

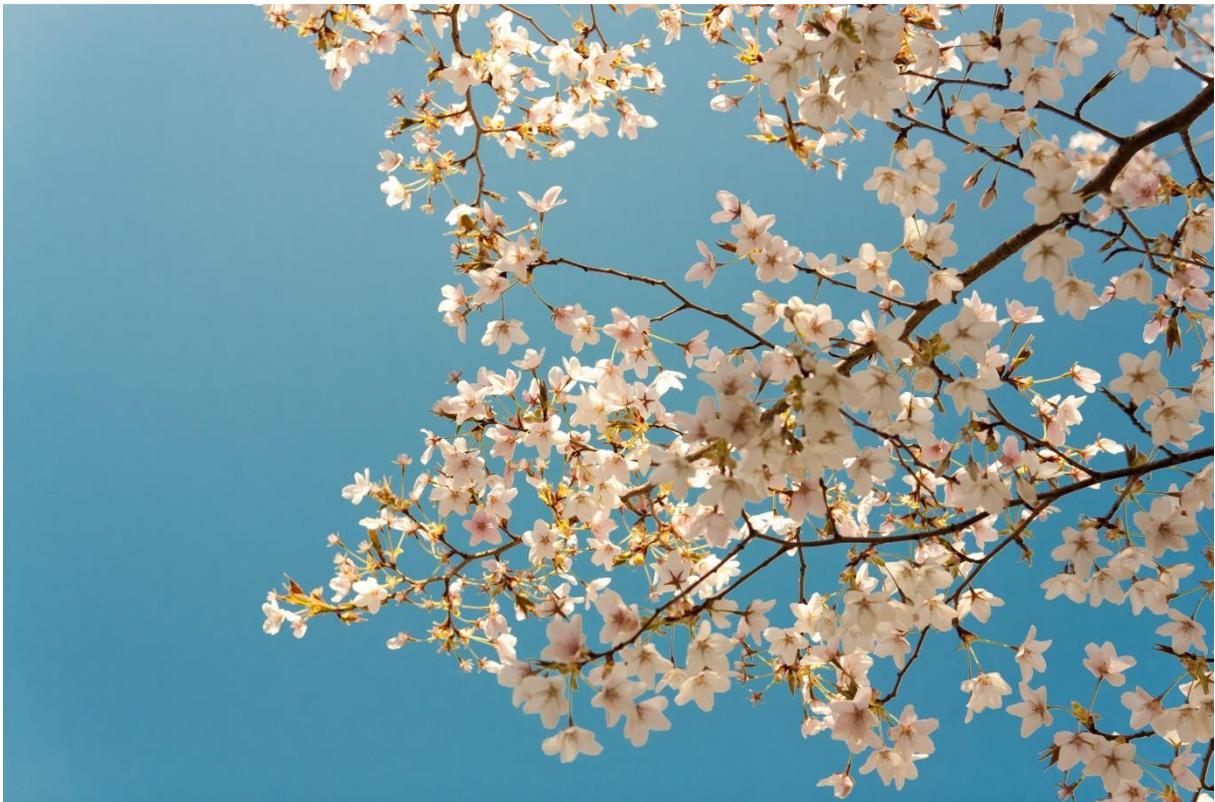


Ashwater Beaworthy Black Torrington Clawton Halwill Highampton Tetcott

St. Peter Ad Vincula St. Alban St. Mary St. Leonard St. Peter & St. James Holy Cross Holy Cross

## Benefice Bulletin

# May 2022



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*“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”*

Acts 1: 11



No information available.

## CONTACTS

### Priest in Charge (part time)

Revd. Stephen Skinner

07554 142 264

### Contacts for Churches:

Ashwater	Terry Darby	01409 211 229
Beaworthy	Richard Prior	01409 221 986
Black Torrington:	Sheila Grabham	01409 231 581
	Val Letheren*	01409 231 430
Clawton:	Irene Ellis	01409 271 371
Halwill:	John Lawlor	01409 221 987
	Kay Napier	01409 221 321
Highampton		
Tetcott:	Nicki Mitchell	01409 271 381

**Safeguarding**

**Val Letheren**

**07484 880 770**

\* or as above

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chiajo-18290215

Thanks to Revd. Stephen for sending the poem for page 11



# May

## “ROGATION WALKING”

We are holding a Rogation Walk on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> May, meeting at 4.30pm at the farmstead of Shirley Richmond, near Black Torrington. Everyone is welcome for a short walk around her farm and surrounding area, to pray God’s richest blessings, before returning to her house for a nice tea!

However, I expect some of you will say that it is a nice idea, but what is the purpose of this, other than enjoying a pleasant afternoon together?! I’ll try explaining the purpose of “Rogation” to you now, for it has a long and important history in the Christian Church.

The spiritual and physical exercise of a Rogation Walk is nowadays to pray for God’s blessing upon the crops, livestock, and farmers of our countryside. In the past these short Services would often have been followed by a “Beating of the Bounds” of the whole parish. The idea here was to remind everyone of these ecclesiastical boundaries! However, this last custom has largely died out because any such disputes would now be resolved by courts of Law! Another nice feature of these Rogation Walks was that food and drink were conveyed to poorer people living within the parish. This is a custom that could well be revived, but with considerable sensitivity to the recipients!

Usually, we make use of Psalms such as numbers 24, 50 and 104 as part of our worship acclamations; for example, to form the following mini liturgy, that celebrates so much of God’s beautiful Creation:

“The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.

**The World and all that live in it.**

All the animals of the forest are the Lord’s,

**And so are the cattle upon a thousand hills.**

The Lord makes grass to grow for the cattle,

**And plants for us to cultivate.,**

Bringing forth food from the earth,

**Wine to gladden our hearts,**

Oil to make our faces shine,

**Bread that sustains our hearts.**

The Lord makes springs pour water into the valleys,

**It flows between the mountains.**

The birds of the air nest by the waters,

**They sing among the branches.”**

I have been involved in leading Rogation Walks around farms for many years, in Cumbria (with the sheep), West Dorset (with cattle and chickens), and last year at Sheila’s farm (by the robotic milker!). I have found the experience of getting ‘close up and personal’ with the living natural world to be very spiritually powerful, and recommend it for that reason alone. Some people have said to me that it doesn’t seem to make any difference to the growth of crops or health of animals – but whatever the ‘fruit’ I think it is a good thing to connect with both farmers and all of creation (wildlife included). God loves His Creation and expects us to show the same love in our farming festivals such as this.

Here is a Rogationtide Prayer for our Farms and Farmers, for us all to pray, especially as we fret about ‘Food Security’ and rapidly increasing prices of food and supplies:

**“We thank you, heavenly Father, for the hard work which takes place here.**

**And ask your blessing on the family and on the whole enterprise.**

**We thank you for the working animal, and for the machines which take the toil out of labour.**

**Keep all the food, equipment and materials in this place, safe from disease, pollution and theft,**

**So that they may play their part in bringing in a harvest to feed and clothe your world. Amen”**

Stephen

Dear Friends,

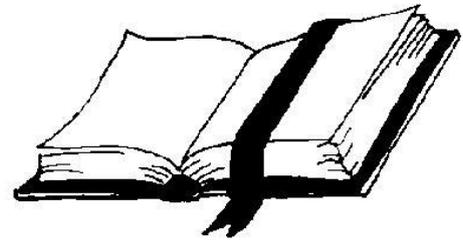
Words are not adequate to express the kindness and generosity shown to us on our recent departure from the Benefice. We were extremely humbled by all the wonderful gifts and cards we received. As for the 'Social Evening' which Jim genuinely thought was all it was going to be! It was so lovely to see so many folk there to wish us well.

As said before, we have many happy memories to cherish.

We are not that far away so will hope to see many of you in the not too distant future.

With our love and blessings and heartfelt thanks. Jim and Pam.

# Lectionary Readings for May 2022



<p><b>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup></b> St Philip &amp; St James</p> <p>Isaiah 30: 15 – 21 Psalm 119: 1 – 8 Ephesians 1: 3 – 10 John 14: 1 – 14</p> <p>Services at Ashwater, Black Torrington, Halwill, Tetcott</p>	<p><b>Sunday 8<sup>th</sup></b> Easter 4</p> <p>Acts 9: 36 – end Psalm 23 Revelation 7: 9 – end John 10: 22 – 30</p> <p>Services at Ashwater, Black Torrington, Clawton, Beaworthy</p>	<p><b>Thursday 15<sup>th</sup></b> Easter 5</p> <p>Acts 11: 1 – 18 Psalm 148 Revelation 21: 1 – 6 John 13: 31 – 35</p> <p>Services at Ashwater, Black Torrington, Halwill</p>
<p><b>Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup></b> Rogation Sunday</p> <p>Acts 16: 9 – 15 Psalm 47 Revelation 21: 10, 22 – 22:5 John 5: 1 – 9</p> <p>Services at Ashwater, Beaworthy, Highampton and Rogation walk &amp; Tea</p>	<p><b>Thursday 26<sup>th</sup></b> Ascension Day</p> <p>Acts 1: 1 – 11 Psalm 47 Ephesians 1: 15 – end Luke 24: 44 – end</p>	<p><b>Sunday 29<sup>th</sup></b> Sunday after Ascension</p> <p>Acts 16: 16 – 34 Psalm 97 Revelation 22: 12 – 14, 16 – 17, 20 – end John 17: 20 – end</p> <p>Services at Halwill, Clawton</p>

*To help you prepare for one of our services or to  
read at home*

# Ashwater with Black Torrington Benefice Services for May 2022

<b>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup></b>	9:30am	Ashwater	Communion
St Philip & St James	11am	Black Torrington	Café Church
	11am	Halwill	Communion
	6pm	Tetcott	Evening Service
<b>Sunday 8<sup>th</sup></b>	9:30am	Ashwater	Morning Service
Easter 4	11am	Black Torrington	Communion
	11am	Clawton	Café Church
	6.30pm	Beaworthy	Evensong
<b>Sunday 15<sup>th</sup></b>	9:30am	Ashwater	Communion
Easter 5 St. Matthias	11am	Black Torrington	Communion
	11am	Halwill	Morning Service
<b>Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	9:30am	Ashwater	All Age Service
Rogation Sunday	11am	Beaworthy	Communion
	4:30pm	Fishleigh Farm, Black Torrington	Rogation Walk & Tea
	6:30pm	Highampton	Evening Service
<b>Sunday 29<sup>th</sup></b>	11am	Halwill	Double Baptisms
Sunday after Ascension	4pm	Clawton	Benefice Open Air Service & Tea

## Reflection from the Reverend Canon Chris Palmer Canon Chancellor, Exeter Cathedral

On the day I'm writing this, news reports are full of bad news: war in Ukraine, terror attacks, illness, a landslide, high profile court action. You'd be forgiven for believing that the only events of any significance are confrontation, suffering, natural disaster, and death. And we are tempted to despair or imitate.

But Christians dare to announce Sunday by Sunday that the truest and most important news of all is Good News. That's what 'Gospel' means. We announce the good news each time we read the stories of Jesus from scripture, we preach the good news of Jesus who shares and transforms our lives, and we seek to live the good news in our daily lives through serving others with joy.

And the good news we proclaim is founded in the resurrection of Jesus, the amazing, joyous wonder that death is defeated and God invites us into life. The resurrection of Jesus is not simply the story of one man; it is God's act of freeing and remaking the entire universe – and us in with the bargain:

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away;  
see, everything has become new! (*2 Corinthians 5:17*)

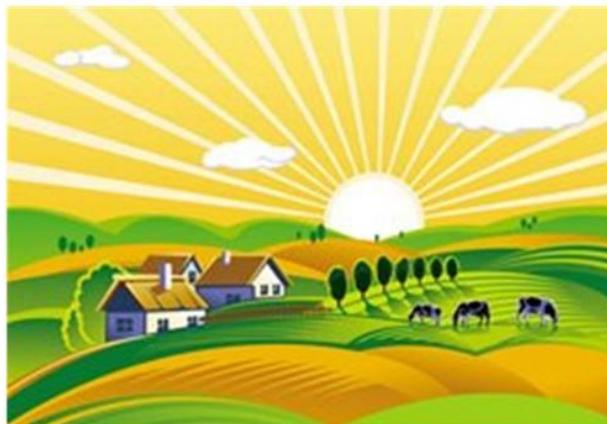
God's invitation to the church is to be the community of new life, of renewal, and of hope for the world. If we are to imitate anything, it is God's good news in Jesus that is our pattern. As Wendell Berry has it, we are called to be a people who 'practice [*sic*] resurrection':

So, friends, every day do something  
that won't compute. Love the Lord.  
Love the world. Work for nothing.  
Take all that you have and be poor.  
Love someone who does not deserve it...

Go with your love to the fields.  
Lie down in the shade. Rest your head  
in her lap. Swear allegiance  
to what is nighest your thoughts.  
As soon as the generals and the politicians  
can predict the motions of your mind,  
lose it. Leave it as a sign  
to mark the false trail, the way  
you didn't go. Be like the fox  
who makes more tracks than necessary,  
some in the wrong direction.  
Practice resurrection.

**The Reverend Canon Chris Palmer**

**The United Benefice of  
Ashwater, Beaworthy,  
Black Torrington, Clawton,  
Halwill, Highampton and  
Tetcott**



## **Benefice Rogation Sunday Service**

To be held at  
Fishleigh Farm, Black Torrington, EX21 5QQ  
By kind invitation of Shirley and Penny Richmond

**Sunday 22nd May at 4.30 pm**

Service/Walk/Tea  
**ALL WEICOME**



## ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021 BY INTERIM PRIEST IN CHARGE – REVD STEPHEN SKINNER.

This is my third Annual Report for our Benefice, in a year that once again has been much affected by the Covid 19 virus pandemic. However, thanks to the mass vaccination programme the number of serious cases has been much reduced. This has meant that with Social Distancing restrictions gradually being lifted by the Government, we have gratefully been able to hold 'in person' Services at all of our seven churches. My diary indicates that we held our Services by means of Zoom 'on line', only from the beginning of January until the beginning of April 2021. But how wonderful it was to begin to hold Services 'in person' from Good Friday and Easter Day onwards! Some of these we held outdoors, weather permitting, and for quite a while we continued to wear face masks and restricted our singing. But by Summer 2021 we were able to 'sing our hearts out' whilst being conscious of the need to protect others. We held a full set of Services in all our churches, at Harvest and Christmas. It was a joy to meet more people around our communities for these festival Services, but we note that numbers were generally much reduced on previous years – in part because there were still quite a few who were nervous about mixing with large numbers in enclosed public places. In truth the attendances on typical Sundays are lower than before – anecdotally because some have got out of the habit of coming to church. It is not at all unusual to have congregations only in single figures. We must try harder to encourage them and others to attend our wonderfully broad variety of Services across the benefice. These Services include not only Common Worship Communion, and Prayer Book Evensong, but more informal Morning or Evening Services led by myself or members of our eight Lay Worship Leaders. I want to pay special tribute to this team of LWLs, that has grown significantly over the course of 2021. They bring a welcome creativity to our Worship offering – for example in our expanding number of 'Café Churches'. It is essential that we experiment with a greater variety of worship, so as to attract younger generations to our church life. I especially want to mention the loss of Trevor May, who died last August. He was a hugely respected Lay Reader, with so much wisdom to impart to our congregations – particularly in the old Ashwater Benefice. Trevor's Funeral / Memorial Service was one of the most moving and beautiful that I have led for many years. At the end of 2021 our only other Lay Reader, Jim Williams, also relinquished his position due to poor health. I personally mourn the absence of these two holy men of God, for their friendship and wisdom. This has put additional pressure upon myself, such that I now regularly lead 2 or 3 Services on 3 or even 4 Sundays each month – far more than originally envisaged in my "Task Description"!

During the two years I have been Priest in Charge the role of the "Benefice Group" has become increasingly important – especially to myself, as I regard the 9 members as an invaluable council of reference. All churches were represented – some by their churchwarden/s and others as nominated by their PCCs. This Group has met roughly every 6 weeks over 2021, and it has discussed a large range of issues, such as Service Rotas, Safeguarding, "Living in Love and Faith", Focal Ministers, Administration, and various strategic matters for our future priorities as we seek to work more closely together. We held a now famous "Pudding Evening" in November, where those present decided on four such priorities: Benefice Choir, Social Events, Cafe Church, a Schools Team. These four areas are being taken forward by leaders – our need to develop leadership is crucial. I want to especially praise Val Letheren for being our Benefice Administrator, to help in these and other matters – she is a huge asset to us! I also want to thank Kay Napier, for her role as Secretary for the Benefice Group. Whilst on these 'management matters' I want to thank our Treasurers and Churches for paying their Diocesan 'Common Fund' in full for 2021. This is a huge achievement in a year when congregations have been relatively small, and it's been very difficult to hold many fundraising events

Finally, I want to thank everyone for being so supportive over the year. I feel that we have very good and harmonious relationships. It's been a real pleasure and privilege to minister among you! I look forward to a good 2022, as we work together towards the appointment of your next priest. **Stephen**

# Parson Jack Russell Art & Photography Exhibition “Life in the Country”

St Mary’s Church, Black Torrington

10<sup>th</sup>June - 13<sup>th</sup>June 2022

**Start creating now!**

**Open exhibition**

**All welcome**

**Send for details**

**Exhibition Secretary**

Parson Jack Russell Animal Art & Photography Exhibition  
Little Acorns, Burdon Lane, Highampton, Beaworthy EX21 5LX  
Telephone: 01409 231430 [val.letheren@btinternet.com](mailto:val.letheren@btinternet.com)



## ***Big Breakfast***

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> May**

**9.00am, Clawton Village hall**

*Cereal, fruit juice, full English, tea or coffee*

*with a glass of Buck’s Fizz*

£8 per Adult £4 per Child Family £20

*Proceeds to St Leonard’s church.*



## In sun and shade

Glory be to God in the world around us:  
in sun and shade, day and night,  
and the rhythms of the seasons

**Glory be to God!**

Glory be to God in the community in which we live:  
in love and laughter, sorrow and joy,  
and the patterns of human living.

**Glory be to God!**

Glory be to God in the way we live our lives:  
in giving and sharing, thanking and knowing,  
and all that makes us Jesus' disciples

**Glory be to God!**

Glory be to God in the world:  
in the search for justice and peace,  
and all that makes us one in human family

**Glory be to God!**

Glory be to God in the smallest of things:  
in tiny creatures, fleeting moments,  
the smallest seed of faith new-growing

**Glory be to God!**

Glory be to God in greatness and majesty:  
in the tallest mountains, the highest clouds,  
the awesome dance of the whole cosmos

**Glory be to God!**

Glory be to you, O God  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
Now and for ever. **Amen.**

*Richard Sharples*

# Safeguarding Training

## Basic and Foundation.

Run by the Diocesan  
Safeguarding Team

Tuesday 10th May.

1.30pm - 4pm

Hope Chapel

Black Torrington

### About Basic Awareness and Foundation Modules:

The Basic Awareness and Foundation safeguarding modules are currently provided online and can be worked through by you in the comfort of your home.

All PCC Members are required to undertake the **Basic Awareness** and the **Foundation Safeguarding Training**.

This is your Opportunity to do both in person if you are unable to do them on line.

### **To book your place:**

Email [val.letheren@btinternet.com](mailto:val.letheren@btinternet.com)

Or Phone Val 07484880770

## St Mary's Church, Black Torrington

### Bags 2 School Collection at the Church on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May for church funds

Please use your own black bags. Bags may be left in church from Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May. We will receive 40p per kg.

## What we collect

We accept the following '**good quality**' items for RE-USE\*:

- Men's, Ladies' and Children's clothing
- Paired shoes (tied together or elastic band around)
- Handbags
- Hats
- Bags
- Scarves and ties
- Jewellery
- Lingerie
- Socks
- Belts
- Soft toys
- Household linen
- Household curtains
- Household towels
- Household bedding (bed sheets, pillow cases and duvet covers)
- 



**WE DO NOT** accept:

- *Duvets and blankets*
- *Pillows and cushions*
- *Carpets, rugs and mats (including bath, shower and toilet mats)*
- *Soiled, painted, ripped or wet clothing*
- *School uniforms with and without logo*
- *Corporate clothing and workwear*
- *Textile off cuts, yarns or threaded material*

## JUNE BULLETIN DEADLINE: 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY

Please send any details of services, events or fundraisers you want publicised, or any contributions – articles, images, poems etc. to Kay by this date. ANYTHING NOT RECEIVED BY THE 15<sup>TH</sup> WILL **NOT** BE IN THE JUNE BULLETIN

**\*Also, if you think you could help producing the Bulletin, please get in touch\***  
zena.napier@gmail.com or 01409 221321



# Upcoming Dates for your Diary

<b>May</b>	7th	Coffee Morning		<b>Halwill</b>
	9th	APCM	2.00pm	<b>Ashwater</b>
	<b>15th Deadline for newsletter</b>			
	21st	Big Breakfast		<b>Clawton</b>
	21st	Tithe Map and Afternoon Tea		<b>Black Torrington</b>
<b>June</b>	10th–13th	Parson Jack Russell Art Exhibition		<b>Black Torrington</b>
	<b>15th Deadline for newsletter</b>			
<b>July</b>	11th	Visitation	7.30pm	<b>St Mary's Bideford.</b>
	<b>15th Deadline for newsletter</b>			
	31st	Summer Event		<b>Clawton</b>
<b>August</b>	<b>15th Deadline for newsletter</b>			
<b>September</b>	<b>15th Deadline for newsletter</b>			
	25th	Harvest Festival and Lunch		<b>Clawton</b>
<b>October</b>	<b>15th Deadline for newsletter</b>			
	15th	Big Breakfast		<b>Clawton</b>
	16th	Advertise the Post for new Priest		
<b>November</b>	9th	Orientation day		<b>All Parishes</b>
	10th	Interview Day for new Priest		
	<b>15th Deadline for newsletter</b>			
	26th	Wine and Wisdom		<b>Clawton</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>15th Deadline for newsletter</b>			
	18th	Carol Service		<b>Clawton</b>
<b>Feb/March 2023</b>	<b>Institution Service for new Priest</b>			

PLEASE LET VAL HAVE DATES OF ANY EVENTS UP AND COMING.

## **WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD OR VULNERABLE ADULT?**

Please speak to your Parish Safeguarding Representative if you have any concerns for the well-being of a child or adult, or about the behaviour of someone towards a child or adult.

Your Parish Safeguarding Representative is:

Name: **Val Letheren**

Contact: **val.letheren@btinternet.com** or **07484880770**

If you cannot reach your Parish Safeguarding Representative, please contact your parish clergy or the Diocesan Safeguarding Team:

Charlie Pitman, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser - 01392 345909

[Charles.Pitman@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:Charles.Pitman@exeter.anglican.org)

Stephen Edgeley, Diocesan Safeguarding Officer - 01392 345910 -

[Stephen.Edgeley@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:Stephen.Edgeley@exeter.anglican.org)

Phill Parker, Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser - 01392 294969 -

[DBS@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:DBS@exeter.anglican.org)

For general enquiries - [SafeguardingEnquiry@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:SafeguardingEnquiry@exeter.anglican.org)

## **IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM?**

If you believe somebody is at immediate risk of harm or that a crime has been committed, dial **999**

If you have serious concerns about an individual's well-being, you should contact the relevant agencies:

### **Concerns about children**

Devon Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): **0345 155 1071**

Please notify your Parish Safeguarding Representative and/or the Diocesan Safeguarding Team after contacting any of these agencies.

### **Concerns about adults**

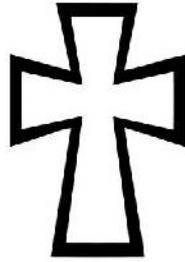
Devon - Care Direct: **0345 155 1007**

### **Domestic Abuse**

Devon helpline for professionals and individuals: **0345 155 1074**

### **Rape Crisis**

National: **0808 802 9999** Devon & Torbay: **01392 20417**



St. Peter Ad Vincula, Ashwater EX21 5EY

St. Alban, Beaworthy EX21 5AB

St. Mary, Black Torrington EX21 5PU

St Leonard, Clawton EX22 6PS

St. Peter & St. James, Halwill EX21 5UH

Holy Cross, Highampton EX21 5LE

Holy Cross, Tetcott EX22 6QZ



The Priest in Charge of our churches Revd. Stephen Skinner can be contacted by telephoning 07554 142 264 or emailing [sjmskinners@btinternet.com](mailto:sjmskinners@btinternet.com)