

# The Messenger

"And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him."

*Luke 2:40*

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



**February 2024**



Revd Don and Eddy received retirement gifts during their last Sunday morning service on 31st December



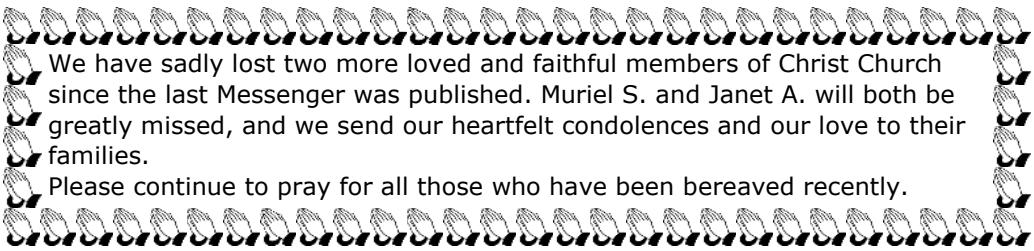
**Christmas Nativity Service**



**Café Church Fruit Crown**



**Christmas Card Tree**



We have sadly lost two more loved and faithful members of Christ Church since the last Messenger was published. Muriel S. and Janet A. will both be greatly missed, and we send our heartfelt condolences and our love to their families.

Please continue to pray for all those who have been bereaved recently.

February Diary			
Sun	4th	10.30am	Morning Worship and Holy Communion: Revd Jonathan Richards
		3pm	Causeway Service
Sun	11th	10.30am	Morning Worship: Local Arrangement
		4.30pm	Café Church
Mon	12th	10am	Sound it Out
		2.30pm:	Friendship Group
Wed	14th	10am	<b><i>Deadline for March Messenger</i></b>
Sun	18th	10.30am	Morning Worship: Heather Bolt
Sun	25th	10.30am	Morning Worship: Jenny Newman and Eff Poole
Mon	26th	10am	Sound it Out
<b>Regular meetings :</b>			
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)	

**Upcoming Events and Services in March - more details to follow**

Friday 15th – Sing for your Supper

Maundy Thursday 1pm: Christian Aid Lunch followed by a Service with Holy Communion

Good Friday Service at 10.30am

Easter Sunday 10.30am: Morning Worship and Holy Communion

6.30pm: Easter Praise

## Message from Rev. Stephen Caddick

Dear Friends,

The circuit farewell service for Don and Eddy held on Saturday 6th January was a joyful and blessed time and a fitting goodbye to them. We pray that God will richly bless them both during retirement and that He will continue to guide and use them. The work of God always goes on and in September we will welcome the Rev. Tracey Darling as the new superintendent of the circuit. We pray for Tracey and her husband Paul that God will richly bless them as they prepare to join us, and in the years ahead.

These days are challenging times for our church and for the circuit. However, they are exciting times. I was led to these words in the prophesy of Isaiah Ch 43 v19, "Behold I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth. Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."

This should thrill and excite us. Our God is a great big God, Lord of Heaven and earth, all authority is His. God is a God of surprises; He often astounds us with the unexpected. Think of stories in the Bible where God does the unexpected thing or chooses the unlikely person. The work we are involved in is His work, but He wants us to partner with Him. Isn't that amazing! God desires that every member of the body of Christ exercise the gifts that He has given them. Now more than ever we need people to step up and to say, "Lord what do you want me to do? Lord, I give myself to you use me to extend your kingdom and to honour your name." This reminds us of the promises at the heart the covenant service that we celebrate at the start of the new year. It has recently been a great joy to come along to cafe church, what a well-oiled machine that is with people organising craft activities, playing musical instruments and singing, talking to the children, making sandwiches and cups of tea and cake, and hoovering up all the crumbs afterwards! What a blessing this time is to the families that attend, but it would be impossible without the many dedicated helpers. There are many other examples in the life of the church.

God has good plans for us. May the Holy Spirit keep us in step with what he is doing as we look for Him to move and to work. He can do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

I pray that God will richly bless you all.

*Rev. Stephen*

## Prayers for February

### Feb 4th

Father we praise you, that you delight in bringing new life. Renew and revive our church so that we will be prepared for the new things that you want to do. Help us to see your new shoots of life and growth. By your Holy spirit lead us into your paths and may your name be praised.

In Jesus Name Amen.

### **Feb 11th**

Father we praise you that you are all knowing and almighty. Help us not to be afraid but to trust you. You have good plans for each one of us, and for the church. We gladly submit to you, fulfil your purposes in and through us. May the name of Jesus be honoured.

In Jesus name Amen.

### **Feb 18th**

Father we thank you that you sent Jesus to offer us new life we praise you that in Him we find life in all its fullness. we pray for our families, friend and neighbours that they would trust Jesus and enjoy His free gift of eternal life. Help us to be confident in sharing the good news of Jesus for your glory.

In Jesus name Amen

### **Feb 25th**

Father we thank and praise you for sending your Holy Spirit to be with us and to empower and fill us. Make and keep us sensitive to His leading and guiding. We surrender our wills and say Lord have your way, work in and through us that we may be a blessing to others because we are richly blessed.

In Jesus name Amen



## **Senior leaders from churches and charities have called on politicians to take urgent action on rising poverty in the UK and around the world**

In a joint statement released on Friday January 5, senior Christian leaders - including the General Secretary of Churches Together in England, President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference and senior leaders of development agencies Christian Aid, CAFOD and Tearfund - have said 'the human cost of failing to take action now is too big and too damaging to ignore'.

The statement goes on to say poverty is 'a consequence of political choices and priorities', and with a General Election on the horizon, 'this year must mark the beginning of the end for poverty'. Signatories are calling on political leaders to set out clear plans to eradicate extreme poverty and halve overall poverty by 2030, in the UK and globally. Patrick Watt, CEO of Christian Aid, is among those signatories.

### **A date for your diary**

There will be a simple soup and bread lunch with donations to Christian Aid on Maundy Thursday 28th March 2024 at 1pm before the afternoon Maundy Thursday service. Please give names to Janet M or Elaine S if you are hoping to come. We look forward to seeing you there!

Your continuing generosity and support are much appreciated.

*Janet & Paula*

## A Letter to us all from Don and Eddy

Dear friends,

As I write this I am sat in the study of the Manse, the sun has just set and I am surrounded by piles of books, papers, things to be sorted through. It is the evening before my final farewell service after which my retirement will begin. At this strange time it is good to take a moment to sit and reflect on so much that has happened and especially to remember all the people I have met and come to know and love in my time here in North Devon.

There is so much for me to give thanks to God for in the ten years Eddy and I have been here. Above all I give thanks for those moments when together we have known God's loving presence with us. Sometimes that has been within worship but often it has been at surprising moments.

One such moment was with the Elders when we had a working party picking up litter in Rock Park but still made time to sit and chat and share life stories together. Another was when a young student from Yeo Valley School led the prayers, beautifully, at a school performance in the church.

There have been those moments when I have been aware of the gentle breath of God in times of prayer as life stories, hopes, and sorrows have been shared, and God has been there with us.

As Eddy and I prepare to move to a new phase of our life we are very grateful for your love through the years and for the amazing gifts presented to us both at our last service including a very generous cheque, as well as garden and Sea Salt vouchers.

We will buy something for the garden, probably a plant that we can care for and watch grow which will remind us of all our dear friends here in Barnstaple and throughout North Devon.

You will always be in our hearts, thoughts and prayers,  
With love,

*Don (and Eddy!)*

*Photos of the day of Don's final service at Christ Church are on the front cover & page 13*

### Action for Children Christmas Collection



Thank you so much to everyone who supported our Christmas giving to the local area Action for Children. This included contributions in return for sharing Christmas cards on our tree (photo - front cover) and our Christmas Morning Service offering.



The total was a wonderful £233.20.

## Excerpts from Rachel Greenland's Final Letter from Sierra Leone -December 2023



I will be departing the Global Mercy in a few days' time, and flying home from Freetown to Home (via a couple of places on the plane!). It has been such a rich and wonderful time over these last 11 months of being aboard this Mercy Ship and being part of its first year of service.

There have been so many highlights, so much to reflect upon on leaving. Here are some of my final thoughts from my last month here. Freetown is a special place, and it has been a privilege to be working and living here again.



### The story of Salamatou. An unexpected link continues. An extraordinary story:

Salamatou was a patient I met here back in 2004, on the Anastasis (2 ships ago), who was a plastic surgery patient. I didn't look after Salamatou many times, but she had a profound effect on me. She was one of the most joyful and cheerful people I have met. She always greeted everyone with a smile and warm wave whenever you came on-duty. She also had a beautiful baby 'Abbie', who was the very

popular baby on the ward and got passed around everyone! One day I assisted Salamatou's nurse with wound care. I was shocked to discover she had both feet amputated! The scars looked terrible! Then I realised, this was the work of rebels or boy soldiers, with a machete. I found it difficult to comprehend how human beings can do this to each other.

During these weeks I found out more about her story, including how they had been running from the rebels as their village was ambushed. Then having to watch her own sister killed in front of her, and warned not to make a sound. Her own life was spared, but not without her feet and buttocks being cut off with a knife. Her family carried her 3 days to Freetown to get help (due to the civil war). With most of the doctors fleeing the country, she was only able to get limited help. Miraculously she survived! She came to the ship to have her feet stumps revised, in order to have artificial limbs fitted.

I have often thought of Salamatou over the years, and how she taught me that joy is not dependent on external circumstances. How she never showed any hint of bitterness or anger to those who had done this to her. She kept coming to my mind since I got returned here and this time I felt compelled to try and track her down. I was very sad and shocked to hear that both Salamatou and her daughter Abbie had died of Ebola in 2014. However, someone was still in contact with her brother who had set up a school in a location 3 hours from the ship. He offered to take us there and help us try and find it. Which we then did the next weekend. We had a very special visit and met 3 children, her brother and his boys.

I'm not sure when I will be back here again. I will miss it very much, but also looking forward to being reunited with family and friends at home too. This has been another year of feeling a huge honour to be part of this. I came to work and live here for others, but I feel I have received a greater blessing, and my life enriched by others. My journey is not just about me, but all of those helping me or encouraging me to be here. I represent many people who play a part in my being here. THANK YOU !

*Rachel*

## Christmas Causeway

Although it was Advent Sunday, it felt like Christmas at our December Causeway service. John led our worship and reminded us of God's gift of Jesus. On the whiteboard, John illustrated, a beautiful story about a boy, finding his missing toy boat.

We sang our favourite carols accompanied by Kathryn on the piano and John playing spoons whilst we followed Jo's Makaton signing.

Our dramatised Bible reading of the Nativity story came from the Message Bible, which was read brilliantly by Mark. Mary (Michaela) and Joseph (Daniel) and their helpers were seated close to the nativity scene at the front of the church. The shepherds dressed in fleece shawls were played by David, George and Sarah who had a reading part. Our angels in white, Caroline, Jenny and Sharon all had speaking parts and were joined by more angels, Tracey, Caroline C. and Joy. Carole was a star holder, and she led splendidly dressed Wise Men, Robert, Thomas, June and Aidan to the stable with their gifts. Many thanks to our team of helpers, it all went very well. John led our prayer time and our time together concluded with a lot of chatter, a cup of tea, mince pies, biscuits and fruit. What a wonderful way to begin our celebration of our gift of Jesus from God.

Our **Covenant Service** for Causeway was held on January 7th. Rachel led our News time so we were updated with what our friends have been doing over Christmas and the New Year. We were thrilled to hear the long-awaited news that Michaela will soon be receiving a new guide dog that will join her dog Tessie, who has now retired. We can't wait for the new guide dog to come to our Causeway services.



Alison led our prayers, covering all our needs, and Marilyn explained the Covenant Service simply and beautifully. Alison then assisted Marilyn in serving the grape juice and bread. It was a very special and reflective time. Kathryn's choice of songs was just perfect: Abba Father; Give thanks and Lord I lift your name on high.

What a wonderful start to 2024.

Do join us on February 4th when Steve will be speaking on Love letters from God.

(photos—page 13)

*The Causeway Team*

## Events Group

After our break following a busy end to 2023, we will soon start planning this year's activities. If you have any suggestions or would like to join us, we would be delighted to hear from you!

Looking forward to having more fun in 2024.

*Elaine, Liz and Joy.*



# Café Church



Creating the Wise Men's crowns with fruit and cardboard!



<http://christ-church-barnstaple.org.uk/pbhwdyaakn/cafe-church/>



"We are looking forward to 2024 and all that it will bring, praying for happiness and peace for us all"

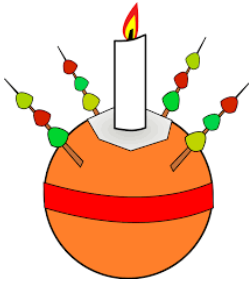
<http://christ-church-barnstaple.org.uk/groups-2/parents-and-toddlers/>



One of the beautifully decorated Christmas windows in the sanctuary



## Young Families Work News



Apart from all the Christmas festivities and fun we had in our regular activities the children and families also had a few extras! The Christingle service on Christmas Eve was blessed with a good number of people when our own children and families were joined by visitors. It was a magical moment when all the Christingles had been made and everyone stood round the church with their own particular candle lighting up the darkness. With welcome refreshments afterwards it was a lovely way of leading into Christmas.

Then on New Year's Eve came the **Family Party** with much loved games like Pass the Parcel, quizzes and the inevitable Chocolate Game! It was all great fun with lots of laughter and chat and with tasty pasties and sausage rolls and delicious puddings left over from the Bring and Share at lunch time! (photos—back cover)

And now for 2024...

## Sunday Club

Thank you to Eddy, Alison and Eff who kept the Sunday Club programme running while we were with our families "simply having a wonderful Christmas time". Appreciation also to Anthea for the lovely December resources which were carried over from Café Church.

Sunday Club now have the weekly programme set out until Easter. As well as following the 'Roots' activities, we marked the week of prayer for Christian Unity (18 - 25 January) with the parable of the Good Samaritan.

**Café Church** entered the New Year very quietly but happily. It was greatly enjoyed by everyone, the crafts and the worship-time following the story of the Wise Men. Crowns were of course the order of the day for everyone, beautifully decorated with gemstones and feathers but the favourite crowns were the fruit ones cleverly designed with a variety of fruits and described as 'really yummy!' (and there was even a word search set out as a crown!).



A Treasure Hunt to find the pictures of babies hidden around the church led into the worship with Marilyn and the story of the Wise Men looking for the baby Jesus. How different was their way of finding him, guided by the star, so much in contrast to the methods we would use today. A comment from one of the mums afterwards is an example: 'It was great fun finding out about 'what3words' and how useful it can be for trying to locate a property and how it's been used in emergencies to get help to people quickly.

(Apparently, our 3 words on the notice board outside the sanctuary for emergencies are 'chopped certified wage' as Alison discovered! Did you know that?!).

(cont.)

Songs included Like a Candle Flame and Twinkle Twinkle Christmas Star, and When the Saints come marching in, to which the children marched round the church providing percussion accompaniment. The story told was around the carol Wise Men Seeking Jesus and how it came to be written. An amazing and moving account, it blessed everyone there with its overriding message that Jesus is everywhere. He is there for everyone. We look forward to welcoming you to our next Café Church with its fun, activities, worship and delicious tea on February 11th at 4.30pm. Do come and join us.

### **Yeo Valley Primary School**

It was so good to welcome Yeo Valley back into Christ Church for their annual Christmas Concert in December. There were a good number of parents there to hear the young people's excellent performance, including Christmas readings, poems, solos and the joyful singing from Years 5 and 6 (with great orchestral accompaniment too). Following this and the school's other two visits in 2023, we look forward to welcoming them on further occasions this coming year. They are a much loved part of our church family.

### **Parent and Toddler Group**

We have had a good 2023 which finished with our Christmas party.

Rev. Marilyn Tricker came in this year to tell our Nativity Story with the help of her puppets: an owl and a sheep, and the nativity scene in the church. Even the tiniest one was mesmerised by the story. After we sang Christmas arrangements of their favourite songs with the Christopher and Marilyn on their musical instruments, we finished with a festive tea. This was a great success and I have already been asked if the lady with the puppets is coming again!

We continue to be a happy group with another family joining us this term.  
(photos - page 8)



*Joy, Sandy, Christopher, Elaine, Jenny and Maureen*

We now look forward to 2024 and all that it will bring, praying for happiness and peace for us all.

With love and blessings from

*The Young Families Work Team*

*Thank you to all the organisers of the New Years Eve Party. The quizzes and games were fantastic; not so many children but the adults enjoyed the games - many of us remembering them from our youth, it was lots of laughter and fun. This was followed by a pasty supper. A perfect ending to the year.*

*Joy*



## Excerpts from the Freedom Community Alliance Supporters Newsletter – January 2024

Dear friend,

Wow! Another year has flown by and we finished 2023 with a sense of gratitude for so many blessings, not least of which is the support that you continue to give to our work.

As with life in general, the year has been full of successes and challenges, joy and sadness but our team of 26 staff, volunteers and partners are still standing and just as committed to the work they do for those in most need within our local community.

Earlier in the year, we said 'goodbye' to Croscombe Barton near Lynton which, for more than 13 years, has been a treatment centre for those wanting freedom from addiction. In May we held a celebration of all that had been achieved there and it was incredibly moving to hear story after story of men who shared how their lives had been transformed by the work of the team there. Indeed, many shared how they genuinely believed they would not be alive had it not been for Croscombe. In November, one of those men, Chris, joined a team that went to Uganda with the local charity Amigos. There he was able to share so much of his life lessons with young men there who were themselves struggling. He said he kept having to pinch himself to think that 5 years ago, he was in prison, but now he was able to travel to Africa to help others. Chris says he is first in the queue to return next year.

We continue to provide at total of 51 beds of supported housing for individuals who either have been homeless or are at risk of being so. These include some properties that provide night by night provision and are the first step on the ladder for those struggling with chaos. We have 2 shared houses and 8 pods (4 internally on site at the Freedom Centre and 4 externally) all of which is used for this temporary accommodation. In 2023, 103 different individuals used this temporary accommodation. The four pods on site here were used 965 times over the year providing safe sleep, with our night welfare team providing a reassuring presence to users. This is an occupancy rate of 72% which, when you consider the levels of chaos of those involved, is really positive. We also have more established shared houses that individuals can call home. In 2023, these houses were used by 37 different individuals and a further 12 from our Recovery Housing.

We have recently also secured some funding to enable more of our clients to access counselling services. We recognise that without being able to process painful life events and the resulting emotions, many individuals will remain stuck in behaviours that undermine their hopes for a positive and full life. The 6-month pilot using counsellors that Freedom are already working with, aims to build trust with individuals who use our Day Centre, to encourage them to engage with a counsellor and move forward in their lives. We will keep you posted on progress.

On behalf of all at Freedom, we wish you a very happy, healthy and blessed 2024. God bless you,

*The Freedom Team*

## Update from Amigos – Kira Farm celebrates

“I found hope and knowledge through the training I received this year from Amigos.” (One of the 2023 graduates)

### An incredible year

We heard in December the excellent news that Elvis, our Kira Farm trainee had successfully graduated, along with the many others with whom he had trained, and got to know over 2023. They had all been working hard since January, learning new skills which will transform their lives, making new friends, and preparing for the road ahead.

Graduation day overflowed with joy and optimism and was full of music, dancing, and lots of laughter! It was a day for all the trainees (now graduates!) to reflect on the year and celebrate with their new friends and family. It is always such an honour to follow their progress as they grow in knowledge, ability and faith over the year. Along with photographs from Elvis we received a lovely letter of thanks, once again painstakingly written in his hand. Here are some encouraging extracts from it copied in his own words:

*“Here in Kira Farm (Amigos) I have been acquired with the skills in carpentry, building, and on those skills I would like to go back to my community and start practicing what I have learnt from Kira Farm, work hard to get enough capital to start my own workshop for carpentry. Also providing the youth the skill that I have learnt through training them. And working hard to buying the electrical machine which may fasten the work easily. The training that I have been will promote and improve the standard of my living...”*



He goes on to say how his strengthened faith has taught him not to give up in anything he does but to continue to practice his skills (*‘as no condition is permanent’*). In knowing God’s word he has learnt the importance of relationships, of choosing a good friend who will advise wisely with good words should things become difficult, and also how to forgive one another. He finishes by saying: *‘Thank you for supporting me in Kira Farm and may the Lord bless the work of your hand Thanks, Elvis Obote’*.

And now as we say goodbye to Elvis, let us cheer him and all these young people on, praying that they will know God’s blessing in all their future endeavours. We pray too that God will give them confidence to believe in themselves and their newly acquired abilities, and guide them as they navigate a new path in life and return to their communities. We know that God will be with them as they face any challenges that lie ahead. Let us, with special thoughts for Elvis, keep them in our prayers as they enter this new chapter.

*Anthea*

# Christmas Causeway



Our dramatised Bible reading of the Nativity story



Elvis and friends graduated from Kira Farm



Rev'd Don's Last Sunday Service

After a very moving service, we celebrated with a wonderful bring & share lunch



## Notes from the Elders Meetings: 11.12.23 and 08.01.24

### 11.12.23

- News of the fellowship was shared and prayers said for all those who are poorly, their carers, those who have been bereaved and those awaiting treatment
- The Christmas Cafe Church went well
- Rev Jonathan Richards will lead a Bible Study on Thursday afternoons at 2pm
- The Nativity Scene was much appreciated by visitors to the church
- A list of issues to be dealt with after Don's retirement was circulated and discussed
- Services for Worship at Home will still to be produced
- Electricians are due to repair/replace faulty lights in the new year
- A quotation for the repair of the stained glass panel in the Lady chapel door has been received
- Yeo Valley School Christmas concert went well
- Winter Fair went well
- Thanks were expressed to Rev Don for all he had done during his time here

### 08.01.24

- News of the fellowship was shared and prayers said for all those who are poorly, their carers, those who have been bereaved and those awaiting treatment. Pastoral care following Revd Don's departure was discussed
- Plans are still ongoing for A's Baptism
- Safeguarding: new guidelines are being drawn up
- Sing for your Supper - planned for 15th March
- Holy Week services are being planned, details in next Messenger
- More volunteers are needed to serve refreshments on Sunday mornings
- Finance: the accounts are with the Auditor for checking

Next meeting: Tuesday 6th February



I would like to thank members of the church who kindly phoned me at home after my operation for cancer. Also for the many get well cards I received.. Thank you for your kind thoughts,

Jessie (Watson)



NORAH BELLOT COURT  
VICARAGE STREET

We continue to value the support we get from everyone at Christ Church and the Circuit.



We had a busy Christmas with visits from pupils from Yeo Valley, Pathfield and Our Lady's Schools.

Add to this, regular visits from local preachers, the Harmony Choir and the Jubilee Singers among others and you can see how many community links we have.



Contact me if you have time to volunteer.  
Best Wishes,  
Sally, Chaplain at Norah Bellot Court  
sally.blackmore@mha.org.uk



# SOUND IT OUT

2024

Coffee, Cake and Chat together with Singing and Music too!  
NO musical talent required.

There is no doubt that singing raises your spirits. At Sound It Out we have a great time singing, laughing, sharing and supporting. Some people come for the company, some because we sing for memory and some carers because of the support and the chance to relax with people who understand.

Christ Church  
Bear Street  
Barnstaple

**'Sound It Out'**  
is a fortnightly group, particularly aimed at supporting people with memory loss and their carers.

At Christmas we had a singsong and a "bring and share" lunch which we all enjoyed.

Come and join us in 2024, everyone is very welcome.

*Sally*

MONDAYS (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> of each month) 10am – 12 noon  
COME & SEE WHAT WE DO – ALL WELCOME

January	8 <sup>th</sup>	22 <sup>nd</sup>	July	8 <sup>th</sup>	22 <sup>nd</sup>
February	12 <sup>th</sup>	26 <sup>th</sup>	August	12 <sup>th</sup>	only
March	11 <sup>th</sup>	25 <sup>th</sup>	September	9 <sup>th</sup>	23 <sup>rd</sup>
April	8 <sup>th</sup>	22 <sup>nd</sup>	October	14 <sup>th</sup>	28 <sup>th</sup>
May	13 <sup>th</sup>	only	November	11 <sup>th</sup>	25 <sup>th</sup>
June	10 <sup>th</sup>	24 <sup>th</sup>	December	9 <sup>th</sup>	only



## **GEORGE HERBERT**

George Herbert was a British poet, orator and Anglican Priest. He is recognised as one of the foremost devotional lyricists. He was born in Wales in 1593 but raised mainly in England. George was from a wealthy family and received a good all-round education. This enabled him to enter Trinity College Cambridge. His intention was to become a priest but his oratory skills soon caught the attention of King James.

George's father died when George was just three years old. John Donne was George's godfather and took up the role of surrogate father to George. Under the guidance of Donne, George continued his education, eventually graduating from Cambridge with first a Bachelor's degree then a Master's. He was subsequently elected a major fellow of his college then appointed Reader in Rhetoric. He became fluent in Greek and Latin and was elected to the post of University's Public Orator, a position he held until 1627.

In 1624 he entered Parliament but circumstances were such that his career did not last long and he turned more fully toward the church. Before he was ordained, he became Prebend of Leighton Bromswold in the Diocese of Lincoln, his friend, Nicholas Ferrar, was ordained the same year and took up a living at Little Gidding, just two miles away from Leighton Bromswold, to found a small Christian community. George raised money and used much of his own to restore the neglected church building.

George entered the priesthood in 1629 and was given a living near Salisbury. Here he lived, preached and wrote poetry. He also helped to rebuild the Bemerton church and adjacent rectory from his own funds. Whilst here he added to his collection of poems entitled *The Temple*. He also wrote *A Priest in the Temple* or *The County Parson, His Character and Rule of Holy Life*. He described this work as "a Mark to aim at", and has remained influential to this day.

He led a very simple life at Bemerton. Having recently married, he and his wife gave a home to three orphaned nieces. Twice daily the household attended services at St Andrew's Church across the lane. George attended services at Salisbury Cathedral twice a week and afterwards made music with the Cathedral musicians. He died in 1633, just three years after taking holy orders. George wrote poetry in English, Latin and Greek. All of his surviving poems are on religious themes and thought to describe his journey of doubt and conflict affecting his soul. More than ninety of his poems have been set to music. Forty were adapted for the Methodist Hymnal amongst them "Teach me my God and King" and "Let all the world in every corner sing".

George Herbert, although better known for his poetry and prose, was a sincere and devout Christian with a great deal of understanding of the needs and circumstances of the poor, and helped where he was able.

Music to Listen to: Orlando Gibbons: *If ye be risen again with Christ*



## GLUTEN-FREE MOIST FRUIT CAKE

### Ingredients

12 oz (300 g) gluten-free plain flour  
2 level tsp. gluten-free baking powder  
1/2 level tsp. bicarbonate of soda  
1/2 level tsp. xanthan gum  
6 oz (150 g) margarine  
4 oz (100 g) soft brown sugar  
1 level tsp mixed spice  
1/2 pint of water, fruit juice, or beer  
16 oz (400 g) mixed fruit  
6 oz (150 g) golden syrup or mixture of syrup, treacle, jam or marmalade.  
3 eggs



### Method

1 Grease and line 8" (20 cm) tin.  
2 Sift flour and dry ingredients into a large mixing bowl.  
3 Put all the other ingredients into saucepan, bring to the boil and boil gently for 5 minutes (allow to cool).  
4 Pour fruit mixture into dry mixture, add eggs and mix thoroughly. Turn into the tin and bake in a pre-heated oven 160 C, Gas 3 for approx. 2 hours. Allow to cool in the tin.

I made this cake for Hobnob as one of our lovely guests cannot eat gluten, the rest of the cake was eaten by the other guests. It works well and does not seem to suffer from a crumbly or dry finish which is a problem with so many gluten-free recipes. If you don't want to make it gluten-free, use ordinary plain flour and omit the xanthan gum. Use two eggs instead of three.

I found this cake worked better using block margarine or butter. It may be a little crumbly with soft margarine.

*Jennifer*

### **Friendship Group**

Our first session for the New Year was called 'Getting to Know You' and was enjoyed by everyone. After the usual start 20 members were seated in a large circle. I went first and told the group that I was born in Godalming in Surrey and came down to Devon in 1989. I passed the speaker to the lady next to me and the group continued and many mentioned a some interesting facts. Only a few ladies were born in Devon! We then had lovely cakes and tea. Many thanks to Gill, Ruth, Jennifer, and to Elsie who shared her Birthday Cake. I had to encourage ladies to leave at going home time – the room was still buzzing with conversations. We missed seeing several of our regular ladies and hope they will be able to come along to our next session.

By the time you read this we will have had an RNLI Film on 22nd January.

Tues 12th Feb: a talk entitled "Braddicks Haunted House" by Sharon Snell

Thurs 22nd Feb: a visit to the Queens Theatre to see "The Mouse Trap".

Best wishes to you all,

(photos – back cover)

*Rosemary*

Myself and the family would like to say a big thank you for all the friends who attended Gordon's funeral. Gordon had been ill for a very long time, but in all that time he never lost his faith. My thanks also goes to those friends who have been there for me, they will know who they are. But lastly my thanks goes to Deacon Joan Cole for so ably taking Gordon's service.

Pam

## The Messenger

The Messenger is available in digital form and can be emailed - this version is in full colour on every page and looks really great. It also saves on paper and printing. If you would like to receive The Messenger in this way, please let an Elder have your email address. This is the ideal way to send The Messenger to friends or family who are not local, and saves you the cost of postage!

This digital version is also available on our church website:

<http://christ-church-barnstaple.org.uk/http-christ-church-barnstaple-org-uk-wp-content-uploads-2019-11-november-2019-pdf/>

The paper copies will remain free of charge as we don't want anyone to feel they can't afford a copy. However, if you feel able to contribute, there is a collection box with the paper copies in the vestibule.

## Benevolent Fund

*This is just a reminder of the existence of the Benevolent Fund. The fund is administered entirely confidentially to respond to urgent one-off pastoral needs.*

*We are very grateful to members of the church family who contribute to the fund. There will continue to be a collection basket available as we leave the sanctuary after Communion services. Thank you.*

## 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. 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.*

**Circuit Superintendent:** Rev Stephen Caddick 01271 345956

#### **Elders:**

Alison Cairns (Church Secretary) 343154 [alisoncairns@hotmail.com](mailto:alisoncairns@hotmail.com)

Kathy Jeacock (Church Treasurer) 373555

Chris Marshall

Liz Seymour

Jenny Newman

Janet Marshall

Shirley Baxter

Staveley Dawson

Anthea Coates

Eff Poole

Elaine Stevens

#### **Pastoral Team (Church Friends):**

Shirley Baxter Elaine Stevens

If no reply, please leave a message

**Room Bookings:** 371808

**Circuit Administrator:** 379116

#### **Christian Aid Reps:**

Janet Marshall and Paula Littlewood

Janet: 01271 373013

[jcbmar18@btinternet.com](mailto:jcbmar18@btinternet.com)

#### **Messenger Editors:**

Bruce and Liz Seymour

[seymourejs@gmail.com](mailto:seymourejs@gmail.com)

# *New Years Eve Party*



Don attempting to eat a bar of chocolate with cutlery, double Pass the Parcel (adults & children at the same time), and dropping fir cones from knees into a bucket!



## *Friendship Group Christmas Lunch*



Thanks to Pam who shared this lovely photo of some dear friends recently lost

