

Totnes Team Ministry Newsletter December 2024 & January 2025



The new world of love breaking into this one at every moment.

Fr Jim Barlow

Sunday Services in our churches in December 2024

	Dec 1st Advent Sunday	Dec 8th Advent 2	Dec 15th Advent 3	Dec 22nd Advent 4	Dec 29th Xmas 1
St Mary's Totnes	7.00: Silence + Morning Prayer 8.00: Holy Communion 6.30: Advent Carols	7.00: Silence + Morning Prayer 8.00: Holy Communion 11.15: Sung Eucharist 17.00: Vespers 19.30: Taize	7.00: Silence + Morning Prayer 8.00: Holy Communion 11.15: Sung Eucharist 17.00: Vespers	7.00: Silence + Morning Prayer 8.00: Holy Communion 11.15: Sung Eucharist 17.00: Vespers	
St. John's Bridgetown	10.30 Team Service (Farewell to Rev Deborah Parsons)	10.00: All Age Nativity	10.00: Holy Communion 16.00: Carol Service	10.00: Holy Communion	10.30 Team Service
Ashprington		11.15: Village Worship	11.15: Holy Communion	18.00: Carol Service	
Berry Pomeroy		11.15: Holy Communion	11.15: Holy Communion	16.00: Carol Service	
Brooking		9.15: Carols and Lessons			
Cornworthy		9.15: Village Worship	9.15: Holy Communion	16.00: Carol Service	
Dartington		10.30 Celtic Holy Communion	15.00: Cantemos Carols	10.30: Morning Praise	
Marldon		10.00: Village Worship	10.00: Holy Communion	10.00: Holy Communion	
Stoke Gabriel	8.15: BCP Holy Communion 18.30: Advent Carols	8.15: BCP Holy Communion 11.00: Holy Communion	8.15: BCP Holy Communion 11.00: Mattins	8.15: BCP Holy Communion 11.00: Holy Communion 18.30: Lessons and Carols Service	8.15: BCP Holy Communion 11.00: Choral Holy Communion
Telephone		Midday	Midday	Midday	
Zoom	10.30 St John's			10am St John's	

For Wild Church/ Monastics contact Sam Wernham on livingspirit3@gmail.com

	Jan 5th Epiphany	Jan 12th Epiphany 1	Jan 19th Epiphany 2	Jan 26th Epiphany 3
St. Mary's Totnes	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
St. John's Bridgetown	10.30: Holy Communion	10.30: Morning Praise	10.30: Holy Communion	10.30: Holy Communion
Ashprington	11.15 Holy Communion (Joint with Cornworthy)	11.15: Village Worship	11.15: Holy Communion	Joint at Cornworthy
Berry Pomeroy	11.15 Morning Praise	11.15: Holy Communion	11.15: Holy Communion	11.15: Holy Communion
Brooking				
Cornworthy	Joint at Ashprington	9.15: Village Worship	9.15: Holy Communion	9.15: Holy Communion (Joint with Ashprington)
Dartington	10.30: Epiphany Service	10.30 Celtic Holy Communion	10.30 Holy Communion (BCP)	10.30: Morning Praise
Marldon	10.00: Holy Communion	10.00: Village Worship	10.00: Holy Communion	10.00 Holy Communion
Stoke Gabriel	8.15: BCP Holy Communion 11.00: Holy Communion	8.15: BCP Holy Communion 11.00: Holy Communion	8.15: BCP Holy Communion 11.00: Mattins	8.15: BCP Holy Communion 11.00: Morning Worship with Baptism 18.30: Evensong
Telephone		Midday	Midday	Midday
Zoom				10.30am St John's

For Wild Church/ Monastics contact Sam Wernham on livingspirit3@gmail.com

A Time for hope *Fr Jim Barlow*

“It’s biblical” – this phrase gets used to refer to the coming together of natural disasters, political chaos, pandemics etc. Another word would be ‘apocalyptic’. Things fall apart, with institutions failing (including the Church of England, with the unprecedented resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury), popular demagogues on the rise everywhere, relentless war in the Ukraine, Sudan and the Middle East. And behind this turbulence, the bigger tsunami of climate change, with its precursors already rolling ashore, like the flash floods in Spain. The church, in its mature forms, does not shy away from this grim picture. Advent offers a time to reflect on ‘the last things’. Not because of an obsession with Armageddon (or trying to second-guess God’s plan from the Book of Revelation) and becoming indifferent to the suffering of the world. Nor out of a spirit of anxiety and a desperate belief that we must make the Kingdom come by our own actions. That leads to despair.

Instead, Advent is a time to acknowledge the broken nature of humanity and the transient nature of all our institutions, whilst gazing on Jesus, the one who showed us a different possibility and who by laying aside power revealed true power. St. Paul tells us that faith (trust), hope and love remain when all else crumbles away. The greatest of these is love. Love is always knocking at the door, asking us to open. That gives us the courage to keep walking into the unknown, knowing that all God asks of us is to act justly, love mercy and tread gently on earth. This is all that any of us needs to do. Then the Kingdom makes its presence felt. It comes through us but is not from us. As Jesus says, my Kingdom is not of this world but is the new world of love breaking into this one at every moment, in every heart that longs for it and says: ‘Thy Kingdom come’.

St John's churchyard *Carolyn Stilwell*

Last year Bridgetown Churchyard was awarded a grant to develop biodiversity and to encourage local people to appreciate the beautiful and peaceful green space, which is open to all from dawn till dusk.

We have an "Adopt a grave scheme", tending and planting kerbed graves with wild flowers. 17 people so far have taken part in in this.

We planted hundreds of bulbs, with special thanks to John Bullock for doing a lot of the planting as well as regularly mowing and tidying the churchyard. Tony (Stilwell) made and erected six bird boxes.

Dr Richard Fox gave an excellent talk and set up moth traps in the churchyard. The next day he showed what had been found. We also enjoyed a storyteller, Henry Everett, telling very animated nature related tales under the trees. There was good publicity for the Welcome days in Totnes Directory, with an article by Colin Hair reminding everyone of all the wild life that can be found in churchyards.

We added two benches to the site, two large compost bins and an informative Trees information board.



KEVICC Photography Club spent a summer afternoon taking photos which were later displayed in the foyer, and we've had two "Welcome to the churchyard" days with spotter sheets to help people identify flowers, trees and mini beasts; also an "Interesting graves" trail.

There was a popular guided walk and talk about the commonwealth war graves by Andy Tysoe in June 2023, and an illustrated minibeast trail around the churchyard. This summer we displayed poems and prayers written by children at St John's Primary School.

Come and see! Come and sit! The ground is uneven, so take care!

Our work with local primary schools *Tony Gregg*

In our Totnes Team area we have five primary schools: The Grove; St. John's Bridgetown; Dartington; Berry Pomeroy; Marldon.

The Grove is a State Primary school; St. John's and Dartington are Voluntary Controlled C of E Primaries; Berry Pomeroy is a Parochial Church Primary; Marldon is a Voluntary Aided C of E Primary.

In Voluntary Controlled and Parochial Schools there is on the governing board a Foundation Governor, usually someone closely connected with the church. The same applies to Voluntary Aided schools, but the connection to the church is more defined and the church has responsibility for the school building.

Every primary school will have an agreed religious education syllabus. Lessons will be largely Christian in content, but comparative religions will also be studied. The vicar could be asked to help with some of these.

There should also be a daily act of worship and schools decide what kind of form this will take. Sometimes it's within the class setting, sometimes a celebration of achievements, and, at least once each week, a whole school gathering for an act of Collective Worship. Sometimes it is taken by a member of staff, but, usually once a fortnight in our church schools, this is led by either Fr. Jim, Chris Harris, Jane Frost or myself.

Some of our schools also have Open the Book as part of Collective Worship. This is a group of Christians from local churches who go into schools and dramatize Bible stories – always in costume and great fun!

The act of Collective Worship is usually on a theme based on the School Values decided for that term This could be themes like Generosity, Compassion, Courage, Forgiveness, Friendship, Respect, Thankfulness, Trust, Perseverance, Justice, Service, Truthfulness. It will usually be illustrated in some kind of story from the Bible or some other source, and there will always be a Christian prayer.

Finally, each Church of England primary school is subject to a SIAMS inspection. This is like an OFSTED inspection but looks at the way religious education is handled in the school. The report is published.

It is always a delight to go into our schools and share the Christian story and a joy and privilege to be part of the school life.

Trust in Me, but only if you're straight! *Francesca Allan*

Those don't sound like the words of our Lord, do they? They do, however, get to the heart of the matter. Those of you who know me from St Mary's will see how happy I am living as my true self as a transgender female, warmly welcomed by you and our community, and I hope that I share the same warmth back with you. Finding out you are transgender is not easy. I knew something was not right on my first day at school, aged 5, when Major Blackstone, the terrifying Head-master with the Jimmy Edwards moustache, lined up all the newbies in a row in front of the rest of the school. He barked at us about rules and uniforms, finishing with the words "Right! Boys over there!" pointing to the piano side of the hall, and "Girls over there!" bellowing again and indicating the library shelves. Instinctively, I went to the books. "Not you!" he cried, "You're a boy!" From that day on I lived with the uncertainty that while I looked like a boy, I thought I was a girl. Take a moment to think how that might affect a small child in the early 1960s at an all-boys boarding school, from the age of 7 right through to the end of puberty in the mid-1970s.

I won't go into the fine details of my ultimate coming out and transition and my 40 wonderful years of marriage to my darling Katie (although don't ever hesitate to ask me or Katie if you're curious) because by now I can hear you asking, "but why is this article in the Church Newsletter?"

I was asked to write a short article about Gender and the Christian Church because it is a subject that has a history of contention. I can only explain my views with the wise words "until you have walked a mile in another man's shoes you may not judge them."

My faith is based on my true belief in the love of Christ Jesus, and that Jesus' love is an example to us all as to how we should treat each other, regardless of race, colour, wealth, creed, gender, wisdom, or any other label that our society has placed upon us. None is better and none is worse, so who are we to be a judge?

When I was at university in Durham in the 1970s, I became friendly with a man who had retired there after having been the Archbishop of Canterbury, the lovely Dr. Michael Ramsay.

He was very wise and able to talk at length about almost anything, but above all, he was an insistent listener. If I had asked him if he thought being transgender was inconsistent with being a member of the Christian Church, he would always say there is one way to find the answer, "Ask yourself, what would Jesus say or do?" Please try this for yourself.

it is a great help.



The Bishop of Exeter – Enthroned at Exeter Cathedral on 2nd Nov 2024

Alison Fisher, (Licensed Lay Minister)



The Rt Rev'd Dr Mike Harrison is our new Bishop. The Cathedral put on a splendid enthronement service. Totnes Ministry Team were well represented. I attended as a Lay Minister - apparently the first time in Exeter Diocese that Lay Ministers have been part of the robing procession at an enthronement. The Cathedral was packed. Young people led the prayers; the Archdeacon of Canterbury did the official bits, and Bishop Mike's sermon was excellent.

You can watch the service on you tube via the website

<https://exeter.anglican.org/bishop-mike-enthroned-at-exeter-cathedral/>)

Photo credit Ella Foster/Exeter Cathedral

Bishop Andrew sings in St Mary's



On 6th December Andrew Rumsey will be playing live at St Mary's, Totnes. Andrew is a singer songwriter, whose folk album 'Evensongs' has been widely praised. He is also the Bishop of Ramsbury! We are very blessed to have him come to play in Totnes and proceeds will go to the Uplift project for St Mary's. Book a ticket:

<https://ttm.churchsuite.com/events/pfuiieb1>

You can listen to music from Evensongs on the Bandcamp site:

<https://andrewrumseymusic.bandcamp.com>

Bug Hotel opens for guests in St Mary's churchyard



Esther, Romily and Albie, students at the Totnes Independent School (TIS), came with their teachers Simon Bowley and Nick Paskin to help install and furnish a bug hotel in the St Mary's Churchyard. The TIS has a project to survey our churchyard, 'God's Acre', and they help in planning to make it more attractive to both people and wildlife.

The Meaning is in the Waiting

Advent Quiet Morning

10am – 1pm Thursday 12th December
Dartington Church Hall.

Led by Revd Jane Frost, Associate Priest,
& Richard Frost, Licensed Lay Minister

2 short talks, periods of silence, guidance.

Booking required: tel 01803 525171

Email: richardnfrost@outlook.com



Coffee and cake - £3 only!

The Friends of St Mary's
invite you to enjoy
a warm welcome
at St Mary's Church,
Tuesday 3 December
10am – 2pm

Berry Pomeroy Church

Coffee Morning

Thursday 5th December

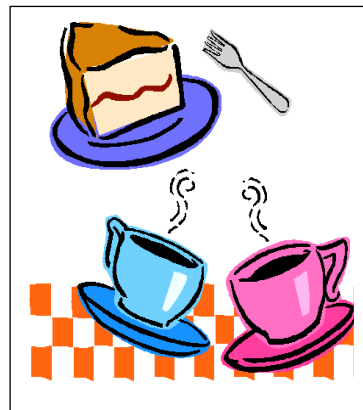
10.30 – 12 noon

refreshments / cakes / preserves

bring-and-buy / books / raffle

Everyone welcome

Proceeds to church upkeep.



St Mary's Uplift project - Latest news! *Fr Jim Barlow*

The post of Project Manager was advertised (to take on a lot of Fr.Jim's responsibilities) and we received two excellent tenders. Phil Lewis of Randall Simmonds was appointed (with Helen Craven as his assistant manager) and they have already begun work. Phil has delivered award-winning major capital projects across the South of England. He is recognised as a national sustainability champion. Helen has 15 years' experience in the construction industry. The Project Manager will be responsible for working with the design team through the tendering process and ensuring both the capital works and activities phase are delivered effectively and within budget.

The purpose of the restoration and transformation project is not just to make the church look more attractive and feel more comfortable. We also want to see more people using and appreciating the building (which will also help us generate more revenue for its maintenance). The NHLF grant was awarded on the condition that St Mary's would grow in this manner.

The budget includes funding for an Activities Co-ordinator. We have some excellent applicants for this post, and an appointment will be made in the coming weeks.

St Mary's will close after Christmas, for 6-8 months. Services will be shared with St John's, with a 10.30 service on Sundays. Lay led services will continue on the 2nd Sunday. The TSM choir will sometimes sing at St. John's but is also available (on the 4th Sunday) to travel to other parishes in the Team area. Choral Evensong will also be on tour during the closure.

Harberton joins the Totnes Team Ministry

We have just learnt that Harberton parish will be joining the team as of December 1st. We are delighted to welcome Harberton into the team. We already have excellent contacts with them, and look forward to working together.

St John's Church, Bridgetown Parent and Toddler Group

Carolyn and Tony Stilwell

The Parent and Toddler Group at St John's Church is very popular and has a long waiting list. It is on Monday mornings from 9.30 – 11.45 a.m. in school term times in the upstairs hall and Meeting room at St John's.

Parents, grandparents or carers are responsible for their children, they don't leave them! They much appreciate having a place to meet where their children can play safely and where they can socialise and make friends. Many people could be quite isolated without this opportunity. Several people help make refreshments for 10.30 a.m. (Tea, coffee and biscuits for adults, and juice, biscuits and slices of fruit for the children) and then help put the toys away in various cupboards during a singing time in the Meeting Room.

Parents pay £2.50, and £1 for every additional child. (Extra babies under 12 months are free!) This covers the cost of snacks, a donation towards church expenses and occasionally purchasing new play equipment. We have a wonderful selection of toys which are scientifically packed away in and on various cupboards!

The session finishes by 12 noon, and only in school term time. If you could help even just **once a month** that would be great, and even if you could only come to do refreshments that would be a tremendous help. Everything you need would be there. No shopping required! (From 10.15ish till 11.15ish, (including preparing and washing up).

Community Café *Denise Evans*

I feel confident that caring for others, love and compassion are human traits that we all aim to achieve. Based on these principles, the community café in St John's church was first established by the much-loved Sue Piggott, who led the first team of volunteers until her untimely death. It was in the days before Covid. I became involved as a social prescriber, trying to help others in the community to access safe, friendly spaces where finances or skills weren't an issue.

The café, held every Wednesday from 10am to 12pm in the church, has become a popular venue for many folk in Totnes. Everyone is welcome without discrimination. We offer tea, coffee, alternative drinks, teacakes

and lovely home-made cakes, chocolate and biscuits free of charge, donations welcome.

The service is excellent, all with a smile and waiter service included! Well, I would say that as I now help in the kitchen as a volunteer. Folk in the community help freely because we feel that the café is important to so many, old and young. The café has developed a real sense of spirit. Friends meet up and chat on a regular basis, enjoying the welcome and the atmosphere of care and support which predominates.

Some come to participate in the Mindful Crafting and some for Knit and Natter. The Citizen's Advice Bureau is also available if needed. While you participate in your refreshments, you could be serenaded by local pianists who also enjoy the ambience of our café and piano, of course!

Over the winter months, the café becomes a warm and happy venue for many, and we look forward to seeing our regulars and any new folk who may like to try us out. Give it a go. It's love that matters and there is no better way than coming together to make connections. Community Café is the place where many, myself included, have found this possible.

Your monthly newsletter

Peter Hilken	Editor	peter.hilken@ntlworld.com	07847 564489
Penny Martin	Sub-editor	pennymartindevon@gmail.com	07812 106635
Alison Fisher	Clergy link	alison.fisher25@gmail.com	07898 956843
Viv Elce	Advertising	vivelce@yahoo.co.uk	07511 072808

Material for publication to the editors by the 15th of the month please.
Follow us on Facebook at:
<https://www.Facebook.com/groups/509069870119796/about>

The editors welcome your comments on what appears in these pages, and your suggestions for future editions. If you have ideas, we can help you write them up.



South Street
Totnes
TQ9 5DZ

Your local in-house printers

High Quality Printed Products

QUICK TURNAROUNDS

Please phone or email for quotes

T. 01803 863174 E. veaseys99@hotmail.com

hmad architects



Experienced, friendly, RIBA Chartered Architectural Practice, working across the South West.

Specialising in the adaptive reuse of listed buildings, residential extensions and renovations.

Call Luke McAdam for a chat about your project and to see how we can help: 01392 459777.

mail@hmad.co.uk www.hmad.co.uk

Ipplepen Garden Club – Programme 2025

22 nd January	Seed Swop evening and quiz
26 th February	Tawny Owls coming to a wood near you <i>Stephen Powles</i>
26 th March	The Victorian Walled Garden <i>Sue Minter</i>
23 rd April	Hardy Geraniums <i>Martin Young</i>
28 th May	The extraordinary Elderflower - demonstration <i>Lori Reich</i>
25 th June	Roses + general gardening questions. <i>Claire Forster</i>
23 rd July	Gertrude Jekyll – her plants and designs <i>Dave Usher</i>
27 th August	Greenway – Past, Present and Future <i>Ashley Brent</i>
24 th September	Garden Plants Behaving Badly <i>Caradoc Doy</i>
22 nd October	Container Gardening for cooler months – demonstration. <i>Julie Haylock</i>
26 th November	The Gardens and Plants of Madeira <i>Saul Walker</i>
December	No Meeting

All Meetings at 7:30pm in Ipplepen Village Hall



We are a family firm now in its second generation that has been manufacturing and installing high quality kitchens & bedrooms for over 35 years.

01626 333600

www.booth-kitchens.co.uk

Peter Booth Kitchens Ltd.

The Old Cider Works, Manor Road, Abbotskerswell,
Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 5NF

**NOW ACCEPTING
NEW CLIENTS!**

**SEYMOUR
VETS**



**RCVS
ACCREDITED
PRACTICE**



Our Services

- Consultations
- Emergencies & out of hours
- Dentistry
- Diagnostic Tests & Imaging
- Microchipping
- Neutering
- Nurse Clinics
- Parasite Control
- Surgery

Join today!

hpc The Healthy Pet Club

Treating your pet like one of the family.

Established in 1986, our small animal practice in Totnes offers accessible facilities, including disabled access and on-site parking.

Our friendly, experienced veterinary team is dedicated to providing the highest quality care, from routine check-ups and procedures to advanced treatments and surgeries. Our state-of-the-art facilities include endoscopy, digital x-ray, dental x-ray and CT scanner. To ensure a calm experience for all pets, we also provide separate waiting areas and wards for dogs and cats.

Contact us today:

Smugglers Inn
Steamer Quay Road
Totnes
TQ9 5AL

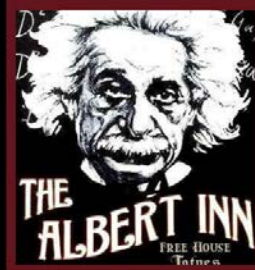
reception@seymourvets.co.uk
01803 866 283
Seymour Vets
vetcollection.co.uk



**INITIAL CONSULTATIONS
FREE
FOR NEW CLIENTS**

OPENING TIMES

MONDAY-FRIDAY 17:00-23:00
SATURDAY 12:00-23:00
SUNDAY 12:00-22:30



FOOD SERVICE

TUESDAY-SATURDAY 18:00-21:00
SUNDAY 12:00-19:00

TEL: 01803 863214

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU

