
The Outlook

from Hope December 2004

December Diary

Wed 01 10am & 1pm Parent and Toddler Groups*

Thur 02 10.00 Coffee Morning**

Sun 05 10.00 Prayer in the Lower Guildroom**

10.30 **Mary:**

Servant Mum' Luke 1²⁶⁻⁴⁵

Revd Andy Saunders



Mon 06 12.30 Open House Christmas Lunch Plume of Feathers

Sun 12 10.30 **'Toy Service'**
Revd Andrew Gardiner

Sun 19 10.30 **'Joseph: Righteous Dad' Matt 1¹⁸⁻²⁵**

Revd Andy Saunders

06.30 Carols By Candlelight

Fri 24 11.30pm Midnight Service and Communion
Revd Andy Saunders

Sat 25 10.00 Christmas Day Family Service
Revd Andrew Gardiner

Sun 26 10.30 Family Service
Revd Andrew Gardiner

*These meetings are held weekly **during term time only**

These meetings meet weekly **all through the year

For the carols by candlelight service and Christmas day service we will not be having an offering but there will be a collection plate available at the close of the services. The money raised will be divided between one mission in the UK and one overseas mission. The mission committee will decide which missions will benefit.

January

New Years Day walk – a family walk, pushchair friendly of about 4 miles

Sunday 02 Family Service – Involving other Churches

Sunday Morning Rotas



Communion

Set-up

19 Ray & Cindy

24 Ray & Cindy

Wash-up

Peter Mann

Ray & Cindy

Crèche

- 05 Ray and Cindy Hedges
- 12 Linda Snell and Jenny George
- 19 Merrilyn Duook and Jackie May
- 26 No Crèche

Coffee

- 05 Marion Brown and Sandra Brown
- 12 Margaret Underdown and Beryl Brown
- 19 Mary-Jane and Pat Taylor
- 26 Pat Dodd and Tim

Flowers

- 05 Mr Mike Holland and Mrs W.M. Shelton, in loving memory of Mr Charles Shelton.
- 12 Mrs Ann Javan in loving memory of her parents, Roy and Mattie Javan
- 19
- 26

BMS Birthday

- 06 Mrs Margaret Tripp

Can I Forgive?

This article is a brief summary of the message I brought to our midweek “Celebration” at the beginning of November. I hope it will serve as a reminder to those that were there, as well as being helpful to those that weren’t.....

From the beginning of time..through to when He wraps up this planet, God has had, and always will have, a double-edged concern for us as human beings.

His concern for us, is in the way in which we live with Him, and for the way in which we live with each other. **And one, undoubtedly impacts the other.**

God’s concern is that we live in a right RELATIONSHIP with Him, and with each other

It would be great if these relationships worked perfectly, but from Adam and Eve’s time in the garden, right up until now, human beings have failed in this area....

We fail in the way that we live in our relationship with God:- we fall away, act in disobedience, we worship other “gods”, and fail to keep the standards He expects of His people. **We sin against GOD.**

And we fail in our relationships together:- We let each other down, we get angry, we disappoint, we hurt each other, we say the wrong things, and fail to do the good things that we could do, for those around us.

We sin against EACH OTHER.

Our lapses, failings and sin cause a breakdown in these relationships, which are so important to us, and can be so fruitful.

We need to be in right relationship **with God**, so that we can hear His voice, so we can walk with Him, He can bless us and use us in His plans and purposes in the world.

We need to be in right relationship **with each other**, so that we can support each other, give encouragement, provide for each other, act as a community witness, speak the gospel with one voice.

So, if we need these relationships so much, but they so easily go wrong, what is the solution to our dilemma?

God has provided the answer:- He is prepared to **forgive us**, on the basis of the price having been paid for sin, through Jesus death on the cross....and in turn He calls us to **forgive one another.**

God wants us to deal in our relationships with each other, in the same way as He deals with us. That there may be breakdowns, but they are NOT irretrievable.

A key Bible passage on this subject is Matt 18 vs 21 – 35

Note, that it was one of the disciples that needed to know about forgiving others, and Jesus explains how much, and WHY, through the use of this story.

Apart from the obvious, there are two things to especially notice about the story:-

The distress caused to the other servants, ie the ones the same as him (disciples), and the anger of the King over one who is forgiven, but will not forgive others.

Jesus clearly picks up the relationship between God's forgiveness of us, and its relationship to our forgiveness of others, in the pattern He gives to us for our own prayers set out in Matthew 6 vs 9 – 15. The main point? Only an insincere disciple would come to God for forgiveness when they were not prepared to forgive others first.

God's forgiveness of us is a gift of grace. We could not expect it, and we could not earn it. **It is only possible because of the cross of Jesus.**

With this loving, gracious gift comes responsibility. Like all other gifts from God, it has to be passed on. We have to convey forgiveness upon those who sin against us.

They may not deserve it.....but it is to be given.

Jesus shows us the perfect example in this at the cross, where He says "Forgive them Father" Why? Because they repent? When they are sorry? – NO, but even when they do not know what they are doing. That is taking forgiveness the extra mile. When you can forgive the person who is literally crucifying you, and to do it at the time of crucifixion; This can only be by the grace and strength of God at work.

If you want to explore forgiveness further.....look at Paul's letters. So often written in the midst of conflict and dispute – he is so concerned to see situations resolved and reconciliation come amongst God's people– he asks it for himself from those he has wronged, and he insists upon it from those who would call themselves followers of this forgiving God. For example have a look at Colossians 3 vs 12 – 13

On the Celebration night we said Forgiveness is.....

Necessary

Biblical

Godly

Being obedient to God

Costly

Often not easy

We need to wrestle with this issue for our own sake and for that of the church family. We must and pray into some situations we find ourselves in as Christians.

When you study the Bible, **unforgiveness does not appear to be an option.**

Open House Christmas Tea

You are invited to join us in the church hall on Monday 20th December, at 2.15 for an afternoon of Christmas Carols, poetry and a fun quiz. Followed by afternoon tea, which includes sausage rolls, trifle, bread and butter, Christmas cake, mince pies and clotted cream, all washed down by tea or coffee.



The suggested donation is £1.50, which will go to one of the charities we support at "Hope" during the Christmas season.

If you would like a lift on the day, please do not hesitate to call me, Pam Smith on Plymouth 219844 to arrange a pick up time.

If you haven't joined us before, why not make the effort to come and try us out.

What is God saying to us at this time about our Buildings Development Project?

Most people will now know, that the Lord confirmed us in the direction we are taking, through the proposals approved by the members at the last Church meeting in November.

What else has God been saying to us?

Here are some responses to that question, from those who were part of an extended prayer time at the "Celebration" event at the beginning of November.. "Wait on Him, and believe that He will match the funds to His requirements for the building improvements"

"I can see a picture of Hope church like a tiny baby in an incubator struggling to breathe. God is telling us that this is a year of opportunity. Just like a child makes huge developments in its first year of life, so this is our year of great opportunity"

"I feel that if all the money had come in we might have trusted in our own strength. I believe God is giving us time in which we can build our faith"

“Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you”

“Test me in this....God wants us to learn about this simple trust.

Like a child jumping into his father’s arms and finding that he won’t drop them. Coming to the end of our resources so we can rely on God”

“If My people humble themselves....2 Chronicles 7 v 14”

“Be still and know that I am God. Wait on me and I will direct you. The work should be delayed until June 2005”

Fellowship Christmas Cards

This year we have decided to place a large Christmas card at the back of the Church for you to sign your Christmas greeting to the fellowship. We are asking that the money you save on individual greetings cards be given to World Vision. World Vision will use the money to help immunise children against killer diseases such as TB, polio and diphtheria. The card will be available to sign from Sunday 5th December.

Women’s Rendezvous

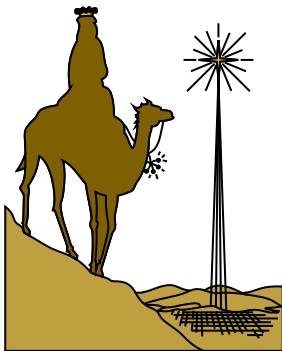
The Women’s Rendezvous successfully raised £250 at their Christmas Fair. This amount goes to the Plymouth and Cornwall Cancer Care Fund.

We would like to thank all those who supported this amount. **Marion Brown**

HM Stamps

Please remember to save your Christmas postage stamps, and pass them to Marion Brown.

Thank you



We have received the following letter dated 7th November from Sheila and Roger Torpey giving us news of their first year in Spain...

Dear Friends at Hope,

It really doesn’t seem possible that a year has gone by since we took up residence in this beautiful area of pain, and yet we seem to have done such a lot since we arrived.

We both certainly feel better living in this climate. Today the temperature has been 20C in the shade and as I write this letter I am sitting in the garden in bright sunshine and clear blue skies above! (and in shorts and a ‘strappy’ top)!

Earlier in the year the temperatures reached 46C (114F) which is when we decided to come to England for seven weeks – at which time our air conditioning decided to go AWOL! So it was not a difficult decision to make.

We’ve made quite a nice garden here with a raised bed containing bushes such as broom, lavender and plants including geraniums etc. We also have the well-known Bougainvillea growing up the veranda which is cerise pink and also jasmine which gives a lovely scent. Having done this, there still remains

many 'odd jobs' and ongoing maintenance to attend to, and we both seem to wonder how we ever had time to go to work.

On the spiritual front we are walking very close with the Lord and enjoying a series of services on video which we brought back with us and these are studying Colossians and we are very happy with them. We have met 3 other Christians and another couple of 'potential' s' who are happy to be in our company. There is another couple living in the village who are interested in starting a house group and/or joining up with us – so although it's taken a year to find some definite encouragement– we put up our hands to the Lord and say 'In the Lord's time' Halleluja!! We knew He would use us sometime but patience doesn't come easy!

We were given the chance of organizing a Carol Service here on the complex – and the response is very positive, so a wonderful opportunity has shown itself to reach out with the true Christmas message. We are excited (and scared) and this is taking place at 6.30 your time on Sunday 19th December – and Roger will be leading it. Someone has offered to make a video of it for us, and we will let you know how it goes, so watch this space!!

For the service itself we would ask for your prayers. There is a great need out here both for the English and the Spanish – and the Spanish people have been invited to come and take part with us. Their carols are sung on Christmas Eve at midnight, but this year the church in the village is being re-built inside – so there's another opportunity!?!

We celebrate our 50th Wedding Anniversary next year and although it's in April, we shall be celebrating with all our family from 28th May – 5th June since that will be a holiday in school. If you fancy helping us to celebrate on 16 April – please feel free! We shall be here.

With love in Christ to you all, and a very Happy Christmas season.

God Bless you all.

Sheila and Roger Torpey

Salvation Army

The members of the Plymouth Congress Hall Salvation Army Home League invite you to a United Christmas Carol Service on Monday 6 December at 2pm. The guest speaker this year is Major Jenny Barnard who comes from Australia.

Prayer Focus

Pray for Mark, Emily, Isaac and Iris, our link missionaries as they celebrate their first Christmas away from home. Also for James BP and his family.

Remember those recently bereaved and those for whom Christmas can be a sad time.

Pray that irregular worshippers may receive a blessing as they join us for our Christmas services.

Pray for a swift end to the conflict in Iraq and protection for our forces there.

Several of our members are recovering from operations. Pray God's healing power for them.

Continue to remember the Buildings Developments Committee. Give thanks for monies received so far.

We shall again be joining with St Pancras and Pennycross in the New Year. Give thanks for the fellowship we share together.

Pray for our aging members not well enough to join us week by week; that they may know God's peace.

Finally, for Torph, Gomer and family as they prepare for a change from Mercy Ships, to 'Samaritans Purse' which will take them to Sudan. Pray for their protection and the situation there.



NEW YEARS DAY WALK

EVERYONE WELCOME

On 1st January 2005 we will be organising a short family walk near **Saltash**.

We will be leaving the **Church** at **11am** or you can meet us at **St Stephen's church at 11.30**(maps will be available)

The walk will be approximately an **hour and a half** long so there should be no need to take a picnic, but you may wish to bring a flask of coffee or whatever!!

The walk will not be suitable for pushchairs but shouldn't be too taxing for little ones. Anyone who needs a lift, or more information please speak to **Debbie or Chris Houston**.

Tel **709909**

Lee Abbey

30th September – 2nd October 2005



Hope has 75 places reserved for this relaxing weekend of teaching and fun at Lee Abbey, which is in a beautiful setting near Lynton in North Devon.

The cost is now fixed at £98 per adult, which includes all meals for the weekend.

We are limited to a maximum of 25 children and prices are a proportion of the adult cost depending on age. However the church has agreed to offer a subsidy so that they would cost no more than £50 each. (This subsidy is of course optional!!)

We are also offering people the chance to pay in installments, as we did last time, so to book a place, or just for more information please speak to either Debbie Houston or Nicky Hatherell

Several people have already signed up to go on this weekend, but there are still places left but remember numbers are limited so don't leave it too long, especially if you want to take children with you.

For more information on Lee Abbey and its surroundings, log on at

www.leeabbey.org.uk

Prayer Partners

Nicky Hatherell and I are Prayer Partners. I think we were put together during Debbie and Nicky's time as Youthwork Coordinators. All Youth Leaders were partnered with someone within the church who could be prayer support for them and vice versa. We were on that list for quite sometime before we actually made a conscious effort to set a time and a date to meet up on a regular basis and be more disciplined in our approach.

I think originally we only met fortnightly but gradually it has evolved into a weekly meeting.

We're both busy working mums and so finding time to set aside isn't easy. At present we meet at my house on Mondays. I finish work and do my school run and head home as quickly as possible and Nicky finishes work and pretty much heads straight round to me. This is a convenient slot for me as Tom has a guitar lesson after school on Mondays and so I have to be there anyway at that same time every week. It's important to set a day and time and to protect it and try to keep to it as far as possible. It's more difficult for Nicky as I know she has lots of other commitments on that same day and has a whole chain of places to be by certain times, hopefully managing a meal somewhere in between. Believe me it is worth the effort!

At times it can be hectic; we've just finished work and can be tired and a little worse for wear, the door bell goes, the phone keeps ringing, Tom may need to interrupt for one reason or another, the cat decides to join us and demand attention, Tom's guitar teacher arrives and leaves. We just keep going, picking up where we left off, asking God to forgive the interruptions and help us to keep focused. Life is busy and sometimes we have to battle against that, even embrace the chaos of that. There's room for all kinds of prayer in all kinds of settings.

I'm a firm believer in setting aside quiet time and praying quietly on my own. We all need that. But I believe that equally we need the benefits of praying together. I'm frequently reminded of Matthew 18: 20 "For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them".

I draw strength and encouragement from our prayer time together. It's good to have someone who can help you to analyse things and keep you on track. It's possible when praying alone to let your own agenda and ideas get in the way. It's good to have Nicky to share with. I know that if I bring something to her that I've been praying about and ask her opinion I can trust her to pray about it with me and be honest

with me. She won't just say what she thinks I want to hear but will let me know when she thinks I may be wrong. I can't speak for Nicky but I hope that works both ways.

We cover all sorts of topics. Sometimes there are personal things going on that we need prayer support for but we also pray for the church, for others in the fellowship, for relatives and friends, something topical in the news. It's amazing how the list grows once you get started. If anyone has prayer requests we'll happily fit you in.

As I said finding time isn't easy but it's time well invested. You don't have to meet weekly, but it helps if it's a regular time commitment. If we have to skip a week for some reason, holidays, work, sickness, I really feel the loss. Nicky and I try to keep in touch via e mail when this happens and then pick up the next week.

I would encourage anyone who has thought about Prayer Partners or forming a Prayer Triplet to get organised and give it a go. A little effort reaps great rewards!

Cheryl

Are you in a prayer group or partnership? Why do you meet?! We'd love to hear about encouragement, battles and answers to prayer, or if you would like to join a group do please let us know, it would make our day!



Jenny Saunders Tel 772809
Gill Knight Tel 217897

Dear Friends



It has been an exciting few weeks in the life of our church. Earnest times of prayer as we seek God's will over the development of our buildings, record numbers of young people coming to our young people's groups, God at work in the Sunday night Alpha group and a simply wonderful time with baptisms of 2 of our more mature ladies within the fellowship. We have much to thank God for!

People are naturally concerned to know the full facts about the final Thank Offering for the Building Development. It is so encouraging I have to hope that you don't mind me using this page to broadcast the news.

When we closed the Thank Offering on Sunday 31st October we had received a total of gifts and pledges to an amazing total of **£56,224** THANK YOU for your commitment, support and sacrifice for this project. Peter Brown and I estimate that we can add a total of £2000 to this total, being the amount of interest which will accrue on the gifts given to the fund, from when they were received, until it is finally spent next year. No interest on this money given will go into our general funds – it will all go on the Buildings Project. However.... We anticipated that we would need £70,000 + £16,000 Tax reclaim. It seems that we have about £58,224 + £14,000 Tax to be reclaimed. But I am told that money is still coming in for the Building Fund, so we shall see!

We have not been able **YET** to obtain the full amount of grants that we anticipated that we would need. Only **£5,000** so far, when we assume that we will need **£62,000**. Many applications are still outstanding and more applications could be made.

Please do go on praying, especially for those most involved in making decisions about the way forward.

A full report will come to our church meeting in January, outlining a possible way forward, given the situation as it will stand then. Does this mean that we are going to stand still in mission, and wait for the building development? **NO!** It may have escaped your attention (I don't know how!) but Christmas is nearly upon us. Over these next few weeks you have great opportunities to bring friends, family and work colleagues along to church, at a time when they will be far more likely to say "yes". Look out for the publicity leaflets and get praying about who to invite. And.....

.....this December, for the first time in many years, you can come carol singing in the streets of Peverell. Don't miss it! Bring a friend, or the whole family.

6.30 - 8.00pm on Friday 17th December.

Drinks and mince pies at the church afterwards.

If you are unable to come out and sing, please stay back and pray. **May God bless each one of us this Christmas, and use us to speak of Him.**

Andrew Gardiner

The Outlook

This month's edition has been compiled by Claire Worrall, and photocopied by Jan. January's edition will be put together by Nicky Hatherell who would be grateful for your articles by 19 December.