

Ruby Country Benefice

The parishes of Ashwater, Beaworthy, Black Torrington,
Clawton, Halwill, Highampton & Tetcott

Bulletin

November 2022



*“The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed,
a stronghold in times of trouble.*

*Those who know your name trust in you,
for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you.”*

Psalm 9: 9-10



SEPTEMBER

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Margaret COLES

(Ashwater)

30th

OCTOBER

BURIAL/INTERMENT OF ASHES

Kate LAWLOR

(Halwill)

8th

Sue WEST

(Halwill)

10th

Brian JENNINGS

(Tetcott)

12th

CONTACTS

Priest in Charge (part time)

Revd. Stephen Skinner

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Contacts for Churches:

Ashwater

Terry Darby

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Beaworthy

Richard Prior

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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

From the Parish Registers image (pg. 2) © Parish Pump,

Cover image: Photo by Bart Ros on Unsplash

Ukraine graphic on the back page from pixabay.com, by chiajo-18290215

Thanks to Revd. Stephen for sending the poems on pages 8 and 12-13

(from *Winter* by Ruth Burgess, Wild Goose Publications)

Photo on page 13 by Larisa Birta on Unsplash



November

“LIGHTENING THE LOAD”

In last month’s lead article I wrote about the wonderful new book, entitled “How Village Churches Thrive”. If you haven’t yet read it then please do – for it summarises the book that we have been discussing recently in our Benefice Group meetings and P.C.C.s. Some people have even got a bit excited by the very useful ideas and stories that we can learn from other rural churches around the country! In our view it is essential for our future that we get out of our current ‘survival strategy’ and look outwards to engaging with the many needs and opportunities to serve our local village communities. We will become more attractive to younger as well as older generations if we are felt to be keen to get involved in useful practical schemes to bless our communities. We can do this as *individuals* (as many already do) but also by working as the local incorporated ‘Body of Christ’ in partnership with other village groups. In my view this is a crucial outward movement that we must make, but it will require more active involvement by us all.

However, to do this we must “Lighten the Load” to release us from our preoccupation with internal administration of our own affairs, to a minimum level for efficient management. The Diocese has recently produced a Course to help us do this. It is in four Sections, and we aim to run the Course ‘in person’, starting in mid November:

1: Celebration. Celebrating what is good in our churches and local communities. This exercise is technically called “Appreciative Enquiry”. It is an excellent ‘counter’ to our tendencies to focus on the various *problems* that seem to beset us in these troubled days. So we can ponder the following Questions: “What aspects of daily life (including church and community) in our rural context do you find life giving?”; “How do you see God’s presence and activity in your church and community?”; “What might be an alternative, and better, measure of ‘success’ in your church than ‘numbers’?”

2: Expectations. In this Session participants can discuss some of the many Expectations that are placed upon us both legally and informally as church members or leaders. This is not just an issue for P.C.C. members, but should be a *shared* concern. A good place to begin is by brainstorming all such expectations, including those of particular relevance as a Church of England parish. Alongside this (using Resource Sheets) it is helpful to place the names of those upon whom greatest Expectations fall. Of course, too many fall on the Vicar, with his/her seven parishes! Could we support each other better across the parishes and partner our communities better in certain areas of our shared life?

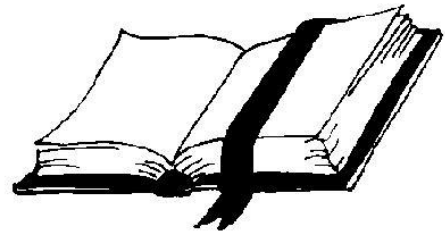
3: Organisation. This Session builds upon the exercises of the previous Session and begins to look into the future. A very useful tool here is to analyse personally which aspects of church organisation and ministry are 'life giving' and which are 'life sapping'! I hope that this will not lead us to ditch the 'life sapping' elements but instead galvanise us to look for better ways to handle the life-sapping ones! One of the most important changes in how we view our work is to see it in terms of *ministry*, where we utilise our gifts under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to achieve our God directed goals. The Course offers a fascinating variety of tested models for ministry, from around the world!

4: Vocation. This final Session looks outwards to help us explore the mission of our churches in our local communities. We can draw on the many examples offered in the book "How Village Churches Thrive". The Session looks at your local village, and all that is going on there – along with the areas of weakness or need (the infamous S.W.O.T. analysis). We undertook such an exercise on October 11th at an event in Holsworthy facilitated by "ROC" ("Redeeming our Communities"). The discussion can then lead on to how your church (and our benefice) can collaborate to meet various needs. The key to 'Lightening the Load' is to be prepared for us as individuals to take the decision to change some of our work / ministry into a *new Vocation* where we feel called by God, and it really feels life-affirming.

JOIN US FOR OUR FIRST SESSION ON 16TH NOVEMBER AT BLACK TORRINGTON METHODIST'S "HOPE CHAPEL". We will have a Bring & Share Lunch at 12.30pm, and promise to end by 2.30pm!

See you there? Stephen.

Lectionary Readings for November 2022



<p>Sunday 6th Third Sunday before Advent</p> <p>Job 19: 23 – 27 Psalm 17: 1 – 9 2 Thessalonians 2: 1 – 5, 13 - end Luke 20: 27 – 38</p> <p>Services at Ashwater, Black Torrington, Halwill.</p>	<p>Sunday 13th Remembrance Sunday</p> <p>Micah 4: 1 – 8 Psalm 9: 9 – 20 Revelation 21: 1 – 6 Matthew 5: 38 – 48</p> <p>Services at Ashwater, Black Torrington, Beaworthy, Tetcott, Halwill Village Hall, Clawton</p>	<p>Sunday 20th Christ The King</p> <p>Jeremiah 23: 1 – 6 Psalm 46 Colossians 1: 11 – 20 Luke 23; 33 – 43</p> <p>Services at Ashwater, Black Torrington, Halwill</p>
<p>Sunday 27th Advent Sunday</p> <p>Isaiah 2: 1 – 5 Psalm 122 Romans 13: 11 – end Matthew 24: 36 – 44</p> <p>Services at Beaworthy, Clawton, Highampton</p>		

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

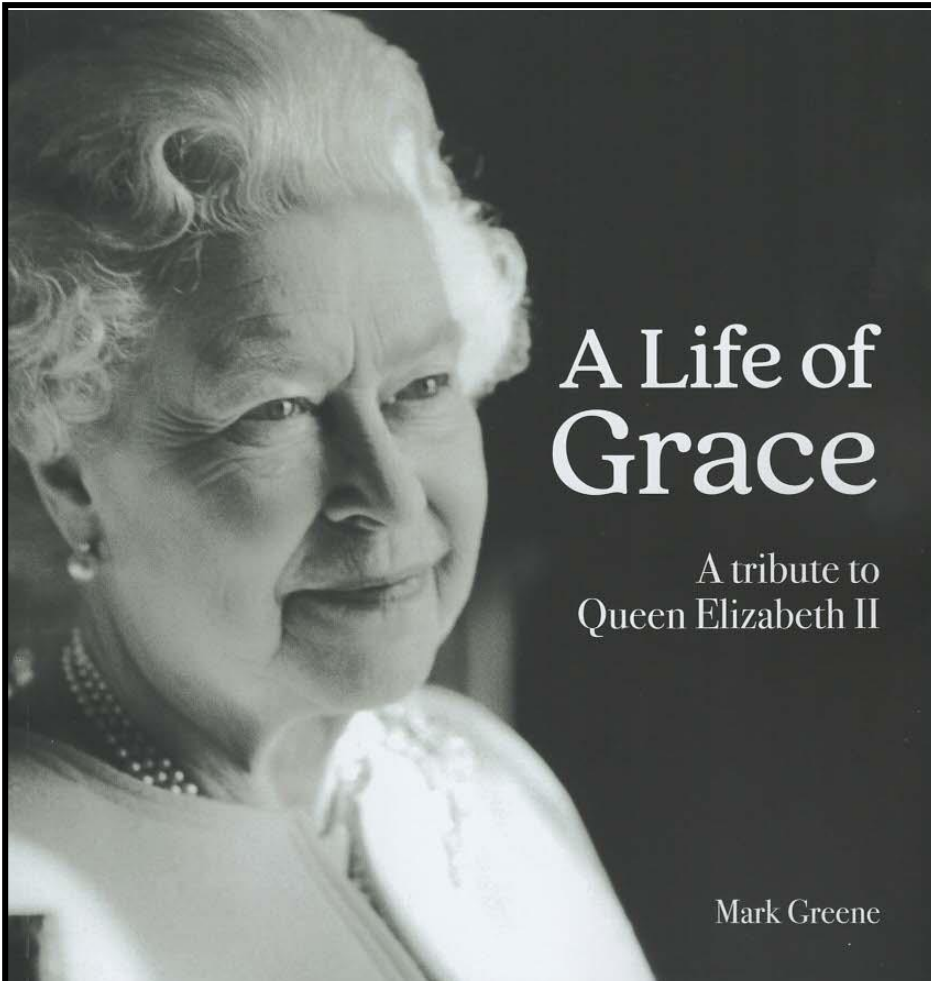
Ruby Country Benefice Services for November 2022

Sunday 6th	9.30am	Ashwater	Communion
Third Sunday before Advent	11am	Black Torrington	Café Church
	11am	Halwill	Communion
Sunday 13th	10:45am	Ashwater War Memorial & Church	Act of Remembrance
Remembrance Sunday	10:45am	Beaworthy Church	Act of Remembrance
	10:45am	Black Torrington War Memorial & Church	Act of Remembrance
	10:45am	Halwill Halwill Junction War Memorial & Village Hall	Act of Remembrance
	10:45am	Tetcott War Memorial	Act of Remembrance
	2:30pm	Clawton War Memorial & Church	Act of Remembrance
Sunday 20th	9:30am	Ashwater	Morning Service & Baptism
Christ the King	11am	Black Torrington	Communion
	11am	Halwill	Morning Service
Sunday 27th	11am	Beaworthy	Communion
Advent Sunday	11am	Clawton	Communion
	3pm	Highampton	Advent Carol Service

Recruitment of a new vicar for our Benefice

Despite there being interest, no applications have been received by the October 2022 deadline for the post of Revd. Stephen's successor. We will, of course, be re-advertising for this position, so please keep praying that the right person will feel called to join us.

God our Father,
help us to put our trust in you
to send your chosen person
to lead us on
to where you would have us to be.
Amen.



A Life of Grace: A tribute to Queen Elizabeth II by Mark Greene

Our administrator Val Letheren has a small quantity of these books available to purchase at a reduced cost of £2 each (RRP £7).

If you would like to purchase a copy, please let Val know – her number is 01409 231 430.

We commend to you

Almighty God,
in your heart we find mercy and peace.

This day we commend to you the men and women who serve
in the Navy, Army and Air Force,
who face danger, and who put their own safety at risk
in order to secure peace for others.
Help them to know that, although often far from home,
out of reach of the touch of a lover,
out of reach of the playful cuddle of a child,
they are never beyond the reach of your touch and care.
We pray that in all the actions of those who serve in war,
or in peacekeeping activities around the world,
the vision of your love for all people is neither lost nor forgotten.

We pray this day for the families of those who serve overseas.
In their loneliness and anxiety
may your Spirit bring support and comfort
in order that they find the strength to endure their time apart
from loved ones.

We pray especially
on this Remembrance Sunday
for those who have lost their lives in war,
and their families who need support in their time of grief.
We pray, too, for those maimed in battle
and we pray for the medical professionals whose skills, care and
attention
are used in rehabilitation.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Keith Blackwood, Spill the Beans

WHATS ON AT..



TETCOTT
CHURCH

Sunday 4th September- BBQ at the Church from **4pm** with bring and buy stalls followed by an open air service.

Sunday 2nd October-Harvest Festival from **6pm** in the Hall, service and supper. Adults £10, Children £5, under 5 free.

Sunday 13th November- Remembrance Sunday outside at **10:50am**. Gathering by the war memorial.

Saturday 26th November- Craft morning **10am** til **noon**. Drop in to a free family Christmas crafts for the church and at home (refreshments available).

Saturday 3rd December- Making mince pies in the hall **10am** til **noon**.

Sunday 4th December- **5:30pm** tea and biscuits, **6pm** service.

Sunday 24th December- Christmas Eve Carols with Rev Peter Ingram at **7pm**. Drinks and mince pies.

Senior Clergy Reflection from The Venerable Nick Shutt, Archdeacon of Plymouth

"...there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns — the ones we don't know we don't know."
– Donald Rumsfeld

By the time you read this piece some of my known unknowns will be known. For example, I am nervously waiting to know what the latest energy cap increase will be. I am also waiting to know who the next prime minister will be.

In the last few years, we have faced several unknown unknowns too. The biggest of those has been the COVID-19 Pandemic. No one saw that coming! And can the same be said about the war in Ukraine? St Paul talked poetically of known unknowns when writing to the Corinthian Church:

"For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

So, whilst there are many things I only see in a mirror, dimly, there are other things that I know, the chief of which is this: "I know that my redeemer liveth" (Job 19:25). I hope those words have created an earworm so you can hum along to Handel's Messiah all day as a reminder that Emmanuel, God is with us is someone we all need to know.

Ven. Nick Shutt, Archdeacon of Plymouth

DECEMBER BULLETIN DEADLINE: 15TH NOVEMBER

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 15TH WILL NOT BE IN THE DECEMBER BULLETIN**

zena.napier@gmail.com or 01409 221321

Financial Struggles?

Help is available

<p>If you are Struggling to get help with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change in income • Benefits • Debt / Budgeting • Mental Health Support 	<p>Contact Wiser Money 01823 299050 wisermoney@navigatecharity.org.uk</p>
<p>If you are on Universal Credit</p>	<p>Go to your online journal and message your work coach</p>
<p>For advice from the Local North Devon Citizens Advice Bureau</p>	<p>Call 01271 377077 They are a referral partner of Northern Devon Foodbank, who will be able to issue you with a food bank voucher if appropriate.</p>
<p>Free national CAB helpline They can help address your crisis and provide support to → 0808 2082138</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help you navigate the benefits system • to maximise your income • identify any additional grants you could be entitled to.
<p>The Torridge District Council Emergency Hardship fund may be able to help. It is administered by Encompass</p>	<p>Call them on 01271 371499 and selecting 'community helpline' option They are open 9.30am – 3pm Monday – Friday</p>
<p>Christians Against Poverty</p>	<p>Phone 07369 226007 (Tues, Wed pm and Thursdays)</p>
<p>If you are a housing association tenant</p>	<p>There are ways your housing officer can help and give advice. Contact them.</p>

Christ in Flanders

We had forgotten You, or very nearly –
You did not seem to touch us very nearly –
Of course we thought about You now and then;
Especially in any time of trouble –
But we are very ordinary men.

And there were always other things to think of –
There's lots of things a man has got to think of –
His work, his home, his pleasure, and his wife;
And so we only thought of You on Sunday –
Sometimes, perhaps, not even on a Sunday –
Because there's always lots to fill one's life.

And, all the while, in street or lane or byway –
In country lane, in city street or byway –
You walked among us, and we did not see.
Your feet were bleeding as You walked our pavements –
How *did* we miss Your footprints on our pavements? –
Can there be other folk as blind as we?

Now we remember; over here in Flanders –
(It isn't strange to think of You in Flanders) –
This hideous warfare seems to make things clear.
We never thought about You much in England –
But now that we are far away from England,
We have no doubts, we know that you are here.

You helped us pass the jest along the trenches –
Where, in cold blood, we waited in the trenches –
You touched its ribaldry and made it fine.
You stood beside us in our pain and weakness –
We're glad to think You understand our weakness –
Somehow it seems to help us not to whine.

We think about You kneeling in the Garden –
Ah! God! The agony of that dread Garden –
We know You prayed for us upon the cross.
If anything could make us glad to bear it –
'Twould be the knowledge that You willed to bear it –
Pain – death – the uttermost of human loss.

Though we forgot You – You will not forget us –
We feel so sure that You will not forget us –
But stay with us until this dream is past.
And so we ask for courage, strength, and pardon –
Especially, I think, we ask for pardon –
And that You'll stand beside us to the last.

Lucy Whitmell
(1869 – 1917)





Upcoming Dates for your Diary

November

15th Deadline for newsletter

25th Wine and Wisdom **Clawton**

December 11th 5pm Carol Service **Highampton**

15th Deadline for newsletter

18th 4pm Carol Service **Ashwater**

18th 7pm Carol Service **Clawton**

19th Churches Together Carol Service **Halwill?**

21st 7pm Carol Service **Beaworthy**

22nd 7pm Carol Service and Mulled wine **Black Torrington**

St. Mary's Ruby Ringers

Playing the restored church handbells



Meeting on Tuesdays

4:15 – 5:30pm

St. Mary's Church,
Black Torrington

All who would like to have a go are welcome!

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

Stephen Edgeley, Diocesan Safeguarding Officer - 01392 345910 -

Stephen.Edgeley@exeter.anglican.org

Phill Parker, Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser - 01392 294969 -

DBS@exeter.anglican.org

For general enquiries - 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