

THE TORRIDGE TEAM LINK

***Bringing Together the Parishes
of the Torridge Team***



December 2025

***And a highway will be there:
it will be called the Way of Holiness
(Isaiah 35: 8)***

***Buckland Filleigh, Huish, Langtree, Merton, Newton St. Petrock,
Peters Marland, Petrockstowe, Shebbear, Sheepwash
Website: torridgeteamchurches.org.uk***

Collects for the Month

7th Dec: Advent 2

Almighty God, purify our hearts and minds, that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again as judge and saviour, we may be ready to receive him who is our Lord and our God.

14th Dec: Advent 3

God for whom we watch and wait, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son: give us courage to speak the truth, to hunger for justice and to suffer for the cause of right, with Jesus Christ our Lord.

21st Dec: Advent 4

Eternal God, as Mary waited for the birth of your Son, so may we wait for his coming in glory; bring us through the birth pangs of this present age to see, with her, our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord.

24th Dec: Christmas Night

Eternal God, in the stillness of the night, you sent your almighty Word to pierce the world's darkness with the light of salvation: give to the earth the peace we long for and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven.

25th Dec: Christmas Day

Lord Jesus Christ, your birth at Bethlehem draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth: accept our heartfelt praise as we worship you, our Saviour and our eternal God.

27th Dec: Christmas 1

God in Trinity, eternal unity of perfect love: gather the nations to be one family, and draw us into your holy life through the birth of Emmanuel, our Lord Jesus.

Saint of the Month

10th Dec: St Deiniol



With Catherine heading off to north Wales, it seems appropriate to choose a saint from that area. Indeed Deiniol is the founding bishop, in the 6th century, of the Diocese of Bangor, which includes Anglesey.

Unlike Catherine coming from the south, Deiniol seems to have come the north. He is responsible not just for a monastery at Bangor, but also for another at Bangor-on-Dee towards Chester. That reputedly had 2000 monks before they were slaughtered by the pagan king of Northumbria. Clearly Deiniol was regarded as of significance. He was on a par with St. David at a high level meeting at Llandewi Brefi. And Gladstone, hundreds of years later, dedicated his library to Deiniol at Hawarden, near Chester.

Deiniol died on 11th September, 584, but for some reason is remembered by some in December. We take advantage of that, and pray for a new bishop of Bangor to be appointed.

He died at Bangor, but along with many of the Welsh saints, was buried on Bardsey Island..

SERVICES IN DECEMBER

Dec 7th: Advent 2

Buckland Filleigh	
Langtree	11.00am Chapel
Merton/ Huish	
Newton St. P	10.30am Chapel
Peters Marland	9.30am Communion
Petrockstowe	11.00am Morning Worship 6.00pm Evening Worship
Shebbear	11.00am Communion
Sheepwash	11.00am Methodist (in church)

Dec 14th: Advent 3

3.00pm Carols (Hall)
11.00am Communion
6.00pm Carols
10.30am Carols (Chapel)
11.00am Moring Worship
10.30am Lake Chapel
2.45pm Carols (Baptist)

Dec 21st: Advent 4

Buckland Filleigh	
Langtree	6.30pm Carols
Merton	3.00pm Carols (Merton)
Newton St. P	11.00am Carols
Peters Marland	7.00pm (Sat) Carols
Petrockstowe	11.00am Morning Prayer
Shebbear	10.00am B'fast Church 6.30pm Carols
Sheepwash	6.00pm Carols

Dec 28th: Christmas 1

11.00am Communion

Dec 24th/25th: Christmas Eve/Day

See on Page 4

West Heanton: Sun 7 th December	3.00pm	Carols
Wed 17 th December	11.00am	Communion

Worship by Phone



Sunday at 4.00pm
Phone 0330-606-0403

You will be asked for an access code: 251417#

Christmas across the Team



Buckland Filleigh

Sun 14th Dec 3.00pm

Carol Service (Village Hall)

Christmas Day 9.30am

Christmas Family Communion

Huish

Sun 14th Dec 6.00pm

Carol Service

Christmas Day 9.00am

Christmas Communion

Langtree

Wed 10th Dec 5.00pm

Christingles with Langtree School (Church)

Sun 21st Dec 6.30pm

Carol Service

Christmas Day 10.30am

Christmas Communion

Merton

Mon 15th

Christmas Tree Festival (-25th)

Mon 15th 2.30pm

Carol Service with Clinton School (Church)

Sun 21st Dec 3.00pm

Carol Service

Christmas Eve 7.00pm

Christmas Communion

Newton St. Petrock

Sun 14th Dec 10.30am

Carol Service (Baptist Chapel)
lunch to follow

Sun 21st Dec 11.00am

Carol Service (Parish Church)

Peters Marland

Sat 20th Dec 7.00pm

Carols (Hall)

Petrockstowe

Sat 6th Dec 6.30pm

Carols with Torrington Silver Band (Chapel)

Christmas Eve 3.00pm

Crib Service (Hall)

Christmas Day 10.30am

Christmas Family Service

Shebbear

Thur 11th Dec 9.15am

Under 5s Nativity (Church)

Fri 19th Dec 2.00pm

School Carol Service (Church)

Sun 21st Dec 6.30pm

Carol Service

Christmas Eve 11.30am

Christmas Communion

Sheepwash

Sun 14th Dec 2.45pm

Carol Service (Baptist)

Wed 17th Dec 6.30pm

Carols in the Village (meet in The Square)

Sun 21st Dec 6.00pm

Carol Service (Parish Church)

Christmas Eve 9.00pm

Christmas Communion



Much joy tinged with sadness

Having completed all of the learning outcomes for curacy back in October, it is with joy that I can share the news of where I will serve my first incumbency as Vicar. The official announcement is as follows:

The Diocese of Bangor is delighted to announce the appointment of a new Ministry Area Leader for Bro Padrig in the Archdeaconry of Anglesey in the Diocese of Bangor. The Revd. Catherine Duff who serves currently as a member of the Torridge Team Mission Community in rural North Devon in the Diocese of Exeter has been appointed after a recent interview process. Catherine has a decade of experience working in the education system before entering lay and then the ordained ministry in the Church of England. We look forward to her coming among us to lead the next phase of life for our Ministry Area, joining our Ministry Team with the Revd. Glenys Samson. Please pray for Catherine in this time, and for the people and churches of the Torridge Team Mission Community where Catherine currently serves.

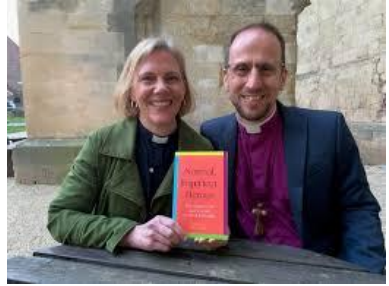


So in February I will be leaving you all and heading northwards to Wales. The Bro Padrig Ministry Area covers the north-western part of Anglesey with the villages of Cemaes, Llanfechell and Llanfaethlu along with a scattering of farming and fishing communities. If you have seen the news of a new nuclear power station being developed in Anglesey, that is the very place! The area is named Bro Padrig after St. Patrick. He is said to have been shipwrecked in a storm just off the coast while travelling back to Ireland. I will be taking the post of Ministry Area Leader across seven churches, two of which only have summer services as there's no heating or lighting and you have to trek across fields to get to them. I will be learning Welsh as 50% of the population of Anglesey speak Welsh. Services are usually bilingual, so I get the challenge of learning how to do this right from the beginning. Of course the joy of moving onwards is tinged with the sadness of leaving here. The Torridge Team Mission Community has been a wonderful place to be a curate and train at the beginning of ordained ministry, mostly because of how encouraging and supportive everyone has been. I shall miss you and always be very thankful for you all. Many blessings, Catherine.

Book Review

Normal, Imperfect Heroes

by James Grier, with Liz Grier



It's not often that we get a book produced by one of our own, so it is

good to celebrate when it is. This one is by the present Bishop of Plymouth, a Devon boy through and through (with his wife's help!)

And even more so when it is written about us! Well, not you and me, and ordinary folk like you and me. Ordinary folk, who God uses. And their stories are in the Bible.

James is keen to address our culture that tends to either applaud people, or to write them off. They are either in or they're out. Fortunately God doesn't see it that way.

James riffles through the Bible, helping us see how so many of the heroes of Scripture were actually ordinary fallible human beings – just like you and me. But God didn't write them off – he still loved them, he still worked through them. And that's not just the men, but the women as well. Ok, so there aren't as many examples of women as men in the Bible – but maybe you could find a few more.

It is an easily accessible book, and so an easy read. James weaves in his and Liz's (Liz is his wife) experiences. As a result it is not just a book reflecting on the characters of the Bible, but helps us to see its relevance today.

And don't be put off by the subtitle about leadership. Whether in leadership or not, we need to pray for and support our leaders. But actually this isn't just about leaders – it's about us all. For every disciple of Jesus, every Christian, every one of us has our shortcomings, but every one of us is still loved by God, and valued by God.

EVENTS.....EVENTS

Carols with Torrington Silver Band

Sat 6th Dec

6.30pm

Petrockstowe Chapel

FROGS

Worship for all ages

Sat 10th December

10.00am

Sheepwash Baptist

In preparation for Christmas

Christmas Concert

for Christian Aid

Tues 9th December

6.00pm

St.Mary's Church, Bideford

Christmas Tree Festival

from Mon 15th December

Merton Church

Just come along.

Torrington Church

North Devon Choral Society

*Music to include Donizetti's Requiem,
Lotti's Crucifixus, Schubert's Mass in G*

Sat 6th December

7.30pm

Tickets: £20

Winkleigh Singers

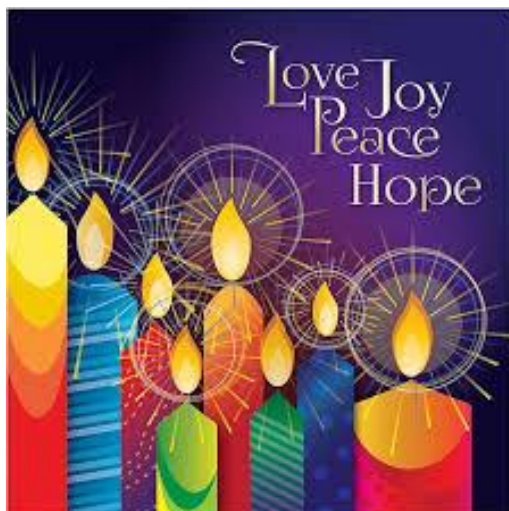
Britten's Ceremony of Carols

+ other Christmas music

Sun 14th December

7.30pm

Tickets: £15



**Every blessing to us
all across the
Torridge Team
this Christmas time**

For your Prayers

- Pray for Sheepwash. Pray for the three churches working together.
- As we approach the Christmas season, pray Christ's presence be seen in all the events that take place.
- Pray for our schools and the focus on Christmas there.
- Pray particularly for Catherine as she lets go here, and prepares to move on to God's fresh calling for her. And pray for us too, as we let go of her.
- As we celebrate Jesus' birth, pray for all families and young children.
- We long for the angels' song of 'Peace on earth' to be fulfilled. Pray that we would be people of peace.

Readings for the month

On occasions, other readings may be chosen.

Dec 7th: Advent 2 (purple)

Isaiah 11: 1-10

Matthew 3: 1-12

Dec 14th: Advent 3 (purple)

Isaiah 35: 1-10

Matthew 11: 2-11

Dec 21st: Advent 4 (purple)

Isaiah 7: 10-16

Matthew 1: 18-25

Dec 24th: Christmas Eve (white)

Isaiah 52: 7-10

John 1: 1-14

Dec 25th: Christmas Day (white)

Isaiah 9: 2-7

Luke 2: 1-14

Dec 28th: Christmas Sunday (white)

Hebrews 2: 10-18

Matthew 2: 13-23

Local Church Staff:

Clergy: Revd Martin Warren, The Rectory, Shebbear (01409-281424); Revd Julie Cartwright (01409-281554); Revd Catherine Duff (07717-209484)

Lay Ministers: Jon Berry (07807-0581881)

Safeguarding Officers: Carol Wakeling (07817-742880), Sarah Huxtable (07765-497711)

Methodist minsters: Frank Watson (Torridge Circuit) 07446 157329; Revd Chris Jackson (West Devon Circuit) 01837-52302.

Baptist Contacts: Pat Hindmarch (Newton St. Petrock) 01409 261758 ; Martin Goord (Sheepwash) 01837-810136

Prayer Hub: Penny Warren (01409-281424)