

the CORACLE

News from the Diocese of Truro

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The editor wishes readers of The Coracle a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Discovering God's Kingdom

A question of 'normality'



WE DON'T KNOW how much, if any, money changed hands to allow Joseph and Mary to stay in the stable. History does not give us any information about the 'rates' for Bethlehem B&Bs. So we don't know what it cost them to stay.

We use the language of money and finance a great deal in our conversations. Our whole society appears to be based on exchanges that are always – and only – assessed by what things are worth in monetary terms.

The protests taking place around the world, including the one outside St Pauls Cathedral, are making a statement about the values of our society. The fact that the cathedral authorities were caught off guard and the situation escalated as it did, is just one sign of the confusion that abounds at present. We are living through chaotic times. The very basis on which our complex societies are built is being questioned. Our core values are under the spotlight and no one seems to know how it will all work out in the end.

This raises an issue about what is 'normal'. Most of us assume a way of living our lives without thinking too much about whether it is 'normal'. We just know how things should be and we all, in the main, go along with the way things should be. We also seem to know when things are odd and we comment on it. We say "That is odd" and we hope and pray everything will soon return to 'normal'.

I believe we are making a mistake if we think that we are now living through one of those 'odd' times and that everything will soon return to 'normal'. I think we are living through a major change and we will need to alter fundamentally many of our values and beliefs. In other words, we will need to reconsider what is 'normal'.

Often people will say, as Christmas approaches, "Everything will be far from normal over the Christmas period"; and then, after Boxing Day, they may comment,

"Won't it be good when we get back to normal."

The message of Christmas is that God loves us so much that he sent his Son into the world. That love is the most precious gift we can ever have. Sadly, all that is happening around us demonstrates that we have moved away from understanding this message and have debased the gift by creating a new 'normality' in which money and finance are all-important.

This year, Christmas will be different. Are we prepared to consider that the difference involved may be permanent? For some people, this year, Christmas will be grim as they are affected by the financial issues right around the world. For some, once again, Christmas will mean no home, no money and nowhere to lay their head. For some, this Christmas will mean – as the year moves to an end – their job is over and their future is far from certain.

So what is 'normal' for you, and on what values do you base your life? We have seen remarkable scenes this year; with disturbances up and down the country during the summer, and now protests on our streets causing real difficulty, not least, for an institution such as the Church of England.

I do think this all points to the real question at the heart of Christmas, which is, 'What is normal?' It also asks us how willing we are to change our lives and to change the whole basis on which we live and relate one to another.

✦ **Tim**



St Petroc's Christmas Appeal

THE WORK of St Petroc's Society with single homeless people throughout Cornwall has once again been in great demand during the past year.

Our City Road premises have been busier than ever and our houses full throughout the county. Practical support and advice has been made available to so many people through the committed work of our staff team and volunteers. As we approach another Christmas, I am once again appealing to you for help.

Last year, our Christmas Appeal raised over £55,000 – once again a record. My very sincere thanks to all of you. Our supporters have proved to be true 'record breakers' over the years, and this year I am hoping we can do the same.

This is my 12th Appeal – and my last – as I retire at the end of December. It has been a great privilege and an inspiration to be associated with St Petroc's Society and I am very conscious that our work depends in large

part on the generosity of our supporters, both individuals and groups.

Will you help? Perhaps you could hold a special collection over Christmas, or organise a special fund-raising event, or simply make a donation. Any contribution, large or small will be greatly appreciated. These may be sent to Jackie Davis, St Petroc's Society, 8 City Road, Truro TR1 2JJ (01872 264153). She can also supply collecting envelopes or further information about the Society.

The Society's tremendous work can only be as good as the help we receive. In these difficult and challenging financial times, please support us if you can. Together we can make a difference.

Thank you and with all good wishes,

Bishop Roy

President, St Petroc's Society.



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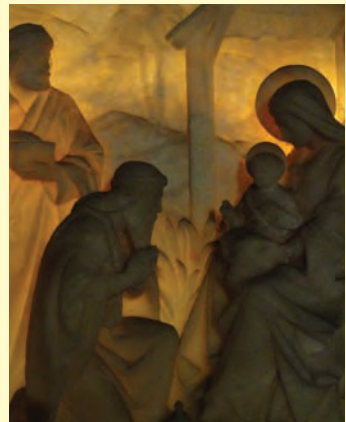
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TWENTY YEARS AGO we would have called it a storm in a teacup. Not any more as the 'teacup' in question is the Evangelical community. In those days, Evangelicals were a small, though important,

minority in the Church of England and a small but important minority in the Church Catholic. Today things have changed and Evangelicals, though split into factions, are a powerful and major player in the Church of England, and the largest single group in the World Church. Definitely not a teacup.

The 'storm' in question is a bitter dispute over a man and his book. The man is Rob Bell, Founding Pastor of Mars Hill Bible Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Chicago Sun-Times even call him 'The next Billy Graham'. The book is *Love Wins* (Collins, 2011, £14.99 – cheaper on Amazon). It reads more like a lively and stimulating meditation than a book and it's a very easy read with lots of short sentences – even single-word ones – and no jargon or footnotes. I found it inspired and inspiring. But it has caused a real storm.

Love Wins is about God. What is God like? In it Rob Bell focusses on Heaven and Hell. He thinks that God is not like the so-called god of those Christians who believe that he provides the joy of Heaven for some and eternal punishment in Hell for the rest. He believes that the picture of eternal punishment in Hell is not actually found in the Bible and that those Evangelicals whose message is that people must 'turn or burn' are utterly mistaken. A god who behaves like that is unworthy of the name – no human parent would behave like that towards their children and God is better than we are!

You can see why he has caused a storm. Not least as in 2000 the Evangelical Alliance produced a report on Hell which firmly stated, among other things, that

Love wins

'as well as separation from God, hell involves severe punishment. Scripture depicts this punishment in various ways, using both psychological and physical terminology. Although this terminology is often metaphorical, and although we should be wary of inferring more detail about hell than Scripture itself affords, hell is a conscious experience of rejection and torment' (*The Understanding of Hell*, point 7). Rob Bell looks at the kind of references the report uses and shows that they don't mean that at all. I'd buy the book just for his marvellous exposition of the Parable of Dives and Lazarus.

None of this is new or strange. My minister told us much the same thing as Rob Bell has written in our Confirmation class in the '60s. Back in 1929, the hymn-writer and editor, Percy Dearmer, wrote that 'The legend of Hell is ... a powerful enemy of the Christian religion, as it has for generations been the most general cause of the widespread repudiation of the Churches which marks the modern era'.

The popular theologian, Walter Wink, put it succinctly in 2002 that 'Belief in a place of eternal torments is unworthy of the highest forms of Christian faith'. And the great Eastern Orthodox Bible scholar, Origen of Alexandria, said much the same in the third century.

Rob Bell doesn't want to throw the concept of Hell away – emphatically not – but he does want to get back to what it and Heaven actually mean in the teaching of Jesus and in the reality of our daily here-and-now lives. This is a book to buy, read and share. It would make an excellent textbook for a Lent course.

Stephen Dawes
Canon Theologian



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Old fashioned Night Storage, apart from using huge amounts of power, has little control, the rooms you want heated always seem to be cold at the very time of the day you need them warm and so you're then relying on even more expensive back-up heating sending your bills sky-rocketing.

In Germany where the brutally cold winters are taken very seriously, night storage heating (economy7) is now **BANNED!** The development of **GERMAN ENGINEERED** 24 hour storage heating radiators, means that they require just a small fraction of the kilowattage of old fashioned economy7, saving you money by automatically switching themselves off and on by constantly monitoring the room temperature. Just 17 minutes of electricity could keep you toasty warm for a whole hour even when the outside temperature is a frosty minus 7 degrees c.

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Update on FIT

THE GOVERNMENT is decreasing the Feed-in Tariff (FIT) by about 50 per cent from 12 December although it may extend this deadline back to the previous date of 31 March 2012 for churches and community groups, *writes Revd Andrew Yates*.

However, at the same time, prices of panels are dropping (by as much as 50%) and efficiencies improving, while electricity tariffs will continue to increase. The interest rate returns on a solar project will not be as financially attractive (more like a 4% - 5% interest rate return) and it will take longer to pay off any loan (say 12 years instead of 8).

In the lifetime of a church building, this is not a long time. The installation of the panels is now to be seen more clearly as an environmentally friendly course of action (carbon reduction) with a possible long-term financial benefit, not a chance to gain a quick return.

There is an on-line petition at <https://submissions.epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/20928> and it is suggested that those concerned about the proposals to reduce the tariffs reply to the consultation in the strongest terms before the closing date of 23 December.

New energy benchmarking scheme

From the New Year, parishes will be able to sign up to a new scheme, which will help churches assess their energy footprint on an annual basis and thus mark the progress being made on improving energy efficiency. This could be a great help for churches taking the 'Shrinking the Footprint' campaign seriously. More information from Richard Hopper, richardhopper@btinternet.com

Parish energy enquiries

169 parishes completed the energy question section on this year's Archdeacons' Enquiries. On the positives, over 50 per cent of these churches had installed low energy bulbs and 37 per cent had turned the thermostat down by one degree.

A projection of these survey results across the diocese means that each year our church buildings alone produce 1,200 tonnes of CO₂ and only 10 churches are using a green supplier. So there is much room for improvement.

Churches in Cornwall Environment Award

Our commitment to caring for God's Creation goes far beyond just our energy use. And the Churches Environment Award offers lots of ideas on practical action that parishes can take up from 'car pooling' to 'living churchyards' and clothes swap events. More details at www.trurodiocese.org.uk/downloads/1752.pdf or from andrew.yates@truro.anglican.org

PV at Mylor Bridge

DETERMINED to be as green as we could, the PCC at All Saints Church, Mylor Bridge, decided to put photovoltaic (PV) panels on the roof, *writes Dorrit Smith*.

We were encouraged, of course, by the Feed-in Tariff (FIT) payments which would undoubtedly help us to meet our Common Fund ... and then there was the return on the investment. It was so much better than we could hope for from other sources.

All Saints Church is a mission church attached to St Mylor and because the land does not belong to the diocese, it is not a consecrated building. So no faculty was required, just planning permission from Cornwall Council. This presented no problems.

We also needed permission to remove two overgrown yew trees which overshadow the



building and to trim a third. All this took a lot longer ... but we persisted and are now proudly generating electricity and selling it to 'Good Energy'.

Taking the church to the street

A STREET PASTOR is a Christian with a concern for society, who is willing to engage with people where they are, in the places they 'hang out' – be it on the streets, in the pubs and clubs, or at parties, *writes Steph Trebilcock*.

They are non-denominational and work with community leaders and with agencies and projects – both statutory and voluntary – to look at collaborative ways of working on issues affecting youth, and initiatives that will build trust.

As the Street Pastor gets to know people in the community, he or she will find out what their needs are and what can be done to help. Their presence will earn credibility in the community, so that people know that the Church is there for them in a practical way. The role is one of listening, caring and helping – working in an unconditional way.

A Street Pastor team consists of four 'street' pastors and three 'prayer' pastors, each of whom will work a minimum of one night a month, usually from 21:30pm to around 4am.

Truro Street pastors are currently recruiting, and training is starting now. For more information, e-mail truro@streetpastors.org.uk or call Steph on 07590686963.

To be a Street Pastor you need to be:

- over 18 (no upper age limit)
- a church member
- able to commit to training and then one 'shift' a month



TAKE A MAP and drive carefully when visiting Lamorran, located on the Falmouth Estate and adjoining the River Fal, *writes Primrose Peacock*.

There are bluebells in spring, chestnuts in the autumn and an ancient, charming little church. The parish, with a handful of dwellings, was originally given by King Edgar in 969 to one of his thegns. The Church, dedicated to St Moran or Morwenna, was consecrated by the famous Bishop Bronescombe in 1261.

William White, a Gothic Revival architect of Truro, 'restored' it during the 1840s. It contains a coloured window by a former Lady Falmouth,

and what perhaps typified Lamorran – a large fir cone used to replace a missing diamond in a north transept window!

Owing to its tiny local population, Lamorran hosts a monthly service during the summer months and a few special events during the remainder of the year. The harvest service was held on the afternoon of 9 October.

Hymns replaced the canticles and Mrs Josephine Gray read the first lesson and Mrs Carol Hall a poem, following the Homily.

Christopher Thomas, the son of a local farmer, who has recently commenced a programme of agricultural study in Camborne, came with his family and a friend complete with a laptop computer to present a slide show of the farming arable year. Using pictures of tractors and other machinery, he conducted us through the process – from initial harrowing and ploughing until the final wheat and maize harvests were safely in the barns.

After the service, we all went out through the cyclamen-dotted graveyard to a home across the road, where one of those amazing Cornish feasts was laid out, before carefully extracting ourselves from lanes with grass and moss up the centre. A beautiful and delightful little Cornish hideaway.



Christopher Thomas finishes ploughing a field.



An amazing Cornish feast.

Vergers wed

ON Friday 7 October, head verger, Steven Rose, and assistant verger, Catherine 'Cat' Harman, were married in Truro Cathedral. The service, which was solemnised by Canon Perran Gay, was followed immediately by a Nuptial Mass and, after a short break, with a reception and meal for about 300 people in the Cathedral nave.

On behalf of all readers of *The Coracle*, we send our love and best wishes to the happy couple.



Critical breakfast

A YEAR AGO, Critical Mass, an interactive Eucharist for young people, was held in Boscastle, *writes the Revd Robert Thewsey.*

The beginning of October saw the event celebrate its first birthday with a Critical Breakfast. And during the past year, thanks to Eden Chapel, there have also been Critical Pancakes and Critical Creation. Critical Breakfast focused on the Bible passage from John 21 – Jesus' appearance to his disciples on the shores of Lake Galilee and the miraculous catch of fish.

A 'Critical' service takes the different elements of the Eucharist and makes them interactive. So during Critical Breakfast people dropped pebbles into water to signify cleansing of sin, they wrote individual intercessions onto cardboard fish which were gathered together in a fishing net, and they joined in with a reflective talk.

The reading used images from The Brick Testament and as always the event finished with food. This time it was fish & chips!

There is now an ecumenical team planning and leading these events – which also attract more mature participants as well as young people – and planning is under way for the next event. Critical Lent will be held on 26 February 2012.



For further information, contact Revd Robert Thewsey, 01840 250359 or Shelley Porter, 01872 247211.



Pets on best behaviour

COMBINING Animal Welfare Sunday and the feast day of St Francis of Assisi, St Grade Church held a Pet Service, led by the Revd Deirdre Mackrill. Some 20 dogs, three hens and a six-month-old Jersey calf brought their well-behaved owners to this service of thanksgiving and blessing for animals and pets.



There were hymns, the story of St Francis and the Wolf of Gubbio, some prayers, followed by each of the animals being blessed by the Revd Deirdre.

Quite the star of the afternoon was Midge, the Jersey calf, who won the hearts of everyone present. She and all the animals were beautifully behaved throughout – although Midge did do a spectacular 'wee' during the final hymn!

Schools

Thinking of others ... worlds apart

CHILDREN and staff at Archbishop Benson School in Truro have a truly international outlook on life. This was recently recognised by their re-accreditation with the International Schools Award.

Instead of sending each other Christmas cards, they have collected enough money to buy some chickens to fill a hen house in Uganda to help feed local orphans. And this is on top of their constant efforts to help overseas farmers and workers by selling Fairtrade 'tuck' products on Wednesday playtimes and at the school's summer fayre.



Whole Gospel in 59 minutes

DURING the Holiday Club run by Veryan CE School, children created four banners that were used during a service of celebration in St Symphorian Church to tell the whole of the Gospel story in 59 minutes! Some of the children helped describe what each banner represented.

Each of the banners measures about 4 feet by 2 feet and they were displayed in church throughout the summer until the end of September. It is planned to exhibit them again at relevant times of the year.

The first banner depicts the Annunciation and the Nativity.



Pupils team up with churches to help people in need

AT THEIR HARVEST FESTIVAL, students and their families at Upton Cross Primary School donated produce, which was added to contributions from members of the church community in the parish of Linkinhorne.

All dry goods were donated to the Liskeard Food Bank, which organises healthy meals for people who cannot otherwise afford food. It provides families in need with three square meals a day for each family for three days, and offers advice about where future help can be found.

All fresh harvest festival produce, including vegetables grown in their own garden by pupils at Upton Cross, was auctioned at a fund-raising harvest supper together with donations from church members. The event made £580 for ShelterBox.

Head teacher, Mark Clutsom, says, "At Upton Cross we firmly believe that taking part in, and contributing to, our community is a vital part of our children's learning experience, and it has been a pleasure to share the idea that harvest is a time for sharing as well as celebration."

Linkinhorne curate, the Revd Marilyn Elliott adds, "It's so rewarding for church and school to work together to help those in need, whether they be our near neighbours struggling to afford the essentials of life in these difficult times, or our friends in the wider world."



Upton Cross pupil, George Drew, leads the presentation to David Berry of Liskeard Food Bank, watched by the Revd Marilyn Elliott.

The second combines Jesus' baptism by John with the 'temptations' – albeit with John looking rather like Satan! The other half of this banner combines Jesus' healing ministry with his preaching to the crowds.



The third banner represents all of the stories and events relating to fishing and the sea, while the other half depicts Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

The final banner contrasts a very sombre Crucifixion scene with a vibrant Resurrection celebration.

There has been so much interest in the banners that the PCC approved a suggestion that they should be used to create Christmas cards and these are available to order through Father Doug Robins, 01872 501618 or fatherdougrobins@talktalk.net at a price of £2 for a pack of five.

Christmas through a child's eyes

Chris Kingshott has written this short, contemporary monologue that focuses upon the observations of a 10-year-old boy who, unlike his family around him, understands that their superficial Christmas has, in fact, a deeper and eternal significance.

Picture, then, the boy sitting in his bed writing his diary at the end of the day. A special day – Christmas Day.

Dear Diary

I know you'll understand what I'm about to tell you.

It's been a dark, December day. "Oh, will it ever get light?" I heard Mum protest.

Alas, no – the impregnable grey would be the best we'd get on this Christmas Day.

I awoke early today. In fact, I couldn't really sleep. Excitement. Presents. I couldn't wait for my Lego set – number 9345 – the model of the Minack Theatre, in Cornwall. I knew I was going to get it – Dad had told me. He shouldn't have. Mum told him off – it was supposed to be a surprise. And, if I was really lucky, I'd get number 9346 to go with it. Twelve life-like actors.

You know, Mum had been up since 5am this morning – preparing the bird, ensuring every last detail would be observed. It really was quite absurd.

She had left father snoring – his mouth ajar, dreaming, in all probability, of propping up the bar – that is, at *The Locomotive*, down along the moor. You see, there's a custom – 'drinks on the house' for the first to come through the door, on Christmas morning.

I once asked him, "Do you ever think about the poor, starving families of this world?" And he just looked at me, curiously; and said nothing. He said nothing. Too many people say nothing. It doesn't help the ones who, really do have nothing.

And there was Gran and Grandpa, all snuggled up in their bed – wondering, I suspect, how many more Christmases they'll be sent. They're Mum's parents. When I look at them, I try to imagine how they were when they were young. And they tell me, as you get older, you remember – most clearly – the times when you were young.

I guess I need to treasure these days of childhood.

Well, by half-past-two all the presents had been exchanged. I did get number 9345, and the theatre was built – 900 Lego pieces in an hour and a half – that's an average of 10 bits per minute. That's a record for me!

The turkey was eaten; the festive pudding devoured. "Not for me," Grandpa had said. "I've eaten too much already. I'll need to go to bed."

That's before he relented ... and had seconds, too!

They were a happy bunch of adults, who, after their festive

lunch, settled down for the expected nap – Mum, Dad, Gran and Grandpa all, at one time, snoring ... for me, this was all so boring.

Then, at three, the traditional Queen's message – I switched on the TV.

Gran stirred first.

"Oh! She looks much older than last year," she declared.

"What's that, Mabel?" asked a yawning, stretching Dad. "Oh, the Queen ... yes. I think this ageing is all quite sad."

Not much you can do about that, I thought.

Mum came round in real melancholy – surprisingly so – for at the table she had been quite jolly. "Oh well," she said with a sigh. "It's all over for another year. Woolworth's will be taking down their decorations and – tomorrow – there'll be all those bargains at the sale beckons."

"Of course," she added, with a twinkle in her eye. "Your father will be booking our summer holiday. Where will it be this time, Bert? Greece or Spain or camping in Cornwall in May?"

So I thought. Is this all that Christmas means to them? What would they say about the weeks, if not months, of



preparation – all over in less than a day?

And, they never mention Jesus.

So I said to them, “What do you think about the baby in the manger?” And they looked at me, all puzzled, as if I was a stranger.

“Who?”

“Jesus!”

“Jesus?” said Mum. “What’s Christmas got to do with Jesus?”

And Gran tutted, “Religion gets into everything these days,” she mumbled, from behind her TV Times.

So, it’s all very sad. And, as I write my diary on this Christmas night, I agree with whoever wrote, ‘Baby Jesus ... this world will break your heart’.

Indeed, his and theirs are worlds apart.

I think I’ll leave it to next year to tell them that Christmas is a season that lasts for 12 days.



Hearing loops

Stephen Gilbert from Kernow A-V Installations explains...

How they work

An audio signal is fed into a loop amplifier. This usually comes from the sound system, if there is one, but could be just a microphone. The loop amplifier outputs a current into a single loop of cable that runs around the perimeter of the church. This cable emits a magnetic field into the room and this field is picked up by a tiny copper coil in the hearing aid (when the earpiece is switched to ‘T’). A current is then induced in the coil which becomes an audio signal once more.

Loop facts

- The loop cable should be ‘stranded’ cable and of a suitable thickness for the total length of the loop. Copper tape can also be used
- The loop cable should be run at floor level or occasionally at the top of the wall if roughly at standard room height.
- The magnetic field will ‘spill’ out of the loop (up to 4x the width of the loop) which can be useful or detrimental.
- Central heating pipes running around the perimeter of the church will dramatically reduce the effectiveness and is best allowed for by using a more powerful amplifier.
- It is best to have at least one microphone always on to provide background (ambience) sound to the listener.
- Condenser microphones are preferable as dynamic microphones can pick up the magnetic field and cause feedback issues.
- It is a Disability Discrimination Act 1995 requirement that the hearing loop is tested annually. In most cases, simply having a couple of hearing aid users to check is quite sufficient.

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Holy Bible in Cornish

AN BEYBEL SANS (The Holy Bible) is the first translation of the entire Bible ever to be published in Cornish. The translator of the Cornish Bible is Professor Nicholas Williams, the foremost present-day translator into the language. The spelling system used is Standard Cornish, which is essentially the 'official' Single Written Form (SWF/T) with marks above some letters to ensure correct pronunciation.

The translator searched historic Cornish miracle plays, homilies, and portions of scripture to find passages where native Cornish translations could

Turning the pages

be used. Such passages by indigenous speakers of Cornish have been incorporated throughout the book and add to its authenticity. Where possible, personal and geographical names are those of traditional Cornish.

The Bible has dedicated pages in the front so family births, marriages and deaths can be recorded in it.

An Beybel Sans is available from local bookshops, price £49.95. Everytype Publishers. ISBN 978-1-904808-70-1.

Good Fellowship of Padstow

Barry Kinsmen

Federation of Old Cornwall Societies

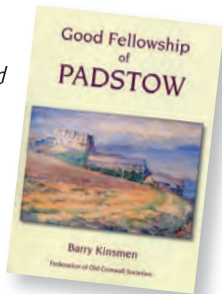
196 pages. £8.50.

ISBN 978-0-902660-42-7.

THE Federation of Old Cornwall Societies has recently published a book written by the former Rector of St Issey, the Revd Barry Kinsmen. Entitled *Good Fellowship of Padstow*, it first appeared 13 years ago, and sold out very quickly. This new edition is considerably revised and has additional illustrations.

It recounts in fascinating detail his childhood in, firstly, Hawkers Cove on the Camel Estuary, and later his teenage years in Padstow itself. It is an engrossing and affectionate recollection of the 1940s and 1950s, and the comparatively simple pleasures of life at that time – but also its occasional anxieties.

The author takes the reader through his memories of life in the modest *Pilot's Cottage* at Cove, his early school-days, his blossoming interest in local history, his devotion to the church, its services and its choir, the thrill of Christmas time, the importance of the May Day celebrations, trips upon the railway, the closeness of family and community, and much else besides.



Those who lived through that period almost anywhere in rural Britain will be struck by many similarities of experience. Along the way, the story is naturally interspersed with some of Padstow's earlier history.

The 196-page book is illustrated with numerous photographs and can be obtained through local bookshops, or from the Federation's Publications Officer, 5 British Road, St Agnes, TR5 0TX (plus £1.50 p&p).

Bishop Phillpotts Library

THERE IS a comprehensive theological library in Diocesan House. Membership is open to anyone resident in Cornwall and the £10 annual fee also includes the use of the South West Ministerial Training Course library. Clergy and Readers may use the library free of charge,

The Bishop Phillpotts Library is open on a self-service basis during Diocesan House office hours (9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday) with a Librarian on duty on Wednesday afternoons.

For further information, contact Sue Smith at phillpott.library@sky.com



Exodus to Pentecost

ONCE AGAIN, the Revd Canon Peter Walker and I are girding up our loins (and cleaning out our rucksacks) in preparation for another pilgrimage in the Holy Lands of Egypt, Jordan and Israel in May of next year, *writes Revd Barbara Heseltine*.

We have called the journey 'Exodus to Pentecost'. We shall follow the steps of Moses as he led the people through the desert from Egypt to the edge of the River Jordan. Unlike Moses, we will cross the river into Israel, and trace the life and ministry of Jesus in Galilee and on up to Jerusalem. We will also spend two nights in Bethlehem.

Do not worry, even though this involves waiting and praying on several 'high places', most of the travelling will be by air-conditioned coach – or at least camel or donkey – and the really 'highest places' are optional.

Some of you may have reservations about safety in this rather unsettled part of the world too, especially since the happenings earlier this year. But I went to Cairo and into the Western Desert in late February and again in October, and never felt unsafe.

As you may know, Peter and I have travelled in this area several times, and it is the experience of many that a second (or third or even fourth) visit just gives more opportunities for seeing more and having greater insight into both the Biblical stories and the contemporary situation.

On our pilgrimage, we will stay in good hotels – in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, we will be staying in Palestinian-run hotels. This is not that we do not still want to share with all of the religions of the region, but there is definitely a ground swell of feeling that wishes to support the Christians in Israel, and this is

one way we can do it. We will still be staying in the Ron Beach Hotel in Galilee, which is owned and run by a Jewish family.

So ... will you join us? If you have not been to these Holy Lands before, I know that this will be a journey you will never forget. If you have been before, then you already know that, but, believe me, each visit brings new revelations.

If you would like one of us to come and talk and show photographs to a group at your church, we will be pleased to do that. In the meantime, do not hesitate to ask us any questions that you need answering before you can make a decision about coming.

We would like to know by the middle of January how many people will be travelling with us.



To register an interest and for further information, contact Barbara (01872 870039, barbara.heseltine@tiscali.co.uk) or Peter (01720 423911, scillychaplain@btinternet.com)



Letter to the editor

IT ALWAYS AMUSES me that those who would be the first to bridle at the notion of papal infallibility are quick to claim direct knowledge of the Holy Spirit's action in the Church today, which smacks of a lack of humility. Even Archbishop George Carey admitted to members of Forward in Faith that he could be wrong on this subject.

Canon John Halkes makes this bold claim in his letter to *The Coracle* (November 2011) in favour of women bishops. This is just one possible interpretation of the movement for the ordination of women bishops; another being that the Church of England is increasingly held captive to the spirit of the age, rather than the Holy Spirit. And what is next on the liberal agenda: same sex marriage?

If 15 of the 35 provinces in the Anglican Communion recognise women bishops, this means that the majority (20) do not – so I'm not really sure what the point of quoting this statistic is? And many of those where it is permissible, have not actually got women bishops.

I have no objection to modernists arguing the case for women bishops, but you know their arguments are weak when they have to fall back on general insults like misogyny; be careful about accusing your more conservative brothers and sisters in Christ of such unworthy motives, lest by implication you end up condemning Our Lord as well ... After all, He chose 12 men to be His Apostles.

One of the most ironic things that I've come across, in my short time in the Diocese of Truro, was a woman who had been ordained as a priest worshipping in a resolution C parish. The fact that she found more Christian charity there than in the liberal parish she had left speaks volumes!

I don't really care what the Revd Marilyn McCord Adams says, but I do care about what the Fathers of the Great Church had to say, and while women were ordained to the diaconate in the pre-great schism Church, they were not admitted to either the ministerial priesthood or the episcopate.

We would also do well to remember the words of a previous Bishop of Truro, Walter Frere CR (1923 – 35) who said that where the Eastern and Western Churches spoke with one accord, the Holy Ghost has spoken. Those of us who seek to defend a traditional understanding of Faith & Order are used to being insulted by revisionists; but perhaps we should consider it a badge of honour, for by their uncharitable remarks they simply demonstrate their own intolerance of those who hold fast to 'the faith once delivered to the saints'. No wonder traditional believers are feeling increasingly marginalised in this diocese.

Yours in Christ,

Fr Mark Mesley, Penwerris.

Will you extend a friendly hand?

INDEPENDENT AGE is a support community for older people who are on low incomes, writes *Andy Nisbet, volunteer recruitment co-ordinator.*

The organisation offers a hand of friendship by helping tackle older people's poverty and loneliness by means of information, advice and friendship. One of the core services we offer to our members is the support of a 'befriender'. However, we cannot help everyone who would benefit from our support and we urgently need more volunteers, especially in the Redruth and Truro areas.

All befrienders receive an induction and training and the role would involve anything from dropping by for a coffee and chat to arranging a trip to the local shops. So, if you think you could be an Independent Age Volunteer, visit www.independentage.org.uk or contact our South West area manager, Gloria Percival on 01823 481353 or Gloria.percival@independentage.org.uk



Talking trees

Decade of **decorating** trees



WHEN Jean and Michael Jefferies suggested that St Sennen Church should hold a Christmas Tree Festival, they had no idea that it would be such a huge success, *writes Leslie Double*.

Originally meant as a 'one-off', it is now celebrating its 10th year. Since 2002, thousands of pounds have been raised for various projects, such as replacing the church's old electrics and installing a sound and loop system. However, this December will be the last Sennen Festival of Christmas Trees and, although many people are sad that there will be no

more, it does give the church the chance to do something else during this very special season.

For the last nine years, the Festival has taken over the church from just after Advent until 21 December, and has drawn in people from all over the county. Every Festival has had a theme – this year the 28 trees that fill the tiny 'first and last' church will be decorated under the title 'Tell Me a Story'.

Father Brin Berriman, Priest in Charge, says, "This last Festival isn't just a time for looking back, it's also a time to look forward with anticipation to see what new things will grow in the space left behind. This Festival is a celebration of 10 good years, so let's make it the best of them all!"

Trees of **happiness**

CHRISTMAS is a time for the young, for it is a celebration of the birth of baby Jesus, *writes Revd Canon Graham Minors*.

But is also a moment for our senior visitors, who remember Christmas as a very different time compared to today; whilst for many other people it is a time of planning and some considerable stress.

St Petroc's in Bodmin has, for some years organised, a Christmas Tree Festival with over 60 fully decorated trees in our beautiful 13th century church. These are decorated by the community of Bodmin and for many visitors the display provides a sense of wonderment and a feeling of peace – when all the cares and worries of these difficult times can be put to one side for a short time.



For the children there is the sense of awe and excitement and an opportunity to explain the real meaning of this important celebration. For the senior visitors this is a time for reflection and the stirring of memories, some joyous and some, perhaps, more bitter sweet.



Announcements

The Revd David Keith Barnes at present Vicar of Honley in the Diocese of Wakefield to be Priest in Charge of the Benefice of Bude Haven and Marhamchurch and Priest in Charge of the Benefice of Stratton and Launcells. He will be licensed by the Bishop of Truro at St Andrew's Church, Stratton on Monday 30th January 2012 at 7pm.

Retirements

The Revd Brinley John Berriman Priest in Charge of St Buryan, St Levan & Sennen with effect from 31st January 2012.

The Revd John Allen Coombs Priest in Charge of Roche and Withiel with effect from 16th January 2012.

The Revd Canon John Harris Vicar of St Gluvias and Rural Dean of Carmarth South with effect from 14th January 2012.

What's On

ST ENDELLION CHURCH

Sunday 11th December 6pm

Evening Worship with Taize chants by candlelight.

Sunday 8th January 6pm

Evening Worship with Taize chants by candlelight.

Saturday 10th December 7.30pm

A Christmas Concert: Three Spires Singers Christopher Gray conducts an evening of festive words and music.

All tickets £10 from Hall for Cornwall and Wadebridge Bookshop.

St Tudy Church

Assistant Director of Music at Truro Cathedral

LUKE BOND plays the Organ at St Tudy

Programme includes music by Bach, Mendelssohn, Karg Elert, Vierne, Thalben-Ball.

Tickets at £8 or £10 (incl postage) from Dr Geoffrey Gibbons 4 Chestnut Close, St Tudy, Bodmin, PL30 3AT; 01208 851267 or e-mail gngibbons@btinternet.com

ADVENT QUIET DAY

for Readers

'WAITING UPON GOD'

led by Chris Kingshott, Chaplain to Readers

Monday 5th December, 10am (coffee from 9.30am),

Epiphany House

Please book early by ringing Chris on 01736 810630 or by e-mail chriskingshott@talktalk.net

Services Available

TROUBLE WITH BATS?

For general advice about bats in churches and other buildings, telephone the Bat Conservation Trust Helpline, 0845 1300 228

Do you need a break?

HOUSESITTER/CARER

For adults, children and pets.

Experienced and adaptable to your needs and happy to travel anywhere.

References available.

Telephone 01326 316464.

Wanted

Contribution of Goods for SINBAD'S CHRISTMAS

The Mission to Seafarers and The Apostles of the Sea provide Christmas parcels for men spending Christmas on ships in Falmouth Port or at Tolverne.

Pick-up points in Falmouth and Truro Cathedral.

For details, contact Primrose Peacock, pearose@mypostoffice.co.uk

PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY (TRURO BRANCH)

In 2012 we shall be celebrating the 350th anniversary of the 1662 version of the Book of Common Prayer.

Why not join the PBS – either as an individual or as a church – and participate in the events as they unfold?

Details J St Brioc Hooper, 01726 76382,

jstbrioc@virgin.net

St Ives Parish Church

ADDITIONAL SINGERS REQUIRED

For thriving traditional style, SATB robed choir Weekly

Mass and monthly choral Evensong Traditional

Anglo-Catholic liturgy and music.

Details from Neil Shepherd

01736 759944 or visit www.stivesparishchurch.co.uk

The content of this publication is believed to be correct at the time of going to print, but its accuracy is not guaranteed and does not form part of any offer or contract.

Epiphany House

www.epiphanyhousetruro.co.uk

The Eucharist is celebrated on Saturday mornings at 10am and Tuesdays at noon.

On the first Tuesday of the month there will be **Prayer for Healing**.

Circle Dancing on the first Tuesday of the month from 7.30 - 9.30pm.

Meditation Groups meet on the first Monday of the month 2.30 - 4pm and the third Monday of the month 7.15 - 9.30 pm

Saturday 3rd December

CHRISTMAS OPEN DAY

Refreshments, various stalls and activities available: with something to suit all ages and tastes!

Arts and crafts fair tables are still available, please contact the office.

Friday 6th January

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

In the Chapel followed by a light supper.

All welcome.

Please contact Epiphany House, so that we can make appropriate provision.

For more information and to book a place on any of these events, please contact Epiphany House, Kenwyn, Truro TR1 3DR
Tel: 01872 272249 Email: epiphanyhouse@keme.co.uk

Christmas Tree Festivals

Sennen Church

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Runs from 3rd – 21st December. For more information, call 01736 871664 or e-mail lesleydouble@hotmail.com

St Petroc's Parish Church, Bodmin A FESTIVAL OF HAPPINESS

Open 10.30am - 5pm
Tuesday 6th December to
Saturday 17th December.
Teas, coffees and light lunches are available
(6th -16th December, groups of 10 or more,
please book lunches on 01208 73867)

St Columb Major Parish Church CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

'Switch-on' Friday 16th December at 7pm
Then open daily 12noon to 6pm until 2nd January.
Sunday afternoon groups by arrangement.

All Saints Parish Church, Falmouth CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

"Glad Tidings We Bring"
12th - 31st December. Open daily 10am - 7pm
(Closed 25th, 26th & 27th December)
All very welcome Refreshment Easy access

Church of St Mary Magdalene, Launceston Christmas Tree Festival

9th -15th December
Friday 9th December Opening
by the Mayor at 6pm
Christmas Late Night Shopping 'til 9pm
Sat 10th Dec 10am - 4pm
Sun 11th Dec 12noon- 4pm
Mon 12th - Wed 14th Dec 10am - 4pm
Thurs 15th Dec 10am - 2pm

Tea & coffee available
All proceeds to St Mary's Church Appeal

Kenwyn Church, Truro CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

16th-18th December
(Open 16th-17th from 10am-5pm;
Sunday 18th 12.30-5pm)

Official opening by horticulturalist and BBC broadcaster,
Tracy Wilson, at 11am on 16th December
Coffee, light lunches & teas
Organ recitals, children's activities, raffle &
seasonal arrangements for sale
Entry £2.50, children free.
Sunday 18th 6pm Service of Carols & Readings

Breage Parish Church CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Friday 9th December 10.30-4pm
Crafts, children carol singing at lunchtime
Saturday 10th December 10.30-4pm
Cakes, crafts, gift stall & raffle
Light refreshments all day both days
Sunday 11th December 2-4pm
Mince pie cream teas.



Truro Cathedral December Dates

Thursday 1st 7pm BBC Radio Cornwall Carol Concert. Listen to BBC Radio Cornwall for details.

Friday 2nd 7pm St Petroc's Society Carol Service.

Saturday 3rd 7.30pm Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with St Mary's Singers and Orchestra. Tickets from Hall for Cornwall, 01872 262466 or www.hallforcornwall.co.uk

Sunday 4th 6pm 'From Darkness to Light' a magical Advent Carol Service with the Cathedral Choir. Free, with collection.

Monday 5th 2pm Cornwall Carer's Carol Service
7.30pm Richard Lander School Carol Service

Tuesday 6th 7.30pm Children's Hospice SW 'Little Harbour'

Friday 9th 7.30pm Truro's BIG Christmas Sing – we aim to get a 1,000 voices singing with the Cornwall Youth Choir, St Gluvias Choir and Callington Gospel Choir. Free with collection for Christian Aid

Saturday 10th 7.30pm Handel's *Messiah* a concert by Truro Choral Society with Truro Symphony Orchestra, Conductor Martin Palmer. Tickets from HfC 01872 262466

Sunday 11th 10am & 4pm Human Rights Day with the Revd Professor Nicholas Sagovsky, former Canon Theologian of Westminster Abbey, preaching at the 10am, Choral Eucharist and again at the 4pm Evensong

8pm 'Open to Question' – reflect on issues of Faith with Canon Dr Stephen Dawes in the Pearson Room. Free

Monday 12th 7.30pm Truro School Nine Lessons and Carols.

Wednesday 14th 10am Friends Coffee Morning in the Pearson Room (10-11.30am) All welcome.

Thursday 15th 2.30pm MU Advent Carol Service in St Mary's Aisle. All welcome.

6pm Polwhele House School Carol Service.

Friday 16th 7.30pm Cornwall Young Farmers Carol Service (Ticketed service)

Saturday 17th 7.30pm A Celebration of Christmas with Truro Cathedral Choir in association with Cornwall Today (www.cornwalltoday.co.uk) Reserved seating. Tickets £10-£18 from HfC 01872 262466 or www.hallforcornwall.co.uk

Monday 19th 7.30pm Penlee Lifeboat Disaster Anniversary Arts Event (tbc).

Tuesday 20th 2pm Motor Neurone Carol Service.

Friday 23th 7pm Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. This service is full. All tickets have been allocated.

Saturday 24th 7pm Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols as above.

11.30pm Midnight Mass. Not ticketed.

Sunday 25th 10am Christmas Day Service. Join the Cathedral Choir and Bishop Tim. Not ticketed.

Monday 26th CATHEDRAL OPENS AT 9.30 am

Tuesday 27th CATHEDRAL OPENS AT 9.30 am

Sunday 1st January 2pm Children & Pets Carol Service a fun filled carol service for two- and four-legged friends.

Last day for copy to Editor November 28th
(for January issue)

david.watson@truro.anglican.org





CHRISTIAN RESOURCES EXHIBITION

EQUIPPING AND EMPOWERING YOUR CHURCH



25th-26th January 2012 at Westpoint Arena, Exeter
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