

A large field of red poppies, likely the 'Poppies Project' in Elburton, Devon. The poppies are made of red paper or fabric and are planted in tall green grass. In the background, there is a stone building with a statue on the wall. The sky is overcast.

The Methodist Link

Linking the Methodist
Churches at Elburton,
Oreston, Pomphlett and
Cattedown to the
Community

NOVEMBER 2017

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A church near you...

ORESTON METHODIST CHURCH

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Treasurer: Mrs Val Hopkin Tel: 403425

Senior Steward: Mrs Dorothy Turpitt Tel: 484038

Link rep: Mr Roger Dodd Tel: 406850

POMPHLETT METHODIST CHURCH

Pomphlett Gardens, Plymouth PL9 7BL

www.pomphlettchurch.org.uk

WORSHIP AT 9.30am

Minister: Rev'd Andrew Day, Tel: 342519

Secretary: Bert Symons, Tel: 210820

Treasurer: Mrs M Williams Tel: 493251

Senior Steward: Mrs Mary Symons Tel: 210802

Link rep: Mr Bert Symons Tel: 210820 or

email: pomphlett.church@gmail.com

ELBURTON METHODIST COMMUNITY CHURCH

Springfield Rd, Elburton PL9 8PR

WORSHIP AT 10.30am AND 6.30pm

Minister: Rev'd Simon Leigh Tel: 335773

Secretary: Mrs Tricia Stringer Tel: 482532

Treasurer: Mr Robert Faulkner Tel: 491779

Senior Stewards: Mrs Elizabeth Coleman Tel: 335662

& Mrs Jean Davies Tel: 404239

Link rep: Tony Raine Tel: 405483

GATEWAY PROJECT, CATTEDOWN

3 Tresillian St, Cattedown

WORSHIP AT 11.00am every 2nd Sunday of each month

Minister: Rev'd David Youngs Tel: 880286

Senior Steward: Mr Roger Dodd Tel 406850

ABOUT YOUR LINK

Editor: Tony Raine.

Advertising Manager: Tony Raine

Tel: 01752 405483 email: tonyraine@icloud.com

NB The Editor may need to amend or omit articles submitted though he will do neither without discussing it with you.

THE NOVEMBER DEADLINE: SUNDAY NOVEMBER 12th
The Link is available in printed format, and online in colour at
www.elburtonmethodist.org.uk/thelink
or your church web site.

Contact Tony Raine on 405483 for details.

THE MONTH'S LECTIONARY

5th November

Joshua 3:7-17

Psalm 107:1-7,33-37

1 Thessalonians 2:9-13

Matthew 23:1-12

12th November

Remembrance

Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25

Psalm 78:1-7

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Matthew 25:1-13

19th November

Judges 4:1-7

Psalm 123

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Matthew 25:14-30

29th November

Ezekiel 34:11-16,20-24

Psalm 95:1-7a

Ephesians 1:15-23

Matthew 25:31-46

Those interested in the readings to be used by most preachers in the Sunday services might appreciate the above list, perhaps for private study.

COVER: The beautiful show of remembrance poppies on the Hoe on display until 29th November.

Letter for Elburton And Oreston



Dear One and All,

Do you think Jesus was religious? I am not so sure he was, as when he had any dealing with the religious folk he seems to pour scorn upon them ie Matthew chapter 6 and Luke chapter 4 beginning at verse 14 and many other places in the Gospel accounts.

So are we religious? In part I suppose we are, for we practice those things which are at the heart of our religion, for instance, the Eucharist and baptism. Both express core values of our belief as Christians, that of redemption and hope. We are redeemed by the salvific (saving) action of Christ on the Cross and we are redeemed by our baptism in Christ. We therefore, have a religion and a religious mind-set. Is that something that Christ would wish to overturn in each of us?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer posed similar sorts of questions as he struggled with the religiosity of the Church and the mission of Christ. For Bonhoeffer it came down to the willingness of God to be reduced to the margins, seemingly powerless and rejected at Calvary, but there finding the true authority of love amidst so much hate. The enduring melody is that of a God who empties himself of all so that all might be revealed. The truth of God is shown in the servant King; hierarchy turned upside down.

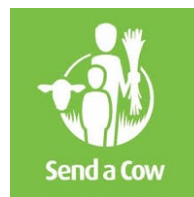
What does that mean for us? I think it means we must let God be God and that we must wear our religion lightly. If God is to be found at the margins, apparently powerless, then we are to find God there in our midst. So when we see the Church

struggling, let's not be tempted to fix it, but rather, to let God teach us how to serve. When we see membership numbers dwindle let's not give way to despair, but rather seek God and see how we serve Christ's purposes better. In short how do we serve the servant King better? The enduring melody is servanthood, amid all the noise and fury, the melody is Christ's example and if we are to serve God in our generation, it is by fixing our eyes on the example of Jesus and all else will follow.

Every blessing,

Simon

SEND A COW is a Christian charity supported by Elburton Methodist Church. It uses well-qualified local people to deliver training in farming techniques rather than sending British experts, believing that Africa can help itself with a little pump-priming from us.



Over 30 years it began by sending cows and now it trains people to grow a healthy variety of plants on their land as well as getting protein from dairy cows' or goats' milk, and chickens. They also teach, hygiene, gender equality and money, water, soil, fodder and livestock management.



The fruits of everything given must be passed on including the first female calf, the training, and some seeds from the first crop. It is hard work.

Send a Cow never gives money to any government organisation.

The charity is so highly valued by our government that every penny given between now and Christmas will be matched by UKaid. What an amazing opportunity to give for Christmas knowing it will be doubled! Please ask for a catalogue or look at the web site.

TR



Elburton Methodist Community Church



REGULAR EVENTS HELD IN OUR CHURCH

SUNDAY

SERVICE	Morning 10.30 am	Evening 6.30 pm
5th November	Rev'd Darren Middleton	Rev'd Simon Leigh SACRAMENT
12th November	Rev'd Simon Leigh REMEMBRANCE ALL AGE WORSHIP	Deacon Linda Brown
19th November	Rev'd Simon Leigh SACRAMENT	Ms Denize Carey ALTERNATIVE WORSHIP
26th November	Rev'd Edgar Daniel	Rev'd Simon Leigh

David Youngs was very disappointed that no one in Elburton was able to spare two-and-a-half hours to help on Prayerline. We will endeavour to carry on as we are. *DY*

Elburton Methodist Community Church

JaM (JESUS AND ME)

10.30 a.m.

JaM is the name for our children's and youth ministry. We meet in the Moore Hall for 10.30 am. The first Sunday is a family and parade service which we are also part of, in the church.

SOUNDS ALIVE SINGERS

When we have a presentation to work towards we meet for rehearsals at 11.45 am after church on Sundays to share our love of music.

MONDAY

DANCE FITNESS - 10.30 a.m.

Contact Sarah Danning, 01752 881447 or email:
info@physicallyfabulous.co.uk
www.physicallyfabulous.co.uk

LUNCHEON CLUB - 11 a.m.

On Mondays lunches are provided for those less able to cook for themselves. Contact June Dinner (407418) for 3rd Mondays, Barbara Jeffery (311100) for the other Mondays.

BEAVERS - 5 p.m. - 6.30 p.m.

CUB SCOUTS - 6.00 - 7.30 p.m.

SCOUTS - 7.45 p.m. - 9.30 p.m.

There are a few vacancies for boys and girls and also helpers. Contact Roger Galloway 268803 for more information.

TUESDAY

METHODIST WOMEN

IN BRITAIN - 2.30 p.m.

November 7th Mrs Brenda Grundy

November 14th Sidholme – no meeting

November 21st Plymouth Foodbank

November 28th Visit to Otter Nursery

The Women's Network Fellowship, now called MWiB, meets in the Moore Hall of Elburton Methodist Church. For more information contact Carol Batchelor 491962.

RAINBOWS - 4.30 p.m.

BROWNIES - 6.00 p.m.

Contact Julie Hoskin on 481605.
There is no Guides group at present.

Elburton Methodist Community Church

PLYMSTOCK & RIDGEWAY

MEN'S GROUP 7.30 pm

14th Nov at Ridgeway

Janet Dobinson - Around Plymouth

28th Nov at Elburton

Rob - 30 years a biker

Contact Andrew Gow (341037) for more details. Half the meetings are held at Ridgeway, the others are in the Rank Hall, Elburton Methodist Community Church.

WIVES CLUB - 7.45 pm

November 7th Janet Cowlard on

John F Kennedy

November 14th Chocolate Bingo

November 21st Sally Edgecumbe

Christmas Flowers □

November 28th Simon Dell, The Law

All ladies are invited to join us on Tuesday evenings at 7.45 pm in the Elburton Moore Hall. For more information contact Sylvia Harris (514818) or Carol Pike (311150).

Held at Pam Kingsland's (519452) and led by Rev'd Simon Leigh.

HOME GROUP 1 - 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

EXERCISE CLASS 2 p.m. - 3 p.m. Contact Denise Avent (402818)

HOME GROUP 2 7.30 pm

Held at the home of Trisha Stringer and led by Maureen Richardson (407137)

HOME GROUP 4 8 p.m.

A group meets at a different home each week (helpful for the young families who attend). Contact Jon Carhart (480319).

THURSDAY

WORKING PARTY

FIRST Thursdays from 9.30 am

Come and help us keep our church in a good state of repair. Contact Tony Sleep (403247) for details.

MEET AND EAT

THIRD Thursdays from 10 a.m.

November it is 4th Thursday.

A good meal, tea/coffee, and good company for everyone, led by Rosemary Lee, Barbara Jeffery (311100) and Jennifer Tomlinson (403896).

TABLE TENNIS 3.15 - 5.15 p.m. Contact David Finemore (406372)

Elburton Methodist Community Church

HOME GROUP 3 7.30 p.m.

David and Brenda Youngs
(880286) lead this group on
Thursday evenings at 7.30 pm at
Ruth Sweetland's home.

FRIDAY

LUNCHEON CLUB

11 a.m. (in term time)

A lovely lunch provided for those
less able to provide for themselves.
Good food, good company.
Contact Trisha Stringer (482532).

SATURDAY

COFFEE MORNING

Last Saturday of the month
10.30 a.m. - noon

Held in the Moore Hall, Arranged
by Margaret Passmore (404929),
run by various groups. Funds go to
church projects, term time only.

MESSY CHURCH

First Saturday of month 10.30 a.m.

An informal kind of worship tailored
to the needs of the whole family
with lots of fun, food, activities and
a Christian message.



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The Reverse Advent Calendar.

Rather than opening a window in an Advent calendar and taking the sweets or whatever, instead each day you put a small food gift into a box, until Christmas Day. Then after Christmas, you take the box to a charity such as the Shekinah Mission or similar. If it isn't terribly "old-hat", I wondered whether the idea was worth including in the next Link.

All good wishes

Allysum Reed

What a lovely idea, Allysum. If we were to put by a can of soup, or UHT milk, sugar, or whatever it would really make a difference at the Foodbank. Some people are going to have a terrible Christmas and it is good that we remember them. I looked on the web and found this from Bournemouth Foodbanks:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| day 1 FRUIT JUICE (CARTON) | day 14 SAVOURY ITEM OF YOUR CHOICE |
| day 2 SPONGE PUDDING | day 15 SPONGE PUDDING |
| day 3 CARTONED/ TINNED CUSTARD | day 16 CHRISTMAS CRACKERS |
| day 4 MINCE PIES | day 17 CRANBERRY/ MINT SAUCE |
| day 5 CHOCOLATE BAR/BOX | day 18 FRUIT JUICE (CARTON) |
| day 6 BISCUIT SELECTION BOX | day 19 PEANUT BUTTER |
| day 7 TINNED HAM | day 20 RICE PUDDING |
| day 8 CRISPS | day 21 FRUIT JUICE (CARTON) |
| day 9 FRUIT JUICE (CARTON) | day 22 TINNED VEGETABLES |
| day 10 PEANUTS | day 23 STUFFING |
| day 11 CHRISTMAS PUDDING | day 24 GRAVY |
| day 12 FRUIT JUICE (CARTON) | day 25 MAKE UP THE BASKET |
| day 13 SELECTION BOX OF YOUR CHOICE | |

CAN YOU HELP?

A few of those who have helped over many years have had to stand down and therefore I am seeking three or four volunteers who could help once a month in peeling vegetables, serving the meal and clearing up afterwards. If you think you might help, would you have a word with me. Tricia Stringer



AUTUMN MARKET

Elburton 's Autumn Market was held on Oct. 14th and visitors had plenty of choice of good items to purchase including books, preserves, cakes, toys and handmade cards. There was a good attendance and over £1000 was made for Church projects.

MESSY CHURCH

Remembering - we will be exploring feelings such as sadness, anger and grief - activities including a prayer box, bracelet and poppies. all with the usual food and friendship. Please join us.



Meet *and Eat*

**GONE TO SIDMOUTH
ON 3rd THURSDAY**

23rd November - this month the 4th Thursday (not 3rd) for lunch.

Come and join us for good food, good company, games and happy conversation.

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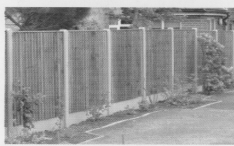
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Prayer Page

Almighty God, you are not God of the dead but of the living. We thank you for your saints - for those of every time and place, who have served you faithfully and enriched the world by their lives, their witness and their example. Help us by your grace to follow them as they followed Christ, so that with them we may receive your everlasting joy.

All Saints day is November 1st.

Let us pray for everyone who is suffering as a result of war: for the injured and the disabled, for those who are mentally distressed, for those whose faith in God and in man has been weakened or destroyed, for those made homeless and who become refugees, for all who are hungry, and for those who have lost their livelihood and security, for those who mourn their dead, husband or wife, child or parent, and especially for people who have no hope that Christ will sustain them in their grief. Almighty God please have compassion on those for whom we pray. There are always incredible acts of bravery and courage and we respect and honour those who risk their lives for us but please make us realise that war hurts everyone and decides nothing except who is the strongest or most powerful. Help your people instead to love each other, to forgive each other, to absorb anger and hatred without retaliation, and to work together in harmony, looking to Jesus your son who gave himself for us on the cross as the perfect example.

Remembrance Sunday is November 12th

Heavenly father, by your grace we have been called into the fellowship and the service of your Church: help us to follow the example of the apostle Andrew who brought his own brother, Simon Peter to Jesus; that we may share the good news of our salvation with those near to us in our families and our neighbourhood, and so advance your kingdom and the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord.

November 30th is St Andrew's day. Fred Colquhoun

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MONTHLY COFFEE MORNING

Every month except in the holiday periods, on the last Saturday there is a coffee morning held in the Moore Hall in aid of church funds. It is a happy social event with many regular attendees.



It will next be held on November 25th

ALTERNATIVE WORSHIP



In the evening of the third Sunday of most months we hold an alternative form of worship. We use guitar and keyboard for more modern songs with strong tunes, and tea or coffee is provided at the beginning of the service. Preachers often allow the congregation to ask questions and discuss what they have said, as part of the worship.

NEXT: Sunday November 19th

SORRY!

I owe everybody an apology. The cover picture last month was of a church in West Looe, not East Looe as I said in the article. It is a small church right on the side of the estuary just before you go up the hill. The window on the left has two right feet and the one on the right has two left feet. Sometimes I think I know how having two left feet feels!!

There was once a rich man who was near death. He was very grieved because he had worked so hard for his money, and he wanted to be able to take it with him to heaven.

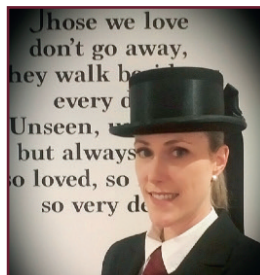
An angel heard him and said: "Sorry, you can't take your wealth with you." The man implores the angel who in the end bent the rules. Overjoyed, the man gathers his largest suitcase and fills it with pure gold bars and places it beside his bed.

Soon afterward, the man dies and shows up at the Gates of heaven to greet St. Peter. Seeing the suitcase, Peter checks the bag and is startled at what he finds. "You brought pavement?" he exclaimed.



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Boxes will be collected on the 12th November during the family/parade service. I have decorated flat pack boxes which are available from me for 50 pence each, otherwise your own wrapped shoe boxes are still acceptable.





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Oreston Methodist Church



SUNDAY SERVICES ARE AT 10.30 AM

November 5th	Rev'd Simon Leigh including Sacrament
November 12th	Local Arrangement
November 19th	Mr Brian Gerry
November 26th	Rev'd Simon Leigh

To the tune of Onward Christian Soldiers:

Like a mighty tortoise
Moves the Church of God.
Brothers we are treading
Where we've always trod.
We are all divided,
Many bodies we,
Very strong on doctrine
Weak on charity.

Onward Christian soldiers!
Saunter as to tea!
Taste and etiquette shall
Lead us Lord to thee!

*This was found on the web and some denominational
references have been replaced.*

Stitch, Knit & Natter



The new Group opened its doors at 2pm on Monday, 11th September and we were pleased to welcome 15 interested ladies who wanted to knit for charity or just do their own thing. We have since upped the numbers to a total of about 22 but with an average of 15 each week. We spend 2 hours chatting constantly, enjoying a cup of tea and biscuit and knitting or sewing at the same time. In the subsequent weeks, lots has been discussed and around six twiddle-muffs (so far) have been made for delivering to the Oasis Care Home, to be given to some of their residents with dementia; a blanket or two have been knitted and lots of squares completed. It seems lots of people knit squares but not enough for a complete blanket so, if you're such a person, we will be happy to receive any you make - to sew into our blankets. Better still, come along to our meetings and enjoy the company and tea or coffee at the same time.

We are currently making squares in double knitting wool with 30 stitches and No.8 (4mm) needles but we could accept different sizes, too. The pattern for Twiddle-muffs is available at the meetings and you can use up any oddments of dk. or chunky, plus odd buttons, bells, baubles, ribbon, etc. to embellish them. There are no special qualifications to join our Group - you don't even have to be able to knit or sew; we'll help you learn!

For the last few weeks, we have been collecting together to fill some shoe boxes for the Samaritan's Purse charity which will be given to Elburton Church on 12th November, another good charitable cause.

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ORESTON EVENTS...

Oreston Parents and Toddlers

The Group meets every Friday in term time, in the Church Hall from 1.30pm - 3.15pm. All are welcome.



Oreston Stitch, Knit & Natter

The group meets every Monday from 2.00 – 4.00 pm in the Church Hall. Craft activities of many types take place and all are welcome to attend.



All Age Table Tennis



2 pm to 4 pm each Tuesday (excluding School Holidays) Used to Play? Want to Learn? or just want to have some fun & exercise at the same time? Drop in any Tuesday and expect A WARM WELCOME!

THE INTERCHURCH BIBLE STUDY GROUP

Twice monthly from 1 pm. 2nd Tuesday at Pomphlett with Revd. Andy Day (342519) and 4th Tuesday at Oreston. Current Bible Study Subjects: Bad Girls & Bad Boys?



-
- 1. I don't suffer from insanity -- I enjoy every minute of it!*
 - 2. Don't take life too seriously -- no one gets out alive.*
 - 3. I'm not a complete idiot -- some parts are missing!*
 - 4. Ever stop to think, and forget to start again?*
 - 5. He who dies with the most toys is nonetheless dead.*
 - 6. Ham and eggs -- a day's work for a chicken, a lifetime commitment for a pig.*

A man was being tailgated by a woman on a busy road. Suddenly, the traffic light turned amber just in front of him. He stopped at the crossing. The tailgating woman hit the roof, and the horn, screaming in frustration as she missed her chance to get through the intersection. As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer ordered her to exit her car with her hands up. He took her to the police station where she was searched, finger-printed, and photographed, and then placed in a holding cell. After a couple of hours, a policeman approached the cell and opened the door. She was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with her personal effects. He said, "I'm very sorry for this mistake. You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, flipping off the guy in front of you, and cussing a blue streak at him. I noticed the 'What Would Jesus Do?' bumper sticker, the 'Follow Me to Sunday School' bumper sticker, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on the boot. Naturally, I assumed you had stolen the car!"

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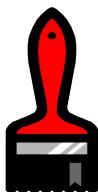


POMPHLETT METHODIST CHURCH



PREACHERS AT POMPHLETT ON SUNDAYS AT 9.30 AM

November 5th	Rev'd Terry Higgins
November 12th REMEMBRANCE	Rev'd Andrew Day SACRAMENT
November 19th	Mr Nigel Norris
November 26th	Rev'd Andrew Day



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Welcome to Family Worship

Sundays @ 9.30 am

Experience the Pomphlett Welcome

Please pop in for a cuppa
After the service at about 10.30 am



4th Friday of

Each Month

10 am in the

Lounge

We start our
Prayer meeting with a cuppa
and a chat and then we move
into our prayer time which is
led by our Minister
Rev'd Andrew Day.

Cafe Style Church

Sunday December 3rd

Sunday December 31st

Try Something New

It's Church

But not as you know it

Informal Worship

Enjoy a cuppa



Share a Christmas

Christmas Harvest
Food Collection
For Plymouth Foodbank

Sunday December 3rd
@ 9.30 am

Your donations of tinned
and non perishable foods will help
the struggling families of Plymouth



Christmas Community Carol Service

Friday
December 15th
@ 6.30 pm

Followed by Warm Drinks
Mince Pies and Cream

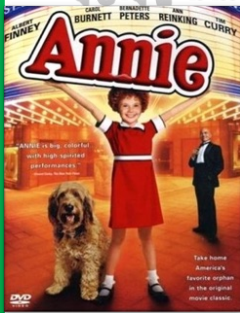


Buffett & Film

Friday November 3rd

Buffet Lunch £3

12:15 pm



Buffet does not need to be booked but it would help if you let us know if you are coming along

Film Starts At 1 pm and is free to watch



Coffee Cakes Chat

Saturday

November 18th

Teas Coffees from 9 am

Sale of

Christmas Goods

Bacon Butties from 9.30 am

Christmas Raffle

Pomphlett Methodist Church Friendship Group

Alternate Wednesdays at 2 pm.
All are welcome

	Subject	Speaker	Teas
Nov 1st	Something Different	Bert Symons	Cynthia & Ann
	Subject	Speaker	Teas
Nov 15th	Singing	Ruth	Maureen
	Subject	Speaker	Teas
Nov 29th		Steve	Maureen



**Well, here they are!
Photos of this illusive
breed of dancer,
rarely seen in the
wild.**



Thanks to Marion who
with Steve look after
the Tea Dancers
every other Monday
for these rare
photos.



In the foreground
are Ken on the key-
board and Gordon on
the drums. These
Chaps have looked
after us well with
their music over many
many years.

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER/ JANUARY

November 13th : November 27th

December 11th

2018 January 8th

For more information please call 519168

Just Pop in and Dance !!!



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After the service at about 10.30 am

Computing for Seniors



Pomphlett Methodist Church

We meet at 10 am. every
Wednesday during school term
time. Everyone is welcome

We are in our 6th year and have
helped many Senior Friends get
into personal computing and solved
many problems for them. Will you
be the next?

Pomphlett Methodist Church

Mini Skittles &
Pasty Supper

Saturday November 25th 6.30 pm

Entry £3 per person



To order your pasty

call 01752210820 or email

pomphlett.church@gmail.com



KEEP FIT
at POMPHLETT
CHURCH HALL
Plymstock
THURSDAYS 11-12

Enjoy a cup of tea after in
this friendly fun class!

For more information please call
Sarah on: 07588640241

Gateway

The Church in a House



"Remember, remember the fifth of November" was something as a child I looked forward to because my birthday was close by. After the war fireworks were not readily accessible. The local toy shop accepted orders but it didn't automatically mean you would get any. So my birthday party would conclude with a bang and a sparkle! These days we remember on the eleventh of November all those who gave their lives so that others may know peace and joy. The First World War was supposed to be the war to end all wars but there have been well over four hundred and fifty wars since the second one that followed; even now there are several going at this moment. This country is providing military support in various places in order to keep the peace. We also need to remember the families of service personnel especially those whose spouses are on long-term engagements. Here in Plymouth we are fortunate to have the Cascade of Poppies down at the Hoe until the end of November. I'm sure you will have someone to remember on the eleventh and thank God for. May you each of you remember how precious you are to God. He loves you very much and keeps his promise: "I will never leave you nor forsake you" which means He is the unseen guest in your home and you can talk to him at any time of day or night.

Your brother in Christ,
David.

Congratulations to Gladdy Derbyshire and Nicky Nicholson who will be celebrating birthdays in November. The Sunday Celebration at 11 am on 12 November is to be led by Roger and Julie Dodd. Afterwards we will go on to a restaurant for lunch. The Coffee morning is every Wednesday at 10.30 am.

LOOK AT THIS RIGHT NOW!

There is a good chance this event will have passed before you see the advertisement but just in case, please read this.

On October 27th, the Friday before November but just after some Links are distributed, there is a wonderful evening of entertainment planned at 7.00pm at Stoke Methodist Church. It is likely to be a lot of laughs, sketches, songs and jokes. If you get this in time, please try and come. You won't regret it.



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Darren was in a pub in Swansea when he was approached by a woman dressed in Gypsy fashion with a white, off-the-shoulder blouse and a long ornamented skirt. "Tell you your future, Darlin'?" she offered.

"No thanks", Darren replied..

"What do you mean, 'no thanks'! Don't you want to know if you'll make a fortune?"

"No, I'm really not bothered about money, as long as I have enough to live on." Darren said as he attempted to walk away.

"What about love?" she insisted. "Don't you want to know if you'll find the perfect partner?"

"I've already found the perfect partner, just leave me alone, OK?"

"They might die - you might die. Don't you want to know?"

"No, I'd seriously rather not," he paused. "You know, I almost had a psychic girlfriend once."

"What happened?"

"She chucked me before we met."

"Very funny," the women said with heavy sarcasm. "What's your name?"

"You tell me - you're the psychic."

"Clairvoyance isn't a joke you know. Your future is already written in the stars," she rounded on him.

"You see I don't think it's written anywhere. I don't think even God knows exactly."

That surprised her. "I thought Christian believed God knows everything."

Darren explained, "Every day I make a thousand decisions, God doesn't know what I'm going to do in any of them. That's the joy of living. I'm writing on a clean sheet all the time. Nothing is decided. If it were, life would be a nonsense - just a meaningless charade. If God knows exactly how and when I'm going to sin we might as well sort out sheep and goats now. What's the point of going through with it all?"

"So you don't think God knows how the world will end. You

don't think he has a plan?"

"Did I say that?" Darren asked rhetorically. "No I didn't! Of course God has a plan. And every day idiots like me frustrate it by not doing what we are supposed to."

The woman looked in consternation. "You think that by doing what you should you can change the world?"

"I know it. We could have heaven here on Earth if only people like me would listen and do right."

"What is this heaven you're talking about, then? Is it a damp cloud full of angels, or a huge city of many mansions?" she teased.

"I'm talking about heaven on earth - the thing we pray for every day. It's like going to a really good church where you're loved by everyone, and you all come there to worship God. It's far more immediate than mansions and clouds. A good church can literally be heaven on earth."

She looked at him, "You're mad, aren't you?"

"All it would take is a few "yeses" from each of us and we could have heaven here right now."

"Absolutely barking!" She swung on her heels and walked away.

TR

THE AUCTION OF PROMISES

On a Saturday last month we held our first auction of promises. I was ill and unable to be there but George Stringer did a brilliant job for me. In the end every promise went for a really good price and we took £250 for church projects. The rugs were expensive but even they went for the reserve price on the day afterwards. I want to say a particular thank you to the advertisers in this magazine who contributed most of the promises, to David and Brenda Youngs who really caught the spirit of the event with their offer of a car ride for two including cream teas, and to everyone who bid so generously. It was an astonishing sum from just eight promises. Thank you so much.

TONY RAINE

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Thank you for your generous gift for our Action of Promises.