

The Messenger

“Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever!”

Revelation 1: 17-18

Christ Church Barnstaple
Methodist & United Reformed Church



April 2023



**Music time at
Parents and
Toddlers**



**Causeway Service:
Planting seeds**



**What went on at
Café Church?**



Christian Aid Week

We are so sad to lose two much loved long-term members of Christ Church this month. John B and Judith S have both been 'good and faithful servants' and will be very much missed.
Please remember their families in your prayers at this difficult time.

April Diary			
Sun	2nd	10.30am 3pm	Morning Worship: Revd Don Causeway Service
Thu	6th	2.30pm	Maundy Thursday Service with Holy Communion
Fri	7th	10.30am	Good Friday Service
Sun	9th	10.30am 4.30pm	Easter Sunday Service and Holy Communion: Revd Jonathan Richards Café Church
Sun	16th	10.30am	Morning Worship: Revd Don
Wed	19th	10am	<i>Deadline for May Messenger</i>
Sun	23rd	10.30am	Morning Worship: Local Arrangement
Mon	24th	10am 2.30pm	Sound it Out Friendship Group
Sun	30th	10.30am 6.30pm	Morning Worship: Revd John Robinson Oasis Service
<p style="text-align: center;">Regular meetings :</p> <p>Tuesdays - Rainbows 5.30pm (Term-time only) Wednesdays - Parents & Toddlers 9.30am (Term-time only) Thursdays - Circuit Zoom Service 7pm Fridays - Hobnob 10am (except Bank Holidays)</p>			



Sunday May 7th: Lions Club Coronation Picnic in Rock Park

More details to follow

Message from Revd Don

Dear Friends

As a teenager I kept a small allotment for a while which I planted with all the usual learner gardener's vegetables; carrots, lettuces, radishes, and of course potatoes. There is nothing quite like eating vegetables for which you have prepared the ground, planted the seeds and watered and weeded.

I still remember the excitement the first time the new life which I'd played a part in growing broke the surface in neat rows. The plants grew surprisingly quickly and, with one exception, the crop looked reasonably like the pictures on the packets of seeds. The carrots weren't quite so straight and perfect, the lettuces not quite such a beautiful green, but still, they were recognisable.

The exception was the potatoes. They hadn't come in a packet but as far as I was concerned had been rotten old bits of spud with "eyes". Seeds I understood, we'd grown watercress on wet tissue paper at school, but how could these bits of rotten food produce anything worthwhile?

Above the surface the growth was impressively lush but I wasn't ready for what to expect when I dug the plants up. Pound after pound of beautiful new potatoes, it was like discovering buried treasure and with each new forkful of earth - more and more appeared.

Why am I sharing this memory? Because as I was thinking about Easter and especially as I thought of Jesus dead and buried but raised to life, it seemed a powerful metaphor for death and resurrection in our own lives.

The message of Easter is one of the ugliness of the crucifixion being replaced with wonderful hope, of the darkness of Good Friday being overcome by the light of Easter morning, of death being overcome by life.

The darkness and rottenness being redeemed.

There are things in my life that need redemption, that need to be changed from ugliness to beauty, perhaps there are in yours too. I pray that this Easter through the example of Jesus we will know God's care for us in such a way that he is able to bring about new life for us too.

May you know joy and peace this Easter,



Prayers for April

We praise you, Lord,
that you travelled the road that led to your death,
not with armies but gently, riding on a donkey.
We thank you that, wherever you call us to travel,
into whatever situation, we too can go gently.
Surrounded by your love and your community, Amen.

April 9th

Risen Lord, on Easter Day, we bask in the knowledge of the amazing love you have for us.

Today is special.

We know it in the core of our beings, in the depths of our souls.

The spirit witnesses within us; our salvation is assured; your love conquers all fear.

Mighty risen Lord, we fall at your feet in wonder.

We worship and adore you for all time. Amen.

April 16th

Loving Lord Jesus, we pray for people who need: strength when they are scared,

peace when they feel muddled or anxious,

a smile when they are sad, a hug when they feel lonely.

Help us to share your love in everything we do. Amen.

April 23rd

Lord Jesus,

sometimes we have so much going on in our heads that we just don't understand what is going on.

Help us to sort things out and join some of the dots.

Show us the parts of the picture we can understand.

And, while we work alone and with others,

to see and understand more of the picture,

be with us, always. Amen.

April 30th

Jesus calls us by name and leads us out.

He is always with us, surrounding us with love and protection.

Lord, we go out in the safety and security of knowing we are part of your flock.

Thank you for our sense of belonging to our church family,

to all our other family, work, and community groups.

May we never lose our sense of inclusion.

May we know our true identity in you

and offer our lives in your service. Amen.

Christian Aid

Give Peas a Chance! Pigeon peas to the rescue!!

Jen is determined to give her children a great future. Jen, a loving mum in Malawi, dreams of her children being able to have the education they deserve. Her hard-working boys have earned places at top colleges, but Jen cannot afford to send them both.



'My heart longs to see our children finish school,' says Jen. 'These dreams are very important to me, because by doing so, I'll be sure that I am creating a good future for the children'.

A terrible dilemma

Her oldest two boys have gained tertiary education places, which is very rare for young people from her rural area. One has a place at a prestigious polytechnic and one at a well-known college – it's even on one of Malawi's banknotes. Jen works hard to provide for her children. But she can barely scratch a living from the soil. Soaring costs of food, fuel, fertiliser, school uniforms and school fees are crushing dreams and keeping her family in poverty. Now, Jen has had to make a choice. One no mum should be forced to make. Rising costs mean Jen can pay for only one of her sons' college courses. We can help this strong and determined mum provide for her family's future.

Jen desperately needs to earn more, so that her oldest son Mathews can study as well. His place at a prestigious college is reserved for a year, so Jen remains hopeful that he'll be able to start his course. The erratic weather is affecting Jen's profits. *'The result is that our harvest is very little,'* she says.

But Jen remains resilient. *'We say, let's work hard so that the money will help the children go to school,'* she smiles.

Crops with amazing potential

Jen and her husband have two acres of pigeon peas, but they are struggling with the effects of the climate crisis. The rainfall is unreliable, and there are more storms, flooding and stronger winds.

The pigeon pea is a tough plant, able to withstand a lot – just like Jen. But to make the most of her crop, Jen needs to plant good quality seeds and sell for the best price possible, and not to unscrupulous middlemen.



This Christian Aid Week, you can help dreams come true. Your gift could help farmers like Jen plant better seeds, secure a fairer price for their crops, and build happier futures for their children. (photos - pages 1 & 20)

Christian Aid Week is 14-20 May 2023.

****Don't forget the Big Brekkie on Saturday 20th May
and a special Christian Aid service on 14th May.**

****Christ Church Braunton are holding a Plant Sale for Christian Aid
on Saturday 13th May at the Parish Hall, Braunton.**

Our sponsored walk is now being planned for September when supporters from Braunton would like to join us. Further details to follow nearer the time.

Your support for all these projects and events will be life-changing for women in Malawi like Jen.

Janet Marshall & Paula Littlewood

A brief account of Richard Andrew's latest visit to Kenya

Richard is the older brother of Elaine Stevens. He has been going to St Francis High School for many years, voluntarily teaching physics, providing the school with equipment, and funding many projects. This year he could only get a visa for one month instead of the usual two.

Richard went to St Francis High School Kenya, again this year after a 2 year break due to the coronavirus.

He was greeted at Kisumu airport by 3 friends from the school, they had a meal together and then he was whisked off to a Game Park situated right beside Lake Victoria. Most of the animals were in enclosures but the monkeys and zebra wandered freely. There were plenty of trees for shade and the area was beautiful. He eventually arrived at the school at 5pm local time, where he was greeted effusively by staff that were present. He made a quick tour around the compound to see all the new buildings, had a shower and went to bed, he was exhausted after 48 hours of travelling. The house where he stays now has a fully tiled shower and toilet, but only cold water for showering, but that is luxury in itself.

The school is very impressive now and is the County's choice of school for meetings, workshops and courses because of the excellent facilities and attractive compound. The borehole is holding up well with the pump programmed to pump every alternate hour day and night. There is ample high quality water for all, including the building site for the new church nearby.

All the classrooms now have terrazzo floors, the Library floor having lovely designs made in different colours, the computer room is really spacious and set up well, and the labs have been decorated. Storage space for all the physics equipment was a problem, so a new cupboard was made and fitted, and all the equipment has been re-arranged to make things easier to access.

Richard is enjoying teaching again, he is in his element repairing and sorting apparatus and preparing practical sessions. He was teaching up to 10pm at night.

The school has a new caterer, the food is much better and the students are fed well, however the staff will still only eat Ugali!

5 previous students, all now in further education, returned to the school to see Richard. It was the first time they had all been together since leaving the school and they were delighted to be able to catch up with each other and exchange news. (photo - page 20)

They were very impressed with all the new facilities provided at the school since they left. The school provided them all with a lovely lunch and Richard was sad to see them go at the end of the day.

(More next month)

Elaine

WaterAid Lent “Jars of Change” Appeal

Please bring your jars back to the Easter Sunday morning service.

If you are not able to be there, please bring them either the week before or the week after.



Thank you

Notes from the Elders Meeting – Weds 8th March

- Prayers were said for members of the Church family who have been unwell or bereaved recently
- Future plans for the Church Friends network was discussed. The directory is due to be reprinted soon
- “Sing for your Supper” planned, date to be confirmed soon
- The Circuit quarterly plan will have more ‘gaps’ due to sabbaticals etc. Our next Local Arrangement is on 23rd April
- The World Day of Prayer was a very good service and was well attended
- Maintenance of the church building is ongoing, thanks were expressed to Staveley, Christopher and others for all their continuing hard work
- The trees in front of the church are still due to be removed but are under a Preservation Order. This is being sorted by the tree surgeons
- The Community Links Group had a good meeting on 16th February, with a great speaker giving details of what is already provided locally and what is still needed. This was really useful and provided ‘food for thought’ for our planning of what we might do. Also, acknowledging the links we all have as individuals in the local community through the various organisations we belong to
- Finance – it was great to see Kathy back at the meeting. WaterAid ‘Jars of Change’ had been made available for our Lent Appeal
- Yeo Valley School will be coming into Christ Church on 21st March for ‘Experience Easter’
- Events Group are holding an Afternoon Tea on June 17th
- Maureen has suggested we join in with the Lions Club Coronation Picnic in Rock Park on Sunday 7th May, and the children to take part in the fancy dress parade

Next meeting to be held on Wednesday 12th April

Café Church



Reading the water prayer



Decorating my prayer flower



The 'Well Bucket' descending from the balcony



Parents and Toddlers

“The children love Christopher playing the saxophone and singing and it is lovely to see all the children happily interacting with each other.”

Young Families Work News

It was a delight to receive the following email from Jaynie Chapple, one of our mums whose children first came to Parents and Toddlers – every week! - when they were small and then were very much missed when they were no longer able to come. Now they are back again, much to our joy.

Thank you to everyone for another lovely Café Church yesterday. Please read my review below:

Café Church is a warm friendly open space shared with family and friends old and new, to come together to socialise with a cuppa and lovely treats, but to also have fun through activities such as puzzles / quizzes which the team sorts out for everyone. The activities are based around the prayers, songs and advice spoken by Don and fellow friends. This week was about the Woman at the Well. While Don was talking about the well, Alex was pulling up a bucket onto the balcony much to the excitement of the children wondering if it was full of water! We also coloured in paper flowers and wrote a prayer on them, folded them gently and popped them on some shallow water and the flower opened, children and adults gave a woo of excitement, when the flowers opened and looked very pretty. Nicola made biscuit wells with the children, which they very much enjoyed creating and eating. The bucket was tipped down on Don and the children....only pretend water this time! My children came home and counted how many taps we have in our house, and thought of ways to save water.

Kind regards

Jaynie Chapple

Thank you so much once again Jaynie. Our next Café Church will be taking place on Easter Day at 4.30pm when, as usual, all will be welcome.

Sunday Club was very busy this last Sunday, the children enjoying decorating the labels to go on our Mothering Sunday flowers. It is always such a beautiful time of the year with the daffodils in bloom both outside in gardens and on kerbsides, as well as in church. Other Sunday Club sessions have been following the lectionary with the story of the transfiguration, the beginning of Lent with the story of the temptations (a difficult story to explain to young children but very well explained on a You Tube video) and then the story of Nicodemus when the children enjoyed colouring and rearranging jumbled up letters to make words from the Bible passage. One very much enjoyed refreshment time was the plate of small pancakes to mark the beginning of Lent, with delicious toppings!! A real treat!

We are very much looking forward to a visit from **Yeo Valley School** Years 4 and 5 when they will be coming to a shortened version of Experience Easter (the first since Covid shut us down in full flow exactly three years ago), and when the children will be hearing the story of the first Easter in an interactive way.

To finish our news we would like to share a prayer that Alex found, adapted and prayed at Café Church – very relevant for our Café Church theme as well as for our present project at Christ Church to raise money for WaterAid.

'Loving God, we ask for Your blessings on children, mothers, fathers, and communities who are thirsty. Purify, protect, and multiply their water sources. May they have the opportunity to fully enjoy the benefits of clean water – essentials like education, gardens of fresh produce, and good health. Amen'

Many thanks to you all for your love and support as always, and we wish you a very Happy Easter.

With our love and many blessings,

Parent and Toddlers.

We are pleased to say our Parent and Toddlers Group is growing. We now have 4 new families and last week we had 9 children, so we are hoping to extend into the wet room after Easter. They love Christopher playing the saxophone and singing, and it is lovely to see all the children happily interacting with each other.

We thank Jenny and Elaine for assisting in the kitchen, and are now looking forward to the summer when we can get outside to play.

(photos - pages 1 & 8)



Joy, Sandy Christopher and Anthea

OASIS

A service of healing and wholeness

A time to meet with God and be refreshed

Oasis services began about seven years ago, after several of us from the Circuit shared in a course about the ministry of healing. This quiet service, with time for reflection and prayer, is planned as an evening service whenever there is a fifth Sunday in the month. After a gap because of Covid, the services have now started again, and on January 29th our thoughts and prayers focused on the charities (local and global) with which we have links as a church.

The next Oasis service will be on April 30th at 6.30pm

Planning meeting for this: Thurs. April 13th at 2.30pm in Rm 4. Anyone is welcome to come and share ideas, or speak to Rev. Marilyn beforehand with any thoughts or suggestions.

URC news

Holy Land Pilgrimage

I have received an email from the South Western Synod office advertising a 10 day pilgrimage to Israel and the Holy Land. The pilgrimage will start from Heathrow on the 10th October and finish on the 19th October 2023. It is being led by Rev. Mark Woodhouse, Minister at Derriford URC, Plymouth and his son, Adam, (a URC minister in Blackburn) with the help of local guides and is organised by Maranatha, a Christian travel company. If you are interested and want more information, visit:

<http://www.maranatha.co.uk/HolyLand2023-RevdsMark&Adam/>

Rod and I are interested in going so have asked for more information. If you decide to follow it up, do let us know as it would be great to go with some Christ Church folk.

Rev. Ruth Whitehead

By now, many of you will have heard that Ruth is leaving the South Western Synod. By the time you read this, she will have left following the March Synod Meeting. She has decided to return to ministry in local churches and has been called by the Landsker Pastorate (6 small chapels in Pembrokeshire) to be their minister. We wish her well in her new venture but she will be sorely missed.

50th Anniversary Celebration Service

A new date has been set for the postponed service to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the URC. It will now be held on 15th April 2023 at Methodist Central Hall Westminster, Storey's Gate, London, SW1H 9NH from 10am -5pm. Tickets are available through:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/open-church-house-anniversary-service-of-thanksgiving-and-celebration-tickets-163843796205>

Paula Littlewood

World Day of Prayer Service

Christ Church was well represented at this year's service at Grosvenor Church. It was an ecumenical act of worship, prepared by women of Taiwan, celebrated throughout the world, including a good congregation of people from churches throughout Barnstaple. Prayer for the beautiful country of Taiwan was our theme. We were reminded of the determination of the women and girls there to be educated and valued in their communities. Our Grosvenor friends provided a delicious selection of cakes with our cups of tea or coffee.



On a different note, several of us were interested in their lightweight but comfortable chairs, which might be suitable for the Alan Finch room! We plan to investigate further.

Eff Poole

Amigos

*"The LORD will keep you from all harm —
he will watch over your life;
the LORD will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore."*

Psalm 121:7-8

As promised in last months' Messenger, we are delighted to introduce our new Kira Farm trainee who we will be supporting during 2023. His name is Elvis Obote.

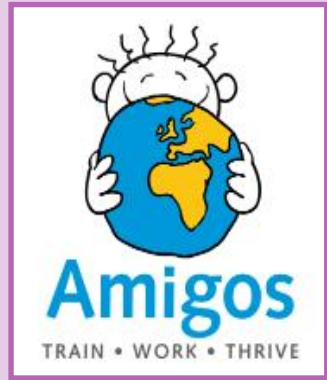
Elvis Obote who is aged 20, is described as a humorous young man, full of life and believing God for great days ahead, having been given the opportunity to come to Kira. He knows he needs Kira to improve his life, as he showed when he responded to the news that Kira interviews were taking place for 2023. He comes from Lira where he lives with his father and stepmother and family, having lost his birth mother at an early age. His father remarried and he has a very good relationship with his family.

Due to Elvis defaulting on his school fees because of the family's financial situation he could not pursue his dream of becoming a driver. Instead now, his days are spent in his garden 2 kilometres away from home where he grows cassava, beans, sweet potatoes and groundnuts, all harvested for home consumption. After waking at 6am each day he stays working in his garden until lunch time when he returns home to fetch the day's water of 80 litres, and to chop firewood from the bushes. He cares too for both his sisters, and himself cooks the one meal served per day for the family. His fun is to play soccer, his favourite team being Chelsea! He was so delighted when his brother bought him a beautiful Chelsea jersey for his 18th birthday!

Elvis wanted to come to Kira Farm to gain skills and be able to pass on his knowledge when he returns home. On arrival he loved what he was seeing. He has settled in well and made friends with the other young men. He has been pleasantly surprised by the love of the staff and how they care for the trainees. Now he looks forward to learning the necessary skills for building, carpentry, computers, business training and conservation farming. After Kira he wants to put into practice all that he has learnt, in order to better his life, becoming 'a beautiful example for other young people'. We have not yet heard from Elvis himself but we very much look forward to hearing from him and learning more of his story as we accompany him through his year on Kira. He certainly sounds to be a very determined and focused young man, full of energy and enthusiasm.

Please keep him in your prayers. He will have chosen his options by now so please pray that what he has chosen will assist him on his journey, not only to transform his own life but also those of his family and community. We give thanks for him and all those associated and working on Kira Farm and with Amigos. May God's blessing be with them all.

Anthea



Elvis Obote, new Kira Farm trainee

Causeway Service



Planting Seeds



Deacon Joan involving listeners in conversation



Singing with percussion

Dear Friends,

What is local? I guess it means different things to different people. In Methodist terms I guess it means Circuit. So to further understand why local matters during this Lent I have been focusing on time spent praying with our Plan Booklet. I have also used the Methodist Prayer Handbook which gives a wider picture of what 'local' could mean.

Page 1/cover The 'new' Chair of District Rev Daniel Haylett is finding his feet or more accurately his car is finding the roads to North Devon can be speedy or diversionary. Thank goodness for satnav and zoom.

The great challenge now is for us all to reflect the 'local' in context of 2023. A year of great change and challenge ahead of us in this Circuit. How are we going to address the issues of 'losing' two stipendiary ministers (oops sorry - that is a general term, I have learnt they should be referred to as presbyters). At the same time the 'Other Ministers' is a growing list. People moving in and out of the Circuit working from other denominations as well as retiring Methodist presbyters. The Circuit Stewards list is much smaller than it used to be - well at least when I first became part of the Circuit in 1991. As with other 'jobs' deemed necessary to keep the wheels turning, the responsibilities have all increased. Perhaps dauntingly so and for a seemingly never-ending period of time. Perhaps we need to look at how some of the diversionary techniques employed by the Chair could be adapted for us at local level.

Then I turn to page 2 and find the Active Local Preachers followed by those on trial or on note (Methodist terms), those not taking services and then Worship Leaders. We are so grateful for those people who have studied and produced written work and taken part in training programmes locally as well as those who have walked alongside them. There is a veritable number of people involved in preparing and leading worship across the Circuit every week on a Sunday and then at other times during the week- Tuesday morning, Wednesday morning, Thursday afternoon or evening and Friday morning. Sometimes in connection with other events in the buildings, sometimes with other church groups and sometimes just other local groups.

Then my prayers took me to thinking about all the people who we have nurtured and met during our faith journeys during the past however many years. The Church I know best of all is Christ Church. For me the best part of coming together in 1990 was learning who the people were from Bear Street and adding to my knowledge of what Methodism was all about. Around the early 1990s there was a lot of movement going on in the Circuit not just in church life.

Looking down that list of 'Other ministers' I am reminded of some stories of how God calls and challenges us as disciples. For example the ministers who have set off on their journeys from Barnstaple. Then from the Youth Fellowship at Bear Street in the 70s and 80s Rev Robert became a Christian 'big time' and eventually having become a minister in 1996 came back to serve the Circuit and

is now retired here. Another became a local preacher and then a minister serving the denomination elsewhere in the country but now back in North Devon in retirement. One candidate for ministry (in the URC) trained and served in this Circuit from 1991 until 2005 then moved away to 'be a missionary fulltime in Yorkshire' before moving back here for family reasons in 2013. Rev Marilyn served as a probationer minister here in 1993 before becoming Superintendent, but is now living here in retirement. Another young person who was brought up in the fellowship moved away and three years ago became a full time minister now serving in Gloucestershire and recently led worship on zoom for the Circuit Service. This thirty year period reflects not just Christ Church's willingness to pray and support our ministers across the spectrum but also to share in witness and mission in the local as well as wider denomination.

That there are fewer local preachers is not just a reflection of our age profile but a response to what we actually need in our churches. Not just presbyter ministry but a willingness to lead worship from the local leaders. Its true in 2023 like many denominations we are going to be falling back on our 'reserves' of witness and discipleship, in URC terms we used to promise we became members to be faithful in private and public worship. We will have to encourage and help one another continually if privately and together we are to offer the best in our pastoral work and praise, devotion and worship. But isn't that what we have been doing all along?

I still have a lot more reflecting to do in the second half of Lent using the inside of the Plan Booklet. I would welcome any comments about changes and challenges from those of you who also use The Plan regularly.

Yours sincerely,

Revd Sue Macbeth

Events Group

As we look forward to Easter and an improvement in the weather we have now planned three events:

New Date: Summer Tea Party
Saturday 17th June.

This will be held at Christ Church,
with a few stalls hopefully outside.

Save the date in your diary!

Quiz Night on Saturday 30th October

Winter Fair on Saturday 18th November

We need help to organise these events, please contact one of us if you can help.
We would love to hear from you.



Joy, Elaine and Liz

March Newsletter from Rachel Greenland

5th March 2023 Global Mercy in Dakar, Senegal



History is happening! The first ever patients on the Global Mercy arrive today! They will be admitted for surgery tomorrow! Patients came on-board last week for x-rays, scans and pre-op blood tests. Now the first ward is open for these first orthopaedic patients. All orthopaedic patients are under 15 years old and have conditions such as 'bow legs' and 'windswept legs'. Tomorrow the first maxillofacial (head and neck) surgery patients will also arrive! It has taken several years from the start of the construction in China, until today, for the first patients to arrive for surgery, so a very special day today!

So what have I been doing while waiting for patients? There were many things that needed setting up in the ICU where I will be based. Supplies took time to arrive here and we are still waiting for some, but we have enough to start, The ceiling has been down twice since I arrived due to problems with the air-conditioning. Temperature was going from 15oC to 22oC! I didn't like the 15 degrees, and the patients certainly won't!

We arrived in Senegal 3 Weeks ago. Since then it has been more setting up, testing equipment, meeting our day crew (translators), helping to orientate 23 new nurses. I completed orientation for 11 ICU and paediatric ICU nurses, even though I barely remember how to use the equipment myself! They are all very kind and understanding though!

There have been, and continue to be many challenges. The computer systems are still not fully functional, which includes the pager system! So I have a lovely new pager, it just doesn't work (unless it is an emergency!). We are also short if water as awaiting filters to arrive in a container. Water may be further restricted (drinking water is not restricted. Or coffee!) however, laundry and showers are restricted for now.

We have also worked at having fun! We had 2 evacuation drills and some patient scenarios to play at while we have been preparing.

Last weekend a couple of my good friends from previous years, went to a nice beach, a couple of hours from the ship. It was beautiful and nice to get off for a couple of days! The sea is actually cold here! But I did manage to get in in a couple of times and lovely once you get in.

A really special moment last week was a prayer commissioning through the hospital areas by all crew who wanted to join. We led groups to each hospital area and prayed together inside each location. The ship families and kids joined in too. A special time. Now it feels we can start!

Patient photos – we are not allowed to take photos due to confidentiality. The Communications department take photos and there will be some made public that we can use with stories. Next newsletter will have a couple of these stories and photos when they have happened. (cont.)

Praying people please pray for:

- * The surgeries on this first week go ahead and go well, with good outcomes.
- * The children being operated on this week will be calm and settle quickly and not be afraid of us or the surgery.
- * Our new nurses will also quickly settle and find their place here.
- * Good relationships between the hospital staff and also for the general crew to feel connected and involved and know they are fully part of what is about to happen.

Thank you to all who have supported me to be here in finance and praying and encouraging. You are part of this story too.

Love, *Rachel*

(Photos - page 20)

A bit of Littlewood Personal News

As you may know Rod and I were in Australia over the first few weeks of this year. The trip had been planned for a long time, and was postponed for a year, like so many things, by Covid so it was a big relief to get on a plane on Boxing Day! We had three days in Singapore to break the journey.

My younger son, Ali, lives in Melbourne and he and his partner, Jacky, got married while we were there. On 4 January we rocked up to a registry office in Melbourne and the deed was done in a very informal ceremony. My elder son, Will, flew out from London for just a week so he could join in his brother's celebrations which was a true act of brotherly love in view of the jet lag he had to endure.

After the wedding, trips over a five-week period included The Grampians, Adelaide, Kangaroo Island, Robe, Gippsland, Raymond Island (with resident Koalas), and the Coonawarra and Yarra wine regions. We also enjoyed two days at the Australian Open Tennis and a "Big Bash" cricket match at the Melbourne MCG. After leaving Melbourne, we relaxed on the island of Langkawi in Malaysia for 5 days of pure luxury which was just what we needed before getting home in mid-February.

Before we left, I had decided to have a go at the Methodist Worship: Preaching and Leading Course which I have now started. It will be a big commitment as others who have done the course before me will attest. Some of you will still be wondering who we are as Rod and I only make to Christ Church about once a month – this is because I preach at Muddiford and Lavington URCs and Rod comes to support me and, often, reads the Bible readings to help out. Some other preaching will be coming my way as a result of the course and I am helping Don with Worship at Home.

So, even if my face is a bit of a blur, I would really appreciate your prayers as I undertake this new adventure for God.

He has certainly presented me with a challenge!

Paula Littlewood

Friendship Group

On March 13 the group met to hear about the life of the Ilfracombe Harbour Master, Capt. Georgina Carlo-Patt MBE. She made her talk extremely interesting, covering her employment over the years, initially being the ship's cook at the age of 21. She was very keen to progress and over the years studied, eventually moving up the ranks to becoming the first female Captain. There are now 496 male and 5 female Captains.

She became Ilfracombe's Harbour Master in 2018. Her many achievements include having a waste collector scouring the harbour which is recycled and made into mugs and keyrings etc. One of only 4 in the world! The harbour is cleaned with a product that protects aquatic life. Also, improvements in the car parking, the toilet facilities and 18 CCTV cameras being installed. Some funding is provided by the Maritime Organisation.

In 2021 Georgina was awarded the MBE and the Woman of the Year Award.

I am sure everyone enjoyed our meeting – we had a downpour just before the meeting so I was very relieved to see 21 ladies arrive.

On March 27 we are having a talk on the Children's Air Ambulance given by another female presenter, Fiona Frankland.

Our only meeting In April will be on Monday 24th, we hope you can join us.

Rosemary

Causeway

Deacon Joan Cole, our speaker at our Causeway Worship on March 5th focused on 'New Things'. Sharon read our Bible Story about Nicodemus visiting Jesus at night. Several shared their excitement as they looked forward to holidays. We enjoyed lots of activities involving feathers, bubbles, plant pots, compost, bulbs and seeds! (photos - pages 1 & 13)
We all left with happy faces.

Gill and the Causeway Team

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.



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)

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

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

Website

www.christ-church-barnstaple.org.uk



Richard at St Francis High School, Kenya



Jen with sacks of pigeon peas

Photos from christianaid.org.uk

**New ICU
Trolley**



Preparing the space



Mercy Ships Update



Practice Scenario



Evacuation Drill