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STOKE ST GREGORY BAPTIST CHURCH NEWS SEPTEMBER 2017



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A COMMUNITY
CHURCH IN THE
HEART OF THE
SOMERSET
MOORS

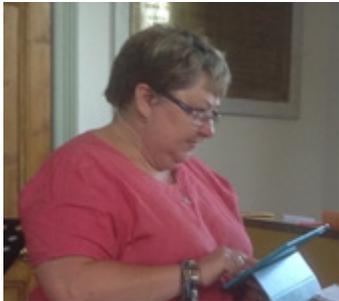
OUR VERSE FOR 2017

Together, we are God's house, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord.'
(Ephesians 2:20 - 21)



Dear friends,

'People have an idea that the preacher is an actor on the stage and they are the critics, blaming or praising him (or her). What they don't know is that they are the actors on the stage; (s)he (the preacher) is merely the prompter standing in the wings, reminding them of their lines.' **Soren Kierkegaard**



I have written before about 'post-it notes from the study wall' and this is the one that caught my eye and imagination today.

I have been doing more reflecting than usual lately on the role of minister/preacher as I've been preparing to change direction somewhat. I think, more than ever, that my role at Lee Abbey will very much be that of 'prompter'; as people come for time out, for renewing, refreshing and resourcing, our task will be to remind them of the love, grace and mission of God and to encourage and enable them to play their part in the Missio Dei on their own stage more effectively. But I am also very much of the opinion that my role here has been that of prompter too - you who make up the church in this place are the players;

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you are the ones with the starring roles, not me, as the

minister.

During my time here I have sought to prompt you to live 'life in all its fullness' with Jesus as your saviour, and to work together to help build up this part of the kingdom of God - with varying degrees

of success (however 'success is measured in kingdom terms!'). Recognising that you are centre stage, and taking responsibility for knowing your lines and playing your part will be even more important in this time of pastoral vacancy. So I'd like to remind you of a couple of things in this, my penultimate, minister's letter. Firstly, learn your lines and get to know the director's voice - spend time in prayer (alone and together), read your Bibles, practise listening to God. And secondly, keep your eyes on Jesus as the real star of the show; don't let the other actors distract you from playing the part that's been assigned to you - especially when things go wrong. God is producing a unique and special work of art in this place ... this Act is drawing to a close, may you prepare well for what is to come ... with love,

Barbara

Goodbye Barbara & Bill

Can you remember Sunday 11 January 2009? That was the day Barbara came to preach with a second view. After lunch we sat down to talk to each other and Bill asked us if we thought that we would be doing less work once we had a full time minister installed.

Fast forward eight years Barbara started TWiGS, now a great success, then Supaclub. The first Messy Church was attended by one child, his parent and eight helpers, eight came to the next one and it grew and grew until we have seated over 50 parents and children. Café church was another novelty that Barbara



Barbara blesses the chocolate cake.

introduced. We were wary at first but now it is an established part of our monthly routine. More than anything it has been Barbara's wish that we deepen and expand our prayer life. The church is open for prayer all day once a month and there are opportunities for prayer before TWiGs, Who Let the Dads Out, and Sunday worship.

Together Barbara and Bill have led trips to Iona and Lee Abbey. They have become involved in other areas of village life. Barbara has served as a school governor, serving as chair when they were looking for a new head teacher and also during an Ofsted inspection.

Here are some of the tributes from those they have worked with:

From Freddie and Nellie:
We enjoyed going to **SUPA club** to listen to the stories and to do lots of fantastic crafty activities. We also loved the snacks, especially the biscuits. We were always well looked after by the the adults who worked with us. SUPA club is great and we recommend it to our friends.

One of the many great things that Barbara and Bill have done for the village is **Messy Church**, it's a fun and creative place to be. When you arrive you can play some games that are out on the tables. Barbara would then tell us a story from the Bible, and along with that she would tell us the theme for that session and then we would go and do crafts according to that theme. We would then sing songs and have a lovely dinner that was cooked in the new lovely kitchen. All around it's a great atmosphere and its fun for everyone.

Betsy

It's fun to take home things from messy Church and store them around the house in different places to remind you of good times. All the arts and crafts are fun to do. I like that everyone shares everything. The tea is delicious and I get to eat with my friends, I always can't wait for pudding! The helpers are always kind and helpful. The songs always cheer me up and I like to dance around. I love Messy Church and it is a very heavenly place to be.

By Emily

We both love Messy Church and will both miss Barbara and Bill who always have a smile on their faces (and are always available for hugs).

Open the Book takes place at my school in Stoke St Gregory. Barbara does it every few weeks. The whole school attends as it's held in our assemblies. Open the Book is a bible story for kids. Barbara and her helpers act it out. Barbara chooses a different story every time but it's always related to Jesus.

The reason I like Open the Book is because they are always true stories. Barbara always includes everyone and Barbara makes it fun. Open the Book will not be the same without Barbara. She's been part of our school for lots of years now, we will all miss her especially me. *Megan Pimm*

Good Luck Barbara and Bill

When Barbara started **TWiGs (Toddlers with God)** almost 8 years ago, it filled a much needed gap in village life. However, little did anyone know what an institution it would become! The warm welcome, Alison's infallible memory for who drinks what, the space to play, the fresh Play Doh (that we all wish we had time to prepare!), and Paddy's precision prepared snacks have proved to be a winning formula. Since the remodelling of the Chapel, things have gone from strength to strength and it's not unusual for as many as 30 parents, carers and little people to attend. Here are the words of some of our newest Mums on what TWiGs has meant to them:

"The feeling of trepidation I had as I walked towards the door evaporated as soon as entered TWiGs, it was like coming home. Everyone was so warm and welcoming, it helped us feel we had made the right decision to move to the village!" *Emmaly*

"TWiGs has been instrumental in helping our family feel settled and welcome in our new village." *Lisa*

"I spent 10 minutes sitting in the carpark of TWiGs the first morning with my 6 week old baby, debating whether or not I should go in. I needn't have been so worried, for as soon as I walked through the doors I was greeted by a room full

of lovely ladies who were all so welcoming to me ... within minutes I felt like I had been a part of this wonderful group forever."

Leanne

No doubt TWiGS will continue to be run by the fantastic team for many years to come - a wonderful part of Barbara's legacy. However, Barbara's listening ear, words of support and encouragement (and excellent new born baby winding skills!), Bill's patient story telling and ability to perch 3 children on his knee at once, will be missed by us all. Many children will continue to look forward to visits from their 'other' Grandparents! Thank you Barbara and Bill xxx

Helen Gittins



My family moved to Somerset from London in 2003. We met Bill shortly after he and Barbara moved to Stoke St Gregory. Bill is kind, thoughtful, gentle and unassuming. an outstanding member of the community. Bill's skills however come into their own on stage performing with **Stoke St Gregory Players**.

He has a huge stage presence and a wonderful singing voice. Bill has played a young man, a monkey, an Undertaker in Oliver, a Dame in Peter Pan.

Bill will be dearly missed.

Mike Wolfman, St Gregory Players

Bill Carpenter was co-opted onto the **Parish Council** in 2014 when there was a vacancy, then re-elected as one of the three most popular candidates in 2015. In his original nomination, Bill wrote: "I see it as an opportunity to help make a difference to this great community to which I am committed", and that is exactly what he has done. His accountancy skills will be sorely missed, as will his analytical mind. When we decided to rejig our voting system slightly, I exchanged countless emails with Bill about the niceties of proportional representation, and it was like arguing with the Encyclopaedia Britannica! His immersion in the community was also a valuable asset: he was responsible for the contact that led to a free professionally built new website for the village. The PC will certainly miss his contributions, but we wish him and Barbara very well in their new life in Devon.
Nick Sloan, Chair, SSG Parish Council

Refresh and Renew

A great way to get to know each other better is spending time away together. David Akerman reflects on opportunities Barbara and Bill have opened up.

Gillian and I have been privileged to join with the church on several visits to Lee Abbey and the Iona Community.

One settles in to Iona Abbey routine –services in the morning and evening with some small chores to perform for the community as a continuation of worship through service.

Lee Abbey has its pattern too, both locations are in “thin “places by the sea and have peaceful libraries. They have community staff drawn from all over the world and guests too are from many origins (though more international in Iona).

Last year I visited the Dominican Republic with a group from church and Mission Direct where we helped bring fresh water to a village, a drug rehabilitation programme, painting a school, and a children’s feeding programme. We met a remarkable Carmelite nun running a home for mentally disabled children.

I wouldn’t have ventured on any of these experiences without the “comfort” of going with the church.

Apart from the physical enjoyment of these trips, I

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have had considerable personal spiritual development too
Thank you Barbara and Bill and SSG Baptists.



Look for more about other activities in our October issue – Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Who Let the Dads out?

Dates to remember

Sat 2nd September 2pm onwards

Baptist Church Grounds
Barbara and Bill’s
Downsizing SALE

Sunday 10th September.

All invited at 10.30 Morning
Worship led by Barbara. Bring and
Share Lunch follows.

Friday 29th September 6.30
Village Hall

Au Revoir to Barbara and Bill
Bring and Share supper & Barn
Dance

Village Fete

Saturday 16th September
from 12 noon. There will be
food, stalls, races, music and
will be opened by Rev Barbara
Carpenter.

September Flowers



3rd Gill Yaskin
10th Alison Katte
17th Leah Van Looy
24th Harvest donations
Oct 1st Harvest flowers
Donations of flowers, fruit, vegetables and non-perishable groceries will be much appreciated. Items can be brought to the church anytime on Friday 22 September.

BMS Birthday Scheme

Celebrating birthdays this month are Barbara Carpenter on the 7th and Liz Hembrow on the 23rd. Happy birthday to you both! Donations to the scheme support the medical work and health ministries of the BMS World Mission. For stories go to bmsworldmission.org/birthday

CHARITY LUNCH

Monday 25 September at the Baptist Schoolroom for CLIC Sargent. Thank you so much ... The July lunch raised £150 for St Margaret's Hospice.
Annette Gage 490297

FOR OUR PRAYERS

Rob and Sarah Blake
Liz and Robert Hembrow
Lyz Kellett
Dianne Sheppard
All pupils and teachers as the new school year starts
Residents of Polkesfield and Dark Lane

Our love and prayers are also with ...

Dianne and her family following the death of Dianne's mother in Grantham
Luke Talmage whose father is recovering from recent surgery
Steve Patten continues to be well cared for at Musgrove Park Hospital after a severe stroke.
Sue and Pete Nicholas following Pete's recent hospital stay.

All others who are known to us who are awaiting/undergoing medical tests/procedures or have been in hospital – and their families.

Alice and Olivia as they embark on the next phase of their life's journey; Luke heading off to Bridgwater College; Jenny Katte and Alice Browning returning to Nottingham and Brighton.

Come And Meet Each Other Do join us at Buckfast Abbey on 18 September. Please contact Mary 442123 or Paddy 698203 to find out more about the visit and for travel arrangements.

Date	Time	Event
Sun 3	9.30 10.30	Church open for Prayer Café church with Communion
Tue 5	7.30	Meeting of the Church
Wed 6	12.00 3.00	Luncheon Club in the schoolroom Home group with Mary and Ralph (442123)
Thur 7	8.30 9.15	Prayer time TWiGs in the schoolroom
Fri 8	3.30	Messy Church
Sat 9	8.30 9.00	Prayer time Who Let the Dads Out? in the schoolroom
Sun 10	9.30 10.30	Church open for prayer Family Worship followed by Church Farewell Bring and Share Lunch
Mon 11	9.00 – 7 00	Church open for prayer all day
Wed 13	3.00	Home group with Mary and Ralph
Thur 14	8.30 9.15	Prayer time TWiGs in the schoolroom
Sat 16	12.00	Village Fete on the Playing field
Sun 17	9.30 10.30	Church open for Prayer Family Worship
Mon 18	11.30	CAMEO visit to Buckfast Abbey by minibus. P7
Wed 20	12.00 3.00	Luncheon Club in the schoolroom Home Group with Mary and Ralph
Thur 21	8.30 9.15	Prayer Time TWiGs in the schoolroom
Sat 23	3.00	Harvest weekend - Church open for tea
Sun 24	9.30 10.30	Church open for Prayer Harvest Thanksgiving – Family Worship Bring and Share Harvest Lunch
Mon 25	12 noon	Charity Lunch in the Baptist schoolroom
Wed 27	3.00	Home group with Mary and Ralph
Thur 28	8.30 9.15	Prayer Time TWiGs in the schoolroom
Fri 29	6.30	Au revoir to Barbara and Bill at the Village Hall See page 6
Sun Oct 1	9.30 10.30	Church open for Prayer Family worship with communion