

# **TORRIDGE METHODIST CIRCUIT**

## **MONTHLY NEWSLETTER**

### **December 2023 January 2024 - Issue 142**

Welcome to Edition Number 142

**Contact e-mail address is [newsletter@torridgemethodistcircuit.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@torridgemethodistcircuit.org.uk) or  
[bucklanddave1953@btinternet.com](mailto:bucklanddave1953@btinternet.com)**

Any comments or items you wish to share, please contact the editor, Dave Watson by e-mail; phone 01237 451437 or to 6 Greenings Road, Buckland Brewer, Bideford, EX39 5LU.

#### **Circuit Contact details: -**

Superintendent Minister – Rev Rob Blackhall – 01805 628041 – [robertjblackhall@gmail.com](mailto:robertjblackhall@gmail.com)

Minister – Rev Andrew Vidamour – 01237 478453 – [vidamour@mybroadbandmail.com](mailto:vidamour@mybroadbandmail.com)

Lay Pastoral Assistant – Frank Watson – 07446 157329 -: [pastoral.torridgecircuit@outlook.com](mailto:pastoral.torridgecircuit@outlook.com)

Circuit Administrator – Sarah Richards – 01237 472649 – [sarahrichards185@gmail.com](mailto:sarahrichards185@gmail.com)

Circuit Safeguarding Officer – Jacqui Watson – [safeguarding@torridgemethodistcircuit.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@torridgemethodistcircuit.org.uk)

As well as the Circuit Facebook page – **Torridge Methodist Circuit**, we have a private Facebook Group where we can share thoughts, prayers & other material on **Torridge Methodist Circuit Group**. If you wish to join please push the Join button & I can add you.

Please pray for our Ministers, Rob Blackhall & Andrew Vidamour, for Frank Watson & Sarah Richards and all involved in the varied life of the Circuit; for those connected to the various Chapels & the communities in which they live & work.

#### **CIRCUIT ZOOM SERVICES**

The Circuit Services continue to take place ON VARIOUS Sunday's on Zoom using the Services that are printed in the Circuit Newsletter. The Services are on Sunday Evenings starting at 6.30pm – but the 'doors will be open' at about 6.15pm. The contact/entry details will be sent out during the preceding week & the Service can be accessed via a computer/laptop with camera/microphone, iPad/Phone or using a 'normal' phone. Even if you have a device with camera/microphone & do not wish to be seen – you can join in without the camera on.

If you do not receive an email or want further information – please contact Sarah Richards, Circuit Administrator on 01237 472649 or [sarahrichards185@gmail.com](mailto:sarahrichards185@gmail.com)

#### **FROM REV ROB BLACKHALL – SUPERINTENDENT MINISTER**

Dear Friends

Another year has nearly rolled by!

It is good that we get one of the highlights of the year towards the very end! We can celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, at the darkest time of the year. We certainly need the light and love of Christ in our world at this time. The news around our globe seems so hopeless; so distressing and full of destruction and war.

However, we can approach the Christmas season with hope and confidence; because God has not left us to our own devices but has sent his most precious son. *"The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth."* (John 1;14)

We celebrate “Emmanuel – God with us”. Joseph is asked to name him Jesus *“for he will save his people from their sins.”* (Matt 1:21).

Mary is also told the same thing; and it is then spelled out to her, *“He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”* (Luke 1:32-33)

These are great and wonderful event; mind-blowing and earth shattering; especially as we are aware of the way the story goes!

These events, then, lie at the heart of our salvation; and at the very centre of the life and mission of the Church.

The way that Christmas falls this year means that there will be a temptation to get into our Christmas celebrations earlier than usual. I know of one Minister who used to say that we should not sing carols until Christ was born! I suspect that we will be much earlier than that!

But, please, don't let Advent be squeezed out. We all need that preparation time that is Advent as we approach the cataclysmic Christmas events. We need to hear of God's promises of old; of God's challenges and choices; of God's mercy and grace. Our belief is that all this did not happen by accident, but by the design and love of a gracious God.

We need time to contemplate and come to terms with this – Advent is such a time. So don't rush to sing your carols and set up your cribs – there will be plenty of time to fully celebrate.

### **Collect for the Second Sunday of Advent**

*God of all time and space, who are we, that you should come to us? Yet you have visited your people and redeemed us in your Son. As we prepare to celebrate his birth make our hearts leap with joy at the sound of your word and move us by your Spirit to bless your wonderful works. We ask this through him whose coming is certain, whose day draws near, even Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen*

Every blessing for Advent, Christmas and the New Year  
Rob Blackhall

### **ADVENT ZOOM CAROL SERVICE**

At 6.30pm on 10<sup>th</sup> December on Zoom we shall share an Advent Carol Service. The order is to be found elsewhere in the Newsletter.

### **ZOOM CAROL SERVICE**

We will be a Carol Service on Zoom at 7pm on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December.  
Any carol requests to Rob or Frank asap please.

### **LIGHT UP A LIFE SERVICE**

This will take place at **Torrington Methodist Church** on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December at 10.30am. It is a celebration of Christmas and also of the work of the Hospice, both the North Devon Hospice and the Children's Hospice, South West, Little Bridge House.

This time of year, is a special and poignant time to remember loved ones who are no longer with us. Light Up A Life gives you an opportunity to remember someone special this Christmas. They do not have to have been cared for by the hospice for you to make a dedication in their honour.

There will be an opportunity within the worship to light a candle in memory of those whom we love but see no longer.

## **PRAYER HANDBOOK**

One of the best resources we have is our Prayer Handbook. This year's theme, matching that of our President and Vice-President is 'Hidden Treasures'. This is based on Isaiah 45:3, with inspiration from Romans 8:22-29 and Psalm 139.

Preparation is underway for next years. Would you like to contribute a prayer?

The deadline is 8<sup>th</sup> January. For more details see <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/prayer/methodist-prayer-handbook/>

## **Praise and Protest – 2024/2025**

We need your prayers!

The 2024/2025 Methodist Prayer Handbook title and theme is: Praise and Protest.

Please use the following to craft and submit a prayer:

In her song of praise, the 'Magnificat' (Luke 1:46-55), Mary thanks God for the child Jesus, who will announce God's kingdom which "brings down the powerful from their thrones and lifts up the lowly."



To engage in God's mission and be part of that transformation, we believe the Methodist Church is called to become an increasingly evangelistic, inclusive and justice-seeking Church.

Following the prophet Isaiah's call, echoing through the ages to us and reflected in Mary's prayer, the 2024/2025 Prayer Handbook will focus on how the Church can "learn to do right; seek justice and defend the oppressed" (Isaiah 1:17a, NIV).

We invite you to offer prayers using Isaiah's three key actions for becoming the justice-seeking Church we are called to be, in response to God's love in Christ:

### **Learn**

We invite prayers that we might be attentive to God's ways, and discern how we go about learning to live justly in our local communities and churches.

### **Seek**

Please offer prayers that seek God and God's ways, and invite us to love God and to love our neighbours. Prayers could relate to looking actively for what God is showing us as the Body of Christ corporately, or more personally, to become people who recognise injustice and take action.

### **Defend**

Finally, we welcome prayers for the Church to become more aware of the voices of the people we are called to defend – those who are marginalised and silenced. We welcome prayers that support others in their protest and prayers for how we get involved.

## **ADVENT STUDY 2023**

Wednesdays at 2pm at Torrington

## **SOMEONE TO BELIEVE IN**

Based on the film "Miracle on 34th Street" 1947

The story is about an elderly man, Kris Kringle, who is employed by Macy's store on 34th Street, New York, to play Santa Claus in the Thanksgiving Parade (after the original Santa is found to be intoxicated) and then in-store. The kindly old man seems to believe that he really is Santa and

people love him. He even sends people to other shops to get the goods Macy's can't supply. This benevolent action enhances Macy's reputation, and Kris Kringle is soon seen as a major asset to the story.

The sessions will show clips from the films as well as exploring Biblical passages and our own beliefs.

29th November	Seeds of faith
6th December	Friends and Enemies
13th December	When common sense tells you not to
20th December	Nothing Impossible

All are welcome.

## **TUESDAY 5<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING**

Torrington Methodist Church at 6-8pm

Training by Jessica Courtney, Assistant Community Responder Officer – North & East Devon, South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust

You never know when you might be called upon. This is a good opportunity to discover more about Defibrillators

## **DATES 2023/24**

### **CIRCUIT MEETING**

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2pm

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 7.30pm

**PASTORAL  
MEETINGS**

April 8-19

### **CHURCH COUNCILS**

Mar 5-16

May 20-25, June 3-7

### **LOCAL PREACHERS 7pm**

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June

### **CIRCUIT SAFEGUARDING 7pm**

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March

### **WAYS OF WORSHIP (TBC)**

### **CIRCUIT CONVERSATIONS (Sunday 3-5)**

Once a Quarter

### **ZOOM SERVICES**

2 a month (TBC)

### **ENCIRCLED IN CARE**

#### **NORTHAM**

Tuesdays 2pm

#### **TORRINGTON**

Wednesdays 7pm

12th December

*Health, Healing & Well-being*

9th January

*Mental Health Issues*

6th February

*Loss and Bereavement*

12th March

*Domestic Abuse*

13th December

10th January

7th February

13th March

### **LEADERSHIP MEETINGS**

2pm Kendor

April 23

June 4

Jan 23

March 5

(July 9)

ADVENT STUDY  
Wednesday 2pm @Torrington  
Dec 6<sup>th</sup>  
Dec 13<sup>th</sup>  
Dec 20<sup>th</sup>

QUIET MORNING / TIME FOR GOD

Time for Quiet and for reading 10-12.30  
11-12 Guided Meditation  
Wed 6<sup>th</sup> Dec Torrington  
Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> Jan Buckland  
Thurs 8<sup>th</sup> Feb Langtree  
Wed 6<sup>th</sup> March Lake  
Thurs 11<sup>th</sup> April Northam  
Wed 1<sup>st</sup> May Black Torr  
Wed 5<sup>th</sup> June Milton D  
Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> July

THY KINGDOM COME

May 9 Ascension Day to  
May 19 Pentecost, 2024

BIBLE MONTH

June 2024

SYNODS

Sat 27<sup>th</sup> April TBC

LENT STUDY

Thursdays 2pm  
Feb 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>  
March 7<sup>th</sup>, Wed 13<sup>th</sup>, Tues 19<sup>th</sup>

HOLY WEEK

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March Palm Sunday  
Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March EASTER DAY

**CIRCUIT MEETING 22/11/23**

The two main pieces of business at the circuit meeting were to approve new job descriptions and contracts for Sarah and Frank. Those were agreed, which is good news for our circuit. We very much value their work among us. The contracts are in the process of being prepared with the HR company the District uses.

There has been extensive discussion with Frank, Sarah, myself and the Leadership team about the way forward.

Sarah will now be taking on much of the Property portfolio within the circuit. For sometime we have been very aware that she has been doing more hours than she was contracted for. With this additional responsibility, we have agreed to increase Sarah's hours to 30. Sarah will continue to work in a flexible manner; which very much suits both her and us. This will, we hope fit in with the Richards' family life. We also agreed that Sarah will now be known as the "Circuit Manager"

Frank, has unbelievably, being working with us for nearly 3 years. His contract will therefore become permanent. This was a good opportunity to review what Frank does. His new job description reflects a more mission-based approach, via initiatives like the Book Club and Encircled in Care Course. Frank of course, now chairs the Pastoral Committees in all the Church Councils, which looks not only at pastoral concerns, but also our wider interaction with the local community. Frank will continue to work 35 hours a week. We also considered what the appropriate job title for Frank was. I was keen to remove the word "assistant", and to have a term that was understood, both within and outside the Church. We also talked to the District Chair about this, indeed Dan Haylett had conversations with Frank concerning his work among us. We have come up with the Title, "Circuit Lay Minister".

Please, pray for both Sarah and Frank as this new phase begins.

We were also able in the meeting to receive and approve the Circuit Accounts for 2022/23. Thanks must go to Elsie and David Potter, Paul Booth and our auditor Revd. Graham Thompson for their efficiency.

#### Contact time and Days off

As part of the discussion about Sarah and Frank concern was raised from the meeting about days off and times that they are contacted. The same might be added for Andrew and myself.

It was felt that it is not unreasonable to suggest that emails and phone calls after 6pm should not take place **EXCEPT IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY**. This last point is vital; and well understood by those working in a pastoral situations. We do and would want to respond should the need arise. Most of us, will have phones around that pick-up emails all the time; so it is likely that in an emergency we are always contactable. I think, I would add, to wait until after 8.30am in the morning.

In anticipation, thank you.

#### Days Off

Sarah – works flexibly; so, she can maximize time with the family. Family time tends to be at the weekend and in college holiday times.

Frank – Saturday. Although you will be aware he often attends coffee morning and other events, taking time off in lieu.

Andrew – Monday

Rob – Friday

Thanks Rob

### **FROM REVD ANDREW VIDAMOUR**

Dear Friends,

Perhaps one of the best known and loved poems about Christmas is the one by the former Poet Laureate, Sir John Betjeman. It is simply called 'Christmas', and it begins with a description of some of the familiar aspects of the festive season such as Church bells, holly, decorations and the exchange of gifts.

All these, no doubt, Betjeman wants to celebrate, even with dry humour as when he refers, for instance, to the gift of a 'hideous tie so kindly meant'. But then he goes on to remind us that all the trappings and trimmings of Christmas can never compare with the 'simple truth' which lies at the heart of the celebrations:

'That God was Man in Palestine/And lives today in Bread and Wine.'

Here Betjeman speaks of the bread and wine shared in the service of Holy Communion which is so central to Christian worship, not least on Christmas Eve. And this bread and wine may recall for us the ordinary life that Jesus lived, if in an extraordinary way. For bread and wine partly represent the basics of life – the 'bread and butter' of daily routine, which Jesus came to share and to help fill with the reality of God's loving-kindness.

But the bread and wine do not only point back to a life lived (and a death died) fully for God; they may also represent for us the potential and actual holiness of our lives now, both in the eyes of

God and in the creative, caring ways in which God may help us live now as we look for inspiration to the One who was born in a stable so long ago.

That birth put down a marker for the way Jesus would live – making the 'ordinary' special, just as he turned water into wine at a wedding. For Jesus was born and lived, of course, in humdrum circumstances, as a sign that our family relationships and friendships, and all the routine of daily life, may be enriched with the wonder of self-giving love not only at the festival of Christmas but every day of the year.

May God bless your celebrations with the joy and peace of the Christ-child.  
Andrew Vidamour

## EDI TRAINING

- If you wish to do the EDI course online, can you let Sarah Richards know.

To do the training online please take the following steps:-

1. Go to <https://mcb.theologyx.com/> If you have already used Theology X (probably for the Advanced safeguarding module) use the same username and password to sign into MCBX (the new Methodist online training platform).
2. If you do not have a Theology X account, just go straight to the MCBX and register there to create an account.
3. There you will find the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Module
4. You do not need to do it all at once but can do as little or as much as your time allows.
5. At the end you will be given a certificate (via email). Please could you let Sarah Richards have a copy of that so we can keep a record.

## FRANK WATSON – LAY PASTORAL WORKER

I wish you all a very  
Happy and Blessed Christmas.

God bless,

Frank

For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named Wonderful Counsellor,  
Mighty God, Everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace.  
(Isaiah 9:6, NRSV)



Have you ever read the whole bible? If not, why not challenge yourself! If you have, when was the last time you did? The start of a new year is a great time to begin. Therefore my activity idea for January is exactly this to read The Bible in One Year. Over the next year there will be a table of readings for each day of that month. There are three readings each day, Old Testament Reading, New Testament Reading, and Reading from Psalms/Proverbs. I look forward to hearing about how



people are getting on in the new year, and please ask me as well as I will be doing it. Happy Reading and Learning!

### **The Bible in One Year**

<b>January</b>	<b>Old Testament Reading</b>	<b>New Testament Reading</b>	<b>Reading from Psalms/Proverbs</b>
Mon 01	Genesis 1:1 – 2:17	Matthew 1:1-25	Psalms 1:1-6
Tue 02	Genesis 2:18 – 4:16	Matthew 2:1-18	Psalms 2:1-12
Wed 03	Genesis 4:17 – 6:22	Matthew 2:19 – 3:17	Psalms 3:1-8
Thu 04	Genesis 7:1 – 9:17	Matthew 4:1-22	Proverbs 1:1-7
Fri 05	Genesis 9:18 – 11:9	Matthew 4:23 – 5:20	Psalms 4:1-8
Sat 06	Genesis 11:10 – 13:18	Matthew 5:21-42	Psalms 5:1-12
Sun 07	Genesis 14:1 – 16:16	Matthew 5:43 – 6:24	Psalms 6:1-10
Mon 08	Genesis 17:1 – 18:33	Matthew 6:25 – 7:23	Proverbs 1:8-19
Tue 09	Genesis 19:1 – 20:18	Matthew 7:24 – 8:22	Psalms 7:1-9
Wed 10	Genesis 21:1 – 23:20	Matthew 8:23 – 9:13	Psalms 7:10-17
Thu 11	Genesis 24:1-67	Matthew 9:14-38	Psalms 8:1-9
Fri 12	Genesis 25:1 – 26:35	Matthew 10:1-31	Proverbs 1:20-33
Sat 13	Genesis 27:1 – 28:22	Matthew 10:32 – 11:15	Psalms 9:1-6
Sun 14	Genesis 29:1 – 30:43	Matthew 11:16-30	Psalms 9:7-12
Mon 15	Genesis 31:1-55	Matthew 12:1-21	Psalms 9:13-20
Tue 16	Genesis 32:1 – 33:20	Matthew 12:22-45	Proverbs 2:1-11
Wed 17	Genesis 34:1 – 35:29	Matthew 12:46 – 13:17	Psalms 10:1-11
Thu 18	Genesis 36:1 – 37:36	Matthew 13:18-35	Psalms 10:12-18
Fri 19	Genesis 38:1 – 39:23	Matthew 13:36-58	Psalms 11:1-7
Sat 20	Genesis 40:1 – 41:40	Matthew 14:1-21	Proverbs 2:12-22
Sun 21	Genesis 41:41 – 42:38	Matthew 14:22 – 15:9	Psalms 12:1-8
Mon 22	Genesis 43:1 – 44:34	Matthew 15:10-39	Psalms 13:1-6
Tue 23	Genesis 45:1 – 47:12	Matthew 16:1-20	Psalms 14:1-7
Wed 24	Genesis 47:13 – 48:22	Matthew 16:21 – 17:13	Proverbs 3:1-10
Thu 25	Genesis 49:1 – 50:26	Matthew 17:14 – 18:9	Psalms 15:1-5
Fri 26	Job 1:1 – 3:26	Matthew 18:10-35	Psalms 16:1-11
Sat 27	Job 4:1 – 7:21	Matthew 19:1-15	Psalms 17:1-5
Sun 28	Job 8:1 – 10:22	Matthew 19:16-30	Proverbs 3:11-20
Mon 29	Job 11:1 – 14:22	Matthew 20:1-19	Psalms 17:6-12
Tue 30	Job 15:1 – 18:21	Matthew 20:20-34	Psalms 17:13-15
Wed 31	Job 19:1 – 21:34	Matthew 21:1-17	Psalms 18:1-6

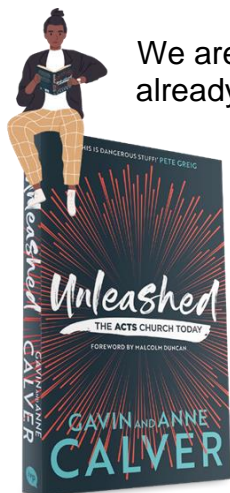
### **Circuit Knitters**

So the first knitted items have started arriving in my office. So far we have... 12 Hats and 5 Mufflers, no mittens yet. Thank you so much!

If you are busy knitting, don't panic! (there is no time deadline). If anyone else thinks they would like to make any of the items then please feel free and remember that once they are finished just let one of your church stewards have them and they will make sure the items get to me to be collected and sent off to the Mission. Happy Knitting!



## Circuit Book Club



We are now over halfway through *Unleashed, The Acts Church Today* and people are already enjoying reading and discussing the book.

A reminder to the group that Discussion Sessions will be held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday's of the month on Zoom at 7.00pm. The Zoom link (which was sent out to you) will be the same each time, but if you misplace it please just let me know and I will resend it to you.

Unleashed Discussion Dates are as follows:

6<sup>th</sup> December – Session 5: Unleashed Potential

20<sup>th</sup> December – Session 6: Unleashed Participators

The next book (yet to be chosen) will start in February 2024. This will give people time to sign up for the new book and for us to distribute the materials in January. More information will follow.

## Encircled in Care Course

The Encircled in Care Course continues, a reminder that the course is designed as stand alone sessions and therefore gives you the option of attending some or all of the topic sessions. Below is a short description of what is contained within each session. **Please remember that because we are now into autumn the Wednesday (Torrington) session has now move to afternoons.** Therefore, both Tuesday at Northam and Wednesday at Torrington, will both start at 2.00pm. The dates of each session are listed below and will be continue to be advertised in the Circuit Dates List.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Torrington December session will not take place. This is because now that we are into the season of Advent, the Circuit Advent Course is taking place at Torrington on a Wednesday afternoon at 2pm and therefore it is not possible to fit everything in. The people who normally attend the Torrington sessions are very welcome to attend Northam on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December.

Session 7: Health, Healing and Well-being			
In this session we... <b>explore</b> how issues of health and wholeness are part of pastoral ministry, and <b>offer</b> guidelines for the ministry of healing and reconciliation.	Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	Northam	14:00
Session 8: Mental Health Issues			
In this session we... <b>increase</b> our awareness of mental health issues, and <b>consider</b> how churches might support people affected by mental health problems, and their families and friends.	Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> January	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> January	Torrington	14:00
Session 9: Loss and Bereavement			
In this session we... <b>increase</b> the confidence of all in working through	TBC	Northam	14:00

issues of loss with people, <b>consider</b> how churches might help people 'return' following the loss of a loved one, and <b>explore</b> the stages of grief.	TBC	Torrington	14:00
Session 10: Domestic Abuse			
In this session we.. <b>recognise</b> that Domestic abuse affects people within the life of the Church as well as in the wider community, <b>reflect</b> on the issues of domestic abuse, and <b>consider</b> what appropriate responses we might make.	Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> March	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	Torrington	14:00

## SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

### Online Training Programme 2023

This training will now only be delivered in person in the Circuit.

**CIRCUIT SAFEGUARDING FOUNDATION TRAINING SESSION** – Dates for this will be announced later so people who need to do the training again as a 'Refresher' can be accommodated.

The next **Live Training Session** will be held on **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February at 2pm at Buckland Brewer Methodist Church** – Jacqui or Sarah will be in touch if you require this training.

## OPTIONS FOR ADVANCED TRAINING:

### E:Learning - Online through the MCBX platform

A learning experience which allows the learner to move through the course at their own pace. With a facilitated Gathered Session at the end of the learning via Zoom. Booking for this option will now be through Eventbrite, where delegates will first book onto a gathered course, which will generate their registration to the e:learning site automatically. These dates will be advertised shortly.

### Streamed Training Events

Designed to offer a face-to-face experience for more people across the District at once, the Advanced Module (Live-Streamed) allows leaders in your church to do this training all together, but without needing to travel as far. Teaching will be offered over a live-stream, delivered via YouTube, with space for conversations in your local context, and ways to interact with the trainers. This option is open to Circuit Safeguarding officers to host in Circuit venues. Individuals will not be able to register and do course alone

### Onsite Facilitated Training Events

Central locations will host District wide events facilitated by the District Safeguarding Officer, Revd Julian Albrow and Learning Network colleagues.

The courses coming to PEMD in 2023-2024:

Plymouth Mission. Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2024. 9-30am-4-00pm.

Taunton Deane & South Sedgemoor Circuit. Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2024. 9-30am/4-00pm.

South Devon Circuit. Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2024. 9-30am/4-00pm.

More details regarding venues to follow.

### **Streamed Training Event explained and booking guidance**

Designed to offer a face-to-face experience for more people across the District at once, the Advanced Module (Live-Streamed) allows leaders in your church to do this training all together, but without needing to travel as far. Teaching will be offered over a live-stream, delivered via YouTube, with space for conversations in your local context, and ways to interact with the trainers. We will offer the Advanced Module Training as a live stream. This includes:

- All the teaching content, taught in-front of a live class, with breaks for discussion and coffee in your local venues
- A way to interact with the training team live during question and answer sessions
- A register sheet to enable your attendees to have a certificate of completion. This will be sent to them directly, or to yourself if for later distribution, via email

Host churches will offer:

- A warm, comfortable venue for 4.5hrs of training
- A chaplain for attendees
- A Circuit Safeguarding coordinator/officer for local questions and answers
- A way to show and interact with a live-stream, suitable for the size of your group. The solution you use depends on the size of the group: for a 5 or below, a TV with a laptop plugged in may suffice. A larger group may benefit from using a projector and PA system connected to a computer. Regardless, a reliable internet connection will be required throughout the event
- Printed or electronic copies of the Participant resources available here:  
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/training/advanced-module-2023-edition-participants/advanced-module-2023-edition-materials/>.

To register your venue as a host:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/creating-safer-space-advanced-module-live-streamed-registration-588260221157?aff=oddtcreator>

### **FROM MAUREEN ELLIS AT BLACK TORRINGTON**

#### **A Free Book!**

As an ordinary Christian, now in my early eighties, I am still discovering what an exciting adventure it is to be a disciple of Jesus Christ!

I have at last finished writing a book called "Adventure with God – Cornwall Mission 2006 with Glorian Bonnette, Apostle like none other". It needed to be written to complete the story that Glorian (Glo) had started in two auto biographical books up to the point in 2003 when she met Roger Daniel. Of course, Glo intended to finish the story herself, but lost her battle with Pancreatic Cancer in 2007.

Glo had been travelling to Cornwall, from America, for 15 years of her 20 years as a disciple of Jesus. Her God-given assignment to "Take 100 strong and change the complexion of Cornwall" was enhanced by a vision - sparks of revival fire in Cornwall, crossing the Tamar, and going to Europe and far beyond.

Glo's last team of 42 (100 overall) was gathered from various States in the USA, included one from Poland, and four members of the very rural Shebbear Methodist Circuit in Devon, which of course is just across the Tamar!

How did it come about that Sheila and Roger Daniel, my husband, Peter, and myself were part of the team? In 2003, Roger, then a farmer, but also part-time coach driver, had been called upon to drive a party of Americans from Heathrow to St Ives when their driver fell ill. Roger and Sheila made sure Glo received an invitation to come to the Shebbear Methodist Circuit, which she did twice. We heard her story; and some of us asked if we could join her next mission, never having done anything like it in our lives before!

At the end of the 2006 mission, Glo believed her assignment was complete – “Signed, sealed, delivered!” she whispered to me when I read to the team a poem I had written to try and express all that the mission had meant to me. “Signed, sealed, delivered!” became the final line of the poem.

The book is written but not published. It is freely available to anyone who can receive an attachment by email. I have sent a few emails to members of Glo's team in America. Do send me an email if you would like a copy. In due time you might then receive a copy of my second book as well!

### **St. Columba**

The island of Iona lies off the west coast of Scotland. It is barely three miles long and one mile wide and St. Columba arrived there in 563AD from Ireland. He built his first Celtic Church on the island and founded a monastic community. He then began to convert many in pagan Scotland and in Northern England to the Christian faith. The island became a sacred place and many Scottish Kings are buried there. Columba and his followers spread the Gospel message more than anyone else had done in Britain at that time.

Born in Donegal, Ireland, Columba was related to the Irish Kings. He became a monk and was ordained as a priest. There are many stories of miracles that occurred during his ministry including his subduing of a ferocious beast which some have related to the Loch Ness monster! He established many churches in the Hebrides and Iona became a centre of education for missionaries. He also wrote hymns and transcribed a number of books.

He died in 597AD and was buried on the island by his monks. Two centuries later Iona was invaded by the Vikings and in 849AD his remains were removed from the island, some to Scotland and some to Ireland! He was never canonised as a Saint by the Pope but was treated as a Saint by the Celtic Church while he was still alive.

The present Abbey on the island was probably built in the C14th and is the spiritual home of the Iona Community today which is ecumenical and popular with pilgrims. In 2021 the Community established a renewable energy scheme along with high speed broadband!

Paul Bate

### **LANGTREE METHODIST CHURCH - SAMARITANS PURSE OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOX APPEAL**

We decided earlier in the year to support the Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Appeal as in previous years. This is an international charity which aims to give Christmas gifts (packed in a shoebox) to children in need across the world.

We held a packing party on Saturday October 21<sup>st</sup> with plenty of coffee, tea and cake. It was truly amazing to see the tables in the Sunday School overflowing with gifts that had been donated and we packed 85 boxes that morning. During the following weeks more boxes came in with support from individuals, local churches, and Torrington Rotary Club. In November a total of 146 thoughtfully filled boxes were taken to Grosvenor Church, Barnstaple. We pray that these boxes will bring hope, love and joy to the children who receive them.

Further details of where the boxes are delivered will be available in the early part of next year, usually at the beginning of February, so watch this space!



Many thanks to you all for your prayers and support and for all those who helped in any way.

Cathy (on behalf of Langtree Methodist Church)

### **BUCKLAND BREWER**

We continue to Live Stream Services on the Buckland Brewer Methodist Church You-Tube Channel on the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the Month & the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday if there is one.

The Weekly '**Time Together**' **Toddler Group** continues on Mondays, during Term Time at **Buckland Brewer Methodist Church** with both Methodist & Anglican volunteers being present. We meet on Monday's from 9.30am to about 12noon, The cost is £1.50 per family & the numbers have been steadily increasing – families do not just come from Buckland but from neighbouring communities – they often come as friendship groups – so if anyone is aware of any Babies & Toddlers, who with their parents, grandparents or carers are looking for a 'chilled out' session of play & chat with tea/coffee/biscuits – just point them in the direction of Buckland Chapel – Dave Watson 07484 223515 or [bucklanddave1953@btinternet.com](mailto:bucklanddave1953@btinternet.com)

The **Wednesday Weekly Coffee Morning** also continues at **Buckland Brewer Methodist Church** from 10am-12noon – this is for **ALL** but especially for those who have moved into the parish/village since lockdown or anyone who would like to meet others in the community over a mug of tea/coffee with Biscuits & possibly Cake!!

The **Monthly 'Mini Market'**, raising funds for Community Groups in Buckland continues at **Buckland Brewer Methodist Church**. The next one will be on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December from 10am to 1pm with many items on sale – Tea/Coffee/Biscuits will be available for Chapel Funds.

The **Community Choir**, based in the Chapel has returned to practice after having a couple of months off.

### **TORRINGTON METHODIST CHAPEL**

Torrington Methodist Church welcome all to their Coffee Mornings where delicious Bacon Butties are served and where cakes and bric-a-brac are sold. The next Coffee Morning is on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> January from 10am till 1pm. Proceeds for Action for Children.

### **BIDEFORD METHODIST CHURCH**

Coffee Morning on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December from 10am-12noon

## **NORTHAM AND BIDEFORD BIBLE STUDIES UPDATE**

After the Christmas Break we will meet on February 20<sup>th</sup> to discuss a LENT STUDY on Tuesdays at 2pm at Diana's home

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February is Frank's Encircled in Care Course then we have Shrove Tuesday 13th February.

For more info. Contact Julia Spencer

### **MILTON DAMEREL NEWS**

Our new BIBLE STUDY group, joint 'venture' with Thornbury St Peter's Church, will be meeting in our Schoolroom, at Milton Damerel, for an Advent Study, titled "Ready for Christmas: Thinking about Advent" by Peter Dainty.

Dates for December are Tuesdays ... 5th, 12th & 19th at 10.30am. The leader is Revd Stephen Skinner. A warm invite to anyone able to come along on any of the mornings.

Many thanks - Grace

### **THE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS - THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD! BY MURIEL MOORE**

The story of Christmas is two thousand years old,  
And over the years it has often been told,  
The story of Joseph and Mary his wife,  
A Nazarene pair who lived a plain, simple life!

They travelled to Bethlehem - a Census was due,  
But when they arrived, they were in a right stew!  
No room at the Inns - there was no place to stay!  
Not very good news with a baby on the way!

One Innkeeper said he was willing and able,  
To give them the chance to sleep in the stable,  
It was not the best place they could think of, on Earth,  
But it was there that young Mary, to Jesus gave birth!

I'm sure you all know how the Shepherds were told,  
How Angels appeared and how they left the sheep fold,  
How they went to the stable, where the young baby lay  
Asleep in a manger on a mattress of hay!

Then Wise Men from the East brought gifts from afar,  
They were led to the stable by a bright shining star,  
Yes it's the story of Christmas that we know very well,  
Of how Jesus was born and on Earth came to dwell.

But the Message of Christmas, we can often forget!  
As we scurry around with the presents to get,  
The turkey to stuff and the mince pies to make!  
Not to mention the shopping or icing the cake!

The Message of Christmas - although old - is still new  
With a Message of Hope for both me and for you,

The Angels' message proclaimed after Jesus' birth,  
Was of Peace and Goodwill to all Men on this Earth!

So as we celebrate Christmas with family and friends,  
May the World heed this Message 'again and again'!  
And remembers that Jesus in humble stable of old,  
Is our Hope for the future - 'The Light of the World'!

## **CIRCUIT ZOOM SERVICE for Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December**

### **AN ADVENT CAROL SERVICE**

**Isaiah 35:1-6**

**StF 169 Come thou long expected Jesus**

#### **Prayer**

*Beloved in Christ, as we await the great festival of Christmas,  
let us prepare ourselves so that we may be shown its true meaning.*

*Let us hear, in lessons from Holy Scripture,  
how the prophets of Israel foretold  
that God would visit and redeem the waiting people.*

*Let us rejoice, in our carols and hymns,  
that the good purpose of God is being mightily fulfilled.*

*Let us celebrate the promise that our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ,  
will bring all peoples and all things  
into the glory of God's eternal kingdom.  
The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk,  
the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear,  
the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

*But first, let us pray for the world that God so loves,  
for those who have not heard the good news of God,  
or who do not believe it;  
for those who walk in darkness and the shadow of death;  
and for the Church in this place and everywhere,  
that it may be freed from all evil and fear,  
and may in pure joy lift up the light of the love of God.*

*These prayers and praises let us humbly offer to God,  
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. **Amen***

#### **Lord's Prayer**

**StF 180 O Come, O Come Immanuel**

**Isaiah 40:1-8**

To God's people in exile in a faraway land, the prophet Isaiah announces good news: God is coming back, and bringing the exiles home.



### **Jeremiah 23:5-6**

The prophet Jeremiah offers hope for a righteous branch, a just king who is yet to come.

### **StF 178 Long ago prophets knew, Christ would come**

### **Zechariah 9:9-10**

To a nation grown weary of war and weapons, God promises a king who will establish a reign of peace.

### **Haggai 2:6-9**

The Prophet Haggai promises to God's people a temple even more glorious than the temple of old.

### **StF 168 Come, Lord Jesus come**

### **Luke 1:26-35, 38 (Video)**

The angel Gabriel announces to the virgin Mary that she will give birth to a ruler whose reign shall never end

### **Mark 1:14-15**

Jesus proclaims the coming of the Kingdom of God

### **StF 186 Tell out my soul**

### **Sermon**

### **Prayers of Intercession**

*This Christmas, as we remember the birth of Jesus in a stable,  
we are reminded that hope comes in unexpected ways  
and in unfamiliar places.*

*We pray for our families and friends, for those with whom we live and work.*

*B: Wherever the world is in darkness, R: **Lord, let there be light.***

*This Christmas, as we remember the violence with which the soldiers came searching for Jesus,  
we are reminded that conflicts still have devastating effects on children trapped between warring  
sides.*

*We pray for conflict zones and look for peace. We especially pray for those whom we know who  
will be away from home this Christmas.*

*B: Wherever the world is in darkness, R: **Lord, let there be light.***

*This Christmas, as we remember the flight of Jesus' family to Egypt,  
we are reminded of the plight of people forced to flee from homes and possessions.  
We pray for refugees and asylum seekers, for those so far away from where they want to be.*

*B: Wherever the world is in darkness, R: **Lord, let there be light.***

*This Christmas, as we remember the homeless Holy Family,  
we are reminded of the millions of families now  
who have no shelter and who face eviction.*

*We pray for all homeless people wherever they are in the world.*

*B: Wherever the world is in darkness, R: **Lord, let there be light.***

*This Christmas, as we remember those who went to the stable, we are reminded that we need to make a journey. We pray for ourselves that as you have come to us, we may also come to know you, to know you and to love you more as we serve other people.*  
**B:**     *Wherever the world is in darkness, R:     **Lord, let there be light.***

*In the name of Christ Jesus, God with us, we ask these and all our prayers.*  
**AMEN**

## **StF 171 Hark the glad sound**

### **Blessing**

*Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage;  
hold fast that which is good; render to no one evil for evil;  
strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;  
help the afflicted; honour everyone;  
love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.  
And the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be upon you, and remain with you always. **Amen.***

## **UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - COVENANT RENEWAL SERVICE**

*In 1663 Richard Alleine, a Puritan, published *Vindiciae Pietatis*: or, "A Vindication of Godliness in the Greater Strictness and Spirituality of It". In 1753, it was again published in John Wesley's "A Christian Library". Wesley used one chapter, "The Application of the Whole," on Monday, August 11, 1755, in what probably was the first real celebration of the Covenant Service in the Methodist movement.*

*Wesley found the service rich and meaningful, as expressed in his Journal: "Many mourned before God, and many were comforted" (April 1756); "It was, as usual, a time of remarkable blessing" (October 1765). "It was an occasion for a variety of spiritual experiences ... I do not know that ever we had a greater blessing. Afterwards many desired to return thanks, either for a sense of pardon, for full salvation, or for a fresh manifestation of His graces, healing all their backslidings" (January 1, 1775). In London these services were usually held on New Year's Day. Around the country the Covenant Service was conducted whenever John Wesley visited the Methodist Societies.*

*This service is an adaption of Wesley's.  
The heart of the service, focused in the Covenant Prayer, requires persons to commit themselves to God. This covenant is serious and assumes adequate preparation for and continual response to the covenant.*

## **ENTRANCE**

### **GREETING**

*Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.*  
**FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING, YOU ARE GOD**  
(Psalm 90:1,2)

## **StF 549 Come let us use the grace divine**

*Charles Wesley wrote this hymn specifically for this service.*

## OPENING PRAYER

*O God, Searcher of all our hearts,  
you have formed us as a people and claimed us for your own.  
As we come to acknowledge your sovereignty and grace,  
and to enter anew into covenant with you,  
reveal any reluctance or falsehood within us.  
Let your Spirit impress your truth on our inmost being,  
and receive us in mercy, for the sake of our Mediator, Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

(DAVID TRIPP, ENGLAND, 20TH CENT.)

## LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

*Let us give thanks for all of God's mercies.*

*O God, our Covenant Friend,  
you have been gracious to us through all the years of our lives.  
We thank you for your loving care,  
which has filled our days and brought us to this time and place.  
**We praise your holy name, O God.***

*You have given us life and reason,  
and set us in a world filled with your glory.  
You have comforted us with family and friends,  
and ministered to us through the hands of our sisters and brothers.  
**We praise your holy name, O God.***

*You have filled our hearts with a hunger after you,  
and have given us your peace.  
You have redeemed us, and called us to a high calling in Christ Jesus.  
You have given us a place in the fellowship of your Spirit  
and the witness of your Church.  
**We praise your holy name, O God.***

*You have been our light in darkness  
and a rock of strength in adversity and temptation.  
You have been the very Spirit of joy in our joys  
and the all-sufficient reward in all our labors.  
**We praise your holy name, O God.***

*You remembered us when we forgot you.  
You followed us even when we tried to flee from you.  
You met us with forgiveness when we returned to you.  
For all your patience and overflowing grace.  
**We praise your holy name, O God.***

## PROCLAMATION

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

*Creative God, you make all things new in heaven and on earth.  
We come to you on a new year with new desires and old fears,*

*new decisions and old controversies,  
new dreams and old weaknesses.  
Because you are a God of hope,  
we know that you create all the possibilities of the future.  
Because you are a God of love,  
we know that you accept all the mistakes of the past.  
Because you are the God of our faith,  
we enter your gates with thanksgiving and praise,  
we come into your presence with gladness and a joyful noise,  
and we serve and bless you. **Amen***

**StF 501 Help us, O Lord to learn**

## **SCRIPTURE LESSONS**

**Jeremiah 31:31-34**    A new Covenant

**Matthew 9:14-17**    New wine into new wineskins

**1 Peter 1:3-16**    Call to holy living

## **SERMON**

**StF 519 Father, I place into your hands**

*Brothers and sisters in Christ,  
the Christian life is redeemed from sin and consecrated to God.  
Through baptism, we have entered this life  
and have been admitted into the new covenant  
of which Jesus Christ is the Mediator.  
He sealed it with his own blood, that it might last for ever.  
On the one side, God promises to give us new life in Christ,  
the Source and Perfecter of our faith.  
On the other side, we are pledged  
to live no more for ourselves but only for Jesus Christ,  
who loved us and gave himself for us.*

*From time to time we renew our covenant with God,  
especially when we reaffirm the Baptismal Covenant  
and gather at the Lord's table.*

*Today, however, we meet, as the generations before us have met,  
to renew the covenant that binds us to God.  
Let us make this covenant of God our own.*

## **WESLEY'S COVENANT SERVICE**

### **INVITATION**

Commit yourselves to Christ as his servants.  
Give yourselves to him, that you may belong to him.  
Christ has many services to be done.  
Some are more easy and honourable,

others are more difficult and disgraceful.  
Some are suitable to our inclinations and interests,  
others are contrary to both.  
In some we may please Christ and please ourselves.  
But then there are other works where we cannot please Christ  
except by denying ourselves.  
It is necessary, therefore,  
that we consider what it means to be a servant of Christ.

Let us, therefore, go to Christ, and pray:

***Let me be your servant, under your command.  
I will no longer be my own.  
I will give up myself to your will in all things.***

Be satisfied that Christ shall give you your place and work.

***Lord, make me what you will.  
I put myself fully into your hands:  
put me to doing, put me to suffering,  
let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,  
let me be full, let me be empty,  
let me have all things, let me have nothing.  
I freely and with a willing heart  
give it all to your pleasure and disposal.***

Christ will be the Savior of none but his servants.  
He is the source of all salvation to those who obey.  
Christ will have no servants except by consent;  
Christ will not accept anything except full consent  
to all that he requires.  
Christ will be all in all, or he will be nothing.

Confirm this by a holy covenant.

To make this covenant a reality in your life, listen to these admonitions:

First, set apart some time, more than once,  
to be spent alone before the Lord;  
in seeking earnestly God's special assistance  
and gracious acceptance of you;  
in carefully thinking through all the conditions of the covenant;  
in searching your hearts  
whether you have already freely given your life to Christ.  
Consider what your sins are.  
Consider the laws of Christ, how holy, strict, and spiritual they are,  
and whether you, after having carefully considered them,  
are willing to choose them all.  
Be sure you are clear in these matters, see that you do not lie to God.

Second, be serious and in a spirit of holy awe and reverence.

Third, claim God's covenant,  
rely upon God's promise of giving grace and strength,  
so you can keep your promise.  
Trust not your own strength and power.

Fourth, resolve to be faithful.  
You have given to the Lord your hearts,  
you have opened your mouths to the Lord,  
and you have dedicated yourself to God.  
With God's power, never go back.

And last, be then prepared to renew your covenant with the Lord.  
Fall down on your knees, lift your hands toward heaven,  
open your hearts to the Lord, as we pray:

## **COVENANT PRAYER**

*The people kneel or bow.*

***O righteous God, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
see me as I fall down before you.  
Forgive my unfaithfulness in not having done your will,  
for you have promised mercy to me  
if I turn to you with my whole heart.***

*God requires that you shall put away all your idols.*

***I here from the bottom of my heart renounce them all,  
covenanting with you that no known sin shall be allowed in my life.  
Against your will, I have turned my love toward the world.  
In your power  
I will watch all temptations that will lead me away from you.  
For my own righteousness is riddled with sin,  
unable to stand before you.***

*Through Christ, God has offered to be your God again  
if you would let him.*

***Before all heaven and earth,  
I here acknowledge you as my Lord and God.  
I take you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for my portion,  
and vow to give up myself, body and soul, as your servant,  
to serve you in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.***

*God has given the Lord Jesus Christ  
as the only way and means of coming to God.*

***Jesus, I do here on bended knees accept Christ  
as the only new and living Way,  
and sincerely join myself in a covenant with him.  
O blessed Jesus, I come to you,  
hungry, sinful, miserable, blind, and naked,  
unworthy even to wash the feet of your servants.***

***I do here, with all my power, accept you as my Lord and Head.  
I renounce my own worthiness,  
and vow that you are the Lord, my righteousness.  
I renounce my own wisdom, and take you for my only guide.  
I renounce my own will, and take your will as my law.***

*Christ has told you that you must suffer with him.*

***I do here covenant with you, O Christ,  
to take my lot with you as it may fall.  
Through your grace I promise  
that neither life nor death shall part me from you.***

*God has given holy laws as the rule of your life.*

***I do here willingly put my neck under your yoke, to carry your burden.  
All your laws are holy, just, and good.  
I therefore take them as the rule for my words, thoughts, and actions,  
promising that I will strive  
to order my whole life according to your direction,  
and not allow myself to neglect anything I know to be my duty.***

*The almighty God searches and knows your heart.*

***O God, you know that I make this covenant with you today  
without guile or reservation.  
If any falsehood should be in it, guide me and help me to set it aright.  
And now, glory be to you, O God the Father,  
whom I from this day forward shall look upon as my God and Father.  
Glory be to you, O God the Son,  
who have loved me and washed me from my sins in your own blood,  
and now is my Savior and Redeemer.  
Glory be to you, O God the Holy Spirit,  
who by your almighty power have turned my heart from sin to God.***

***O mighty God, the Lord Omnipotent, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
you have now become my Covenant Friend.  
And I, through your infinite grace, have become your covenant servant.  
So be it.  
And let the covenant I have made on earth be ratified in heaven.  
Amen.***

*Comment*

*You are advised to make this covenant not only in your heart, but in word; not only in word, but in writing. Therefore, with all reverence, lay the service before the Lord as your act and deed. And when you have done this, sign it. Then keep it as a reminder of the holy agreement between God and you that you may remember it during doubts and temptations.*

**StF 658 A Charge to keep I have**

**Intercessions**



## Lord's Prayer

**StF 564 O Thou who camest from above**

### **DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING**

*May the God who established a covenant with those who seek to enter the Kingdom be always present with you.*

**AMEN**

*May Jesus Christ who sealed the new covenant with his sacrifice on the cross bring you peace*

**AMEN**

*May the Holy Spirit of God guide your life now and for ever.*

**AMEN**

*Go in peace to serve God and your neighbour in all that you do.*

**AMEN. THANKS BE TO GOD!**

**Copyright:** "Covenant Renewal Service" Copyright © 1992 UMPH. Wesley Covenant Service abridged by Ole E. Borgen.

## **DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING**

**TUESDAY 5<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER**

**Torrington Methodist Church at 6-8pm**

**Training by Jessica Courtney, Assistant Community Responder Officer – North & East Devon, South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust**

**You never know when you might be called upon.  
This is a good opportunity to discover more about Defibrillators  
ALL WELCOME**

## **Creating 'Spaces for Grace': The Heart of Methodism's Mission by Leslie Newton.**

Arguably the most influential driver for the remarkable growth of early Methodism was Wesley's creation of a dynamic network of 'spaces for grace.' As Wesley's own life was shaped by God's amazing grace, so he discovered that receiving and responding to grace is foundational to everyone's growing in faith and, crucially, something best done *together*.

Grace, of course, is a cherished treasure at the heart of Christianity in general, but for Methodists it has historically held a particularly rich and distinctive place. "For the 'people called Methodists' grace is nothing less than the defining, shaping and underpinning energy that flows at the very heart of the movement."<sup>[1]</sup> It embraces the Wesleyan 'waves of grace'<sup>[2]</sup>: 'prevenient grace', 'justifying grace' and 'sanctifying grace.'<sup>[3]</sup> Alongside these 'waves of grace' we also have the 'means of grace' (such as prayer, scripture, communion, fasting, and conferring). Devoting ourselves to the 'means of grace' is vital if God's transforming grace is going to continue to help us grow. As Randy Maddox so helpfully puts it, it's about "responsible grace"<sup>[4]</sup>: we have our part to play, responsibly, in continuing to grow in grace.

So, here's some challenge for us.

- Is there not a danger that we have lost confidence in the power of God's grace to transform us, our communities and the world?
- Have we instead too often settled for a church that runs more on guilt than grace, more out of anxiety than assurance?
- Is it not high time that we once again yield our lives, and our life together, to the transformative potential of God's grace?

As I began, part of John Wesley's genius lay in creating a network of 'spaces for grace.' These included the field, bands, classes and societies, where 'waves of grace' flowed as people attended to the 'means of grace' together. Through this lens our discipleship is first and foremost forged by our intentional, risky-but-committed participation in this network of 'spaces of grace.' Out of this is shaped our response: in vocation, service and generous gracious living.

What does this all mean for us as the Methodist Church today? My hunch is that we need to focus our best imagination and energy in recreating and developing a rich tapestry of purposeful 'spaces for grace.'

With space-limited bluntness, I point to two radical reorientations I think are essential:

1. *Away from* attaching too much expectation about the Sunday congregational gathering being able to achieve all that is so often implied. These times can indeed be a 'space for grace' but they should not be seen as the primary building block of a movement seeking to be fashioned and empowered by 'waves of grace' and through 'means of grace.'
  2. *Towards*, a greater commitment to smaller, committed groups focussed around an openness to God's unexpected activity, mutual accountability, and deeper sharing. All with an expectant longing for more of Jesus' gracious presence.
- *Away from* too easy a satisfaction, all too often, with 'just' providing opportunities for people to be gathered together. Of course, there is often enormous benefit and Christian service in such times (coffee mornings, warm spaces, speaker-led fellowship gatherings etc.) They are good: they can be wonderful 'spaces for grace,' particularly of prevenient grace. But without them being part of a fuller network of 'spaces for grace' we are so limited and limiting in what we are offering.
  - *Towards*, alongside such gatherings, a more courageous, Jesus-centred offering of other spaces; spaces of grace with huge contextual variety and shade, but with an intentionality to share the Jesus story, to invite people to grow in grace, to discover the Good News of the gospel personally – that Jesus really is *Emmanuel* – God with us – that he really has moved into every neighbourhood, full of grace and truth.

Wesley quickly learned that a network and flow of 'spaces of grace' was vital for the 'people called Methodists' to continue to grow in grace and for new people to enter into, and grow in, a life of faith. [5] What was true then is true now.

So, at a time when the church is prone to be almost paralyzingly anxious that it is running low on resources of money, energy and even time, let's celebrate that the resource we most need – grace – is inexhaustible and in constant supply! Might we then set about developing a richer, more diverse and creative network of 'spaces of grace' that once again offer us – and the world – the hope of spiritual and social transformation?

---

[1] From my book, *Revive Us Again*, page 52. Available here –<https://amzn.eu/d/6cj8eow>  
More information at: <https://www.publishu.com/books/revive-us-again>

[2] Beck, M, *A Field Guide to Methodist Fresh Expressions*, page 40

[3] Prevenient grace, meaning the grace that ‘comes before,’ bridges the gap between God and humanity. It makes possible our response to God’s forgiving and reconciling grace. Justifying grace assures us of the forgiveness and acceptance of God, aligning us with God’s gracious gift of new life. Sanctifying grace, the grace that perfects, shapes the restoring of humanity into the image of God and the conforming of all creation into the image of Christ.

[4] Maddox, R, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley’s Practical Theology* page 41

[5] Indeed, as Wesley himself put it so bluntly in his journal: “I was more convinced than ever, that the preaching like an Apostle, without joining together those that are awakened, and training them up in the ways of God, is only begetting children of the murderer.... [with].... no regular societies, no discipline, no order of connection.... the consequence is that nine in ten of the once-awakened are now faster asleep than ever.’

Leslie is a Methodist Minister, currently serving as Chair of the Yorkshire North and East District. He has previously served in circuit ministry in Barnsley, Bramhall and York. He is co-chair of the Methodist Church’s ‘New Places for New People’ Guiding Team and a Trustee of Fresh Expressions.

Every Monday, a short article is posted which brings some theology to bear on an issue or topic. This offers some theological reflection people can read quickly to start their week, ponder on and contribute to as the week goes on. It is a way of flexing and using our theological muscles to keep them fit, as well as an opportunity for those contributing to offer new ways of thinking about a topic or looking at an issue theologically perhaps for the first time.

The Theology Everywhere website is made available by the Methodist Church as one of the actions being taken to create a learning church. Contributors are from varied backgrounds; many but not all are Methodist. The views expressed are the responsibility of the authors and do not represent the position of the Methodist Church.

The moderator of Theology Everywhere is Rev’d Dr George Bailey. Enquiries should be addressed to him at [george.bailey@methodist.org.uk](mailto:george.bailey@methodist.org.uk)

## **The following is the Plan for December, January & February**

HC= Holy Communion	PC= At Parish Church
MC= Methodist Church	C& F= Coffee and Fellowship
Café= Café Worship	SB=Sunday Breakfast
T = Transport	LUAL – Light Up A Light

### **Post codes of Chapels**

Alverdiscott – EX31 3PT	Bideford (High Street) – EX39 2AN
Black Torrington – EX21 5QF	Buckland Brewer – EX39 5LP
Langtree – EX38 8NF	Littleham – EX39 5HW
Milton Damerel – EX22 7DJ	Northam – EX39 1BS
Parkham – EX39 5PG	Shebbear – EX21 5SJ
Sheepwash – EX21 5NA	Torrington – EX38 8AL

### **Lectionary Readings for December**

3<sup>rd</sup> Dec - Advent 1 Year B  
Isaiah 64.1-9; Psalm 80.1-7,17-19; 1 Corinthians 1.3-9; Mark 13.24-37

10<sup>th</sup> Dec - Advent 2 Year B  
Isaiah 40.1-11; Psalm 85.1-2,8-13; 2 Peter 3.8-15a; Mark 1.1-8

17<sup>th</sup> Dec - Advent 3 Year B  
Isaiah 61.1-4,8-11; Psalm 126; 1 Thessalonians 5.16-24; John 1.6-28

24<sup>th</sup> Dec – Christmas Eve - Advent 4 Year B  
2 Samuel 7.1-11,16; Luke 1.47-55; Psalm 89.1-4,19-26; Romans 16.25-27; Luke 1.26-38

25<sup>th</sup> Dec - Christmas Day Year B  
Isaiah 9.2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2.11-14; Luke 2.1-14,(15-20)

31<sup>st</sup> Dec - Christmas 1 Year B  
Isaiah 61.10-62.3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4.4-7; Luke 2.22-40

### **Lectionary Readings for January**

7<sup>th</sup> Jan - Baptism of the Lord Year B  
Genesis 1.1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19.1-7; Mark 1.4-11

14<sup>th</sup> Jan - Epiphany 2 Year B  
1 Samuel 3.1-10, (11-20); Psalm 139.1-6,13-18; 1 Corinthians 6.12-20; John 1.43-51

21<sup>st</sup> Jan - Epiphany 3 Year B  
Jonah 3.1-5,10; Psalm 62.5-12; 1 Corinthians 7.29-31; Mark 1.14-20

28<sup>th</sup> Jan - Epiphany 4 Year B  
Deuteronomy 18.15-20; Psalm 111; 1 Corinthians 8.1-13; Mark 1.21-28

### **Lectionary Readings for February**

4<sup>th</sup> Feb - Epiphany 5 Year B  
Isaiah 40.21-31; Psalm 147.1-11,20c; 1 Corinthians 9.16-23; Mark 1.29-39

11<sup>th</sup> Feb - Transfiguration Year B  
2 Kings 2.1-12; Psalm 50.1-6; 2 Corinthians 4.3-6; Mark 9.2-9

18<sup>th</sup> Feb - Lent 1 Year B  
Genesis 9.8-17; Psalm 25.1-10; 1 Peter 3.18-22; Mark 1.9-15

25<sup>th</sup> Feb - Lent 2 Year B  
Genesis 17.1-7,15-16; Psalm 22.23-31; Romans 4.13-25; Mark 8.31-38

	<b>Dec 3</b>	<b>Dec 10</b>	<b>Dec 17</b>	<b>Dec 24</b>	<b>Dec 25</b>	<b>Dec 31</b>
	<b>Advent 1</b>	<b>Advent 2</b>	<b>Advent 3</b>	<b>Advent 4</b>	<b>Christmas Day</b>	<b>Christmas 1</b>
<b>At Home Worship</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Blackhall Advent Carols</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Blackhall/F Watson Carols on Tues 19 @7pm</b>	<b>Buckland Live Stream</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Bideford 10.30am</b>	<b>Potter HC</b>	<b>D Watson</b>	<b>Vidamour Carols</b>	<b>Bate</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Spencer T</b>
<b>Northam 10.30am</b>  <b>4pm</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Ley</b>	<b>Burgon/F Watson Carols</b>	<b>Vidamour HC Crib Service PC @4.30pm</b>	<b>Vidamour @10am</b>	<b>Hall-Tomkin</b>
		<b>Shebbear</b>	<b>Methodist</b>	<b>Church</b>		
<b>Black Torrington Fridays @3pm</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>F Watson HC Friday 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Blackhall Carols Friday 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Langtree 11am</b>	<b>Blackhall</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>	<b>LA Carols</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>LA</b>
<b>Milton Damerel 11am</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Café</b>	<b>Blackhall Carols</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Shebbear 10.30am</b>	<b>Withall</b>	<b>C&amp;F</b>	<b>Parish Church United</b>	<b>Blackhall Carols United</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Sheepwash 11am</b>	<b>Harris HC</b>	<b>@Baptist</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>	<b>@Village Hall</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
		<b>Torrington</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>Alverdiscott</b>	<b>Methodist</b>	<b>Church</b>
<b>Alverdiscott 11am</b>	<b>Hall-Tomkin</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Potter Carols @6pm</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>
<b>Torrington 10.30am</b>	<b>Spencer T</b>	<b>Blackhall LUAL</b>	<b>Blackhall Carols @4pm</b>	<b>Blackhall HC @6pm</b>	<b>Blackhall @10am</b>	<b>Harris</b>
	<b>West</b>	<b>Torridge</b>	<b>Methodist</b>	<b>Church</b>		
<b>Buckland Brewer Parish Church</b>  <b>Methodist Church</b>	<b>S Skinner Christingle @4pm</b>	<b>Booth @10am</b>	<b>Blackhall Carols @6.30pm</b>	<b>J Skinner HC @10pm</b>	<b>F Watson @10am</b>	<b>D Watson @10am</b>

<b>Littleham 10.30am</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Vidamour HC</b>	<b>Vidamour Carols Parish Church on Wed 20<sup>th</sup> @6pm</b>	<b>Withall</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Parkham  Parish Church  Methodist Church</b>	<b>Vidamour HC @11am</b>	<b>Sunday Breakfast @10am</b>	<b>Carols @6.30pm</b>	<b>J Skinner HC @11am  Nativity Live @Melbury Farm 6.30pm On Fri 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>X</b>	<b>J Skinner Contemporary @11am</b>

	<b>Jan 7</b>	<b>Jan 14</b>	<b>Jan 21</b>	<b>Jan 28</b>
	<b>Sunday after Epiphany</b>	<b>Ord 2</b>	<b>Ord 3</b>	<b>Ord 4</b>
<b>At Home Worship</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Blackhall Covenant Zoom 6.30pm</b>	<b>Buckland Live Stream 10am</b>	<b>Buckland Live Stream 10am</b>
<b>Bideford 10.30am</b>	<b>Vidamour Covenant</b>	<b>Macbeth</b>	<b>Burgon</b>	<b>Booth</b>
<b>Northam 10.30am</b>	<b>Davis</b>	<b>Vidamour Covenant</b>	<b>Bate</b>	<b>Vidamour</b>
		<b>SHEBBEAR</b>	<b>METHODIST</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>
<b>Black Torrington Friday 3pm</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Blackhall HC on 26<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Langtree 11am</b>	<b>Blackhall Covenant</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>	<b>Withall</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
<b>Milton Damerel 11am</b>	<b>@Langtree</b>	<b>Hill</b>	<b>Cafe</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
<b>Shebbear 10.30am</b>	<b>@Langtree</b>	<b>C&amp;F</b>	<b>Harris</b>	<b>Ley HC United</b>
<b>Sheepwash 11am</b>	<b>@Langtree</b>	<b>@Baptist Church</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>	<b>Village Hall</b>
	<b>TORRINGTON</b>	<b>WITH</b>	<b>ALVERDISCOTT</b>	<b>METHODIST CHURCH</b>
<b>Alverdiscott 11am</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Blackhall HC</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Torrington 10.30am</b>	<b>Bate</b>	<b>Blackhall Covenant</b>	<b>F Watson</b>	<b>Sheriff</b>
	<b>WEST</b>	<b>TORRIDGE</b>	<b>METHODIST</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>
<b>Buckland Brewer 10am (PC)  10am (MC)</b>	<b>HC @Parish Church @9.30am</b>	<b>Hall-Tomkin @Parish Church</b>	<b>Anglican</b>	<b>@Littleham</b>
<b>Littleham 10.30am</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>D Watson</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Blackhall Covenant</b>
<b>Parkham 11am</b>	<b>Withall</b>	<b>SB @Parish Church</b>	<b>Vidamour</b>	<b>@Littleham or HC @Parish Church</b>



	<b>Feb 4</b>	<b>Feb 11</b>	<b>Feb 18</b>	<b>Feb 25</b>
	<b>Ord 5</b>	<b>Sunday before Lent Cuttack Sunday</b>	<b>Lent 1</b>	<b>Lent 2</b>
<b>At Home Worship</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Vidamour Zoom 6.30pm</b>	<b>Buckland Live Stream 10am</b>	<b>Buckland Live Stream 10am</b>
<b>Bideford 10.30am</b>	<b>Davis</b>	<b>Vidamour HC</b>	<b>Withall</b>	<b>Vidamour</b>
<b>Northam 10.30am</b>	<b>Spencer T</b>	<b>Macbeth</b>	<b>Vidamour HC</b>	<b>Harris</b>
		<b>SHEBBEAR</b>	<b>METHODIST</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>
<b>Black Torrington Friday 3pm</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Vidamour on 9<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>D Watson on 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb</b>
<b>Langtree 11am</b>	<b>Hall-Tomkin</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>	<b>Ley HC</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
<b>Milton Damerel 11am</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Harris HC</b>	<b>Cafe</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
<b>Shebbear 10.30am</b>	<b>Bate</b>	<b>C&amp;F</b>	<b>United @Parish Church</b>	<b>Hill HC United</b>
<b>Sheepwash 11am</b>	<b>Ley</b>	<b>@Baptist Church</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>	<b>Village</b>
	<b>TORRINGTON</b>	<b>WITH</b>	<b>ALVERDISCOTT</b>	<b>METHODIST CHURCH</b>
<b>Alverdiscott 11am</b>	<b>F Watson</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Blackhall HC</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Torrington 10.30am</b>	<b>Blackhall</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Booth HC</b>	<b>Davis</b>
	<b>WEST</b>	<b>TORRIDGE</b>	<b>METHODIST</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>
<b>Buckland Brewer 10am (PC)  10am (MC)  3pm (MC)</b>	<b>HC @Parish Church @9.30am   Circuit Consultation @3pm</b>	<b>D Watson @Parish Church</b>	<b>Anglican</b>	<b>Blackhall HC</b>
<b>Littleham 10.30am</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Potter</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Price</b>
<b>Parkham 11am</b>	<b>Hill HC</b>	<b>SB @10am</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>	<b>HC @Parish Church</b>

## **Activities, Events and Meetings**

### **December 2023**

Fri 01	World Aids Day		
Sat 02	Christmas Fair	10:00-12:00	Northam
Sun 03	Advent Sunday (Year B begins)		
	Christingle Service	16:00	St Mary and St Benedict, Buckland Brewer
Mon 04	'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Tue 05	Toddlers' Tune Time	09:15-10:15	Northam
	Christian Aid Schools Carol Concert	18:00	Bideford
	Community Defibrillator Training	18:00	Torrington
Wed 06	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
	'Time for God' Quiet Morning	10:00-12:30	Torrington
	Worship and Community Lunch ( <i>Booking for Lunch required</i> )	11:30	Northam
	Circuit Advent Course	14:00	Torrington
	Circuit Book Club Discussion Session	19:00	Zoom
Thu 07	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Alverdiscott
Fri 08	The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary		
Sat 09	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 10	Human Rights Day		
	Coffee and Fellowship	10:30	Shebbear (Lake)
	Light Up a Life Service	10:30	Torrington
	Café Worship	11:00	Milton Damerel
	Sunday Breakfast	11:00	Parkham
	Messy Church	16:00-17:30	Northam
	Circuit Advent Carol Service	18:30	Zoom
Mon 11	'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Tue 12	Toddlers' Tune Time	09:15-10:15	Northam
	Encircled in Care Course (Health, Healing and Well-being)	14:00	Northam
Wed 13	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
	Circuit Advent Course	14:00	Torrington
	Churches Together in Torrington Carol Singing	19:00 (TBC)	Torrington Town Centre
Thu 14	Thursday Fellowship	14:15	Northam
Fri 15			
Sat 16	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Bideford
	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Torrington
Sun 17	Carol Service	10:30	Bideford
	Carol Service	11:00	Langtree
	Carol Service	11:00	Milton Damerel
	Carol Service	16:00	Northam
	Carol Service & Bring and Share Tea	16:00	Torrington
	Carol Service	18:00	Alverdiscott
	Carol Service	18:30	St James's, Parkham
	Carol Service	18:30	St Mary and St Benedict,

Buckland Brewer

Mon 18	International Migrants Day		
	Farm Nativity	18:00	Wootton Farm, Shebbear
Tue 19	Circuit Carol Service	19:00	Zoom
Wed 20	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
	Circuit Advent Course	14:00	Torrington
	Carol Service	18:00	St Swithun's, Littleham
	Circuit Book Club Discussion Session	19:00	Zoom
Thu 21	Nativity Live	18:00	Melbury Farm, Parkham
Fri 22	Carol Service	15:00	Black Torrington
Sat 23			
Sun 24	Holy Communion	10:30	Northam
	Carol Service	10:30	Shebbear (Lake)
	Holy Communion	11:00	St James's, Parkham
	Crib Service	16:30	St Margaret's, Northam
	Holy Communion	18:00	Torrington
	Holy Communion	22:00	St Mary and St Benedict, Buckland Brewer
Mon 25	Christmas Day		
	Morning Worship	10:00	Buckland Brewer
	Morning Worship	10:00	Northam
	Morning Worship	10:00	Torrington
Tue 26	Boxing Day		
	Stephen, deacon, first martyr		
Wed 27	John, Apostle and Evangelist		
Thu 28	The Holy Innocents		
Fri 29			
Sat 30			
Sun 31			

## **Activities, Events and Meetings**

### **January 2024**

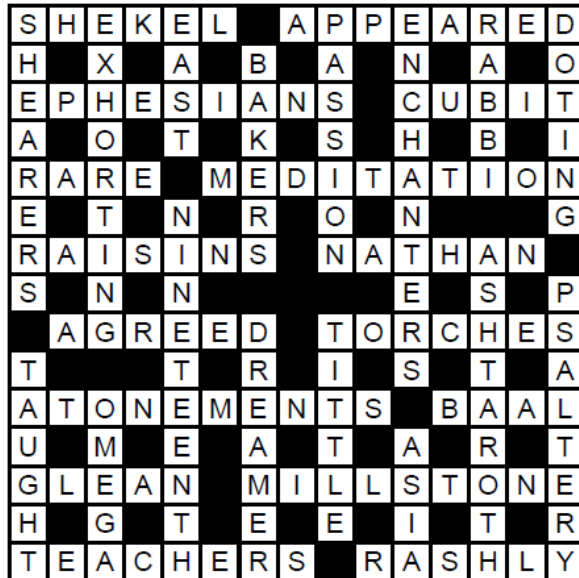
Mon 01	New Year's Day The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus New Year's Day Service	10:00	Northam
Tue 02			
Wed 03	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Thu 04	'Time for God' Quiet Morning	10:00-12:30	Buckland Brewer
Fri 05			
Sat 06	The Epiphany Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 07	Covenant Sunday Plough Sunday The Baptism of Christ Covenant Service Shebbear Covenant Service	10:30 11:00	Bideford Langtree
Mon 08	'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Tue 09	Encircled in Care Course (Mental Health Issues)	14:00	Northam
Wed 10	Coffee Morning Encircled in Care Course (Mental Health Issues)	10:00-12:00 14:00	Buckland Brewer Torrington
Thu 11			
Fri 12			
Sat 13	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 14	Covenant Service Coffee and Fellowship Torrington with Alverdiscott Covenant Service Sunday Breakfast Circuit Covenant Service	10:30 10:30 10:30 11:00 18:30	Northam Shebbear (Lake) Torrington St James's, Parkham Zoom
Mon 15	'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Tue 16	Circuit Young People and Families Meeting	13:15	Buckland Brewer
Wed 17	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Thu 18	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (until Thu 25) Prayers for Christian Unity in the Churches of Bideford	12:00-12:30	TBC
Fri 19	Prayers for Christian Unity in the Churches of Bideford	12:00-12:30	TBC
Sat 20	Coffee Morning Coffee Morning Prayers for Christian Unity in the Churches of Bideford	10:00-11:15 10:00-12:00 12:00-12:30	Northam Torrington TBC
Sun 21	Café Worship	11:00	Milton Damerel
Mon 22	'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer

	Prayers for Christian Unity in the Churches of Bideford	12:00-12:30	TBC
Tue 23	Prayers for Christian Unity in the Churches of Bideford	12:00-12:30	TBC
	Circuit Leadership Team Meeting	14:00	Torrington Manse
Wed 24	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service	10:30	Northam
	Prayers for Christian Unity in the Churches of Bideford	12:00-12:30	TBC
Thu 25	The Conversion of Paul		
	Prayers for Christian Unity in the Churches of Bideford	12:00-12:30	TBC
Fri 26			
Sat 27	Holocaust Memorial Day		
	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 28	World Leprosy Day		
	West Torridge Covenant Service	10:30	Littleham
Mon 29	'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Tue 30			
Wed 31	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer

## TEA TIME PUZZLE BREAK

November 2023 - Solutions

### BIBLE CROSSWORD I - SOLUTION

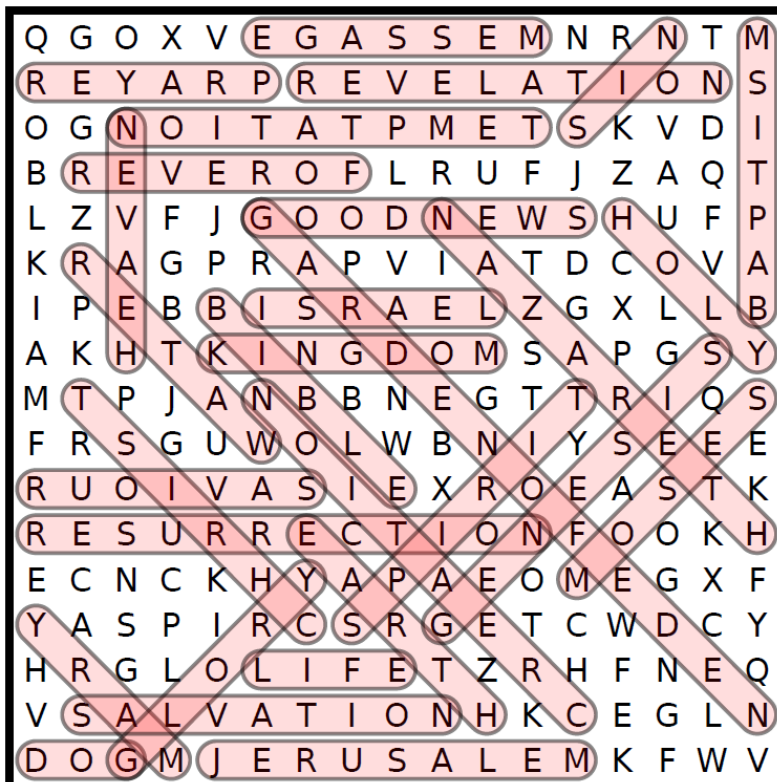


Across: 1 Shekel, 4 Appeared, 10 Ephesians, 11 Cubit, 12 Rare, 13 Meditation, 15 Raisins, 16 Nathan, 19 Agreed, 21 Torches, 23 Atonements, 25 Baal, 27 Glean, 28 Millstone, 29 Teachers, 30 Rashly.

Down: 1 Shearers, 2 Exhorting, 3 East, 5 Passion, 6 Enchanters, 7 Rabbi, 8 Doting, 9 Bakers, 14 Nineteenth, 17 Ashtaroth, 18 Psalter, 20 Dreamer, 21 Tittle, 22 Taught, 24 Omega, 26 Asia.

Bible Crossword by BiblePuzzles.org.uk

### The Bible Word Search – Solution



# CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

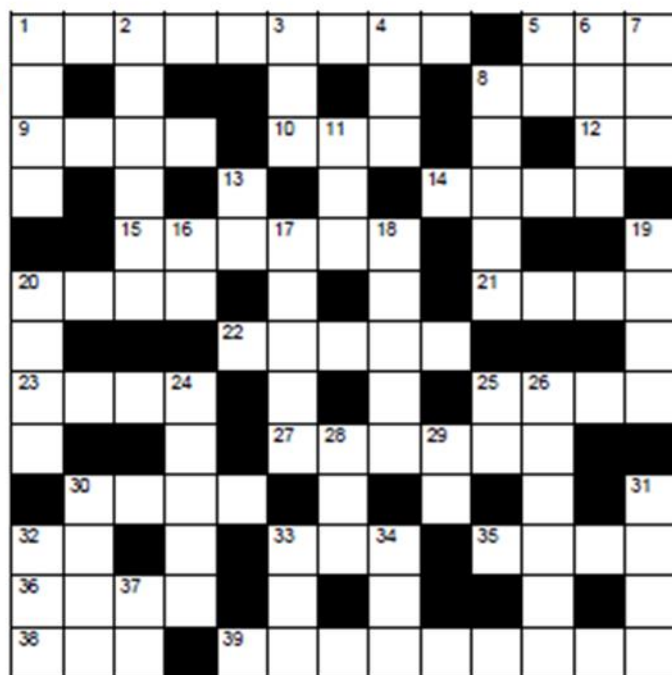
## Across

- 1 Jesus' birthplace (9)  
 5 Herod slew the children of this age and under (3)  
 8 Peter quoted his words on the day of Pentecost (4)  
 9 "A \_\_\_ shaken with the wind" (4)  
 10 "Ye shall find \_\_\_ babe wrapped in swaddling clothes" (3)  
 12 The year from Jesus' birth (2)  
 14 Anna was of this tribe (as recorded in Luke) (4)  
 15 "Behold, a \_\_\_ shall be with child" (6)  
 20 "Fruits \_\_\_ for repentance" (4)  
 21 The wise men came from here (4)  
 22 "He shall reign of the house of \_\_\_ for ever" (5)  
 23 A female ancestor of Jesus, as recorded in Matthew 1 (4)  
 25 The amount of manna to be gathered per person (4)  
 27 He multiplied the widow's oil (6)

- 30 "As soon as the voice of thy salvation sounded in mine \_\_\_" (4)  
 32 An altar meaning witness (Joshua 22) (2)  
 33 To increase (3)  
 35 Malarial fever (4)  
 36 To guide (4)  
 38 There was no room here (3)  
 39 These men went to see the baby Jesus (9)

## Down

- 1 "Mary, of whom was \_\_\_ Jesus" (4)  
 2 Jesus' age when he was taken to Jerusalem (6)  
 3 Jesus did not do this in the wilderness (3)  
 4 Adam's wife (3)  
 5 "Mary was espoused \_\_\_ Joseph" (2)  
 6 "They that \_\_\_ soft clothing are in kings' houses" (4)  
 7 Zacharias said, "I am an \_\_\_ man" (3)  
 8 Grandson of 23 (5)  
 11 A place near Bethel (3)  
 13 "A pair of turtledoves \_\_\_ two young pigeons" (2)  
 16 "That \_\_\_ might be fulfilled" (2)  
 17 "The \_\_\_ of God was upon him" (5)  
 18 Mother-in-law of 23 (5)  
 19 This went before the wise men (4)  
 20 The mother of Jesus (4)  
 24 He was king at the time of Jesus' birth (5)  
 25 "\_\_\_ that one would hear me!" (2)  
 26 Jesus was laid in this (6)  
 28 The spirit did this to Jesus in the wilderness (3)  
 29 Thus (2)  
 30 The first garden (4)  
 31 "Where is he that is born king of the \_\_\_?" (4)  
 32 A priest in the time of Samuel (3)  
 33 A tree of the olive family (3)  
 34 To put into water (3)  
 37 "\_\_\_ angel of the Lord appeareth" (2)



by Colin

© BiblePuzzles.org.uk



# CHRISTMAS! WORD SEARCH

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

**ADVENT**  
**ANGELS**  
**BAUBLES**  
**BELLS**  
**BIRTH OF JESUS**  
**BOXING DAY**  
**CAROL SINGING**  
**CHIMNEY**  
**CHRISTMAS CAKE**  
**CHRISTMAS**  
**PUDDING**

**CHRISTMAS TREE**  
**CRACKERS**  
**ELVES**  
**FAMILY**  
**FOOD**  
**HOLIDAYS**  
**HOLLY**  
**IVY**  
**MINCE PIES**

**MISTLETOE**  
**MULLED WINE**  
**PARTY**  
**PRESENTS**  
**QUEEN'S SPEECH**  
**REINDEER**  
**ROBIN**  
**RUDOLPH**  
**SANTA CLAUS**

**SCROOGE**  
**SHEPHERDS**  
**SNOWMAN**  
**STAR**  
**TINSEL**  
**TURKEY**  
**WISEMEN**  
**WRAPPING**  
**PAPER**  
**YULELOG**

# BIBLE CROSSWORD II

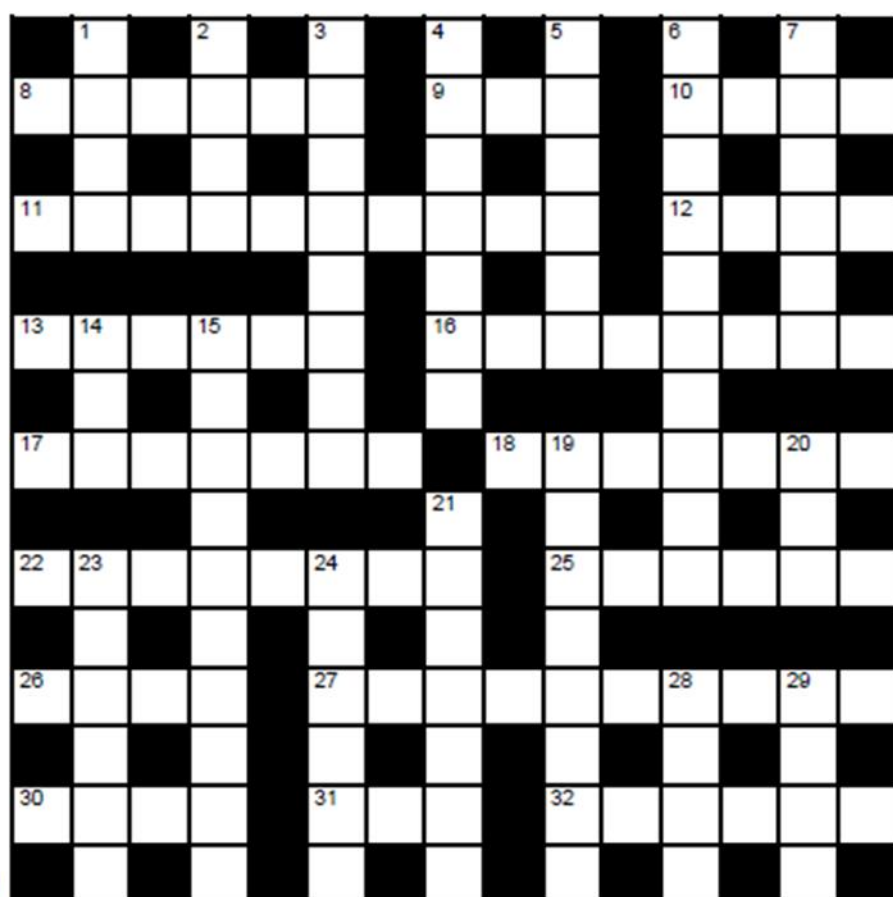
## Across

- 8 Religious service (6)  
 9 Vessel (3)  
 10 Drive forcibly (4)  
 11 Christ does this for us (10)  
 12 Bethesda was the name of this (4)  
 13 Servant of a prophet (6)  
 16 One who leaves the straight and narrow path (8)  
 17 Check the money (7)  
 18 Fragrant offering; make angry (7)  
 22 Come out from among them (8)

- 25 Works with clay (6)  
 26 Main part of text (4)  
 27 Chucked it too far (10)  
 30 Treachery sealed with this (4)  
 31 Simon washed his (3)  
 32 Migratory grasshopper (6)

## Down

- 1 Standard for the tribe of Judah (4)



by Philologus

© BiblePuzzles.org.uk

- 2 Brother of James; Hardy book (4)  
 3 Choice by vote (8)  
 4 Evening glow (7)  
 5 All sing the tune (6)  
 6 To reduce deficiency (10)  
 7 Take no notice of (6)  
 14 Look at (3)  
 15 Alternative Revelation (10)  
 19 Son of Jacob (8)

- 20 The blind will (3)  
 21 Regrets; Serpent (anag) (7)  
 23 Angels by another name (6)  
 24 Decorates (6)  
 28 Say it and you will be in danger of the council (4)  
 29 Cleanse (4)

## THE WISE MEN WORD SEARCH

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

<b>ANGEL</b>	<b>FRANKINCENSE</b>	<b>JOSEPH</b>	<b>MYRRH</b>
<b>BETHLEHEM</b>	<b>GIFTS</b>	<b>JOURNEY</b>	<b>PROPHECY</b>
<b>BIRTH</b>	<b>GOLD</b>	<b>KING</b>	<b>PROPHET</b>
<b>CHILD</b>	<b>GUIDE</b>	<b>MAGI</b>	<b>SAVIOR</b>
<b>DREAM</b>	<b>HEROD</b>	<b>MANGER</b>	<b>STAR</b>
<b>EAST</b>	<b>JERUSALEM</b>	<b>MARY</b>	<b>WISE MEN</b>
<b>EGYPT</b>	<b>JESUS</b>	<b>MICAH</b>	<b>WORSHIP</b>



# Nativity Live (in a barn)

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

6.00 for 6.30<sup>pm</sup>, finish 7.15<sup>pm</sup>

Hot drinks & mince pies etc served at 6<sup>pm</sup>

**at Melbury Farm  
PARKHAM, EX39 5PP**

with a collection to support  
**NORTH DEVON HOSPICE**

**The Christmas Story with  
animals and humans**

**WEAR WARM  
CLOTHES!**

**Parking at Farm  
on concrete**

***More info? Phone or  
WhatsApp Sarah  
07798 661114***