

Ruby Country Benefice

The parishes of Ashwater, Beaworthy, Black Torrington with Highampton, Clawton, Halwill, & Tetcott with Luffincott

Bulletin September 2026



*"Show me your ways, LORD,
teach me your paths."*

Psalm 25:4 (NIV)

“From the Parish Registers” has moved to page 5.

CONTACT NUMBERS

Rector

Revd. Dr. Paul Fitzpatrick

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Administrator

Val Letheren

07484 880 770

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		07768 818 646
	Kay Napier	07814 237 243
Tetcott:	Nikki Mitchell	01409 271 381
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Ruby Ringers (handbells)	Shirley Richmond	01409 231 764
BT Roaming Ringers	David French	07502 115 303

Safeguarding

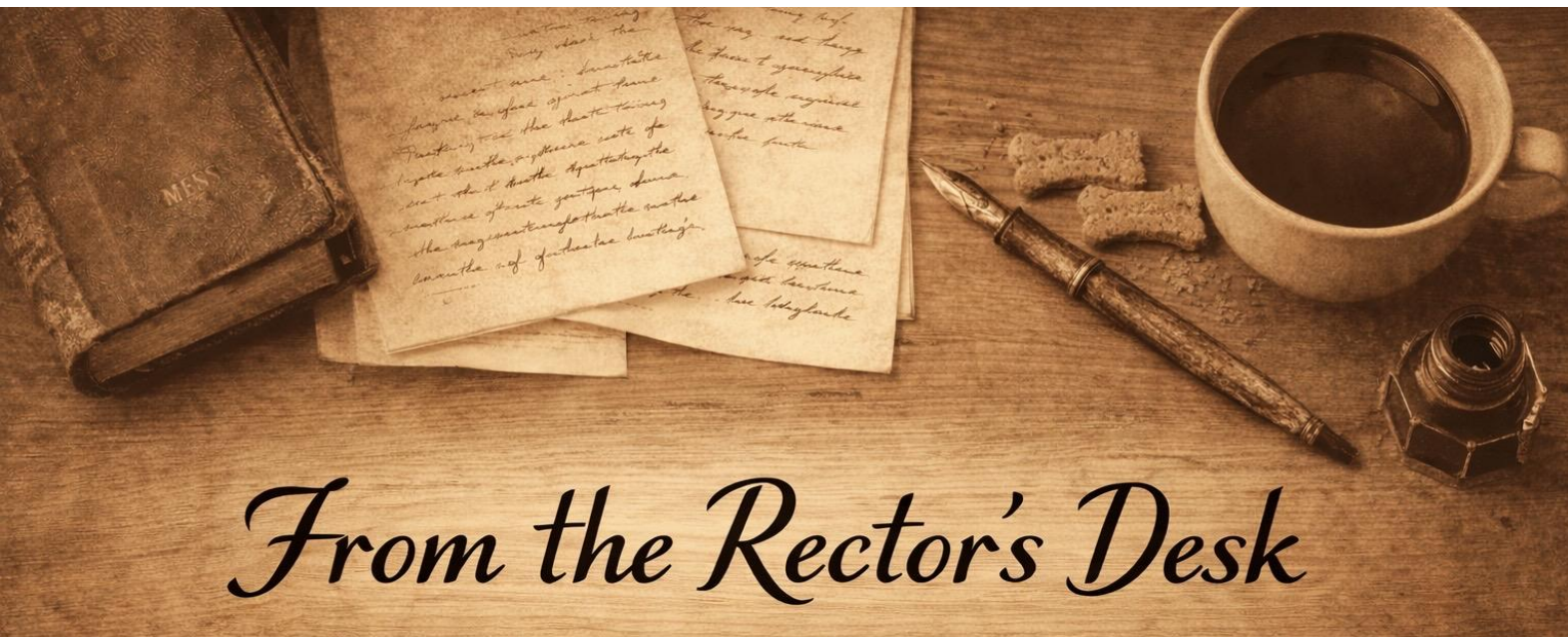
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Tetcott	Sharon Wonnacott	07980 989 262
Holywell Joint Council	Val Letheren	07484 880 770

for safeguarding email addresses, see back cover

From the Parish Registers image (pg. 5) © Parish Pump,
Cover image: gravestone at St. Mary's, Black Torrington 12 Aug 2026 © Val Letheren
Eclipse photos © Val Letheren, Graham Wills, Kay Napier.
W.O.M article images © Kay Napier and Ngaire Wright, and death records © Crown Copyright.

Thanks to Maureen, Shirley, Nikki, Lorna, Sandra, Val, Graham, Diana,
David, Paul F and Paul G who have all contributed to this month's Bulletin.





From the Rector's Desk

September

The steaming heat from the (incredible) Ashwater show has gone and this Sunday afternoon requires no evening service, so in the evening breeze with Henry (as ever), sleeping at my feet and a very black coffee beside me, I write this missive.

This was part of the sermon that I preached today. I don't normally use these in my 'Rector's Desk', but this time I am going to make an exception.

In the last week I have watched....

Three friends quietly say goodbye and lay to rest their friend having travelled two years on his journey.

A very small group working their socks off to literally keep the church roof up.

A call from someone asking for me to help someone who feels worthless. I did, and she isn't.

A sick wife caring for a sicker husband, who always puts others first.

A support group with teeth form to support our farmers through the devastating Bluetongue zoonemic.

A group of ladies eat prodigious amounts of cake amidst raucous laughter.

Two brothers being baptised, one named after a Prince and another a King (the 'Prince' was not impressed).

A church warden write individual thank-you letters to those who helped save one of our churches and another preventing our churchyards from burning.

I met a Guardian Angel in a church (I did).

Someone's heart getting broken.

An entire rural show falling silent for a prayer.

A couple planning their wedding next week with increasing excitement whilst working on a tractor.

Some weeks are blessed.

Paul.



August 2026

- 8th Baptism of Hector A J
and Alfie C J FORD
(St. Peter ad Vincula, Ashwater)
- 10th Interment of Ashes
(St. Peter ad Vincula, Ashwater)
- 20th Funeral of Carole WARD
(North Devon Crematorium)
- 22nd Marriage of Melissa SUTCLIFFE
and Michael DROWNE
(St. Peter ad Vincula, Ashwater)
- 28th Marriage of Wendy Le NOURY
And Graham ANDREWS
(St. Mary's, Black Torrington)

A Parish Prayer

Loving God, we lift up our parish family to you.
Bless those newly baptised, that they may grow
in the light of Christ.
Strengthen those married in our churches,
that their love may reflect your faithfulness.
And grant eternal rest to those laid to rest,
bringing them into the joy of your kingdom.
Hold us all together in your love.

Amen



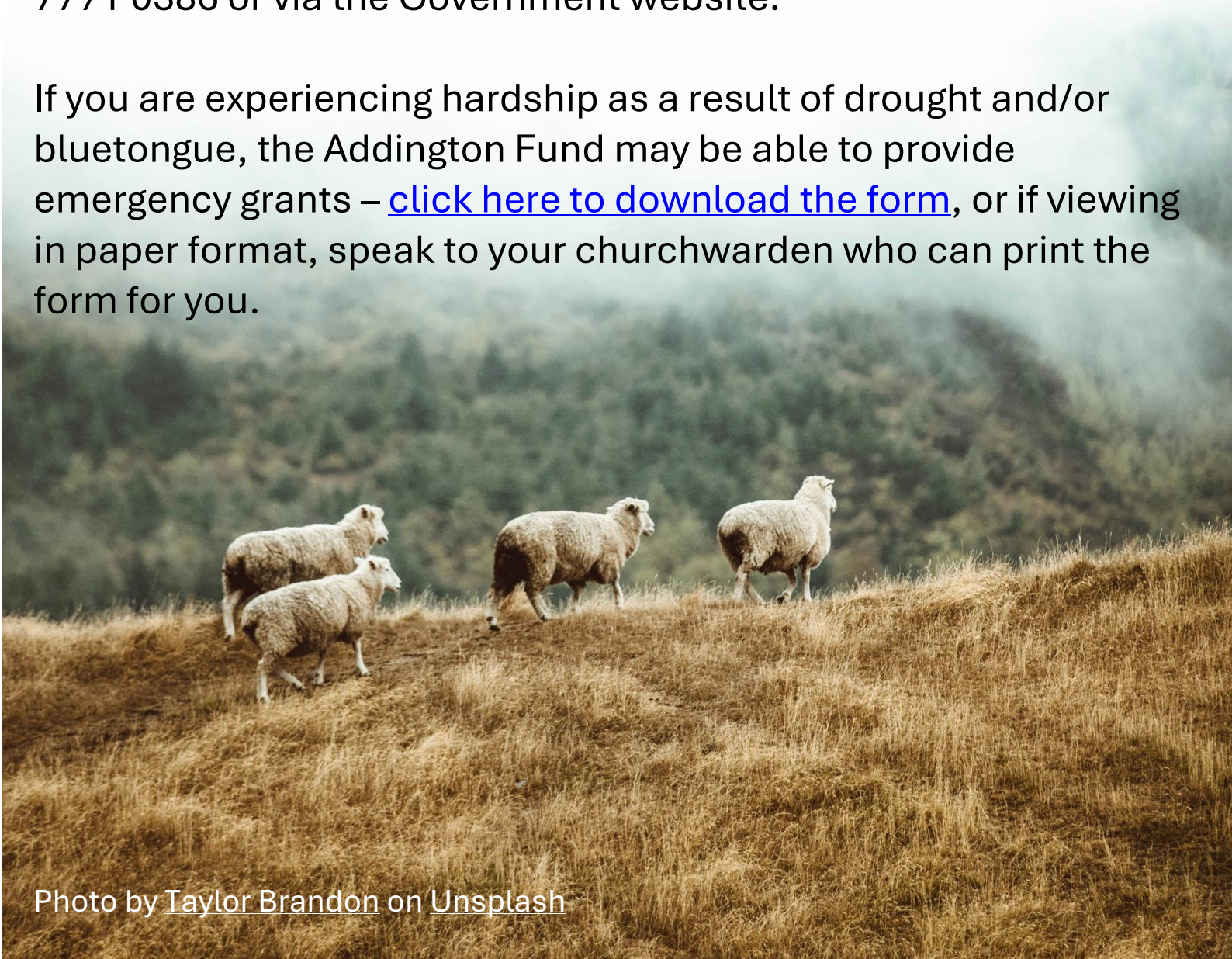
Bluetongue

Our thoughts and prayers are with all who are affected or fearful of this horrible disease which is affecting livestock in our parishes and Benefices.

Revd. Paul and our Chaplains are here if anyone needs to talk, but there is also dedicated support at Holsworthy Market, or by calling or emailing the Farming Community Network (help@fcn.org.uk or call 03000 111 999) – their helpline is open 7am-11pm every day of the year.

Latest news is available by calling the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board's Bluetongue Hotline on 024 7771 0386 or via the Government website.

If you are experiencing hardship as a result of drought and/or bluetongue, the Addington Fund may be able to provide emergency grants – [click here to download the form](#), or if viewing in paper format, speak to your churchwarden who can print the form for you.



The Ruby Country Benefice

The parishes of Ashwater, Beaworthy, Black Torrington with Highampton, Clawton, Halwill and Tetcott with Luffincott

To all the mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters and cousins.

To all those who held their child in their hearts but never in their arms.

To all those whose child never made their first steps, who never heard their babies laugh, who never saw their child live to an old age.

To everyone who has suffered such a loss – in the past day, week, year or longer.

We see you.

Please, if you are able, join us at the Church of St. Peter and St. James, Halwill at 5pm on Sunday 11th October 2026 for a special service of remembrance:

Letting go, holding on remembering our children

There will be poems, music and prayers but it is suitable for any religion or none; its focus is to provide a safe space where we can honour and remember our lost children.

From early September, in each of our Ruby Country Benefice churches, there will be a memory branch and a host of leaves. Please feel free to write on a leaf a message to your loved one, or just write their name. It can then be attached to the memory branch, before all branches are brought together for the service on the 11th October. You can even take the leaf home and bring the leaf to Halwill on the 11th.

If you do not feel you can make the service, please still free to take and use the leaf to commemorate your little one in whichever way you feel fit; you are not alone.

The Ruby Chaplains

September Services 2026

6TH

ASHWATER MORNING SERVICE
BLACK TORRINGTON HOLY COMMUNION
HALWILL MORNING SERVICE
TETCOTT TEA AND EVENING SERVICE

13TH

BLACK TORRINGTON HARVEST
CAFE CHURCH
CLAWTON HARVEST SERVICE
6PM BEAWORTHY EVENSONG

20TH

ASHWATER HOLY COMMUNION
BLACK TORRINGTON MORNING PRAYER
HALWILL HOLY COMMUNION

27TH

BEAWORTHY HOLY COMMUNION
CLAWTON CAFE CHURCH/
UNITED SERVICE
6PM BENEFICE INFORMAL BIBLE STUDY
AT BLACK TORRINGTON



Unless specified otherwise.

Services at
Ashwater begin 9:30am.
Black Torrington,
Beaworthy, Clawton and
Halwill start at 11am
and Tetcott 5pm

Benefice Morning Prayer is
10am every WEDNESDAY
at St. Mary's Church,
Black Torrington

For more information on regular and occasional services,
contact the benefice administrator on 07484 880 770
or email: rubycountry.beneficeadmin@btinternet.com

Ruby Country Benefice

Lectionary Readings

September 2026

Sun 6th

Trinity 14

Ezekiel 33:7-11

Psalms 119:

33-40

Romans 13:8-14

Matthew

18:15-20

Services at:

Ashwater, Black
Torrington, Halwill,
Tetcott

Sun 13th

Trinity 15

Genesis 50:

15-21

Psalms 103:1-13

Romans 14:1-12

Matthew

18:21-35

Services at:

Black Torrington,
Clawton, Beaworthy

Sun 20th

Trinity 16

Jonah 3:10-4:11

Psalms 145:1-8

Philippians 1:21-

30

Matthew 20:1-16

Services at:

Ashwater, Black
Torrington, Halwill

Sun 23rd

Trinity 17

Ezekiel 18:1-4,

25-32

Psalms 25:1-8

Philippians 2:1-

13

Matthew

21:23-32

Services at:

Beaworthy, Clawton

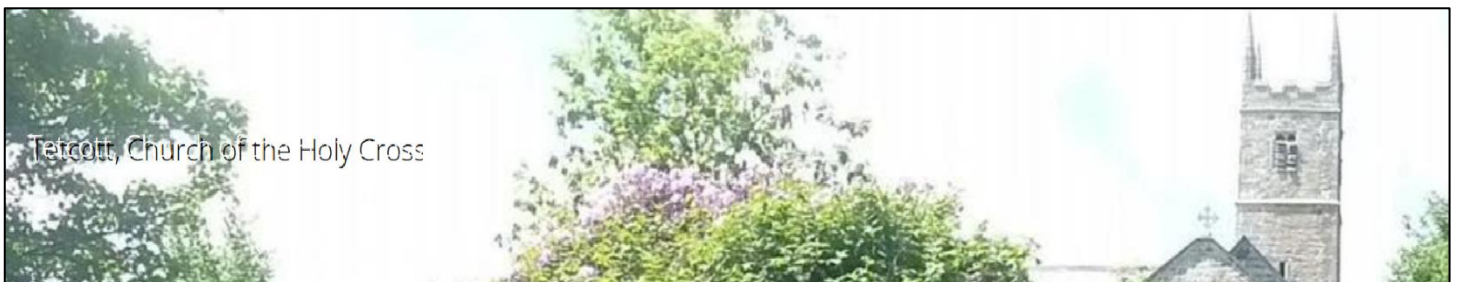
Have you visited our Benefice's websites?

The Parish Church of St Peter ad Vincula Ashwater

www.ashwaterparishchurch.com



www.rubyholwellchurches.org.uk



Tetcott, Church of the Holy Cross

www.tetcottchurch.org



facebook.com/rubybenefice

St Alban's Beaworthy

Lammas celebrated again

Our Lammas day celebration was held on the 8th August preceded by a Lammas harvest tea. Lammas honours the corn harvest and we welcomed friends from Halwill and Madworthy churches to our communal Harvest meal with a spread of sandwiches, savouries ,complemented by very tempting cakes .

The thoughtful Lammas service led by Revd. Dr. Paul Fitzpatrick followed, giving us time to consider our many blessings and the hardships faced by so many countries as the climate change attacks. It concluded with worshippers presenting harvest gifts relevant to the creation of the harvest in front of the altar where the harvest loaf was positioned: seeds; a trowel in lieu of farm equipment; water; and fertilizer.

Lammas is an ancient festival traditionally celebrated on August 1st that marks the beginning of the grain and cereal harvest. Also known as Loaf Mass Day, the name comes from the Old English word *hlāfmæsse*, meaning "loaf-mass," because a loaf of bread made from the first harvested grain was traditionally brought to church to be blessed. It's also one of the four quarterly calendar days that mark the turning of the agricultural year.

Long before the Christian era, the day corresponded with **Lughnasadh** (Lugnasad), a Gaelic festival dedicated to the god Lugh. It honoured skills, craftsmanship, and the hard work required to cultivate the land. The term persists in Lammas meadows which are an ancient type of English floodplain grassland. Crops of grass grow in strips of land each assigned to a local owner who lets the grass grow undisturbed until Lammas Day on August 1st. After the harvest, the land is opened for shared communal grazing.

Modern Wiccans and pagans still celebrate Lammas as a seasonal sabbat on the Wheel of the Year, focusing on gratitude, sharing communal meals, and baking bread.

Lammas continues to be celebrated in Exeter by the Exeter Lammas Fair, a

900-year-old civic tradition dating back to before the Norman Conquest. (The franchise of a fair was a very valuable possession, giving exclusive right to tolls on all articles sold). This year the Fair was declared open on Thursday, July 9, 2026.

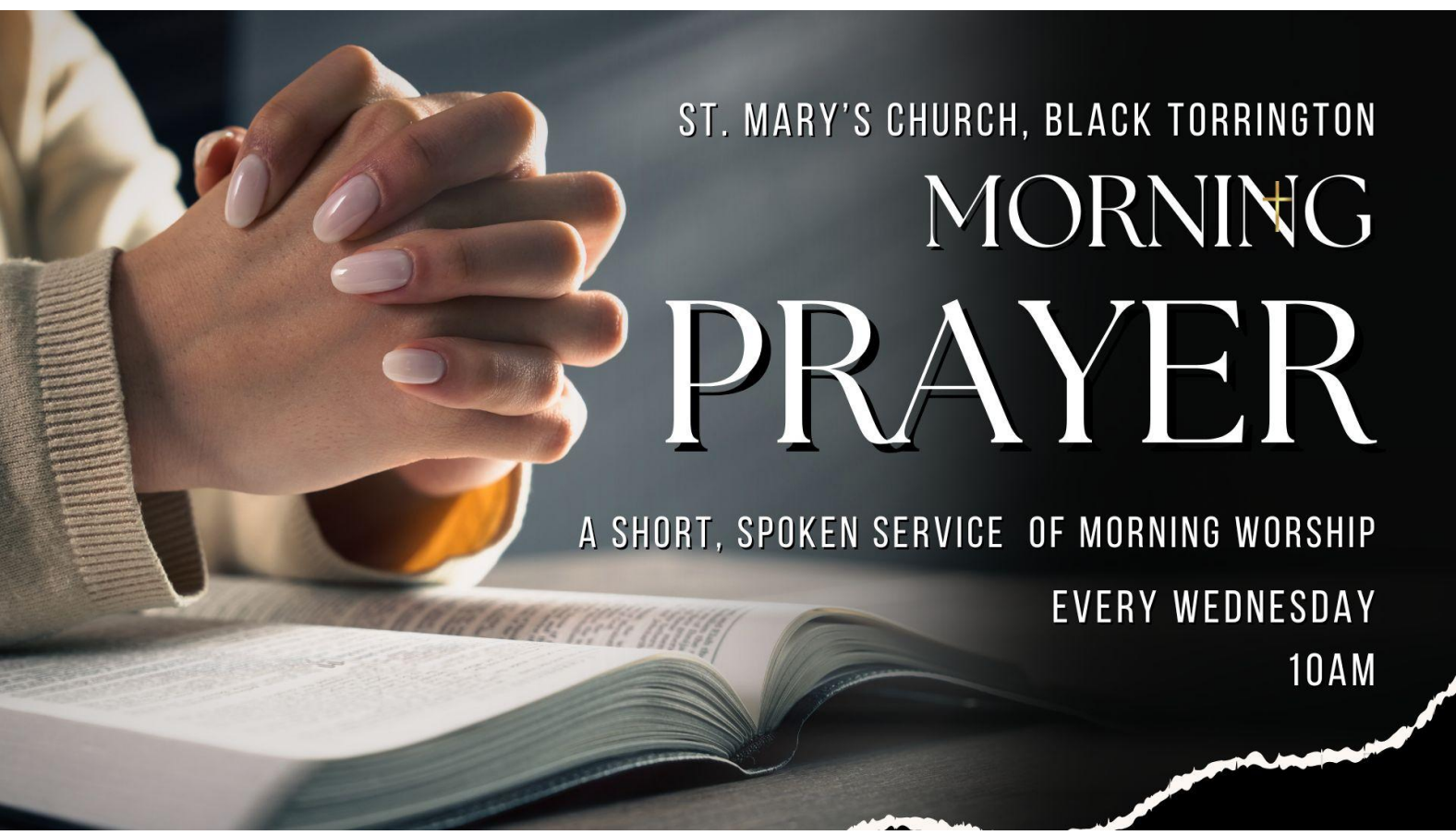
Obituary

The life of Ann Rossiter-Stead of Polehayes who passed away on 22nd June aged 78 years, was commemorated in a Thanksgiving Service at Madworthy church on Tuesday, 11th August. Ann often attended Beaworthy celebration services with her husband Richard to whom we extend our sincere sympathies.

Bishop's visit

Bishop Moira,(the Venerable Moira Astin). is currently on pilgrimage around Devon, her patch. She will visit Beaworthy and Halwill on the 2nd September at Beaworthy 12.30 and Halwill at 13.20 pm and is particularly keen to see our two Saxon stone Crosses. We look forward to welcoming her. Revd Dr Paul Fitzpatrick will greet her at both churches and she will meet Richard Prior and Sandra Ward at St Alban's.

Sandra Ward
PCC Secretary



St. Mary's Celebration

St. Mary has several feast days throughout the calendar year, but St. Mary's Black Torrington usually celebrates August 15th for its patronal festival.

This year we decided to combine this celebration with our café church Sunday on August 9th.

The 'Thank You' service was really well attended and had the theme of a 'firm footing', beginning with the mention of a long-established church here, the past rectors and worshippers, leading to all at this present time who help in any way: current worshippers, priests, chaplains and church wardens; those who come occasionally to worship or attend special services, or to celebrate the life events, marriages, baptisms and funerals.

Importantly, the thank you was given to all the church supporters: flower arrangers, the church yard maintenance team, stewards and cake-makers for events, Tower and handbell ringers, jigsaw puzzlers, jigsaws and cardboard donators, the flag flier and clock time-keeper - to mention just a few, an endless list.

To reinforce the theme of a firm foundation, one table built a house of playing cards [sticks], another table created a house of cardboard drink tumblers [sticks],

while a churchwarden built a house [church] of bricks. Meanwhile, a press-ganged team of Belleplate ringers practised 'Who's afraid of the Big Bad Wolf' which they played enthusiastically as each house was blown down - except for the church.

After the service tea and coffee were provided, more folk arrived and then there was lunch. This was an outstanding success.

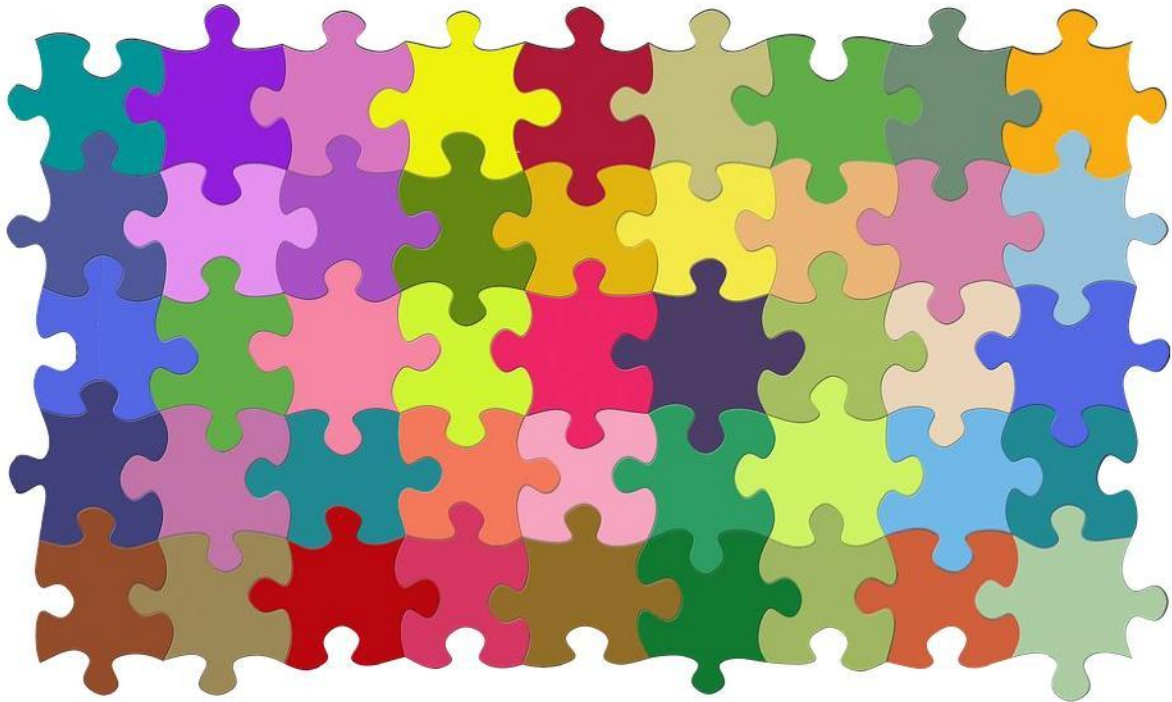
Everyone was so happy, tucked into amazing food, chatted and mingled, in the knowledge that each one of them is appreciated by St. Mary's.



St. Mary's Church, Black Torrington

GRAND JIGSAW FESTIVAL

2027



We can make it happen

IF YOU HELP US!

We need 500 jigsaws by next March

- Donate
- Make up
- Come puzzling @ our monthly puzzle and natter



SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER

Clawton United Church

HARVEST Festival

11am

with Revd. Dr. Paul Fitzpatrick

FOLLOWED BY A
SOUP & SWEET LUNCH
AT THE HALL 1PM,
COST £8.00

If anybody wishes to come to the
lunch, please let Lorna know by
11th September on 01409 271 384

MARTIN REDWOOD MEMORIAL

TRACTOR RUN



NEW DATE!

Sunday 4th October

**9am at Clawton Village Hall
for 10.15 start**

£10 per tractor £5 per passenger

in aid of the Alzheimer's Society and Clawton Churchyard

Refreshments available before and after run

To book, text or call 07967 525769

TETCOTT CHURCH BARBECUE

GOOD FOOD • GREAT COMPANY • ALL WELCOME!



DATE
SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 6TH



TIME
4:00 PM



A TIME TO GATHER,
ENJOY AND SUPPORT
OUR CHURCH



BRING AND BUY STALL



IF WET:
IN THE MANOR GARAGE

Everyone Welcome! ❤️



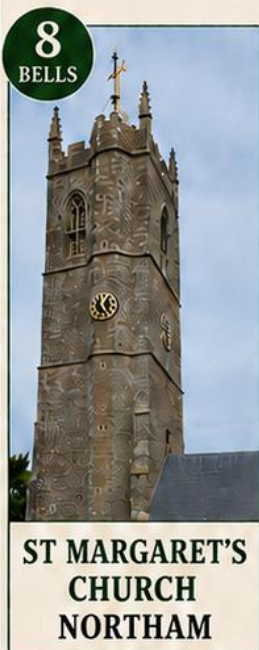
BLACK TORRINGTON



ROAMING RINGERS

SUMMER OUTING

5TH SEPTEMBER 2026



LUNCH AT THE BELL INN PARKHAM

WHERE THEY ARE HOLDING

★ A BEER FESTIVAL! ★



**HEAVIEST BELLS
ST NECTANS CHURCH
STOKE, HARTLAND
17-2-8**



**LIGHTEST BELLS
ST JAMES CHURCH
PARKHAM
7-3-22**



∞ Good Ringing • Great Company • Wonderful Churches ∞

Any bell ringer within our Benefice is welcome to join us on this outing. Please contact David French 07502 115303 for more details or to confirm attendance. Fuller details will be sent to those attending nearer the day.

ST. MARY'S RUBY PUZZLERS

Meet fellow puzzlers, puzzle,
chat, donate, loan and borrow!

EVERY 3RD WEDNESDAY

11AM-12:30PM



Tea and  coffee available

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, BLACK TORRINGTON

Ruby Country Benefice

Letting Go, Holding On

remembering our children

Photo by Laura Ohlman on Unsplash

11th October 2026

5pm

**The church of St. Peter & St. James, Halwill
EX21 5UH**

With an introduction from The Right Rev'd Moira Astin, Bishop of Crediton



A service to remember for those of any religion or none - all are welcome.



On Summer Break!

No policy corner this month, but the policies and safeguarding are still there in place for you and your protection!

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to your Churchwarden, Safeguarding Rep, Administrator or Paul as necessary.

trypraying.

Try praying for a week and see what happens.

Try Praying booklets are available, free of charge, in your local church.
Please take one, use one and pass it along

Common Fund

Full Review

The Bishop's Diocesan Council has approved a full review of the Common Fund system to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our diverse Diocese. A consultation will take place with every Deanery Synod from this autumn through to Spring 2027, and individuals will also have the opportunity to share their views. Everyone is encouraged to take part, with any agreed changes expected to come into effect from 1 January 2028.

From the Bulletin Editor.

Firstly, thank you for your contributions, which always shape our Bulletin. **Please make sure you send submissions to rubycbulletin@gmail.com**

Or if you are not in email contact, please send your submission onto your churchwarden in good time for passing along.

Anything not sent to the above email will not get into the publication.

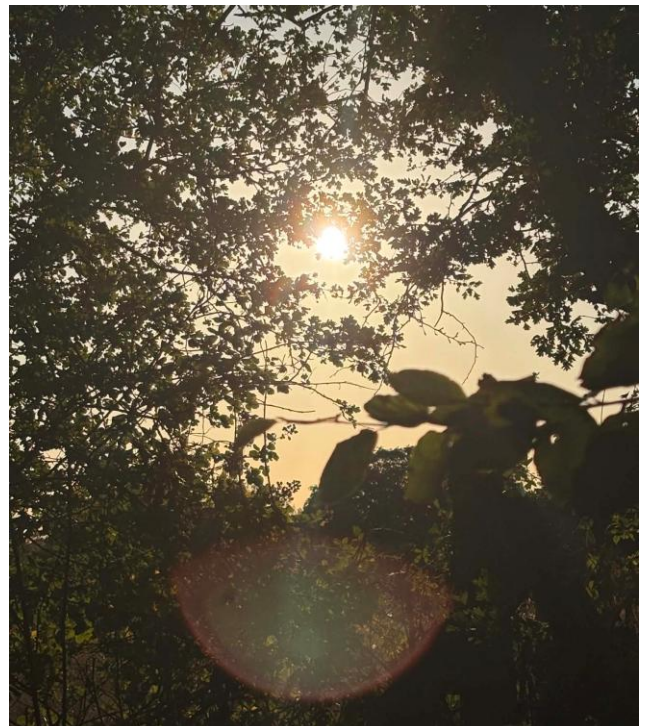
There has been some confusion regarding the absolute deadline for the Bulletin each month, so, for clarity, unless explicitly agreed in advance, please ensure contributions are in by 01:00 on the 15th of each month.

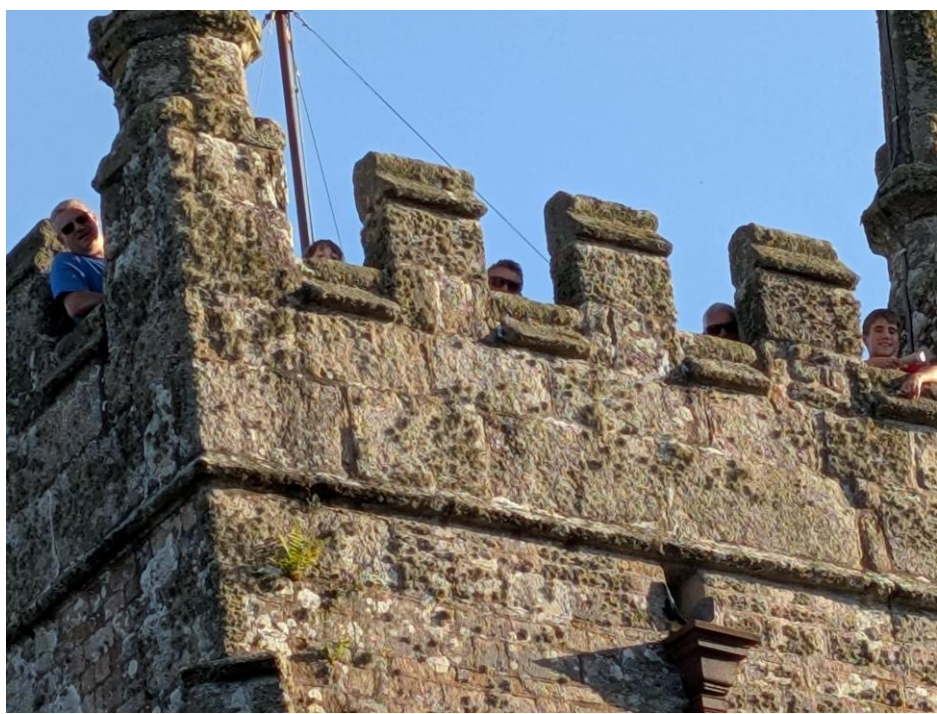
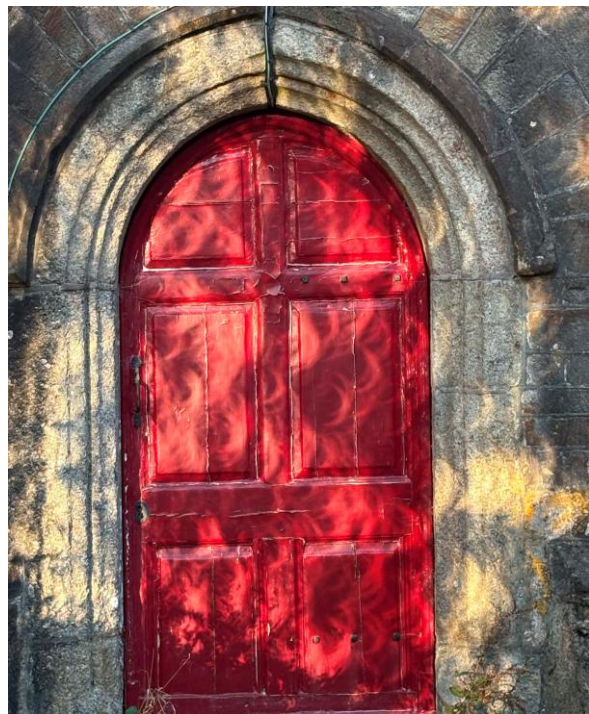
Eclipse

WEDNESDAY 12TH AUGUST 2026

Black Torrington's Roaming Ringers delayed their evening practice on Wednesday 12th August to view the partial solar eclipse. Equipped with colanders and home-made pinpoint viewers, half the ringers made the climb to the top of the tower at St. Mary's, Black Torrington for a better look. Unfortunately for them, the best views were to be had "in the cheap seats" on the ground, where the light shining through the trees cast perfect crescents on the tower door and nearby gravestones!

Photos © Val Letheren, Kay Napier and Graham Wills. Grateful thanks to all for allowing their publication.





Lost Wisdom of the Celtic Saints

Jul 21, 2026

Maureen Ellis

(Part of a reflection from Lindisfarne on the healing ministry of St Cuthbert by Scott Brennan, published on Substack)

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them... and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

Matthew 28:19–20

The Celtic missionary approach was not simply about gaining converts; it was about **forming communities of disciples** who would grow in the life of Christ.

Bede tells us that Cuthbert laid his hand upon those recently baptised so that they might “receive the grace of the Holy Spirit.”

This was likely a combination of prayer, blessing, and the completion of Christian initiation through the laying on of hands. The practice reflects the apostolic pattern found in Acts 8, where Peter and John pray for newly baptised believers:

“Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.” Acts 8:17

Within the early Church, baptism was not understood merely as forgiveness of sins but as incorporation into the Spirit-filled life of the Christian community.

The newly baptised were not simply brought into the Church; they were strengthened and empowered to live as disciples of Christ.

Christ did not merely announce the coming of God's kingdom; he demonstrated its presence through acts of mercy and restoration.

The Celtic saints seem to have inherited this integrated vision. Healing was not reserved for specialists or extraordinary occasions. It formed part of ordinary pastoral ministry. As they travelled, preached, baptised, counselled, blessed, and prayed, they expected God's grace to touch every aspect of human life.

This holistic vision is perhaps one of the greatest gifts the Celtic tradition offers the contemporary Church. In many places we have separated ministries into distinct compartments: evangelism belongs to one group, pastoral care to another, discipleship to another, and healing to a select few with a particular gift.

Cuthbert's example suggests a different approach. **Every pastor, missionary, and disciple** is called to embody the compassionate presence of Christ, praying for the sick while proclaiming the gospel and nurturing believers in the life of the Spirit.

Healing, then, is not an optional extra added to the Church's ministry.

It is one expression of the reign of God breaking into a broken world. Whether God grants immediate physical healing, inner restoration, reconciliation, or the grace to endure suffering faithfully, every prayer for healing bears witness to the hope that,

in Christ, death and brokenness will not have the final word.

A reflection

Do our churches embody the same integration of proclamation, discipleship, pastoral care, and healing that characterised the ministry of Jesus and the Celtic saints?

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
you went through towns and villages proclaiming the good
news of your kingdom,
healing the sick,
strengthening the weak,
and calling people to follow you.
Grant us the compassionate heart of St Cuthbert,
that we may faithfully proclaim your gospel,
care tenderly for those entrusted to us,
and pray with confidence for those who suffer.
Fill us afresh with your Holy Spirit,
that through our words and our actions
others may glimpse your restoring love
and come to know the hope of your kingdom.
For yours is the power, the glory, and the victory over sin,
sickness, and death,
now and for ever.
Amen.

Rev. Dr. Richard C. Halverson's
Benediction
US Senate Chaplain from 1981-1994

**YOU GO NOWHERE
BY ACCIDENT**

**WHEREVER YOU GO, GOD IS
SENDING YOU THERE.**

**WHEREVER YOU GO, GOD HAS
PUT YOU THERE.**

**HE HAS A PURPOSE IN
YOUR BEING THERE.**

**CHRIST, WHO
INDWELLS YOU**

**HAS SOMETHING HE
WANTS TO DO**

**THROUGH YOU,
WHERE YOU ARE.**

**BELIEVE THIS, AND GO IN HIS
GRACE, AND LOVE AND POWER.**



St. Mary's Weekly Schedule

Mon	Tue	Wed
	14:15 Ruby Ringers Handbells	10am Benefice Morning Prayer 6:30pm Roaming Ringers
Thu	Fri	Sat

Black Torrington

Spoken morning Prayer, 10am on Wednesdays, all welcome.

Weekly Handbell Ringing, Tuesday afternoons at St. Mary's, Black Torrington - 2:15pm setup, practise 2:30pm – 4:30pm



Church Tower Bell Ringing

Wednesday evenings 6:30pm – 8:30pm

1st Wednesday – Langtree

2nd Wed. – Black Torrington

3rd Wed. – Shebbear

4th Wed. – Black Torrington

5th Wed. – Roaming!



W.O.M

died May 15th 1842

How many times have we all passed a little stone, maybe with a handful of letters on, and not given it a second thought. After all, it's not as fancy as some, and it won't grab your attention with a beautiful epitaph. But in a cemetery, each mound or indent, or stone or wooden marker signifies an entire life lived, every bit as important or valid as our own. And, this time in St. Peter ad Vincula, I was going to do my best to find out who exactly W.O.M was, and share with you someone who will not be forgotten.

Luckily, there was a very explicit date on the stone, so it can be looked up in the Burial Records for the church (if you ever have those to hand!)

This is the marker for **William Oliver METHERELL**, aged ten years old.

William was the first-born son of Joseph METHERELL and his wife Margaret DAVEY who had married at Ashwater in November 1829. Both “Ashwater families”, Joseph METHERELL was the son of Richard and Susannah (nee BASKERVILLE) and Margaret DAVEY the daughter of Oliver DAVEY.

The first child of Joseph and Margaret’s marriage, and William’s older sister, was Elizabeth Davey METHERELL, baptised at Ashwater on 20th July 1830. According to her baptism record, the family were residing at “Alpha’s”. I am unable to find any information on where this was or is – more local people might know exactly where that is! It seems that Alpha’s was a family home for the DAVEY family.

William Oliver METHERELL was privately baptised at Northlew on Monday 18th July 1831. It is noted that he was resident in the parish of Beaworthy; I am unsure of parish boundaries at the time, but for most of the time, the family was residing at Venn/Mount Lane

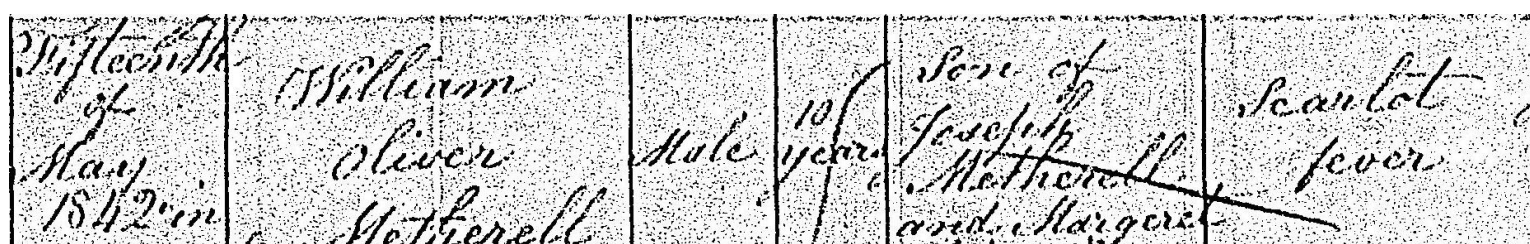
July 18 th No. 575.	William Oliver son of	Joseph C Margaret	Metherell private	Parish of Beaworthy	by James Farmer baptized -
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From the baptism records at Northlew, Devon, July 1831

Ashwater, which I understand is near the Ashwater and Henford turning off the A388.

Although the only census young William appears in is the 1841, for some reason, my census sites aren't particularly forward in giving the information needed, so information about further siblings is taken from the 1851 and 1861 censuses after William's death. Therefore, barely anything is known about his life, and, until today, most wouldn't have even known his name after passing his gravestone.

On the 15th May 1842, William, just under 11 years old, died of scarlet fever, and was buried at St. Peter ad Vincula two days later. His funeral was conducted by Franke PARKER, the Luffincott rector who the very first of these articles was about.



From the death certificate of William Oliver METHERELL 1842 © Crown Copyright

From the 1851 census, we can see William was a farmer's son. The family lived at Venn, officially in the Beaworthy parish, and his father Joseph METHERELL was a farmer of 526 acres, employing 8 labourers – a massive farm for the time.

63-year-old Joseph lived at Venn with his wife Margaret (53) and children Elizabeth Davy [sic] METHERELL aged 20, and Beaworthy-born children Jane (18), Matilda (17), John (14) and Abiathar (12). It seems there is another son, Joseph (15) who was working as a servant on a farm out of parish.

Living with them were their staff: two housemaids, Susanna BRAUND aged 22 from Northlew and Charlotte METHERELL aged 17 from Broadwoodwidge, and six agricultural labourers, working the land

These were

Jonathan DAWE aged 52, a widower from Black Torrington

John PHARE, 40 from Bratton Clovelly

Stephen VOADEN, 20 from Beaworthy

James DAWE, 15 from Black Torrington

Thomas TICKLE, 14 from Beaworthy

John METHERELL, 12 from Ashwater.

Between the 1851 and 1861 census, the family scatters.

Mother Margaret METHERELL dies at Venn and is buried at Ashwater on 4th June 1856. Daughter Jane marries Thomas GLASS at Ashbury on 9th February 1857.

Father Joseph METHERELL dies in 1858 and is buried on 7th January 1858. Later that year, his daughter Matilda marries John BROWN 12th October 1858 at Beaworthy.

For a short time, Venn, Mount Lane was held by the family; son Joseph METHERELL and his wife Susanna take over the running, with brother John living with them.

Sister Matilda, now Matilda BROWN Is living nearby at the farm house at Blagdon Moor, with oldest sister



The grave of Joseph and Margaret METHERELL, St. Peter, Ashwater

Elizabeth METHERELL.

By 1871, the family have well and truly spread, with Matilda and Elizabeth in St. Keverne, Cornwall, Joseph in North Tawton. Joseph ends his days in Teignmouth, and youngest brother Abiathar most far-flung, as he is buried in Waimakariri district, Canterbury, New Zealand where he had made his life.

James Abiatsar [sic] Martin METHERELL's death was reported in a New Zealand newspaper; "A farmer at Rangiora, left his house on the 28th [May 1901] with a double-barrelled gin with one cartridge to have shot at a hare. Afterwards he was found dead by a fence, with the gun in the fence and the cartridge exploded, the shot having entered his left breast."*



The grave of Abiathar METHERELL (and his wife Lucy) at Rangiora, NZ

© [Ngaire Wright](#)

So there is the short history of the short life of W.O.M. A young boy like so many of the young boys of our villages. His life was cut short by scarlet fever, but William Metherell is now known to us, and will not be forgotten.

Kay Napier
August 2026

Sources:
Findmypast.co.uk
Familysearch.org
Findagrave.com

General Records Office births and deaths

* <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/OW19010605.2.86>

Baptism and burial records for St. Peter ad Vincula, Ashwater and Northlew

Senior Clergy Reflection from
the Venerable Douglas Dettmer, Archdeacon of Totnes

CREATION IN CHRIST

Brown lawns, desiccated herbaceous borders, hosepipe bans, searing heat in the daytime, difficult sleeping conditions at night—no resident of the UK can be in any doubt that summer 2026 has been one of the hottest and most drought-ridden ever, if it doesn't actually end up holding a record. Those who remember the summer of 1976 will recognise conditions of even greater severity now, exactly half a century later, but this time as part of an increasingly evident pattern over recent years rather than an exceptional event.

The evidence for climate change caused by human interaction with the environment has been clear to the scientific community and the wider public for a considerable period; the summer we have experienced this year has brought home the magnitude of the changes humanity now faces, even if future increases in global warming can be limited in line with international goals—an aim of which the achievement in practice is far from being guaranteed.

Indeed, brown lawns and wilting borders are as nothing compared to the risk of increasing hunger if not starvation for millions of people around the world in increasingly hostile climates with marginally sustainable food supplies, in the context of the diminishing food security which all nations cannot now but address.

Compounding all those problems is the effect of climate change in the winter months in geographies such as ours, where summer heat and drought are increasingly followed by extremely wet winters and flooding with all the disruption to homes and lives that entails.

Thankfully all is not doom, at least not yet. The gifts of human ingenuity are as real as they ever were, and the growing commitment by such a large part of our society to addressing the roots of climate change through

energy is plain to see, not least—often passionately so—among younger people.

In particular, the remarkable response among church communities in this diocese to the Give to Grow Green initiative has been heartening. More and more, churches are incorporating reflection on environmental concerns into their thinking and planning around their local mission and ministry—taking a lead in our wider society in a way which is truly prophetic.

The Biblical tradition of the Old and New Testaments is clear that the universe and everything in it is absolutely dependent on God for its coming into being and its continued existence, or (to put it the other way round) that God's absolute creativity is the source of all that is. At the same time, Holy Scripture witnesses to the trust God has placed in humanity as that part of God's earthly creation God has called to steward and care for the rest of it. One of the gifts of the increasing awareness of this responsibility among all church traditions has been greater attention in our corporate spiritual life to the relationship of humanity to God as Creator. One of the fruits of this awareness has been the welcome ecumenical adoption of a 'Season of Creation' extending from the start of September to the St Francis of Assisi's day on October 4th.

As part of this initiative, the General Synod in July gave final approval to what has been describe as the most significant piece of liturgical business in a generation: the new Festival of Creation in Christ on the first Sunday in September. This offers a significant new opportunity each year for church communities in the Church of England to reflect on God's creative act in Christ, 'through whom all things were made', and on the responsibility for creation to which God calls us all.

As we enter the month of September and with it the season of Creationtide, I commend this new festival with its central theological and moral themes to our celebration and reflection in our local churches. May it help us to grow more deeply into our calling to fulfil the trust God has placed in his human creation for the sake of the world God has made.

Douglas Dettmer, Archdeacon of Totnes

WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD OR VULNERABLE ADULT?

Please speak to your Parish Safeguarding Representative if you have any concerns for the well-being of a child or adult, or about the behaviour of someone towards a child or adult.

Your Parish Safeguarding Representative is:

Holywell Joint Council	Val Letheren	07484 880 770	rubycountry.beneficeadmin@btinternet.com
Ashwater	Catherine Bowness John Lowe	07348 443 490	churchwardens@ashwaterparishchurch.com safeguarding@ashwaterparishchurch.com
Beaworthy	Caroline Hayes	07342 740 862	
Tetcott:	Sharon Wonnacott	07980 989 262	sharonwonnacott@hotmail.co.uk

If you cannot reach your Parish Safeguarding Representative, please contact your parish clergy or the Diocesan Safeguarding Team:

Costa Nassaris—Diocesan Safeguarding Officer

t: 07809 339501 or email: costa.nassaris@exeter.anglican.org

Rebecca Lane—Deputy Diocesan Safeguarding Officer

t: 01392 294975 / 07889542640 or email: rebecca.lane@exeter.anglican.org

James May—Deputy Diocesan Safeguarding Officer

t: 07889 542646 or email: james.may@exeter.anglican.org

David Cross—Deputy Diocesan Safeguarding Officer

t: 07572 923242 or email: david.cross@exeter.anglican.org

Alex Pugh—Safeguarding and DBS Coordinator

t: 01392 294929 or email: safeguardingenquiry@exeter.anglican.org



Ruby Country Benefice

RUBY PEOPLE WORSHIPPING IN GOD'S COUNTRY

St. Peter Ad Vincula, Ashwater EX21 5EY
St. Alban, Beaworthy EX21 5AB
Holy Cross, Tetcott EX22 6QZ

Ruby Holywell

Charity Number: 1216130

St. Mary's, Black Torrington EX21 5PU
St. Leonard, Clawton EX22 6PS
St. Peter & St. James, Halwill EX21 5UH