condolences to Helen, David, Fred and their families as, yet again, they mourn the loss of a parent.

We also send condolences to Sandra Payne and her family as she too mourns the loss of a parent. Her mum, Hilda Wedlake of Black Dog, died at the beginning of November. Our thoughts are with Sandra, Stephen, Joe and Ruby as they come to terms with her death; a much-loved Mother and Grandmother.

We send all those experiencing ill health, and treatments at the moment. Our good wishes and hopes are that these difficult times will soon pass and you can feel better soon.

We bade a sad farewell to Emerald and Reuben in November (we will miss you two) and welcome Peter and Bobbie Boax in their place. We hope you will be happy in your new home in Lower Washfield.

Washfield Social Club recently weighed up the fruits of a lot of peoples' labours as Pumpkin night arrived at the end of October. Fifteen pumpkins (and an interloping cabbage) were presented for the final weigh in and the results subsequently posted. The winner was David Bowden with a respectable weight of 40lbs with Kipper Heywood coming a close second with 38.5lbs. Special congratulations go to Eva and Eliza whose sterling efforts got their

pumpkins in the weigh in too. Well done to all who entered.

Look out for more news and updates about what may be happening in the parish on the village website and Facebook page 'Humans of Washfield and Lower Washfield'.

We wish all our readers a safe Christmas and we're sure you are hoping (as we are) that 2021 will be kinder to us (and our families). Take care all.

We hope you are in good spirits now that some of our freedoms have necessarily been curtailed. At least we know that we can cope with this, and help is always forthcoming if needed. Keeping in touch is even more important again, and there are many ways of making sure that no-one is lonely. We live in a good place!

On a lovely sunny day in September we were so pleased to be able to celebrate Harvest and to thank God and our farmers. The churchyard and the lychgate were beautifully decorated and the Service was led by Annabel from the tower door, with all our children bringing offerings of produce and taking part in the Thanksgiving. James Ayre, assisted by Natasha, gave an excellent talk on farming today and how he looks after the land, working with nature and caring for his cows in the best possible way. We could not sing, but heard 'Come, Ye thankful people, come' sung from a distance by an operatic visitor, which was a great pleasure.

The Remembrance Sunday in Church had been planned but was not to be. However, this important day was marked on The Green, with permission

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## PARISH ROUND-UP

of the Local Authority. Richard led an Act of Remembrance with Veterans and Church Leaders present and others able to participate from the road. Maurice read the names of the fallen and the Two Minutes Silence kept. The wreath had been laid by the tablet in the Church earlier in the week.

We had just become used to having a Holy Communion Service in Church, when our turn came, but at least for a month these services have had to cease. The Services on 'Zoom' and on the telephone at 10 am will continue as long as they are needed and are very much appreciated by well over 100 people each Sunday.

We need one, or maybe two, volunteers to deliver the 'Today' magazine in Washfield Lane and Long Lane. Just over 30 copies in all, every two months.. If you have any spare time and feel able to help we would be glad to hear from you! Please phone 01884 254306.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all those who are unwell and for those who are finding life hard. We send our kind thoughts and prayers to the Elston family in their sad loss of Joe, a much loved and respected member of the community.

Steph is always available and is working hard to keep us all in her care.

## WITHLEIGH

Life is not so much a matter of keeping up with the Jones at the moment as one of keeping up with the Covid rules.

The constant changes in restrictions might well have left us in tiers! Now, at the time of writing, we have just entered a second lock-down, so the planned Remembrance Sunday Service was an early victim. Now Christmas looks like being a very strange affair. Whilst we may not like the rules and restrictions under which we find ourselves, to ignore them as so many seem intent on doing can only delay our all getting back to anything like normality.

Our postponed Annual Church Meetings did eventually take place on 2 October, but as virtual meetings via Zoom and conference telephone calls. All were thanked for their part in the life of St Catherine's, with Brenda and Paul being re-elected as churchwardens, with Christine as treasurer. After sixteen years, Elizabeth stood down as PCC secretary and electoral roll officer, these roles now being taken on by Janet and Stephen Roche respectively.

Our Village Hall at Withleigh is looking for some new Trustee's. Anyone who is interested in the hall and/or village life may like to think whether this is for them. It would not take up much of your time and you are not required to attend every meeting, but if you would like to attend our meetings you would be more than welcome. If anyone is interested or would like more details please contact Duncan 252949 or Brenda 252431.

With other avenues off limits, we continue, as far as possible, to keep in touch by telephone or e-mail.

Members of the W.I. have been keeping in touch with each other on a monthly basis via "Snippets", thanks to

Marianne, who circulates snippets that members have sent her.

Congratulations to any who are celebrating special birthdays or anniversaries.

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

Our condolences go to the family and friends of Doreen Tanner who passed away recently, and whose ashes have been interred in our churchyard. Doreen was one of the leading forces in raising funds for kneelers for St Catherine's.

And, to everyone, once again, stay safe and take care.

### A Prayer for Advent Sunday

Living God, as we light the first Advent candle and the flame begins to dance, so may we. May joy be kindled in our hearts and week by week, as a new candle is lit, may the flame of your desire for justice and peace burn deep within us, releasing in our lives, our churches and our world the healing and transforming power of your Spirit.





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