

Upcoming dates

Monday 15 December

9.30am School carol service
St. Mary's, Black Torrington

Tuesday 16 December

9.30am Halwill school Christmas service
Halwill Junction Baptist church
5.00pm Halwill school Christmas service
Halwill Junction Baptist church

Wednesday 17 December

9.15am Ashwater school Christmas service
St. Peter ad Vincula, Ashwater
10.00am Morning prayer
St. Mary's, Black Torrington
5.00pm Ashwater school Christmas service
St. Peter ad Vincula, Ashwater

Thursday 18 December

2.00pm Clawton school carol service
St. Leonards, Clawton
7.00pm South Tetcott Hunt carol service
Holy Cross, Tetcott

Friday 19 December

3.00pm Black Torrington school Christmas fair,
Primary school
7.00pm Carol service
St. Mary's, Black Torrington

Sunday 21 December

11.00am Carol service
St. Peter and St. James, Halwill
2.00pm Carol service
St. Leonard's, Clawton
6.00pm Carol service
St. Peter ad Vincula, Ashwater

Commentary

Three readings for the third Sunday in Advent: Isaiah and James point us to a life worth living and Matthew points us to the divinity and wonderment that is Christ. Churches are wonderful things, buildings filled with broken people, who have the greatest capacity to live, love, give, reach out to others and change things. In the mist of winter, there is a pulse of holiness in them. Use this week well, prepare for what is to come but make the time to pray and to make someone else's life better. Paul.

Please pray for:

All who have died recently, including Stuart Marwood, Ashwater, and Sue Marwood, friends and family.

Those who are ill, including Ian, Helen, Steve, Cathy, Peter, Stewart, Natalie, Helen, Abigail, Rene, Brian, Ian, Sandra and River Onyx.

Our Benefice schools.

All those who give generously to the Foodbank on a regular basis and those who receive food.

All who are living under conditions of conflict, including those in Ukraine, Russia, Palestine, Israel, Sudan, Yemen, Iran and Congo and Syria.

Mission prayer

You go nowhere by accident. Wherever you go, God is sending you. Wherever you are, 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

Ruby Country Benefice

Sunday 14 December 2025
3rd Sunday of Advent

GRAPEVINE

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

Welcome to Worship

Sunday 14 December

11.00am Café church
St. Mary's, Black Torrington

11.00am Holy communion
St. Leonard, Clawton

4.30pm Evensong
St. Alban, Beaworthy

Ruby people: Worshipping in God's country

Old Testament

Isaiah 35: 1-10

The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendour of our God. Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you." Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow. And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it. No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, and those the Lord has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away. (NIV)

Epistle

James 5: 7-10

Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door! Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. (NIV)



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Gospel

Matthew 21: 23-27

Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him. "By what authority are you doing these things?" they asked. "And who gave you this authority?" Jesus replied, "I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. John's baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or of human origin?" They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin'—we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We don't know." Then he said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. (NIV)

