

## From the Manse

Dear Friends,

I hope you will forgive me if I make this month's letter rather more personal than usual.

As most of you will know, my father died at the beginning of October. I was very grateful for all your prayers, cards and practical support during the time of his final illness and following his death. Although my brother was out of the country at the time, it was good that my mother and I were able to be with him when he died – a very peaceful passing.



I guess most of us don't think about death too often, unlike the Victorians who seemed to make much more of it – perhaps because so many more people died in childhood or at an earlier age than today. For me, a fifty-seven year old, it was the first time I had been present at the death of a member of my family. This certainly would not have been the case in the past when death seems to have been much more a part of everyday life. Hospitals and retirement homes shelter us from much of the reality of mortality. One evening, as I was sitting with my father, I reflected that, one day, I too would be lying in a similar bed, perhaps, waiting for my end. How strange is that moment of transformation from this life to the next. It touches not only the one who dies, but the lives of those who knew and loved him or her.

Perran Bay, the care home where my father had been looked after for the past twenty months, provided a place of peace for his final few days. The staff were generous in their love and the respect they showed him, and in their support of my mother and me. At times such as these it is a great comfort to know the kindness of comparative strangers. Despite all that we sometimes regret about our society, there are still many people who reach out to others through simple acts of kindness and consideration.

Most of you will have been where my family has been over these past few weeks – or will be in the future, as you experience the death of your own parents or close family members. I hope that you will receive the same level of love and support that we have.

Jesus said:

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”  
(John 14: 27)

Every blessing,

David

### **Alpha Course.**

Earlier in the year it was decided, by the Church on St. Mary's that we should hold an Alpha Course. It was agreed that this would be held during January and February for anyone interested and would replace the weekly house groups during that period.

In preparation for this the Church Council have invited Geoffrey and Mary Thorpe – who were here during my sabbatical – to come over to help us with the preparation for this. They have a lot of experience of running Alpha groups. They can come over at the beginning of November. This is the same week as the Church Council, so I suggest that we meet with Geoffrey and Mary on the evening of Friday November 9<sup>th</sup> (the date of our Council) and rearrange the Church Council for another evening. It would be unrealistic to try and do two things on one evening.

Although this is an invitation for the Church Council, this will be a meeting open to everyone who would like to come along. It will be held in our Hall.

I suggest that we arrange a new Council date on the 9<sup>th</sup> when everyone has their diaries with them.

David

## Letter from Rita and Eric

**Dear Friends**, It hardly seems possible that we have been away from the islands for almost a year, but indeed it is so. Eric and I have settled well into Totnes and our new life is very happy although, of course, very different from island life. Our son Robert and his wife Katherine are helping us run the holiday cottages and we are managing to spend much more time with our children and four grandsons. (Oliver is the latest arrival.) We are still finding time for the Spanish sunshine with the added benefit of taking the car from Plymouth to France and enjoying some French food on the way down!

We have not been to Romania this year but will be visiting again in the Spring. The news is mostly good – the boys have had a good summer (although drought has been a worry) and I understand their store cupboards are full of bottled fruit and vegetables and plenty of animals have also been born. There are some concerns about Gheorghitza's health as he has a mild form of T.B. but he is mainly well, although prone to chestiness in the winter. Now that they have running water and an indoor bathroom, life should be a little easier for them. We get news from them each month and it still gives us an immense feeling of joy that they have made such a success of their lives. This feels an appropriate moment to thank everyone for your generous support, love, prayers and kindness over the last ten years. The memories of "suppers, strawberry teas, fayres on Holgate's Green, Barn Dances and so many more occasions are very happy ones for us and we are only too well aware how little we would have achieved without your invaluable support.

It has taken me a very long time to find a new church but I am very happy to say that at last I have found where I believe God wants me to be. I am worshipping at Great Parks Chapel at Paignton ( [www.greatparks.co.uk](http://www.greatparks.co.uk)) and already beginning to feel at home. I must admit I found it very difficult to settle with a new church family and visited around eleven churches before finding Great Parks. I was beginning to feel like a professional church visitor! (Thank you David for contacting the Methodist Church in Totnes. I do indeed spend some time with them.) However, I must say that I still miss you all and feel very blessed to have been a part of your church life and, in particular, privileged to have lead worship during the latter years that Eric and I were at Tolman House.

We would like to extend an invitation to everyone to visit us if you are in the area – we usually have a spare bed! The South Hams is very beautiful and the trains stop at Totnes!

With love and blessings to you all, Rita and Eric . Longcombe Cottage Holidays,  
Longcombe, Totnes TQ9 6PW 01803 863762  
[www.longcombe-cottages.co.uk](http://www.longcombe-cottages.co.uk)



### News From St.Martins

October has been a quieter month for the members at our small chapel, with less visitors around and people's thoughts turning to their own forthcoming holidays. As I write, Daph is hopefully enjoying her river cruise on the Seine and Rodney and Celia their coach tour to Yorkshire and Northumberland. Chris Hensleigh will be cruising the Caribbean by the time In Touch comes out.

It is good to know that Derek is feeling himself again, and able to return to the farm work he so enjoys, after a couple of brief spells in hospital to deal with a localised medical problem. Similarly, Rodney has had a day trip to Cornwall for outpatient treatment, which we trust has been successful.

Chris and Chris have worked their last season at St.Martin's Campsite, a business started by our father, which they have upgraded and expanded over the past twenty four years since Dad's untimely death. They now look forward to retirement with more time for their interests and community involvement. Moving Day was September 28<sup>th</sup>, when they exchanged homes with Ben and Caroline Gillett, who are going to take over the campsite. No rain, as tractors and trailers moved between Middletown and The Old Stable, was a blessing. As Christine and I moved the last small bits in two wheelbarrows, a visitor remarked, " Who needs Pickfords!"

David, Alan and I went up to St.Martin's on September 19<sup>th</sup> for part one of our Annual Church Meeting. It was deemed necessary to discuss building matters and next years fund raising, before members left for their Autumn break. The immediate plan is to improve the Sunday School in readiness for an exhibition of pictures connected with the Chapel and St.Martin's in general. If any of our **local** readers have any relevant photos we might borrow or copy, we would be grateful to have a look before choosing the selection to exhibit.

Finally, we would like to extend our sympathy to David following the death of his father.

Heather Terry

## **Water Aid Walk Saturday November 17<sup>th</sup>.**

Water Aid is a charity which seeks to provide safe, clean water and sanitation in parts of the world where there is little. People in some parts of the world walk miles each day to fetch drinking water.

To support Water Aid's work and to highlight the needs of those without a supply of clean water, people from the churches on St. Mary's will be carrying a bucket of water from the desalination plant into the town on Saturday November 17<sup>th</sup>. We will be taking turns to carry the bucket – unlike people in other parts of the world who often carry it single-handed on their heads. Those who cannot join in the walk are invited to be in the town itself where cups of water will be handed out to highlight the needs of others. Following the walk there will be a lunch in our hall at 12.30 p.m.

The walk starts at the desalination plant at 10.00 a.m. If you would like to be part of this event, please turn up there on the morning. Or you may join those giving out cups of water in the town and/or help with the lunch.

This event has been organised by the Churches Joint Social Action Group to raise awareness of the need for fresh drinking water and to raise some money for the charity.

For further details, please contact a member of the Social Action Group: Karen Phillips, Mary Leathers, Barbara Hasler, Guy Scott, Mary Ratcliffe, Beryl Read, David Easton.

## **Christian Witness**

St. Francis said to one of his brothers, "Brother Leo, let us go into the town and preach"

They went down together, wandering up and down the principal streets. They smiled as they walked along and talked happily with one another. Sometimes they would pat a ragged child and speak a cheery word to others. "Father", said the young monk "when do we start to preach?"

"Why, my son" said St. Francis, "we have been seen. Our behaviour has been marked. There is no use walking anywhere to preach unless we preach as we walk!"



## **Nathan's Diary**

*The continuing story of Nathan Thomas's journey to the Far East.*

Hello, Just arrived back in Bangkok from Hanoi. Stay-ing in lovely hotel. I thought I'd treat myself after a week in Bamboo shacks.

Last night I had my first meal in two weeks without rice-steak and chips ansumm!!! I'm craving pasties though! I just can't wait to do nothing but lie on a beach, chill out and will have the chance to read the Bible and possibly try and write a sermon??!!!!??

One amazing thing in Vietnam in the village of Sapa in the mountains - they were building a church. It was ace to see God reaching into every corner of the world - even better again – I was in the market and heard a faint voice singing a familiar tune – Amazing Grace – an old lady with a hymn book in her native language was trying to sing it. I sat down behind her stall and sang the English version, she and her friend loved it, then through a bit of pigeon English and hand signals, I worked out they believe in God. Don't know if they were Christians (well you know what I mean) – But that was so amazing for me, did a home stay in the mountains with a local family – a great experience and privilege to share a taste of their culture – it was brilliant.

On the way to Samui tomorrow, take care, love to everyone,

God Bless

Nathan xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

## **Meet and Eat.**

A reminder that it is never too late to come and join this new group, meeting on Mondays at the Manse. You can be assured of a warm welcome even if you can only come occasionally.

It is for anyone and everyone. We even had some visiting holidaymakers one morning!

Mary Ratcliffe

## **With Remembrance Sunday in mind....**

A great war leaves the country with three armies - an army of cripples, an army of mourners and an army of thieves. Anon

War is the slaughter-house of mankind, and the hell of this present world. John Trapp

War is not an act of God but a crime of man. Cordell Hull

Death takes away the difference between king and beggar, and tumbles both the knight and the pawn into one bag. Thomas Adams

Death is but a passage out of a prison into a palace. John Bunyan

Look upon death as a thing you must meet with; look upon yourselves as a thing you must part with. William Dyer

If men are prepared to die they are ready for anything. Joseph Addison  
Alexander

## **Memories of Yesteryear**

When in late August in 1939 I started a two week holiday at Plas-y-nant, a Christian Endeavour Holiday Home a few miles from Caenarvon in north Wales, I was content that all the talk of war was newspaper hype and that even though I was a Territorial, I wouldn't be called up at least until I had finished my holiday.

However, when I returned from an excursion on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September, I was greeted by our hostess who regretfully informed me that the Territorials had in fact been called up, and that I must return home the following day! I returned home, where instructions awaited me to report to barracks on Sunday morning to be supplied with an army uniform. Being a big fellow (all of 5'2"!), the S.Q.M.S. (squadron quarter-master sergeant) said, "I think these may be too big for you" (trouser length 35/37", waist 54"). Regular soldiers were obviously trained to be observant! I can't remember the outcome, suffice it to say that some days (or was it weeks) later I was supplied with a uniform that was somewhat smaller and did fit in odd places. We returned home later on Sunday morning with instructions to report back at 1400 hours, just in time to hear Neville Chamberlain make his historic speech ending "we are at war with Germany".

Two o'clock and we were back in barracks ready to be driven off to war. We moved off in several requisitioned buses, leaving waving, laughing, crying, mother, fathers, wives and girlfriends (not both), brothers and sisters, all wondering when they would see us again. We travelled some seven miles before the buses stopped. We all dismounted and were installed in several large requisitioned empty houses. We were sorted into companies, squadrons, troops etc., then told we were free but must return by 2200 hours that night. Most of us were home just in time for tea, and all were back in our new barracks between 10pm and midnight.

Reveille next morning was at 0600 hours and after washing and shaving etc. in cold water, we paraded for breakfast, served for the first and last time by our Sergeant Major. He enquired of each soldier whether he liked his tea with milk or without milk, and with sugar or without sugar. We collected the beverage in large enamel mugs out of a huge tea urn, which of course contained tea "with and without milk and sugar".



After breakfast, a parade by squadrons, companies, troops etc. took place on the roads outside our various villas. That was followed by a further parade when anyone who could drive was instructed to fall out. A considerable number did so. They were separately paraded off for cookhouse fatigue – washing up, peeling potatoes, and similar desirable activities. Surprisingly, sitting in the sun peeling five or six cwt of potatoes was not too bad, provided you had a few comrades to help and chat to. It's a lot of potatoes to peel by yourself. Thus we learned the soldier's first rule – "Never volunteer".

The remainder of the parade were marched off, some to fill sandbags, some to move the sandbags, some to empty the sandbags which had been moved, and others to fill the sandbags which had just been emptied.

We were at war and that was my first day of the 2,305 days remaining that I would serve.

Come to think of it, I'm still on the "Z" reserve.

Joe Fairburn



*...love the new notice board, Vicar...  
...just not quite so sure about the wording...*

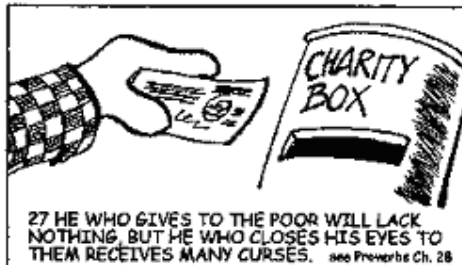
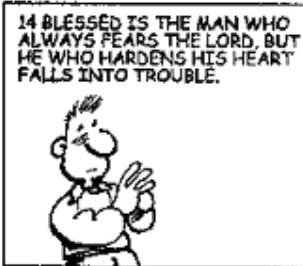
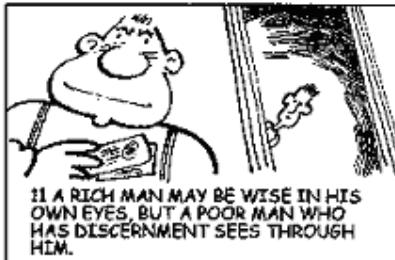
# Picture Proverbs

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS IS A COLLECTION OF "WISE" SAYINGS FROM THE HEART OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING PROVERBS MEAN? THEY ALL COME FROM CHAPTER 28.



6 BETTER A POOR MAN WHOSE WALK IS BLAMELESS THAN A RICH MAN WHOSE WAYS ARE PERVERSE.



## **Summer Holidays with a Difference. (Part 1)**

At some point during the service, the leader suggested we chat to someone nearby. "Ask them how far they've travelled if you can't think of anything else to start with" he said. So ... to the man in the pew in front I obediently said, "How far have you travelled to get here then?" Quick as a flash came back the answer. "364\* miles".

I was a bit thrown, then thought and said aloud, "Well we must have done about that too! Where are you from?" "Up North" came the reply.

Eventually, via answers of Yorkshire, Sheffield, the West side, Fulwood, Christchurch and 6.15, we eventually realised we lived a couple of miles away from each other and every week went to the same service in the same church. With a congregation regularly between 7 and 8 hundred it's not so difficult to not know everyone! However, Geoff and Joan have now become good friends.

Joan and Geoff, who some of you will know, stay regularly at Pelistry in Gordon's flat for a fortnight in summer. On the last Sunday of one of their visits Joan said to Gordon, "Why not ask Carol I'm sure she'd love to help!" I wasn't so sure! However, it resulted in my first involvement with the Holiday Club a few years ago. We climbed mountains in anoraks, hats and boots in temperatures more worthy of swimming cozzies. It was exhausting, but enjoyable and for me, a very new, but not very young, Christian, an eye opener. The enthusiasm to spread the gospel message to the young people was a new experience for me.

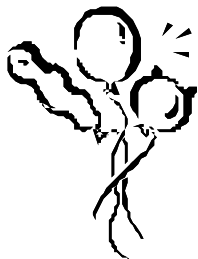
The following year's Holiday Club went "on a cruise", just as much fun but less climbing! However, the dates clashed with a different kind of holiday club, where I really wanted to be, back home in Sheffield. This is The Friday Club Summer Experience – a holiday with a difference for the over 60s. More about this soon.

\*Why 364? Is the man an anorak? Or a cricket fan-from Yorkshire?

Answer next time!

Carol Clapham

## Happy Birthdays in November



to Daniel Bird on the 11<sup>th</sup>  
and to his brother Jonathan on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

also  
Happy Anniversary to Mervyn and Steph Bird on the  
11<sup>th</sup>

From the Editorial Team

Thank you to all who have contributed this month. We have collected some birthdays and one anniversary. ( Obviously not all of Mervyn and Steph's anniversaries have been spent wining and dining!)

Contributions for the magazine covering December/ January will be needed by 15<sup>th</sup> November.

E-mail addresses of the team are given below but next month's editor is Beryl so items directly to her please.

Beryl Read [berylread634@btinternet.com](mailto:berylread634@btinternet.com)  
Val Parker [martinandval.parker@virgin.net](mailto:martinandval.parker@virgin.net)  
Joe Fairburn [jwfairburn@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:jwfairburn@tiscali.co.uk)  
Heather Terry [gallinule@btinternet.com](mailto:gallinule@btinternet.com)  
Anne Gurr [manda.gurr@btinternet.com](mailto:manda.gurr@btinternet.com)  
Mary Ratcliffe [maryratcliffe37o@hotmail.com](mailto:maryratcliffe37o@hotmail.com)

*The statement that God is in control is either true or not. If not ,forget God. But if it is true, and we accept God's revelation of himself, our faith enables us to enjoy and rest in the certainty of his providence.*

*Paul Little*

*It is a greater compliment to be trusted than to be loved.*

*George MacDonald*

## **Slum Survivor**

My experiences of the weekend from some of the youth group FUSION who brought the needs of many to our attention, Sleeping in a shack, with very little food and no home comforts. An experience that they will always remember.

Some quotes from the slum dwellers of St. Mary's.

"At Slum Survivor I was really annoyed when the police came and tore down our slum and I feel really sorry for the people around the world who live in a slum for most of or all off their lives."

"Before this I really didn't understand, to be honest I didn't really care, but now I can go and tell everyone what it feels like. I can't believe how hard it has been."

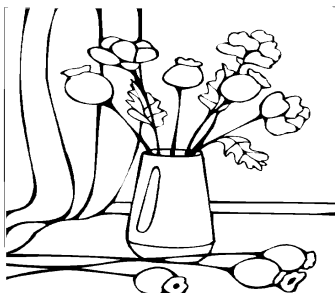
"It really makes me think how lucky we are to have a warm bed also a roof over our head along with fresh water. The challenges have been good and have shown me what a tough life people who live in slums have"

This week I have learnt that people have not got a lot food, They don't have a lot of money for food. It must be very hard to get food. They only have a small amount of space (in their slum houses) and it is very cramped."

"This week I have learned a lot about how many live. We only stayed in the slum for two nights and this was bad but I could never do it every night. I now realise how lucky we are and I now appreciate things more".

"I think not only I but everyone here has learnt at least one thing this week. I have learnt that people living in slums hardly have any food. It has made people aware of how important it is and we will not take luxuries for granted"

Please support this group with your prayers and friendship and give thanks for its leaders



## **Remembering, Remembering and Remembering**

**(1 Corinthians 11:24,25)**

We remember, while we live,  
We who breathed with them.  
Photographs and anecdotes hold meaning  
now,  
But our children's children will see only  
Images in boxes,

Flat and far-away strangers.

And those who lived and loved,  
Who fought and died,  
And those who stayed at home and soldiered on  
And bravely to their pillows cried,  
Will we remember them, as November claims,  
Or just the sadness of that list of names?

A different remembering there is,  
A re-enactment, a continuing  
Through past, present, and future of his gift.  
Linking lives of faithful witness.  
In this remembering we live, who believe,  
Knowing the love poured out for us.

Christ died, is risen and will return,

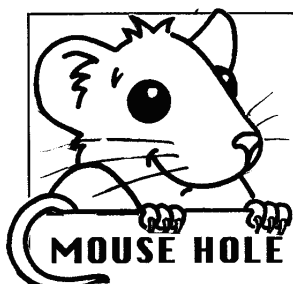
Do this in remembrance of me  
Do this in remembrance of me

We will eat,  
We will drink,  
Living our remembering in love  
Until he comes.

*Daphne Kitching*

He may look on death with joy who can look on forgiveness with faith.

*Thomas Watson*



## Pick-up Sticks

'Pick-up Sticks' is a game that's been played for hundreds of years.

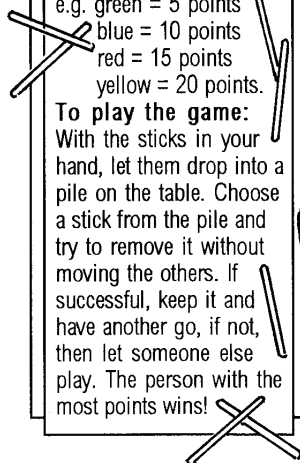
**You can make** your own *Pick-up Sticks* from a packet of wooden skewers, or for a miniature set, use a box of wooden cocktail sticks.

Colour the sticks different colours, with felt pen or paint, to represent a different number of points.

e.g. green = 5 points  
blue = 10 points  
red = 15 points  
yellow = 20 points.

### To play the game:

With the sticks in your hand, let them drop into a pile on the table. Choose a stick from the pile and try to remove it without moving the others. If successful, keep it and have another go, if not, then let someone else play. The person with the most points wins!



## The Man in the Tree

With Jesus passing through the town,  
A crowd of people gathered round,  
But as Zacchaeus couldn't see,  
He ran ahead and climbed a tree.



Jesus stopped as he passed by,  
And saw Zacchaeus there up high,  
Said "Dear Zacchaeus, come with me,  
I'm going to your house for tea".

Zacchaeus climbed down to the floor,  
And walked with Jesus to his door,  
Amazed the Lord would want to be  
With such a liar and cheat as he.

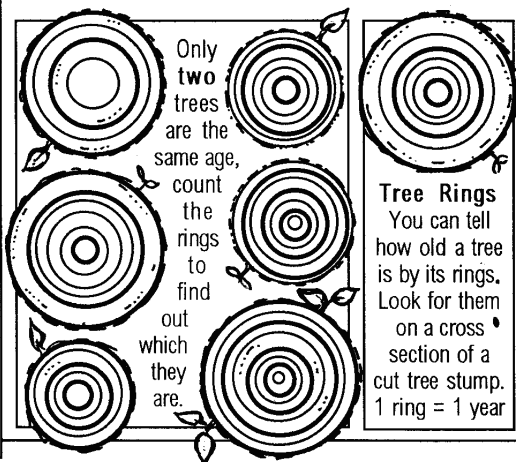
Zacchaeus, sorry for all he'd done,  
Said "Lord I'll pay back everyone,  
Half I own I give to the poor,  
Those I've cheated get four times more."



Jesus said "Today you are saved!"  
Zacchaeus replied "May God be praised!"



Read the full story of Zacchaeus in  
Luke 19:1-10



Only **two** trees are the same age, count the rings to find out which they are.

### Tree Rings

You can tell how old a tree is by its rings. Look for them on a cross section of a cut tree stump. 1 ring = 1 year

## Diary Dates

### October

House Groups every week on Wednesdays and

Thursday (please note change)

Monday 29<sup>th</sup>

Meet and Eat in the Wesley Room

10.00 a.m. ALL WELCOME

Pastoral and Fellowship Committee 6.45 p.m.

Wesley Room

Wed. 31<sup>st</sup>

At Home in the Wesley Room 2.00 p.m.

ALL WELCOME

### November

Thurs. 1<sup>st</sup>

Worship Committee 7.00 p.m. Wesley Room

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup>

Sound System Meeting at P.A. desk (see below)

Monday 5<sup>th</sup>

Meet and Eat 10.00 a.m. Wesley Room

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup>

Methodist/Anglican Joint Social Action Group

Garden Pavilion 2.00 p.m.

Wed. 7<sup>th</sup>

At Home in the Wesley Room 2.00 p.m.

Friday 9<sup>th</sup>

Alpha Course , an evening with

Geoffrey and Mary Thorpe 7.00.p.m.

See David's article on page

Monday 12<sup>th</sup>

Meet and Eat 10.00 a.m. Wesley Room

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup>

Preachers Meeting 7.00 p.m.

Wed. 14<sup>th</sup>

Stewards meeting 10.00 a.m.

At Home in the Wesley Room 2.00 p.m.

Sat. 17<sup>th</sup>

Methodist/Anglican Joint Social Action Group

Walk for WATER AID 10.00 a.m. Desalination

### Plant

The Walk will be followed by a light lunch in the Chapel Hall

### December

St Mary's Christmas Concert

(date to be decided)

Sun 23<sup>rd</sup>

St Martin's Carol Service 3.00 p.m.

St. Mary's Carol Service 6.30 p.m.

Do you need to know how the Sound System works?

Could all Stewards and anyone else interested in learning the ropes,

Join Peter Laverock after the 10.30 a.m. service. Meet at the P.A. desk.

SOUNDS EXCITING!!!!!!