

# The Messenger

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.”

*Psalms 46:1*

**Christ Church Barnstaple**  
Methodist & United Reformed Church



**December 22 - January 23**



**Covid  
Memorial  
Service**

**Remembering those we have lost**



**Remembrance  
Sunday Service**

## December Diary

Sun	4th	10.30am 3pm	Morning Worship and Holy Communion: Revd Don Causeway Service
Fri	9th	7pm	Barnstaple Jubilee Singers Christmas Concert
Sun	11th	10.30am 4.30pm	Morning Worship: Alison Cairns Café Church
Mon	12th	10am 2.30pm	Sound it Out Friendship Group
Sun	18th	10.30am 6.30pm	Morning Worship: Revd Don Carol Service
Sat	24th	4.30pm	Christingle Service
Sun	25th	10.30am	Christmas Day Service: Revd Don
<b>January 2023 Diary</b>			
Sun	1st	10.30	Morning Worship: Revd Don
Sun	8th	10.30 4.30pm	Morning Worship Café Church
Mon	9th	10am 2.30pm	Sound it Out Friendship Group
Sun	15th	10.30am	Morning Worship, Holy Communion and Covenant Service: Revd Don
Wed	18th	10am	<b>**Deadline for February Messenger **</b>
Sun	22nd	10.30am 1pm	Morning Worship: Revd Don Church Meeting ( <b>* Note: changed from 15th Jan</b> )
Mon	23rd	10am 2.30pm	Sound it Out Friendship Group
Sun	29th	10.30am	Morning Worship

### Regular meetings :

Tuesdays - Rainbows 5.30pm (Term-time only)  
 Wednesdays - Parents & Toddlers 1.30pm (Term-time only)  
 Thursdays - Circuit Zoom Service 7pm  
 Fridays - Hobnob 10am (except Bank Holidays)

## Message from Revd Don

Dear friends,

It's strange that it has only just occurred to me after all these years just how appropriate it is that we have an edition of The Messenger that covers both December and January.

At the time of writing I am very much focused on the New Church Year which begins on the first Sunday of Advent (the 27th November this year) and is followed so soon by Christmas Day (the 25th December, in case anyone had forgotten!) and the season of Christmas which follows.

Maybe it's my being a grumpy old thing or maybe it's because it's not really an event which is part of the Church Year but for many years the celebrations of New Year (1st January...) have taken a secondary place but perhaps sometimes there are good reasons why they shouldn't.

Throughout Advent we prepare to remember the world changing event of the birth of Jesus. At Christmas we celebrate and give thanks for that, Jesus was born to live a life showing us that the power of God's love revealed through him lit the flame of bringing light to a world which can sometimes feel very dark. That has been especially true in the last couple of years.

This year, or rather next year, as we move on in our journey through Christmas into the new year of 2023 I am going to make a conscious effort to pray for the light of Christmas, the life of Christ, to burn brightly that the coming year will be a year of healing, of renewal, of new life, sure hope and many blessings not only for us and all God's children but for the world itself.

With love and prayers to you all  
for increasing peace and joy this Christmas  
and throughout 2023 and beyond.



### **Prayers for December**

#### **December 4th**

God of hope, where things seem to be one big tangle of pain and unhappiness, intervene with your saving love; where despair takes centre stage and depression and anxiety sharpen their claws, fill those situations with unexpected peace and joy.

God of hope, God-with-us, God of all time and of every place:  
may your love flow through the world, bringing healing light. Amen.

#### **December 11th**

Lord, you are the source of all hope and healing.  
As winter approaches fast, may you warm our cold hearts and strengthen our weak spirits. Lead us away from the dark places where our doubts take us, and take us instead along your holy, hope-filled way. Amen.

## **December 18th**

Lord, you alone know our hearts, our histories and our hopes.  
You alone know our futures and our fears.

Lead us on, so that whatever part we may play, our story may be shaped by your story, through Jesus, son of Mary, and given a name through Joseph.  
Amen.

## **December 25th**

Lord Jesus, we praise you that your birth transcends all time and unites heaven and earth, past and present.

May we in response to your care for us reach out beyond our comforts and privileges and embrace the needs of all people, that this Christmas may be a time of prayer and action for the world's poor and vulnerable, in whom your love was fully revealed at Bethlehem. Amen.

## **Prayers for January**

### **January 1st**

Faithful God, we thank you for your presence with us. In trouble and in joy, you are always there.

Help us to see where you were with us last year, and open our eyes to new opportunities in this new year. Faithful God, we thank you. Amen.

### **January 8th**

Father of all, who created the heavens and the earth, thank you that we are your beloved.

Your Holy Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove. May your Spirit meet us where we are today. May your Spirit breathe new life into us today. May you hold us with your righteous right hand.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

### **January 15th**

God of all time and all places, we pray for your Church throughout the world.

For congregations facing persecution and violence:

For congregations struggling financially and numerically:

For congregations that are divided and disillusioned:

For congregations witnessing in areas of poverty and conflict:

For ourselves and our fellow saints in this area and this nation:

may all know your grace and peace. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

### **January 22nd**

Father God, Thank you that you sent Jesus who came to give us freedom. You have called us to put down our 'nets' and follow you.

You have offered us new life in you – a new path to follow, as a new light has dawned. Thank you that you walk beside us on the journey, the journey from darkness into your marvellous light. Thank you that you offer us life full of adventure, life in all its fullness. Amen.

### **January 29th**

Let us be encouraged in our walk with God.

When we are faced with challenges, when the way before us is dark, when we are not sure what to do, let us be assured that God is ready to bless us, and to bring us through it all.

As we come to God in praise and prayer. Amen.

## **Covid Memorial Service – 30<sup>th</sup> October**

At long last, we were able to hold a memorial service to remember together everyone and everything we had lost as a Church family.

Rev. Don led a beautiful and very thoughtful service where we recognised, remembered and gave thanks for: the NHS, care homes, paramedics, researchers and laboratory staff; staff and pupils in schools, colleges and universities; and our local community.

Don read a list of all those we had lost from our Church family during the time when funerals were restricted, and we were unable to say goodbye and give thanks in the way we usually would. It was very moving to light candles to recognise the loss we all felt in so many different ways.

It was wonderful to share in some beautiful hymns and prayers too.

We would like to express our thanks to Don for all he did to support us all as a Church family during those difficult months, his ministry and care were such a blessing to us all.

(photo – front cover)

*Bruce and Liz*

### **Christmas Concert at Christ Church**

**Friday December 9<sup>th</sup> 7.00pm**

**Barnstaple Jubilee Singers are joined by guests  
Torrridge U3A Ukulele All Stars**

**Entry is free but donations are invited for  
North Devon Hospice and Christ Church**

There will be Refreshments and a Raffle  
*Do come, and encourage others too!*



### **Morning Service Tea Rota**

If anyone is able to volunteer to serve tea and coffee after the Sunday morning service, please contact Pauline. The new rota will start in January 2023. Many thanks.

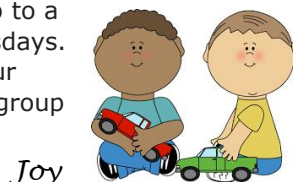
## **Notes from the Elders meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

- It was confirmed that those elders up for re-election had all agreed to stand and had been voted in by the Annual Church Meeting. Elaine Stevens had also been voted in and will begin in January 2023.
- Following the Annual Church Meeting Paula & Rod Littlewood have offered to become church friends. More volunteers would be lovely as some church friends are no longer able to fulfil this role.
- The collection plate will remain in the foyer rather than being passed round the congregation but will now be brought into Church and placed on the communion table at the beginning of the service by the elder on duty.
- Room 4 will no longer be designated as the Covid isolation room and will be free for use by Sunday club.
- The signing in (and out) book in the foyer should be used by all coming into and leaving the building (apart from the congregation on Sundays).
- The windows at the front of the foyer have been cleaned inside and out and the car park has also been cleaned. The property committee are looking into removing the 2 trees in the car park which are in danger of damaging the foundations and replacing these with concrete planters.
- The foundation stone in the car park is to be moved to Noah's Park area.
- A class from Yeo Valley school will be visiting church at the end of November as part of their learning about different religions.

**Date of next meeting – 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

### **Parents and Toddlers**

We have changed our Parent and Toddlers Group to a morning meeting from 9.30 to 11 am on Wednesdays. This is in hope we can attract more families to our friendly group and that families want a morning group as the weather becomes colder.



### **Sticklepath Services**

Christingles at Sticklepath Methodist Church - 9th December at 6pm

Carol Service at Sticklepath Methodist Church - 18th December at 6.30pm

We asked if anyone could write a poem for The Messenger.  
Janet Marshall found this when she was sorting through some old papers.

She wrote it for a Sunday School Anniversary in the mid 1970s!!

**Except ye become as little children**

Sticky fingers, dribbling mouth, nappies, bibs, bootees,  
Games and teddies, building bricks, you'll recognise all these.

Splashing in water, enthralled by new life, by flowers, by insects, the sea,  
Building a snowman, watching it melt, gath'ring mushrooms or strawberries  
for tea.

A baby or young child you'll say, it's very clear to see.  
I've seen it many, many times. But is this how I should be?

How can I be a little child like Jesus told the twelve?  
I'm none too young, that's not my way. I'm mature, grown-up myself.

Dependent, trusting, loving and loved, does this make better sense?  
Willing and eager to learn and be taught, inquisitive and wondering, so hence –

Do you feel you can become a child, dependent on Father God,  
Filled with awe at His world and His love so immense, ent'ring into His Kingdom  
above?

O! Help me to understand your word, to respond, to be meek and mild,  
Above all not to be a childish adult but a properly grown-up child.

(Janet Y Bland - circa 1976)



# Young Families



**Sunday Club:** Remembrance Sunday Service and watching the 2 minute silence at The Cenotaph



Parents & Toddlers



**Café Church:** Decorating muffin pizzas

## Hobnob

*Every Friday at 10am*

Helping out on the Greeting Cards stall



Grandchildren helping out at Hobnob





## Young Families Work news

'It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas, Everywhere you go...'

...so sings out the television advertisement whenever we turn it on (well, to the appropriate channel!). Yes, it's true when we go out into the town and to the shops and the streets. It is indeed all around! But for me today (20<sup>th</sup> Nov!) it was the very first time that I heard it mentioned in Sunday Club! Amazing! One of the children brought in a Christmas card which she was designing as part of a Primary School competition. Hopefully, this means that whatever theme we explore each week with the children, we manage to capture their interest! However, next Sunday (the 27<sup>th</sup>) we will be starting our Advent journey preparing for the coming of Christ on Christmas Day and sharing our favourite Christmas stories.

This past month has given us some good stories, games and activities: Zaccheus (including a very canny unfair game(!) with the sharing of pennies!); Jesus Welcoming the Children, reinforcing how special each one of us is; asking Big Questions; and of course being part of the Remembrance Sunday service. Once again the children observed the two minutes silence at The Cenotaph with the help of a laptop - beautifully silent, and then were truly amazed when shown a replay of the poppy petals falling at the Remembrance Service in the Albert Hall (photos opposite).

It has been a real delight to welcome one of our young people back on a regular basis, along with a friend who has immediately made himself at home with us. Welcome too to two new volunteers who have come to join our team. We are now looking forward to our Christingle service on Christmas Eve, 24<sup>th</sup> December at 4.30pm, followed of course by coffee and mince pies, not to mention chocolate biscuits!

**November Café Church** seemed to be in some way a special time - almost as if the children sensed immediately that kindness was our theme. The children quietly settled into the activities, enjoying making friendship bracelets, planting bulbs in pots as gifts, rainbow colouring their Cup of Kindness, decorating their two muffin pizzas ready to be cooked - one for themselves and one to be given away (no guesses as to which was the most popular!). The word searches are also always popular with both the children and the adults, whatever the age - fun to do competitively or to work on together. The worship time was led into with a 'kind hands' game. Each table was given a cut-out hand with a label on of a different kind action, and when given the word went and searched round the church ledges to find the matching hand. These were then brought forward and put on a tray ready to begin the worship. The children sat round the tray and heard that, unbelievably, it was World Kindness Day (no, we really didn't know that when we chose the theme!). And also to meet Harry (Marilyn's puppet friend) and have a conversation with him about kindness. Don appropriately read verses from Matthew 25, and once again we were introduced to a new and catchy video song - one about kindness of course - and very well received. As ever, a delicious tea led into letting off pent-up energy in the wonderful space - with no-one ever wanting to go home! And more good news, we welcomed back one of our original Café Church families - and yet another

new volunteer. Fantastic! Do please feel welcome to come to our next Café Church with a Christmas theme on Sunday December 11<sup>th</sup>, and as one young newcomer said to her mother when she returned home after her first visit 'You must come next time, you'll LOVE it'!

**Parents and Toddlers,** After consultation with our regular families the decision has been made to change the time of the group. It will now take place between 9.30 and 11.00am – still on Wednesdays - to coincide with the time when parents will have dropped their older children off at school. This is the time too when we had hoped to re-start the Drop-in sessions which were always so popular, so we will see how things go. We are very much hoping that this way we will be attracting more families. The new timetable will have started on the 23rd November, and will carry on until Christmas. The new times have been put on Facebook, and Joy has been around with new posters and contacted the schools. As usual, more information from Joy Morley 01271 376171.

**Yeo Valley School** is on its way! At the end of this month Year 4 is coming to find out what happens in church, who uses it and why. It is in response to their RE curriculum which is asking them to look at a key question to guide them through a range of religions across the year, with visits also to a Mosque and Synagogue. The key question is 'What is worship and does it need to happen in a special place?' They have asked that we tell them a bit more about Christianity, where Christianity originated, so they understand the changes across time. Quite a challenge, but we are greatly looking forward to their visit. ALSO, Years 5 and 6 will be performing their Christmas Concert at Christ Church to Years 3 and 4. It is so lovely to have them back.

As always, many thanks to you all for your love, prayers and support in the different ways that you give it. Without you so much of what we do would not be possible. We will look forward to updating you in the New Year. Meanwhile, we hope you have a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

With special Christmas love and blessings from

*the Young Families Work Team*

### **Christ the King - Local Arrangement Service**

I would like to thank those members of our congregation who took part in leading the morning service on Sunday the 20<sup>th</sup> of November. As it was the Sunday before Advent the service reflected on Christ the King, with readings and reflections from all those who took part. The hymns, the prayers, and the children's address were all excellent.

I, and I am sure, many others were encouraged to worship. So thank you to Staveley, Pauline, Celia, Rosemary & Janet. My thanks also go to Alison for supporting the group.

I hope & pray that there will be more services of this calibre in the future.

Love & blessings,

(photo - back cover)

*Shirley*

Here are some Christmas Greetings - in lieu of Christmas cards.  
In return for these, donations have been made to Action for Children



To all my friends at Christ Church.  
May the peace, blessings and presence  
of Jesus be with you this Christmas  
and always. With love from *Eff*

May the blessings of  
Christmas be  
with you all.

*Staveley and Pauline*



Glory to God in the highest  
heaven, and peace on earth . .

Luke 2.14 from the Good News Bible

Our prayer to you all from

*Maureen*

*and Chris*

*(Thomas)*



Merry Christmas &  
Happy New Year to all  
our friends at Christ  
Church. Love from

*Jack, Beth  
and Ellie*



Wishing all my friends at  
Christ Church a Happy  
Christmas and a peaceful  
2023.

With love  
from

*Rosemary*



*Hilary and Jonathan Richards*  
hope your Christmas and New Year will be  
a time of Blessing and Peace. That you will  
experience for yourself 'Immanuel, God  
with us' (Isaiah 7 vs 14) and the perfect  
peace that only knowing Jesus as Lord and  
Saviour can bring  
(John 14 vs27). With our love and prayers  
for you and all whom you love and hold dear.



Sending you all Christmas blessings and  
wishing you a happy and peaceful New Year.



Love from *Liz and Bruce* (the Messenger editors)

To all my friends,  
sending Christmas  
greetings and love.

From

*Joy*

(Morley)



Wishing everyone at  
Christ Church Peace and  
Joy this Christmas and in  
the New Year.

Love from

*Elaine*

(Stevens)



Wishing you all a very happy and  
blessed Christmas with peace and joy  
in the New Year.

With love and blessings from

*Anthea and Tony Coates*

## **THE FEAST OF EPIPHANY AND 12TH NIGHT**

The Feast of Epiphany is celebrated, for the most part 12 days after Christmas Day, and commemorates the visit of the Magi to the Christ child and thus Jesus' manifestation to the Gentiles. The visit of the Magi represents a potential awakening to all the non-Jewish people of the world.

In Western tradition, the eve of Epiphany is celebrated as 12<sup>th</sup> Night. It marks the end of Christmas celebrations and is considered unlucky if decorations are not removed on Epiphany Eve. In some cultures decorations are not removed until Candlemass, which is the conclusion of Epiphanytide.

Epiphany may have originated in the Greek speaking Roman Empire as a feast to honour the baptism of Jesus, this event took place approximately thirty years after his birth. Epiphany means 'revelation' and usually comes from within, rather than an external event causing it. It was about this time that Jesus started to teach people about God.

The tradition of celebrating 12<sup>th</sup> Night dates back to medieval times. In the Northern hemisphere the Christmas season takes place at the darkest time of year. From Christmas day onwards days of feasting and general jollity took place, culminating in a party on 12<sup>th</sup> Night. Although there are many ways of enjoying 12<sup>th</sup> Night in different cultures, there were similarities. There is always cake. The cake always contains a bean and sometimes a pea as well. At the start of the celebration the cake is cut and each guest receives a piece. Whoever receives the slice containing the bean is crowned King for the evening and the Lord of Misrule, other guests must obey his command. If the cake also contains a pea, the lucky lady receiving the piece with the pea is Queen for the night and the Lady of Misrule.

Each culture has a different cake, some are yeasted with fruit, others a traditional fruit cake. Spain has a yeasted ring and France has a puff pastry and marzipan version, all have a crown on top, beautifully hand made of course.

The custom of a 12<sup>th</sup> night party seems to have died out, perhaps in our culture of plenty we have had enough rich food by then, but it is quite a fun party to have, perhaps as a supper party for a few friends.

However you choose, or are able to celebrate the Christmas season, I do wish you all the best time possible and may the New Year bring peace and good health to you all.

Music to Listen to: Bach Cantata for Epiphany BWV, text from Isaiah 60:6, (They will all come from Sheba)

## TWELFTH NIGHT CAKE

### Ingredients

2 packets butter puff pastry or 1lb of homemade puff pastry  
4 ounces (100g) butter  
4 ounces (100g) caster sugar  
4 ounces (100g) ground almonds  
1 egg, plus 1 egg yolk  
1 tablespoon rum (optional)

### Method

Cut 2 circles from the pastry approximately 9" (23cms)  
Beat the softened butter with the caster sugar until light and fluffy.  
Add the ground almonds and rum and mix well.  
Brush the edge of the circle with beaten egg.  
Place one circle on a baking tray and add the frangipane mixture. Spread to within about ½ inch doming it slightly, adding a dried bean if desired.  
Place the remaining circle on top and pinch in the edges.  
Make a hole in the centre to let out the steam. Then partially cut through the pastry twelve times starting at the centre.  
If time allows, rest in the fridge for a while.  
Then brush with beaten egg and place in a pre-heated oven about 220. Turn the heat down once pastry has browned and cook for a few minutes longer to make sure the filling is cooked.  
Serve at room temperature with a paper crown on the top.

Music to listen to: Glen Miller's Greatest hits.

*Jennifer*



## Discovering "Faith" in Wetheral Church, Cumbria

Rod and I had a very enjoyable holiday in Scotland in early October and, on our way back, we called in on an old school friend of mine who lives at Warwick Bridge just outside Carlisle. She is married to Graeme, the vicar of nearby Wetheral and Holme Eden Churches.

We were lucky enough to have two beautiful walks along the River Eden on crisp sunny days and, on one walk, Graeme took us to see the Howard Chapel in Wetheral Church where we were blown away by a sculpture by Joseph Nollekens RA and which is entitled "Faith" as it reflects the hope and certainty that death is not the end of life. The story behind it is tragic. Henry Howard and Maria, daughter of Lord Archer of Umberslade, married in November 1788. Tragically Maria died just 12 months later in childbirth, together with her baby daughter. She was 22 years old.

Henry was heartbroken and commissioned one of the greatest sculptors of the day, Joseph Nollekens, R.A. to create a memorial monument. The statue shows a draped female figure, 'Faith', pointing upwards with one hand, whilst with the other she supports the head of the dying mother, who holds her baby on her lap. The inscription reads: 'This tribute of sorrow is paid to the memory of her who approached near to perfection by the afflicted husband and sisters'.

Henry paid £1,500 for the work, a vast sum in those days, and it is considered to be Nollekens' greatest work. Certainly, he was very proud of it, and it's said he burst into tears when he discovered where it would be housed as he felt so few people would see it.

One visitor to Wetheral Church, no less than William Wordsworth, was so moved by the statue that he felt it worthy of a sonnet which begins:  
"Stretched on the dying Mother's lap, lies dead  
Her born Babe, dire issue of bright hope!"

If you are ever up that way, do make a detour to see the sculpture. Trust me, it will be one of the most beautiful and moving works of art that you will have ever seen. It can be viewed through the screen between the chapel and the chancel but, to see it more closely, either join Sunday service at 11.15am service or make an appointment with Rev Graeme Skinner to see it. Just look up [www.edenchurches.co.uk](http://www.edenchurches.co.uk) and you will find all the information you need.

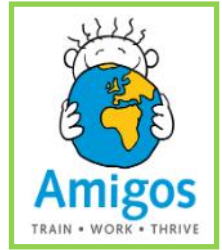
(photo - back cover)

*Paula Littlewood*



## **Much to Give thanks for - Our latest news from Amigos**

We have received our usual joyful letter from Richard who, in the last paragraph tells us of the group from UK that, as I write, is now in Uganda on Kira Farm (what a wonderful place to visit). No doubt some of you will know someone who has gone with them. They are the Strength and Inspire Team of 17 people who have gone out to work together with the Kira Farm staff team to help instill the values the trainees need to prepare for their return home. Also to put into practice all the practical and spiritual lessons they have learned from their 11 months at Kira. As well as group activities, the team will have been building relationships with each of the trainees and spending time praying with them and encouraging them'. And along with others, Richard greatly looked forward to the visit.



*Dear Anthea and Tony and my friends at Christ Church,  
What a joy to hear from you my dear friends. I am so delighted with the love you have for me. I am happy to let you know that I am awesome and having a great moment and experience of my life here on Kira, and thank you so much for your continued prayers for me.*

*I am so thankful to God that I am seeing the great future plans he has for me here on Kira and also after. You asked about urban farming, it is growing crops in small spaces using things like empty tins, broken plastics and clothes that are wasted. It is called urban because in places with a lot of buildings, there is no space but also a lot of waste, which is then converted into a small garden. For us at Kira we learn it because many people don't big land to grow crops, so they can still farm on small land. I hope that explains urban farming.*

*My friends are friends forever, for life. I know your church has people like that also and they can take care of you as well you take care of them. You are very lucky to have them. I am hoping mine can stay for long as well.*

*This time I have a lot of good news about my business and the training called Strength. So far, I have learnt very many skills and the recent one is business management. I and my friends have been selling Mandazi for two weeks now as a way to practice and we have made profits of 60 thousand shillings. This is exciting to me that profit is so much in a short time.*

*(cont.)*

Richard (right) & friends,  
working on their  
business accounts

## Amigos



Trees for the Future & Amigos have 'smashed their target' for the number of trees they hoped to plant in 2022!

## Friendship Group Events

Peter Christie presents a fascinating  
talk on local history



Enjoying Christmas lunch at the Williams Arms



*I am now looking forward to the last training of Inspire and Strength with the team from UK and then graduation day. I will keep you in my prayers but also in touch with everything happening.*

*Please be safe, I will hear from you soon*

*Blessings,*

*Richard*

NB. Mandazi is a form of fried bread that originated on the Swahili Coast (Wikipedia!)

### **And other news:**

Plant trees and change lives!

Some time ago I wrote of Amigos' partnership with Trees for the Future which helps to train communities on sustainable land use so that they can grow vibrant economies, thriving food systems and a healthier planet. Well, the brilliant news is that the team in Uganda have already 'smashed their target!' for the number of trees they hoped to plant in 2022 – so far 719,133 trees! Communities are seeing their land replenished and local environments transformed through the Forest Garden project, thus strengthening their future, and helping to restore the planet.

### **Our prayers:**

**For the outcome of the COP27 summit**, giving thanks for the good result and the wise decisions of the World Leaders and praying that the nations will implement and hopefully improve on them.

**For the Amigos tree-planting project**, led by Joshua Kitizo and Pastor Fred of Kaliro, to go from strength to strength and to spread to the other districts where we are working.

**For Kira farm** that the holy spirit will be powerfully at work so that this group of trainees will leave inspired to become community transformers as they work alongside their local churches.

**And for Richard** in the last months of his time at Kira Farm giving thanks for all that he has learnt so joyfully and asking for your blessing on him as he prepares, along with his fellow students, to return to his family, community and church.

*Anthea*

### **Plymouth & Exeter Methodist District Newsletter**

Newsletter Sign-up:

<https://pemd.us13.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=7aa213f2bfd0c8a9f37adc2ef&id=50685b2186>

Website for back issues: <https://www.pemd.org.uk/newsletter/>

## North Devon Talking Climate Justice Day, Christ Church Braunton. Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2022.



The local Christian Aid Committee met in August and planned this superb day and invited people from across the entire spectrum of North Devon.

I was pleased to be able to attend this day especially as it was focused on 'Talking Climate Justice'. You don't often get a chance to do this so close to home. It was good to meet with people from the churches and local communities. Over fifty people came along. The urgency to act on climate change has never been more urgent than it is now. The fact that COP 27 would be meeting during November as well helped to sharpen our minds.

The injustice of the current climate crisis is no longer something we can ignore and we know that for future decades now is the time to act even if we haven't been doing so already. As Janet Marshall and Paula Littlewood our church's reps on the Christian Aid Committee have said in the last month's Messenger:

*Every social movement started with a conversation - these conversations stirred anger, fuelled hope and inspired people to act. As the church, we need to have those honest conversations that spur us into action. We want to walk with you, to join these conversations and act together in the pursuit of climate justice.*

Margaret Robinson the local organiser stressed this was to be a day of honesty and openness. Katrine Musgrave, Christian Aid's Church Engagement & Fundraising Officer for Devon & Cornwall added: "Every successful social movement started with a conversation - these conversations stirred anger, fuelled hope and inspired people to act".

In the morning session we heard from guest 'conversationalists' as they talked through how the church and the local community could respond and call for climate justice. The 'conversationalists' were:

\*Revd Susan Durber, World Council of Churches President for Europe

\*Lydia Perris, Social Justice & Creation Care Officer for Exeter Diocese and about to go to COP 27

\*Revd Rob Weston, Convener of the URC's Environmental Task Group

\*Derrick Spear a North Devonian who has lived in Braunton since 1966. After taking retirement in 1992 he became a Devon County Councillor in 1993. Other credentials include his work with North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. He is also a member of Braunton Parish Council.

Climate change is a crisis and emergency for now.

The questions they gave us to think about -

What is the nature of creation and how has theology changed over time; where can we act for climate justice?

What is our local community calling for? Are we living in a Fairtrade way?

Have we embarked on the Eco Church Award Scheme?

The flyer which we read about the day said:

With record heatwaves choking India and a new report by the UN warning that four indicators of the climate crisis are at record highs, the urgency to act on climate change has never been greater.

(cont.)

This morning session was followed by lunch and a reflection period followed by small group discussion and planning time. Lunch was a good opportunity to share with people we might not usually hear from about their concerns and where we might take our concerns.

We had freedom of choice for the post lunch reflections and after all the morning talk it was good to be part of a small group led in prayer and reflection by Rev Dr Susan Durber. If you want to listen to the moving music on you tube (only 3 minutes): [Ludovico Einaudi - "Elegy for the Arctic"](#) and read Isaiah 11:1-10 most apt for this Advent period. There was more but this was so moving.

The lunch time session finished with a piece of music: Away with me, an arrangement of Ralph Vaughan Williams poem 'Linden Lea' sung by Maggie Boyle. The afternoon small group discussions and planning are going to be written up and summarised by the committee so please watch this space for more information.

*Why is it so vital that we're seen to be calling for Climate Justice specifically?*

*'Where are you seeing the church and the local community act collectively for climate justice – What's giving you hope and where do you see the opportunities for people to get involved?'*

*We need to tackle the root causes of poverty and the climate crisis. This means changing laws, policies and practices. These changes can be in our churches, government and corporations.*

*What ideas?*



The organisers of the day plan to work further with Christian Aid to develop the ideas discussed at the meeting into actions that can be taken together. Already this has started as our local MP Selaine Saxby has been contacted about some issues raised on the day and will be further contacted about issues from COP27. In summing up Katrine said the committee were "so grateful to our dedicated and passionate supporters for hosting this event in North Devon!" For more information from those from Christ Church Barnstaple, who attended try: Kathy Jeacock, Eff Poole, Liz Seymour, Marilyn Tricker, as well as Margaret Robinson at Christ Church Braunton.

*Sue Macbeth*

### **Friendship Group**

Dec 12th Mrs Smudgers Kitchen: Decorating Christmas Cakes

Jan 9th Members afternoon - Afternoon tea, games

Jan 23rd Dave Stevens - Magistrate



*Rosemary*

## South Western Synod News

I have received an email from the South Western Synod containing a sad message for us from our Moderator, Reverend Ruth Whitehead who has written:

*"Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,*

*I write with news that will come as a surprise to many of you. I will be leaving the post of Synod Moderator in the South Western Synod at the end of March next year (2023), after nearly 10 years.*

*I have loved my time here and have always described it as a happy Synod, even though we have weathered some storms together. I will miss all our local churches, but God has called me to serve the Landsker Pastorate – a group of six small chapels in Pembrokeshire, and as you know, where God calls us is where we find our deepest joy.*

*There will be time for proper farewells but now is a good time to say thank you for welcoming me to share the life of your church. Leading worship in the many churches of the Synod has been an especial joy, and I will continue to pray for you all."*

We need to keep the Synod in our prayers as they seek a new Moderator.

*Paula Littlewood*  
(Synod Representative)

### Remembrance Causeway

Our News time included the exciting news that Steve Richardson was going to Kira Farm, Uganda with Amigos in a few days time.

Kathryn Edwards introduced our time of remembering and being thankful for others. In small groups each one of us could name those we have lost and say why they were so special to us.

Prayers followed giving thanks for the lives of those we miss.

Steve's talk included various ways to help us not to forget things and most importantly to remember Jesus and to be thankful for His Life and His Love. Pictures of poppies, bread and grapes on the screen helped illustrate his talk. It was great to welcome newcomers and we hope more will join us at Christ Church for our Christmas Causeway on Dec 4th at 3pm when Revd. John Ewington will be giving the talk on Gifts.

Our team have decided NOT to have a Causeway Service on Jan 1st so our first Causeway Service in the New Year will be on Feb 5th.

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and every blessing for 2023.

*Gill and the Causeway Team*



## **Christmas Day Lunch**

There is to be a FREE inter-church Christmas Day Lunch to be held at Grosvenor Church on the 25th December.

Volunteers are required to help with cooking, waiting on tables, washing up, sourcing foodstuffs and presents etc.

The lunch is provided free for anyone who would otherwise be on their own, and for those who will find it difficult to provide for their families on Christmas Day.

As well as the meal there will be quizzes, crackers, mince pies, the singing of Christmas songs and a short Christian address.

Leaflets giving details on who to contact if you are able to volunteer, or your family like to be a guest/s, will be available shortly.

*Shirley*

## **Events Committee**

A huge thank you to everyone who helped in any way to make the Winter Fair on November 26<sup>th</sup> such an amazing success: bakers, stall-holders, crafters, refreshment providers, everyone who donated items and all those who came on the day.

We had such a lovely time, with many new families coming into the Church. As a new venture, we ran the Fair across the middle of the day and served light lunches – these proved to be very popular! We had stalls selling cards, DVDs, books, puzzles, Christmas decorations and crafts, Christmas gifts, and children's' books and toys. There were fun activities for the young (and young at heart) – glitter tattoos, crafts and colouring.

We raised funds for Christ Church and had a lot of fun at the same time!

This was our first year of events since the Covid lockdown. We had just 4 events: Jubilee Garden Party, Summer Fair, Quiz night and Winter Fair.

Many thanks again to everyone for their support,

(photo - back page)

*Joy*

## **Offertory**

An increasing number of people are donating money direct to the Church account by standing order. Many thanks to all of you.

**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.

Cash offerings can be made at Christ Church on a Sunday morning, there will be an offertory plate on the table in the vestibule. Gift Aid envelopes are also there if you wish to use one. Thank you.

*Kathy*



## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Christ Church seeks to express the love of Christ  
for everyone.

### 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](http://www.methodist.org.uk))

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

#### Christ Church Minister

Revd Don Macalister

01271 345313

[dasmacalister@icloud.com](mailto:dasmacalister@icloud.com)

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Eff Poole

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Jenny Newman

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Please send us articles, poems, book reviews, and photos of Church events

#### Website

[www.christ-church-barnstaple.org.uk](http://www.christ-church-barnstaple.org.uk)



**Christ the King:** Members of the congregation led the Local Arrangement Service on November 20th - Page 10



**Moving the Foundation Stone**



**The Annual Church Meeting**



Many thanks to 'Top Tier Removals' for their help



**The Winter Fair was a huge success - Page 22**



**Discovering 'Faith' in Wetheral Church - Page 15**