

The Messenger

Christ Church Barnstaple
Methodist & United Reformed Church

“He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.”

Psalms 1:3

June 2021



Trees for the Future - Amigos news, page 12

June 2021

All activities are cancelled or postponed until further notice.

As the church magazine is printed once a month you may find more up to date information on the church website. I strongly recommend that, if you are able to, you have a look there for updates.

Our family matters

Christ Church Family News

Sadly we record the death of Mike Smith, an active member of Christ Church for many years, especially known to most of us for his commitment to Community Action Romania, founding the Men's Breakfast group and joining the Worship Leaders, amongst involvement in so many other activities in the life of the church.

While we are not meeting together please look out for each other and let our Church Friends coordinator know of any concerns.

The following is an excerpt from information received from Sally, Chaplain at Norah Bellot Court:-



I'd like to share with you part of an email from Sam Monaghan, Chief Executive of MHA. You may well have heard and/or seen Sam talking on the radio and on television during the last year or so. MHA is very much involved with the national campaign to "Fix Care for All".

#FixCareForAll calls on the Government to prioritise adult social care in the national recovery from coronavirus. Over the past 20 years there have been many promises to fix social care - unfortunately to date this has come to nothing, and the pandemic truly highlighted just how overlooked, underfunded and poorly planned the sector has been for so long.

Almost two years ago on the steps of Downing Street, the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, promised that he would **"fix social care once and for all"**, and has since promised to 'fix the injustice of care home funding'. This hasn't happened. As the biggest care provider to campaign and influence the debate, we have a unique opportunity to remind those in power, and the nation, that when social care isn't prioritised it is **people** who should be receiving care and support and those providing it who suffer.

This campaign calls on the government to **fix care for our neighbours, for our parents, for care workers, for the future, for me, for you, for all!** Just as the Prime Minister has promised.

Visit [#fixcareforall.co.uk](https://www.fixcareforall.co.uk) for more information, and to support this recently launched campaign.

Message

Dear Friends,

I've mentioned before how, as a small child, I loved to lie on the floor at my mother's feet as she played the piano. She was a great classical pianist but as I grew older she would teach me to sing some of the African American songs of faith. Songs such as "Wade in the water" and "Swing low sweet chariot". Even as a child I sensed something of the pain and hope such songs expressed for those who first sang them. A recurring theme being looking forward to being set free and arriving home to the promised land.

As I write this we really do seem to be getting closer to a point of freedom, to a promised land when many of us will be able to be together in church giving thanks to God for our newly given freedom.

When the churches first closed, the Methodist Church decided that in order for a church to reopen there must be a Church Meeting held for the members to make the final decision.

The Elders and my recommendation is that, as long as the country is still on target for restrictions to be lifted on the 21st June, we will reopen the church for worship on Sunday the 27th June. If you have been received into membership of Christ Church you will receive an invitation to a Church Meeting to be held at 7pm on Wednesday 9th June in the church. A presentation, discussion and a vote on this will be the only items on the agenda. For members who are unable to attend the meeting provisions will be made for a postal vote to ensure that all have a voice.

We don't know exactly what form our worship will take when we return and whether we will be able to sing with all our hearts. It is likely we will need to take things gently and build slowly as we look after one another (especially those who will be feeling nervous) but, step by step, I believe we are approaching the promised land.

Every blessing,



Visit of Rev. Colin Lake to Fremington on July 11th.

Colin will be making a long-promised visit and will be leading an evening service at 6.30pm.

He would be delighted to see friends from the circuit, but even if Covid restrictions have been relaxed we need to plan seating arrangements carefully.

Please BOOK your seat by June 27th by contacting either:

Brenda Prentice, tel. 01271 377323 or email: brenda.prentice14@gmail.com

Rev. Marilyn Tricker, tel. 01271 830869 or email: marilyn@mtricker.plus.com

Prayers for June

6th June

God of truth and mercy, where we break down – you build up;
where we damage – you repair; where we blaspheme – you bless;
where we isolate – you include; where we go wrong – you put us right;
where we confess – you forgive; where we begin again – you are with us.
Thank you Lord, in Jesus’ name. Amen

13th June

God of mystery, Sower, Saviour, Spirit, we worship you;
and we ask you to give us:
eyes to notice where the seeds of your kingdom are growing,
courage to show them to others,
faith enough to help nurture them,
and a heart that delights in their harvest. Amen.

20th June

Loving and sometimes silent God,
we come into your presence,
thankful to quieten our hearts and to wait for you to speak.
We bring our joys, our challenges, and our questions.
We open our hearts honestly to you,
and we wait in that space beyond questions
to feel you hold us in compassion. Amen.

27th June

We give you thanks, Lord, that your healing ministry transcended cultural and social barriers. We pray for a cleansing of all prejudice, and for those whose illness or situation distances them from others. May they, and all creation, know your healing and accepting love, and may we all reach out where we can, in your name. Amen.

Solution to word search on page 11

N	C	E	L	E	B	R	V	A	R	E	T	A	E
E	O	S	E	L	D	N	C	A	N	C	H		
S	Y	I	P	R	I	Z	E	S	A	S			
N	C	S	T	N	E	S	E	R	E	P			
O	A	E	G	A	Y	T	R	A	V	E			
O	R	B	R	I	B	T	H	A	D	A			
L	D	F	D	E	T	I	C	X	E				
L	S	F	M	A	G	A	V	I	Y	M			
A	R	A	V	E	Y	K	P	S	T	N			
B	S	D	N	E	F	R	I	F	A	I			

The 'grow a potato' activity for Sunday Club didn't get a lot of publicity - is anyone else giving it a go? You can still plant in May and June.





CHRISTIAN AID CORNER

Christian Aid Week 2021: Double Threat of Climate Chaos and Covid.

The twin threats of Covid-19 and the climate crisis will be the focus of this year's Christian Aid Week (10-16 May). The charity is asking supporters to stand in solidarity with those at the very brunt of these global crises, specifically with all those forced to walk long distances to collect water for their families.

Handwashing in our homes, a key line of defence against coronavirus, is not an option for the world's three billion people who do not have access to soap and water at home. But while coronavirus has sharpened this issue of a reliable source of water, the impacts of climate change remain the biggest challenge for the communities Christian Aid works with. Unpredictable water sources, triggered by erratic weather, are pushing families into extreme poverty as crops fail, livestock die, and incomes are destroyed.

Christian Aid Week, the charity's biggest annual fundraiser, unites over 20,000 churches every year to support global neighbours in need. This year, continued restrictions on gatherings have forced supporters to become more creative with their fundraising. But every donation, every envelope, every fundraiser will help some of the world's poorest communities. £5 could buy a shovel to build a dam, £10 could buy a pair of taps at a water point and £42 could buy 350kg of cement to build an earth dam. Everyone is equal in the sight of God. For over 75 years, this has inspired us to stand together in solidarity with our global neighbours, of all faiths and none. There are lots of resources available for you to use at <https://www.christianaid.org.uk>

300,000 steps in May for Christian Aid

Chris and I will be aiming to raise additional funds by taking up this challenge, gaining sponsorship and hopefully hitting our target! If you'd like to sponsor us, please get in touch with me (*Janet*) at

(number removed) or donate via our JustGiving page at

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/JanetandChriswalkingchallenge>

Your 2021 gift to Christian Aid

A reminder that donations to Christian Aid week can be made via the JustGiving page we have set up for Christ Church. The web address is

<https://www.justgiving.com/ChristChurchBarnstaple>

Cash donations are allowed but not encouraged due to the pandemic, but if this is how you wish to donate, please contact either Carolyn or myself and we will do what we can to get an envelope to you. If you wish to put a cheque in your envelope, please make sure it is made payable to **Christian Aid**. You can also call Christian Aid direct on **020 7523 2492** to donate by telephone. Phone donations cannot be counted towards the total from Christ Church though. Janet & Carolyn



What's happening?

Notes from Special Elders Meeting - held on Zoom - 28th April 2021

Rev Don opened the meeting with prayer

- Purpose of this meeting to discuss actions required to enable church to re-open on Sunday 27th June.
- Currently government restrictions are on track to be eased by suggested opening in June – this could change.

Risk assessment for Sunday Worship was discussed.

- Final decisions on temperature and symptoms check, social distancing, face masks, hand sanitiser and track & trace register will be considered in the light of government requirements announced nearer the time of re-opening.
- There are still concerns over vulnerable people and it was stressed that only people vaccinated will be allowed to assist with Church duties.
- Some areas of the Church will be out of use as a safety requirement - these will all be marked accordingly. This will help to stop people moving around and also ensure that various parts of the building will not be shared between adults and children.
- Personal possessions will remain with their owners - eg. coats and umbrellas.
- People having entered will need to remain sitting in their seats; those in mobility scooters will be allocated a special parking area. There will be no handshakes and no unnecessary moving about the building. Some doors and windows will remain open to aid ventilation.
- A decision on the use of hymnbooks and singing will be delayed until nearer the time of re-opening and made in line with government requirements.
- The use of toilets will be restricted. There will be no flowers. Microphones will be checked and used sparingly. The cleaning regime will be strictly followed.

Preparing the Church for Re-Opening

- Tests for Legionella will be carried out.
- The sound system and computer/projector area will be checked over.
- PAT testing will be looked into.
- A risk assessment for our Young People has been set up. Children will go straight to Room 1; hopefully via another door. If children are to enter the main church area they are to be supervised and must remain seated at all times. It was felt necessary to make contact with the parents to ensure everyone is aware of the procedures.
- The length of service was discussed and reduced from a possible 45 minutes to 35 minutes.
- The cleaning of the Church had been kept up over the last year or so and everything appears to be in order.
- To date the Church is focussing on the Sunday service. However, once we have opened, it is clear that there will be interest from other organisations/

groups, both within and without, with regard to using the church. At this stage no decisions can be made and we will simply progress to this all in good time.

- There is a clear need to maintain the Zoom element of the Sunday service and it is hoped William Seymour may be able to assist with this.

Arrangements for the Church Meeting

- Rev. Don agreed to discuss this at a higher level and made the point that there must be a church meeting before re-opening can take place.
- There was further discussion on a possible Zoom meeting, letters and postal voting - but the church meeting, in some shape or form, must take place. More information will become available in due course.
(see page 3)

Roles and Responsibilities

The point was made that we will need to look at who does what in terms of re-opening. This will be discussed in more detail at the next Elders meeting on May 19th. There are also a number of vacant church posts that will need filling - this will also be discussed at the next elders' meeting.

Conclusions - Good progress was made. However, certain actions could not be finalised at this time until more is known about how the government intends to ease lockdown measures. This information, when it becomes available, will need to be considered and all our agreed/outstanding actions will be discussed and updated accordingly.



Summary of a few important dates – *These are provisional dates, dependent on things that we have no control over (covid-19, weather, nesting pigeons etc)*

Start of Community Links Project building work:-

Beginning of June – Church car park closed for at least three months.

Pedestrian access to building left clear.

End of May/Beginning of June – removal of existing scaffolding (hopefully from the shop next door as well!), pigeon's nest permitting.

June 7th – erection of new scaffolding, higher and complete with hoarding, installation of equipment etc in the car park.

June 21st – stonemasons start work.

The time it takes will depend on what is found once there is access to higher up the building, but the expectation is a minimum of three months.

Re-opening the building for Sunday worship.

Church meeting – provisional date Wednesday 9th June

First Service – provisional date Sunday 27th June

Younger Peoples Activities



The twins entered a "Change Begins with a Bicycle" colouring competition and won! A few days later the prizes arrived - small adult size tee shirts! ←



Serena enjoying 'Tree Craft'



Patrick: Football action shot



Joe: celebrated a big birthday—
Congratulations!



Riley, Don & Eddie's
granddaughter watering
Mummy's new flower bed

Young Families Work

Our story so far this year...

Zoom Get-Togethers have been a source of great fun this year and one way of keeping in touch with Sunday Club and Café Church Families. We have 'met' occasionally on a Sunday afternoon to chat and sing, to dance and hear Bible stories. Since our Noah and God's Promise Challenge last year which produced lots of colourful pictures that were in the Messenger, we have also explored the theme of light, talked about the origins of Mothering Sunday, heard the much loved story of Moses in the bulrushes, and of course remembered with many others the events of Holy Week. This was of course followed by the favourite story of 'Breakfast on the Beach'! Remembering one Sunday afternoon some time ago by special request - we had an extremely lively - if somewhat chaotic(!) - party with games and balloons and a scavenger hunt. Scavenger hunts are always a great hit, particularly with the younger ones!

In addition, parcels and cards have been posted to our families - or delivered at the door when the lockdown has allowed - which have provided stories and activities, most recently for Christian Aid and 'Change begins with a Bicycle' (part of the Methodist Relief and Development Fund charity All We Can), weaving them together to think about helping one another, being kind to one another and at the same time taking care of our planet. Importantly, these parcels and cards have been a way of keeping in touch with those families who are unable to zoom for various reasons. The parcels have included many things to do - colouring galore, scavenger hunts and mazes, and creative activities including weaving and making a fluffy pom pom sheep. Most recently crafting bicycle pictures and stand-up trees and ideas for junk box models have been on the agenda! A variety of stickers have also been a very important part of this too!! There have been cards and story books for the toddlers - with the Parents and Toddlers group also having a delivery at Easter - and occasionally some chocolate for everyone! Challenging word searches can also be found in each parcel for the more adult members of the families! When able to deliver personally, it has been great to have the chance to meet people face to face and have a chat on the doorstep. These are very special times.

Other activities delivered have been daffodil bulbs which were planted in pots and will now have been found a place outside or in the garden ready for next year. More recently the families received sunflower seeds - which undoubtedly will set off a competition between the young people as to whose will grow the tallest! We look forward to hearing how they are doing and seeing pictures of them as they grow upwards and upwards (hoping the supports are not forgotten)! Yet to come, as we think further about the importance of planting trees for the environment, each family will receive a very young oak tree that has started life under its parent oak tree in Eff's garden (a Christ Church Barnstaple oak forest?!). Growing potatoes has also been encouraged and Eff has kindly offered strawberry runners to anyone who loves strawberries and would like to have a go at growing them.

It has been a delight to see pictures in the Messenger of the children's activities - both the ones prompted by the deliveries and also other activities they have found to do both indoors and outdoors. Many thanks to the Messenger's editors. And please do send any other photos - or indeed any news you may like to share - to Bruce at seymoub@gmail.com and/or to Kathy at kjeacock@hotmail.com or to Maureen or Anthea at the details below. The photos and news give so much enjoyment and are always such fun.

We are very grateful too, to Don for setting up our Zoom sessions and managing all the technology. Our last zoom session on the 9th May was around the theme of Christian Aid and Climate Change, and 'Change begins with a Bicycle', thinking about the different ways we help and are kind to one another as well as ways we can look after our beautiful world. Then on 13th June we will be celebrating Pentecost. If you and your children and young people would like to join us in future for these zoom get-togethers, or have any other ideas about how and where we can meet as lockdown starts to ease, do please contact

Maureen on (number removed), or Anthea on coates@anthea-tony.eclipse.co.uk phone number (number removed) – or indeed any one of us. We should love to hear from you. And hopefully anyway if everything goes to plan, we will be meeting again soon face to face. So watch this space for future plans and details!

With love and blessings from Sunday Club, Café Church and Parents and Toddlers

Some of our prayers this month...

Dear God

We want to say thank you for Christian Aid and for All We Can
and for all the charities and organisations and people who give
their time, skills and money to help the poorest people of the world.
We pray for all those who struggle to have enough food and water.
Please help us to remember them always and do our best to help them.

John Wesley calls us to...

'Do all the good you can,
by all the means you can,
in all the ways you can,
in all the places you can,
at all the times you can,
to all the people you can,
as long as ever you can.'

Loving God,
Thank you for all the good things you have given us.
Thank you for all the love that is in the world,
And for the kindness that people show to one another.
Please help us too, to be always grateful and loving and kind,
To do all the good we can for our families and friends,
For our neighbours near and far,
And together, do all we can to take care of your wonderful world.

Amen

The defibrillator

From May 12th 2021 the public access defibrillator in the cabinet at the entrance to the church has been registered on a new national database. The database is called The Circuit (the national defibrillator network). The Circuit was established in 2019 and is funded by the British Heart Foundation. Eventually it will link access information for defibrillators to every ambulance service in the United Kingdom. To date, the Midlands, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales are detailed on The Circuit. The South West was added on May 12 th.



Please contact me if you have any queries about this.

There is no change to making an emergency call – please continue to dial 999 or 112.

Maureen Thomas, Primary Guardian for the defibrillator at Christ Church

We hope it will soon be time to celebrate meeting together face to face instead of electronically. Can you find 16 words in the square below, with a connection to getting together to celebrate and have some fun.

I	A	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	B
T	N	S	P	K	Y	E	A	R	A
M	Y	V	A	G	A	M	E	S	L
E	X	C	I	T	E	D	F	D	L
Y	A	D	H	T	R	I	B	R	O
P	A	R	T	Y	A	G	E	A	O
P	R	E	S	E	N	T	S	C	N
A	S	E	Z	I	R	P	I	Y	S
H	C	A	N	D	L	E	S	O	E
E	T	A	R	B	E	L	E	C	N

Greetings from Kira Farm and Amigos

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."

Lamentations 3:22-23

We have yet again received a wonderfully positive letter of thanks from Scovia – someone always anxious to learn, so proud of what she is achieving and realising that the future now is holding great possibilities for her. I am particularly struck how fast she is moving forward in her learning from arriving at Kira Farm, one example being 'I am really happy that from not knowing anything I am now producing garments and beautiful things'.

So now for this month's letter ...

Dear Anthea and Tony and friends at Christ Church,

How are you doing my dear friends? Hope all is well with you.

I am happy to let you know that I am getting better with my vocational training every day that passes by. I am faster at working on my sewing machine. Can you believe I have been able to finish my first-class project of making a pair of shorts? I am really happy that from not knowing anything I am now producing garments and beautiful things.

Still, on the side of learning, I am happy to inform you that I am getting computer skills. Before coming to Kira, I used to see people working in big organisations in my village using computers. I always thought that for one to know about computers, they have to first work for big organisation. I was amazed when I was also given an opportunity to learn computers from Kira Farm. So many youths in my village miss out on employment because they cannot do anything on a computer.

Learning this skill has given me the security of never having a limited life. The world is mine to conquer.

Thanks a lot for enabling me to achieve this. I am more confident about myself and I am looking forward to learning so many other things.

Greetings to everyone there – May God bless you

Yours, Scovia

More news from Amigos:

The following is taken from Amigos' monthly newsletter. It is about a project which involves planting trees, something which is dear to our hearts here and worldwide – and absolutely essential to help combat Climate Change. Amigos describes it as a further part of their green fingered journey...

Trees for the Future.

'This month we celebrated Earth Day, the theme being 'Restore Our Earth'. With unsustainable land use being one of the leading causes of climate change globally, we have partnered with 'Trees For The Future' to integrate a forestry gardening model in the local community - planting more trees, capturing carbon and restoring biodiversity.

After receiving funding and training, we have formed 9 groups in the community of Kaliro where establishing tree nurseries has begun.'

So what does Trees for the Future do?

Its mission is to end hunger and poverty by training farmers to regenerate land, thus

Amigos News



Training and planning for
Trees for the Future



Putting theory into practice



God's Feathered Friends

A pigeon takes advantage of the church scaffolding
& Chris Punt spotted this heron in his garden



Taking computer lessons has given
Scovia more confidence



helping both people and the planet: 'We aren't just planting trees. We're changing lives'.

We are grateful to Amigos for reminding us how interconnected we all are – how we need to focus on the same ways to combat the Climate crisis and, how we need to work together...

The more I hear about the work of Amigos, the more I find out how much they have to teach us. It is not just a one way process with us giving money and support to help teach skills in order to empower people to make sustainable and lasting change for them and their communities. It is a reciprocal process. We can learn from people there from the way they live - if we are willing to listen and understand. They too can teach us skills and attitudes and practices particularly those which encourage sustainability: caring for the land - Farming God's Way; using available resources to make energy saving stoves and tippy taps, building toilet blocks with recycled bottles and materials. They remind us about what is important – how precious our earth is. We can be humbled by their attitudes and by seeing the importance of encouraging one another. Their work is about changing lives – not only for themselves and their communities but also for the wider world if only we stop to see it.

Dear God, thank you for all that is being achieved at Kira Farm, in Uganda and in the wider world through the work of Amigos. We pray for all those involved – for all those who give their time, skills and money - for administrators and fundraisers ; for the trainees; and for those who have graduated, as they learn and use their knowledge and skills to benefit themselves and their communities. We ask that you will bless them all especially thinking at this time of Scovia as she strives to learn ever more to achieve her dream. Amen

Anthea

Eco church

Plastic – not always fantastic

Plastic is an amazing material that plays a positive role in many aspects of our modern life. However, the characteristics and chemical properties that make it such a useful material (like its strength and durability) make it a toxic, hazardous substance that lasts for hundreds of years when it gets into the natural environment.

Plastic Free North Devon (PFND) is a local environmental charity started by volunteers who want to reduce the impact of plastic pollution on the environment in North Devon and beyond. Their mission is to protect and improve our environment through community-led action to combat plastic pollution. They aim to achieve this by helping people to recognise the relevance and value of the environment to their lives; to see and experience first-hand the impact of plastic pollution on nature; and to support good choices in purchasing, use and disposal of plastics. By working with local communities, businesses, organisations and government they aim to:

- Raise awareness of our environment and how it is affected by plastic.
- Reduce the consumption of single-use plastics in North Devon.
- Clear waste plastic from our coasts, waterways, countryside and urban areas.
- Recycle and dispose of used plastics in an appropriate way.

*40% of the plastic produced is for single use packaging. It is estimated that an average of 35.8 million plastic bottles are used every day in the UK, but only 19.8 million are recycled each day. This means there are about **16 million plastic bottles a day not making their way into the recycling bin.** Of the 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic produced since the 1950s: 9% has been recycled, 12% has been burnt and 79% is in the environment as landfill or litter.*

Plastic in the sea

A healthy ocean is essential to a healthy planet that can support all life, and that includes us. Allowing millions of tonnes of toxic plastic waste to enter the ocean environment threatens the ecosystems that provide 50% of the oxygen we breathe and the primary source of food for 3.5 billion people. We simply can't keep producing this amount of plastic or allow any more of it to enter our environment.

8 - 12 million tonnes of plastic enters the ocean annually, 80% of this washes and blows in from the land.

1+ million seabirds, 100,000+ sea mammals and turtles are killed annually by marine plastic pollution.

What we can do

As individuals

- you can now recycle 'soft plastics' such as cling film, bubble wrap, crisp packets, pet food pouches etc. at Tesco Taw View.
- for a list of how and where to recycle all sorts of items, go to <https://www.recyclenow.com/what-to-do-with>
- for more ideas of how to reduce plastic usage: <https://www.plasticfreenorthdevon.org/what-you-can-do-individual>

As a Church – with the agreement of the Elders I have signed us up as a PFND Community Group. We have already made some changes to reduce our use of plastic and increase what we recycle. As we begin to restart activities in the church building, we need to think of what else we can do - if you have any ideas, please let me know.

PFND have linked up with Surfers Against Sewage in their *Million Mile Clean* campaign. As soon as we can meet up safely I'll be organizing a Christ Church Clean – it may be a beach or a park, and we can have a picnic too. Let me know if you have any suggestions!

Liz Seymour

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

All that is known with certainty about John the Baptist comes from the Gospels. He was the son of Zachariah, a temple priest and his wife, Elizabeth, who was a cousin of the Virgin Mary. He was born to Elizabeth later in life, his birth being foretold by an angel, who also gave him the name of John.

No more was heard of him for many years until he began preaching and baptizing in the river Jordan. His lifestyle resembled that of Old Testament prophets, he sustained himself by foraging and wore simple garments. His message was one of repentance and preparation for the coming of the Messiah. He is considered the forerunner of Jesus. Among his disciples were Peter and Andrew who later became apostles. He baptized Jesus and recognised him as the Messiah when he saw the Holy Spirit descend upon him. Jesus was baptized by John in order that he might identify with and encourage the followers of John, who preached that the people should turn away from sin and turn towards God. John was considered a prophet and said 'another will come after me that will baptize not with water but with the Holy Spirit'. Jesus praised him, saying that none borne of women was greater than he.

Prophecy in Isaiah states 'Behold, I send my messenger who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his way straight'.

John also preached a strong moral code and denounced the marriage of Herod Antipas with his brother's wife Herodias, and was imprisoned for doing so. When Salome, Herodias' daughter danced before Herod he was so enamoured with her performance that he promised her anything she desired, even half his Kingdom. At her mother's instigation she demanded the head of John the Baptist on a plate. Without delay Herod ordered that John be beheaded and the head presented on a plate to Salome, who passed it to her mother. This act has inspired many works of art and music.

The celebrations for St John the Baptist usually start on the eve of 23rd June. John's Feast day was fixed by the early Christian church as 24th June, six months before the birth of Jesus. The symbolism of the dates is not lost on Christians, Christ, the Light of the World was born when the days were lengthening and John, the forerunner of Jesus was born when the light was diminishing.

The celebrations for St John's Feast Day usually started at eventide on 23rd June, bonfires were lit and family and friends met together for a feast. Women gathered herbs, such things as fennel, rue, rosemary, lemon verbena, mallows, laburnum, foxgloves and elder flowers. It was also traditional to collect the perennial herb 'St John's Wort'. All these plants are at their best at this time of year and ideal for drying for medicinal use later. Many of these herbs are still used medicinally today.

In England St John's day is one of the quarter days, when tenants would pay



their dues to the Landlords. The town of Midsummer Norton in Somerset is said to be named after the Feast day of St John the Baptist. The village church is also named after him.

John lived very simply and with high endeavour, nothing shook his belief that Jesus was the chosen one whose example we should follow. It is interesting that this simple, austere man is celebrated with such jollity and fun. Perhaps on 24th June we can think of John, the simple man, and enjoy simple pleasures with our family and friends.

MIDSUMMER BERRY CAKE *(See back cover for picture.)*

There are recipes for all manner of fancy Midsummer cakes, but I think this very simple and quick recipe is as good as any.

In Sweden, after the long dark winter, Midsummer or St John's Eve (23rd June) is quite a celebration.

This is one of the turning points of the year and is very near the Summer Solstice. In Nordic countries and indeed in Britain until a few years ago, St John's Eve was considered a good reason for a party.

Ingredients

4 ounces (100gms) plain white flour (sieved onto kitchen paper)

4 ounces (100gms) caster sugar

4 free-range eggs (at room temperature)

Few drops of vanilla essence.

½ pint double or whipping cream

Mixture of any seasonal berries

- 1 Butter and flour two deep 7inch sandwich tins.
- 2 Set oven to 170 fan or 5 Gas. The eggs and sugar need to be whisked together. This is best done in a table-top mixer with a fixed head; otherwise a hand-held mixer will work but may take a bit longer to form a thick trail.
- 3 Sieve half of flour into egg mixture, carefully fold into egg mixture, then repeat with the other half.
- 4 Divide between the two tins and bake for approximately 12 minutes. It will be cooked when springy to the touch. Turn onto cooling wire.
- 5 Whip the cream, scoop some into a separate bowl and add some chopped berries and a little sugar if desired. Spread this on one cake and top with the other.
- 6 Spread the remaining cream on the sides and top of the cake and decorate as desired with the berries.

Enjoy with your friends and family whilst sharing a glass of non-alcoholic elderflower champagne.

Music to Listen to: Midsummer Nights Dream by Felix Mendlessohn
Samson and Delilah by Camille Saint-Saens

Weekly Meetings

Monday	7.30pm	Friendship group	(2nd & 4th Mondays of each month) contact Rose de la Cour tel 830824
Tuesday	9.30am - 12.00 noon	Coffee morning	
	9.30am	Prayer meeting ...	except the last Tuesday of each month)
	10.30am	Holy Communion ...	(last Tuesday of each month)
	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Rainbows ...	
	5.30pm - 7.00pm	Brownies...	
	7.00pm - 8.30pm	Guides	contact Nicola Wilkins tel 07813620615 or 01271377154
Wednesday	1.30pm - 3.00pm	Parents & Toddlers	
Thursday	2.30pm	Ladies Fellowship ...	
	7.30pm	Bible Study...	contact Shirley Baxter tel 375560
Friday	10.00am - 12.00 noon	Hobnob coffee morning	
	10.30am	Bible Study...	contact Shirley Baxter tel 375560
Saturday		2nd Saturday of each month - circuit event	
	8.30am	Men's Breakfast	contact Chris Punt tel 343716 or Staveley Dawson tel 373213

All at Christ Church Barnstaple are committed to the following Safeguarding Principles:

- * the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and all adults.
- * the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable.
- * the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.
(Methodist Safeguarding Guidelines, online: www.methodist.org.uk)

Sunday Offertory for 2021

		Cash	Envelopes
April	4th	£0.00	£0.00
	11th	£0.00	£0.00
	18th	£0.00	£0.00
	25th	£0.00	£0.00

An increasing number of people are donating money direct to the Church account by standing order. Currently this offertory is £1965.00 per month. While we are not meeting together for Sunday worship in Bear Street, some of you are also sending in donations by cheque. Over the twelve months to the end of February 2021 this has amounted to about £11000. Many thanks to all of you. If you have given me an envelope number your gift will be included in the offertory in the accounts, otherwise it has been recorded as a donation. *If you are a tax payer* and would like the church to claim back the tax on your giving or if you change your address or other details, please contact Janet Marshall or speak to a serving elder - Thank you.



*If you are visiting Christ Church today we extend a warm welcome.
Please take a Messenger home with our good wishes.*

Christ Church Minister
Rev Don Macalister

tel. 01271 345313
dasmacalister@icloud.com

Young families worker

Elders

Shirley Baxter	Kathy Jeacock (treas)	Jenny Newman
Alison Cairns	Chris Marshall	Eff Poole
Anthea Coates	Janet Marshall	Liz Seymour
Staveley Dawson	Jack Neville (sec)	Elaine Stevens

Telephone Directory (01271)

Church Secretary	
Church Treasurer	373555
Room Bookings	374085
Circuit Administrators	379116

Editors:

Bruce & Will Seymour

Kathy Jeacock

Website

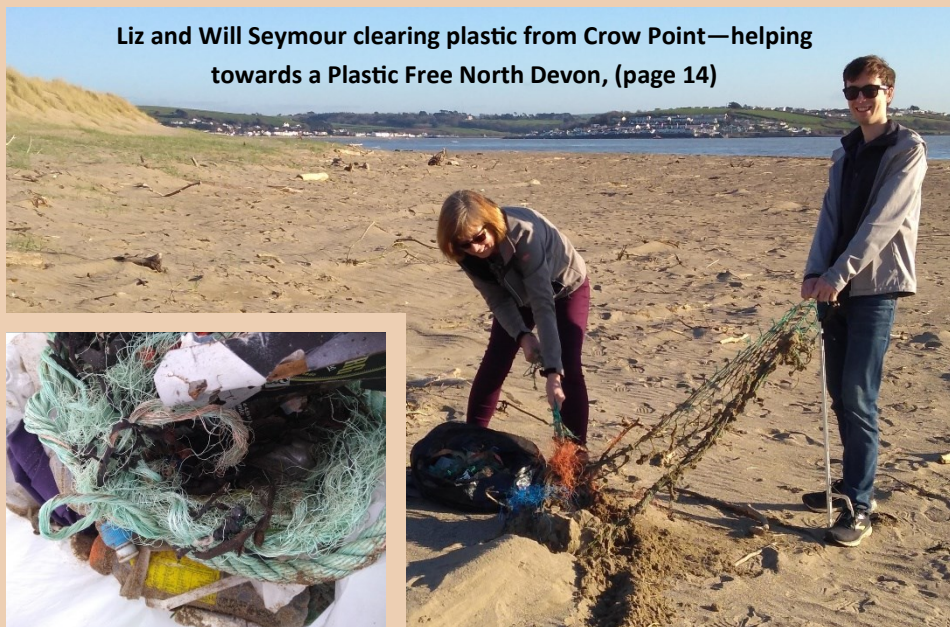
373555

seymoub@gmail.com

kjeacock@hotmail.com

www.christ-church-barnstaple.org.uk

**Liz and Will Seymour clearing plastic from Crow Point—helping
towards a Plastic Free North Devon, (page 14)**



"The beach really didn't look too bad, but we collected a huge bag of plastic rubbish."



The Icing on the Cake

Who couldn't resist a piece of
Jennifer Allen's
Midsummer Berry Cake?

Find the recipe on page17



Apple blossom
in Anthea & Tony's garden