

Ruby Country Benefice

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

Bulletin October 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

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Administrator

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Beaworthy	Caroline Hayes	07342 740 862
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,

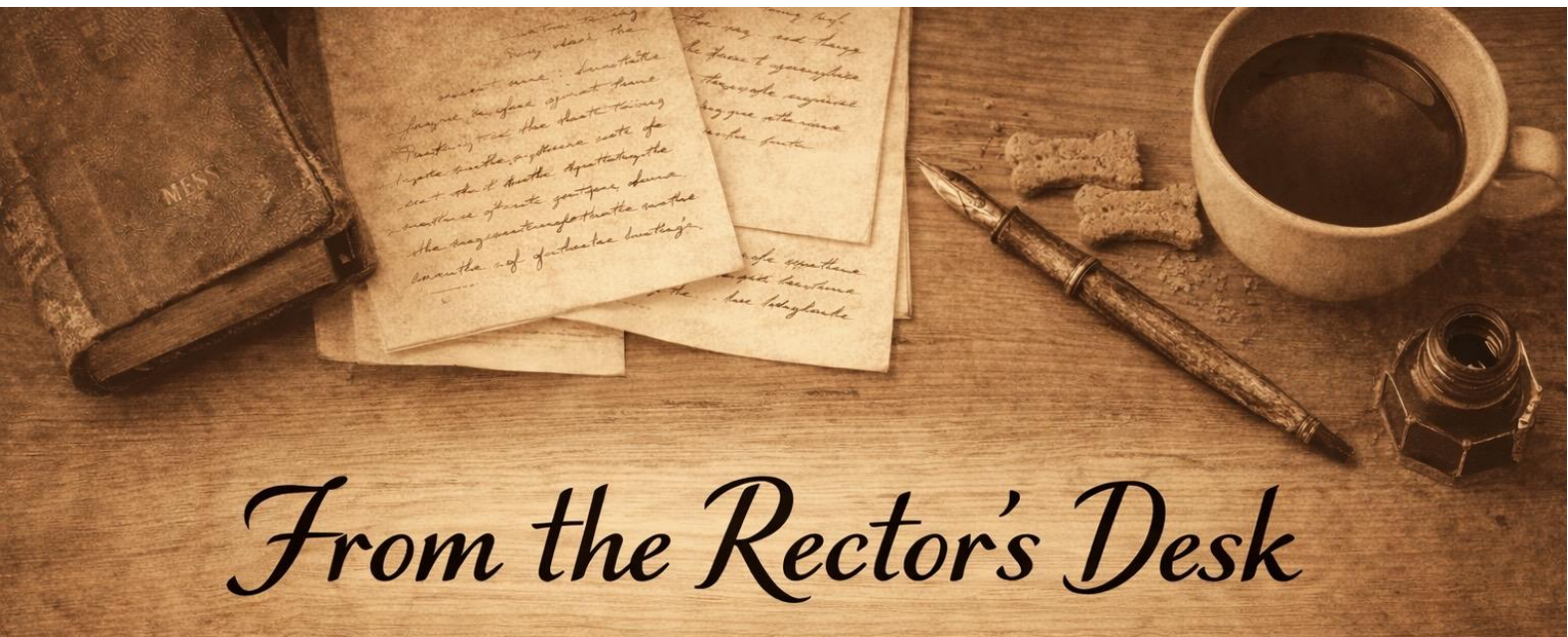
Cover image: Black Torrington roaming ringers visiting St. Helen, Abbotsham Sept. 2026 © Kay Napier

Eclipse photos © Val Letheren, Graham Wills, Kay Napier.

BRAUND article images © Kay Napier 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

October

The season turns. Henry and I are dieting so we both have waists again, although Henry cheats by eating the windfalls. The garden is a pleasant crispy cold, I have a coffee and as ever, Henry is sleeping.

As I write this, with a new and beautiful Fountain Pen, made in 1926, I have Sarah back from her adventures on the silk road, a gentle rain heralds oncoming dusk and an early evening mist falls and all sits right with the world.

A lot has happened in the last month. Lammas and Harvest and soon Michaelmas fair, the last two of this year's nine weddings, major changes in policies to be discussed at Synod, including one of my papers on the care and cost of church buildings.

Safeguarding develops being runout and most positively, Julie, our PTO (Permission to Officiate) Priest, is to be licensed full time to our Deanery for the next six months. Julie will be mainly working with the Bradworthy Benefice but will at times be deployed across all the

benefices of the deanery. All Julie's commitments to Ruby will be kept and I will be her line-manager. If you bump into her when she is around and about on her new duties, please do say hello.

As the season turns, perhaps the biggest event we look forward to will be the Baby & Child bereavement service at St Peter & James, Halwill on the 11th October, 5pm where Bishop Moira will be joining us. More on this in the magazine, but please, please support this, our team of Chaplains have worked hard for months to make this happen and it is a keystone event for us.

The loss of a child was once intelligently described as 'blue-black horizon' by Mary Chestnut; it never leaves a parent, but, thankfully, love never dies and if grief is a journey, allowing a gentle recognition of the pain and finding a 'touching place' will help. Please do come along if you can.

Paul.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands clasped together in a prayer position. The hands are resting on an open book, which appears to be a Bible or a prayer book. The lighting is soft and focused on the hands and the book. The background is dark and out of focus.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, BLACK TORRINGTON
MORNING
PRAYER

A SHORT, SPOKEN SERVICE OF MORNING WORSHIP
EVERY WEDNESDAY
10AM



September 2026

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



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.

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.

October Services 2026

4TH

ASHWATER MORNING SERVICE
BLACK TORRINGTON HOLY COMMUNION
HALWILL MORNING SERVICE
TETCOTT HARVEST FESTIVAL

11TH

BLACK TORRINGTON CAFE CHURCH
CLAWTON HOLY COMMUNION

5PM - LETTING GO, HOLDING ON:
BENEFICE SERVICE FOR BABY LOSS
AWARENESS WEEK WITH BISHOP MOIRA,
ST. PETER & ST JAMES, HALWILL, ALL
WELCOME.

18TH

ASHWATER HOLY COMMUNION
BLACK TORRINGTON MORNING PRAYER
HALWILL HARVEST FESTIVAL

25TH

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

October 2026

Sun 4th

Trinity 18

Isaiah 5:1-7
Psalms 80:9-17
Philippians
3:4b-14
Matthew
21:33-46

Services at:

Ashwater, Black
Torrington, Halwill,
Tetcott

Sun 11th

Trinity 19

Isaiah 25:1-9
Psalms 23
Philippians 4:1-9
Matthew 22:1-14

Services at:

Black Torrington,
Clawton, Halwill

Sun 18th

Trinity 20

Isaiah 45:1-7
Psalms 96:1-13
1 Thessalonians
1:1-10
Matthew 22:15-
22

Services at:

Ashwater, Black
Torrington, Halwill

Sun 25th

Trinity 21

Leviticus 19:1-2,
15-18
Psalms 1
1 Thessalonians
2:1-8
Matthew
22:34-46

Services at:

Beaworthy, Clawton

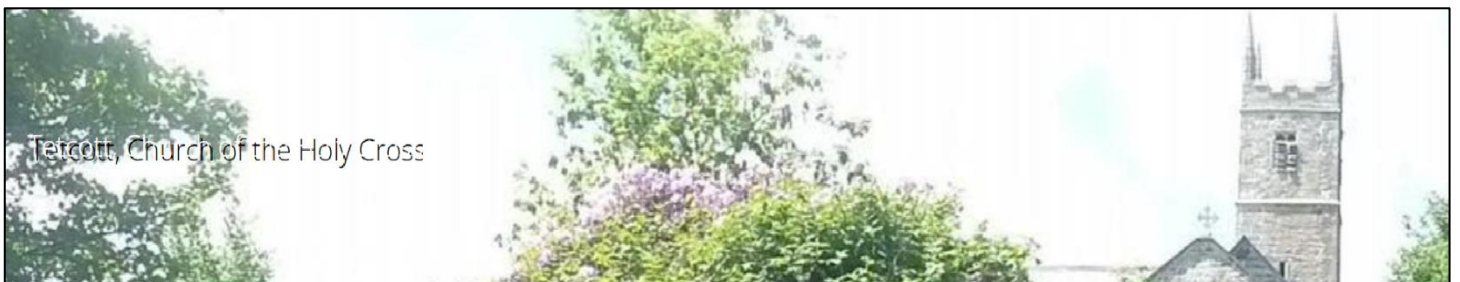
Have you visited our Benefice's websites?

The Parish Church of St Peter ad Vincula Ashwater

www.ashwaterparishchurch.com



www.rubyholywellchurches.org.uk



Tetcott, Church of the Holy Cross

www.tetcottchurch.org



facebook.com/rubybenefice

St Alban's Beaworthy

Update for October

The PCC is meeting shortly to plan events for the rest of 2026. We just have one service in October – Holy Communion on the 25th at 11am being taken by Rev. Dr Paul Fitzpatrick.

In September we were privileged to be on the list of places to be visited by Bishop Moira as part of her Living Stones Tour. She had come specifically to examine the remarkable Saxon Stone Cross following her visit to Holsworthy Livestock Market.

Bishop Moira was welcomed by Dr Rev'd Paul and Richard Prior, our treasurer. Sandra Ward welcomed her into the church. She was accompanied by a photographer with a voice recorder so that her visit was being well recorded. See the Diocese Roots, Shoots & Fruits newsletter ,10th September with a superb photo of the Bishop by the Saxon Cross.

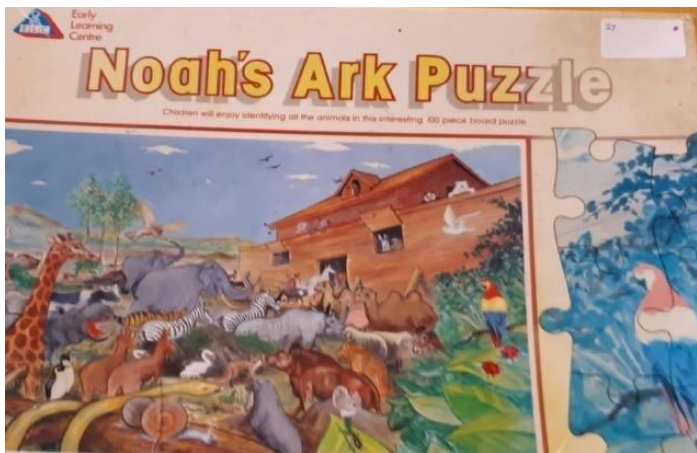
While Bishop Moira ate her lunch, discussion ranged far and wide: the issues facing rural farmers and their parishes, the demands of the Diocese for finance, the low numbers attending church, and ideas for dealing with this challenge.

Before Bishop Moira left, she signed the Church's visitors book and presented us with a certificate recording her visit, now on display in the nave.

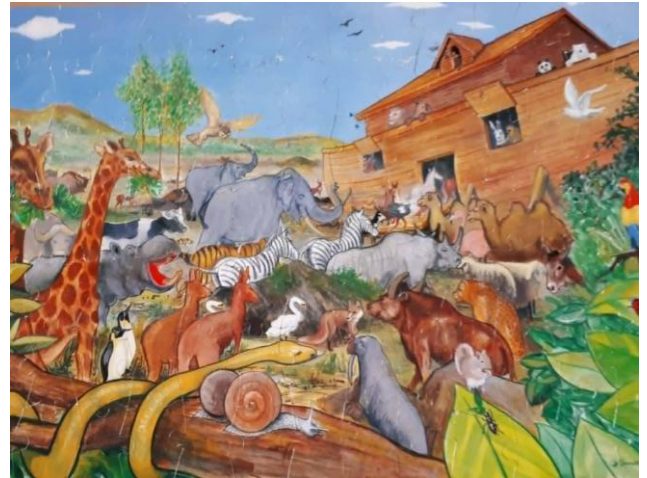
Sandra Ward
PCC secretary

St. Mary's Jigsaw Festival

Light-hearted thoughts from a self-appointed jigsaw co-ordinator



From donated box



to mounted picture

Getting the boxes seems to be quite straight forward. They arrive in church!

Folk are either having a good clear out, or are buying from charity shops, which seem to be putting their prices up.

Often I see £4.00 marked on the box, pieces may be missing; last year we sold complete mounted 1000 piece puzzles for £4.00!

Buying jigsaws to donate is addictive, beware. Some charity shops will do deals feeling they are selling from one charity to benefit another, for example the Devon refurbish shops in both CREDITON and South Molton; I have found several vintage and wooden items there – don't mention fuel and time – it's all part of getting to know and explore your locality.

We will need about 200 more boxed jigsaws to reach the initial first 500 target.

Then I try to make the boxes look as presentable as possible before returning them to church for puzzlers to choose. Sometimes this involves extra card to reinforce the box, but more often means just

the removal of several pieces of sellotape from each side of the box. This is impossible to do from some boxes so it just has to be trimmed to the edge.

Then there is the cardboard needed for assembling the jigsaws. Supply cannot keep up with demand – or only just. Currently I have two sources. A very kind firm at Wellington donated 300 boards, cut to size for 1000-piece puzzles, leaving a working border to be trimmed later.

When we arrived at the factory, we realised the board was too thin, but I solve the problem by putting two together.

Another source is from Woolacotts warehouse on Bude Trading estate. We collect several fridge freezer boxes at a time and I cut them to size with an old handsaw, hence the very rough edges and the one tiny saw mark on the teak bench I use as a cutting table. I have negotiated cutting space in the barn now the weather is inclined to be unpredictable and the swallows have gone.

Completed puzzles plus boxes return to church, very rapidly it seems. The puzzling season is only just beginning, but the Ruby Ringers and a few others are puzzling hard and we hope more puzzlers will join them. The next stage of mounting ready for display cannot keep up the pace.

My living room is a precarious jigsaw paradise while puzzles wait to be mounted as there are separate piles of 1000 and 500-piece, round puzzles, multiple puzzles and 'Wasgijs'. They are a puzzle in themselves; three came back together from one person and hopefully someone will explain how to label the right puzzle with the right box!

Once mounted I take them back home, label and pack them ready for storage.

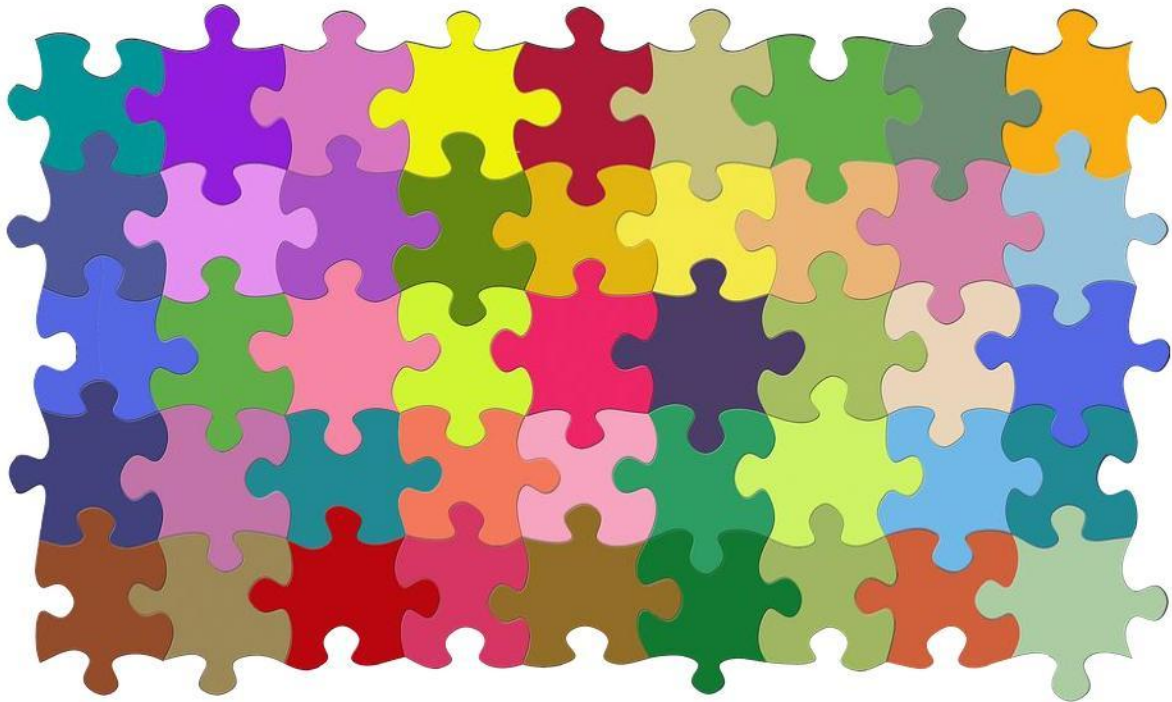
Some are staying with me as I hope to have some vintage puzzles on display for sale.

Thank you for your help.

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

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

The background of the poster is decorated with watercolor illustrations of autumn-themed elements. In the top left, there are purple and red leaves on a branch. In the top right, a large yellow pumpkin is partially visible. On the left side, there are green leaves on a branch. On the right side, there are yellow leaves on a branch and a yellow pumpkin. In the bottom left, a large green pumpkin is shown. In the bottom right, there are yellow leaves on a branch and a cluster of small red berries. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

HARVEST

Service and supper
at

Tetcott church

SUNDAY 4TH OCTOBER

5PM SERVICE

FOLLOWED BY SUPPER

ALL WELCOME

Harvest Big Breakfast

IN AID OF
Tetcott Church

SATURDAY 10TH OCTOBER

**9AM-11AM
AT THE ARSCOTT HALL
TETCOTT
ADULTS £12 CHILDREN £6**

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



Service Rotas

The Bulletin deadline is the 15th of each month, so it's a question of starting the next month's article as soon as this one is published!

In practice, that is not always practical. Life is busy for us all, and with the summer now behind us, we turn to Harvest Festivals and even that special event that takes over December.

This spot in the bulletin has been called "Administrator's Policy Corner", but that's not just my main role. For the next month, it should be "Admin's Corner", so I can report on all aspects of what I get up to – editors take note!

Before I can start thinking about next month's article (as I write this one very last minute), the rotas are an urgent task to complete.

These are produced once every three months, so it is a job to be done ASAP to get them out before they are needed for the 15th October Deadline.

Each PCC or Joint Council have had to plan and book in all the extra services that they want for November, December and January 2027.

This they have been doing since June – it seemed so far off back then, but planning is key so we can all support each other and attend each other's services if we don't have one in our own church.

Remembrance is a prime example. Paul can only be in one place at 10:45am. A rota is in place, taking it in turns as to where he is each year, sharing him around. Or, a church could hold their service at a different time; for example, Clawton hold their service at 2:30pm, enabling Paul to take the service.

December is busy, adding in school services too. The sooner your church request their special service, the easier it is to plan and compile the rotas.

Each of you who receive this bulletin also receive the rotas. The information is correct at the time of being published, but always check the grapevine for up-to-date services and

times as they do change sometimes.

The readings can be found in the first column, along with the Sunday we are in (eg. Proper 20 or Trinity 16 which is the part of the Church year we were in when I was typing this.)

Plus, you will see what Liturgical Colours could be used.

The reading follows a pattern set out for us to use by the Church of England. (No, Paul doesn't choose them!) It is a three-year programme; we are currently in Year A. Year B will start on Advent Sunday, 30th November 2026.

Along the top you will find each of the six churches in our Ruby Country Benefice and in each of your own churches' column will be what service they are holding and who may be taking it.

We are blessed to have so many Lay Persons to fill the rota - as previously stated, Paul can only be in one church at any one time.

You will see that each church holds a Holy Communion service once a month. Any other service they hold is lay-led.

	Ashwater	Halwill	Beaworthy	Clawton	Tetcott with Luffincott	Black Torrington with Highampton
	9.30 am Morning Service Terry/Cathie	11.00 am Morning Service Elisabeth			5.30 pm Evening Service Revd Dr Paul Fitzpatrick	11.00 am Holy Communion Revd Dr Paul Fitzpatrick
			6.00 pm BCP Evensong Revd Dr Paul Fitzpatrick	11.00 am Holy Communion Revd Dr Paul Fitzpatrick		11.00 am Café Church Val
	9.30 am Holy Communion Revd Dr Paul Fitzpatrick	11.00 am Holy Communion Revd Dr Paul Fitzpatrick				11.00 am Morning Prayer Val
			11.00 am Holy Communion Revd Dr Paul Fitzpatrick	11.00 am United Service/ Café Church Lorna		6.00 pm Bible Study Revd Dr Paul Fitzpatrick

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.



Black Torrington Roaming Ringers Summer Outing 2026

by Daisy Napier

On Saturday 5th September we went on a Bellringing Outing. Me and my mum drove to Val's house, and Val let us go in her car and she drove us up to the first tower, Northam.

Northam was my favourite because I had way more energy than the rest of the towers, and it was easy to ring.

There were stairs to get to the bells so the people that weren't ringing went to the café in the church.

There were 8 bells to ring. Jonathan said I couldn't ring 2, so I had to ring bell 3.

Then, when we finished at Northam about an hour later, we got in Val's car and went to Abbotsham.

It was a very short tower at the church.

Also, we were shut in the tower because people could enter and exit there, so we had to be shut in to keep other people safe.

Bell number 2 was overweight, so I had to ring number 1. That meant I had to call out Look to, treble's going.



There were 6 bells to ring. They also had a gate on the door to stop birds getting in.

An hour later, when we had finished at Abbotsham, we went to Parkham.

It wasn't my favourite tower and most of us drove the same way except David and Monty.



When they were ringing up, Graham broke the tail rope so they had to get it down with a giant stick. It made me feel nervous because the bell ropes had tape on them.

When it was my turn, I wasn't keen on ringing there because I needed to stand on 2 blocks to reach the bell. There were 6 bells here.

There was a repair café at the church that day and it was

weird to see people going in and out of church with things like blenders and toasters.

Then it was lunch. We got to chat and joke at The Bell Inn at Parkham. This was the best part! I had a ham sandwich.



When we were done with lunch, we went to Clovelly. There were 6 bells. All the bells felt too heavy and some people had to swap from their usual bells. Lots of tourists came to see us ring. There were no doors to get in to the bell tower area so it felt like they were attached to the church and the tourists could have a good look at us doing it. There were no stairs.



By the time of our last tower, we were getting tired. This church was Stoke Hartland. I wish we had done it earlier in the day so I could have more energy to do it.

There were 6 bells, and we had to climb stairs to get to it. There were less stairs than Northam but the tower was very tall.





All the bells felt different to ring. Grace wanted to ring all the heavy bells! I liked seeing what other churches were like and the difference in bells. Thank you David for organising it and letting me go.

Daisy is 8 years old and has been ringing for just under six months. She cannot ring fully independently yet but shows great, if not loud, enthusiasm!

BELL FACTS (for those interested)

These are measured in the traditional units as cwt-qr-lb

St. Margaret's, Northam – single frame.

Bell 1	3-3-4	Bell 2	3-2-15
Bell 3	4-1-21	Bell 4	4-3-20
Bell 5	6-1-0	Bell 6	7-1-14
Bell 7	9-2-2	Bell 8	13-2-25

St. Helen's, Abbotsham – single frame

Bell 1	4-0-8	Bell 2	4-3-26
Bell 3	5-3-14	Bell 4	6-2-24
Bell 5	7-3-24	Bell 6	10-3-22

St. James, Parkham – single frame.

Bell 1	4-0-0	Bell 2	4-0-4
Bell 3	4-0-19	Bell 4	4-3-4
Bell 5	5-3-8	Bell 6	7-3-22

All Saints, Clovelly – single frame.

Bell 1	3-3-21	Bell 2	4-2-14
Bell 3	5-1-4	Bell 4	5-3-11
Bell 5	7-2-11	Bell 6	10-1-21

St. Nectan, Hartland – single frame.

Bell 1	5-1-15	Bell 2	6-1-13
Bell 3	7-3-22	Bell 4	9-2-7
Bell 5	12-2-27	Bell 6	17-2-8

To help those “non bell minded”, 3cwt is about 136kg or between 21 and 22 stone, meaning bell 6 at Hartland is 771kg or over 121 stone in weight!.

**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.**





Baby Loss Awareness Week

9-15 October

Raising awareness
one ribbon at a time

Together, we:



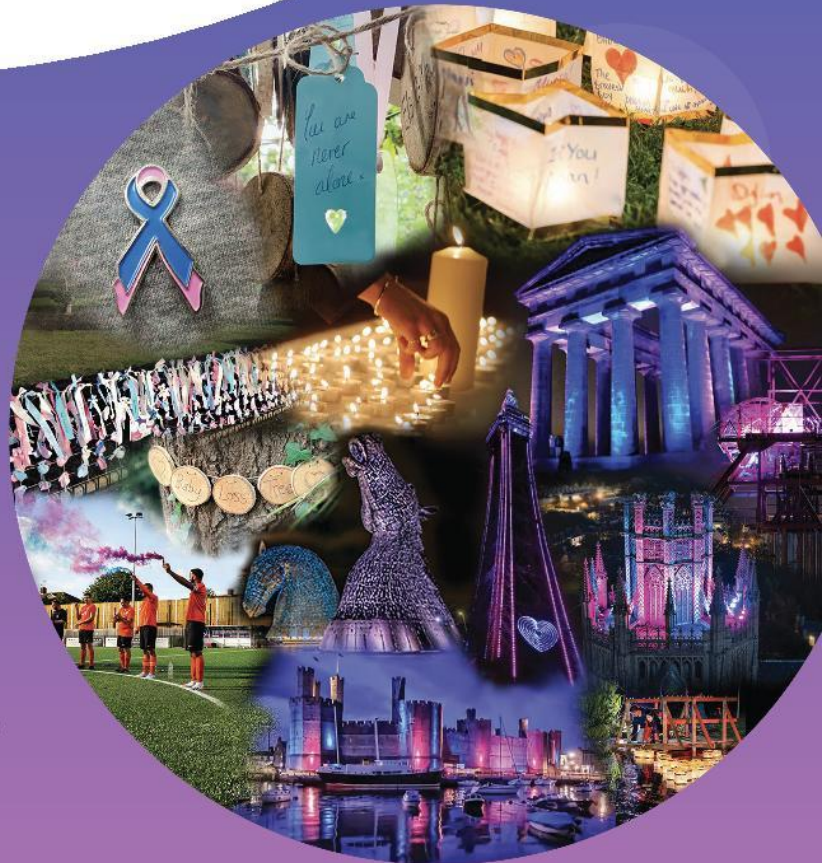
Remember
our babies



Raise awareness of
the support available



Drive change to improve
care and support, and
save more babies' lives



Benefice Service – for those of all religions and none, all are welcome

Letting Go, Holding On

Remembering Our Children

5pm

Sunday 11th October 2026

Church of St. Peter & St James, Halwill



Find out more about the
week and how to support
babyloss-awareness.org

#BLAW

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!



BRAUNDS of Black Torrington

Recently, Nick and Trudy have been making fantastic progress at St. Mary's, Black Torrington in hacking back the undergrowth, discovering forgotten or covered graves and leaving the area beautiful, and, initially, I wanted to thank them for their work by examining the lives of one of their recently excavated stones.

I headed to Black Torrington, camera in hand and a digital copy of Gerry MATTHEWS' trusty memorials list by my side ("digital copy" sounds fancy, but in reality it's just a collection of photos on my phone of the list he produced/updated in the mid 2000s). And I recalled that, just outside the church, I've always felt there seem to

be too many names listed for graves present – this was a mystery which I was determined to get to the bottom of.

In Gerry's list, there is a simple roll-call of names:

Susanna Frances BRAUND died March 1860, aged 32 years.

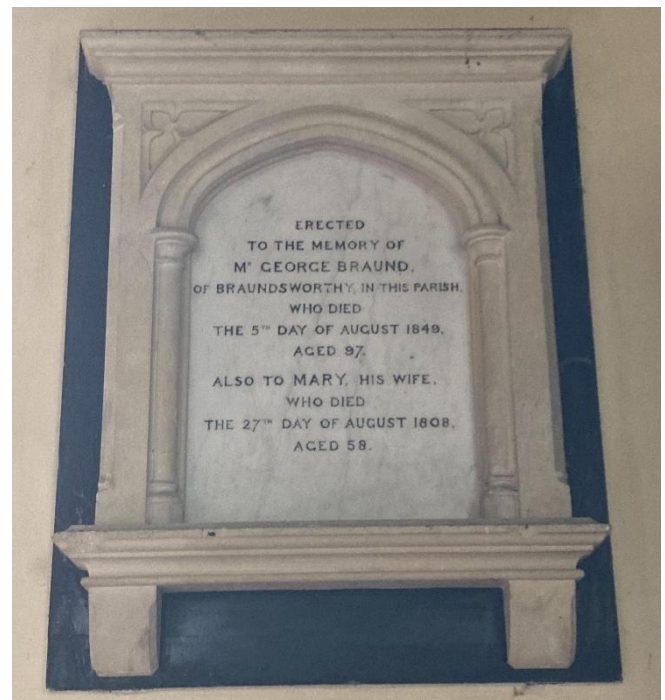
Frances Elizabeth May BRAUND, Died February 1859

Arcscott Lewis BRAUND of Braundsworthy, died 29 May 1858, age 11 months

Norah Ellen BRAUND Died March 1865, age 1 yr.

Inside the church is the monument to George BRAUND and his wife Mary (nee HOCKIN) – this is one of “only two memorials” that the BRAUND Society website acknowledge that Black Torrington has – meaning, the three children were not known about.

Susanna Frances BRAUND was born at Shebbear in about 1828, the youngest daughter of Lewis BRAUND and his wife Frances (nee PERKIN). Lewis was the son of George and Mary (commemorated on the wall at Black Torrington). By the time of the 1851 census, Lewis and Susanna were living in Shebbear alone, save for their 3 servants; by this time, Lewis was a 67-year-old widower and farmer of 40 acres at Waite. Susanna was listed simply as a 24-year-old farmer's daughter.



Memorial to George and Mary BRAUND, St. Marys, Black Torrington (round to your right as you walk through the door)

On Thursday 21st June 1855 at St. Michael's, Shebbear, Susanna

married her cousin George BRAUND, eldest son of Arscott BRAUND of Clawton. Arscott's parents were also George and Mary BRAUND – their sister was Susan BRAUND who married into the RISDON family; their graves can be easily spotted to the right of the church at Black Torrington; some wall-mounted, others kerbstones.

George and Susanna set up their marital home at Braundsworthy in Black Torrington parish. They had two children, a son and a daughter. Arscott Lewis BRAUND was born in 1857, and Elizabeth Frances May BRAUND was born the following year in 1858. And, for those following closely, yes, they are two of the “missing names” buried at Black Torrington.

These children never met each other.

Aged just 11 months, Arscott Lewis BRAUND, suffering from croup (2 days) and “inflammation of the membranes of his brain (5 days)” died at Braundsworthy on the 28th May 1858, and was buried the next day at St. Mary's, Black Torrington. One can only imagine what his sorrowing mother was going through at the time, burying her only son. And as if this tale were not sad enough, his baby sister was born just two weeks after his funeral on 12th June 1858. Susanna would have been heavily pregnant burying her firstborn.

Arscott's death and Frances' birth were registered on the same day: 8th July 1858.

When Died	Name and Surname	Sex	Age	Rank or Profession	Cause of Death	When Born	Name and Surname	Sex
Twenty eighth May, 1858 Braundsworthy Black Torrington	Arscott Lewis Braund	male	11 months	Son of George Braund Groomer	Croup 2 days Inflammation of the membranes of the Brain 5 days Cerebral	Twelfth June 1858 Braundsworthy Black Torrington	Frances Elizabeth May	girl

From the death certificate of Arscott Lewis BRAUND, and birth certificate of Frances Elizabeth May BRAUND 1858 © Crown Copyright

Aged only 8 months old, Frances BRAUND died of bronchitis. This was not certified but could easily have been tuberculosis – as we shall see.

She died on 2nd February 1859 at Braundsworthy and, according to the burial records, was laid to rest alongside her baby brother 5 days later. Perhaps the family wished for a little longer to mourn their daughter, or they were waiting on a post-mortem that never came. Or, more practically, maybe the winter ground needed some time to thaw before they could dig.

Second February 1859 Braundsworthy Black Torrington	Frances Elizabeth May Braund	Female	8 months	Daughter of George Braund Farmer	Bronchitis not certified
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From the death certificate of Frances Elizabeth May BRAUND 1859 © Crown Copyright

There are no reliable records of the next year, and how the bereaved BRAUNDS spent their time, but on 15th March 1860, at Braundsworthy, Susan [sic] died of ‘phthisis pulmonalis’ [tuberculosis] aged just 32. The death certificate states she had suffered from this for two years, indicating why they did not have more children. The death certificate bears the X of Sally LITTLEJOHNS, present at the death. At this time, Sally would have been 52 years old, and she is found in the 1871 census as a nurse; she would have been called on to look after Susanna as her illness progressed. A notice was put in several local papers declaring that the beloved wife of George BRAUND had died.

Fifteenth March 1860 Braundsworthy Black Torrington	Susan Frances Braund	Female	32 years	Wife of George Braund Farmer	Phthisis Pulmonalis 2 Years Certified	X The mark of Sally Littlejohns present at the death - Village Black Torrington
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From the death certificate of Susanna Frances BRAUND 1860 © Crown Copyright

Susanna was buried at Black Torrington on 12 March 1860. The stone on the right bears Susanna's name, but the large stone has no markings. There is evidence that perhaps the stone on the right was attached to the foot of the larger tomb. It is possible that the larger is dedicated to other BRAUNDS, but there is no solid, legible proof.



**The grave of Susanna BRAUND
at St. Mary's, Black Torrington**

One must remember not only had her husband lost two children and a wife, but, at this time, Lewis BRAUND was still alive; he had lost his own wife, his two grandchildren and now his youngest daughter.

Lewis died in 1865 and is buried at St. Michael's, Shebbear alongside his wife.

Although there is another BRAUND memorial at Black Torrington to investigate, there are some happier times ahead. On 7th December 1861 George BRAUND married again, his new bride being Hannah MILL from Pyworthy. They married at St. Swithun's, and then settled back at Braundsworthy for a while. There were 8 children of this marriage.



**The grave of Lewis and Frances
BRAUND at St. Michael's, Shebbear**

The first five of these children were born at Braundsworthy; George in 1863, Norah Ellen in 1864, Hannah Mill in 1865, Mary in 1866 and Elizabeth in 1868.

The young child who was buried at Black Torrington alongside Arscott and Frances was little Norah Ellen BRAUND. And, as much as I would like to give information about Norah's little life, there is nothing to offer. On 6th March 1865, at Braundsworthy, the 10-month-old died of unknown causes, and the death wasn't certified. No cause, no information.

Her death was registered with the mark of John EDEFORD who was in attendance

6 th March 1865	Norah Ellen Braund	Female 10 months	Daughter of George Braund Brooman	Unknown not Certified
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From the death record of Norah Ellen BRAUND © Crown Copyright

She was buried on 10th March – perhaps cold ground again, a father who could not fathom the loss of three infants, or perhaps waiting on death certification that would not come. She was buried the day her death was registered; a legal formality.

Some time after, the family left Braundsworthy. Their later children were born at Filleigh – Arscott William BRAUND being born in 1870 (although sadly dying at Barton Farm, Filleigh the next year), then Henry was born in 1872, and Priscilla May BRAUND completing their family in 1877.

The wider family did not stay based in Devon. I was unable to trace

what became of Henry, but I was able to plot roughly the lives of George and Hannah and their other five children.

Hannah, Mary and Priscilla remained unmarried. The latter two are buried in Dorset. Elizabeth married a man named Christopher SHAPLAND in North Tamerton in 1892 and lived her last years ‘up country’, being buried at Henley on Thames. Oldest son George lived near his parents, and is commemorated on their gravestone – in the church of St. Leonard, Clawton.

George’s second wife Hannah was the first to go, on February 18th 1896, shortly followed by their son George 11 days later on 29th February 1896 – a very unusual “Feb 29th death.”

Finally, George joined them on 29th April 1901.

I’ve found this article absolutely full of coincidences. I, by chance, came across the graves of three infants in the very month of Baby Loss Awareness. The service our benefice has lovingly crafted brings together our chaplains from Black Torrington and Clawton – where both the mothers are buried – alongside our Rector from Pyworthy; where the second wife was from.

Those that know me will know I’m a “Bellringer Mum”, taking Daisy across the county for practise and experience. George senior’s sister Mary HEARN’s memorial is at Shebbear, as is Lewis ARSCOTT’s grave – I have photographed these while wandering about the



The grave of Hannah, George and George BRAUND, St. Leonard’s, Clawton

churchyard while Daisy rings.

The coincidences don't end there; another of George's sisters is interred at St. Nectan, Stoke Hartland, the last stop of the most recent Bellringing Outing. I wandered the churchyard and passed the grave of Elizabeth COLE (nee BRAUND) without giving it a second thought at the time. And upon finding it on the findagrave site, it had originally been uploaded by "Kay" – not me, another Kay – like I had been led to it.

But these children's graves have lain in the same place for some 150 years. And if you have visited St. Mary's, Black Torrington, you will have seen them the same as I have.



Every Wednesday I venture out to the churchyard during Bell Practice, I walk past them, not even acknowledging their existence.

I even sit on the bench to find phone signal and stare at their resting place – until now, unknowingly.

The inscriptions have faded with time. They become covered by grass easily, but they are still there. Norah. Arscott. Frances.

The grave of the BRAUND children at St. Mary's, Black Torrington as viewed from the bench. Norah is closest, then Arscott, Frances, and the grave of Frances and Arscott's mother Susanna at the far side of the picture.

From where I have taken that photograph, behind the graves is the hedge of the church path. The church sits to the right, and the grass on the right side of the image where you would put your feet when sitting on the bench next to the church, with Frances and Arscott's cousins, the RISDON's around you.

With that in mind now, when you sit on the bench, you are part of their world. Their family. A family that transcends both time and parish boundary.

They were loved. They were wanted. They were missed. I will be writing their names on a leaf for the service at St. Peter & St. James, Halwill on 11th October 2026 to honour their memory, and I hope you can find the time to attend. Child loss is hidden in so many of our stories and lives and, like the gravestones, often hidden in plain sight – just waiting for someone to notice, to listen, to love, and to remember.



The grave of Arscott BRAUND at Black Torrington – the most legible of the three infants' stones

Kay Napier
September 2026

Sources:
Findmypast.co.uk
Familysearch.org
Findagrave.com
General Records Office births and deaths
Braundsociety.org
Burial records for St. Marys,
Black Torrington
& St. Leonard's Clawton.
Exeter Flying Post, Thursday 5th July 1855
North Devon Journal,
Thursday 19th December 1861

Senior Clergy Reflection from
Canon Cate Edmonds, Canon Steward, Exeter Cathedral

Sometimes during different seasons of the year, I go foraging. Autumn is, of course, a particularly good time for foraging with rich pickings of crab apples and rowan berries, which make a delicious savoury jelly, elder berries for a variety of uses and of course blackberries for yummy bramble jelly or scrumptious puddings. This year, however, the blackberries have been much earlier than usual and probably due to lack of water not so tasty. In the spring I occasionally gather new nettle tips to make vinaigrette, then wild garlic for pesto and sometimes in the summer dandelion leaves for salad, not forgetting elder flowers for cordial. I haven't yet become confident enough for fungi foraging.

When foraging for these things I can't help but remember the lines; "all good gifts around us are sent from heaven above, then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord, for all His love." It is the refrain from the traditional eighteenth-century harvest hymn, We plough the field and scatter, which, no doubt, will be sung in our churches many times over the season.

We have been in the season of Creation-tide and this year there has been a very special focus on "Hope for all Creation." Plenty of hope is needed if we are to really care for creation, to halt damage that has already been done and to have regard for the good gifts from God that we see all around us. "God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruits; you shall have them for food.'" Genesis 1:29 God commands us to have care of them, for them to continue to be fruitful and provide us with food. We have seen the effects of climate change this harvest, many crops are less fruitful, yields are down and many in the farming communities are struggling, others are looking at ways to develop different more sustainable crops. We hold them all in our prayers and thank God for their hard work.

Returning to the refrain of plough the fields and scatter, "O thank the Lord, O thank the Lord for all His love." We can, in our worries about climate change, forget that we must be thankful to God for all that we have. As I go about my foraging, my prayer is of thanks for what I am foraging but also a prayer of thanks for the love we receive from God through his Son Jesus Christ. That gives me hope for creation.

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



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