

The Messenger



**The bi-monthly magazine from
St Michael's, West Hill**



**June - July 2024
delivered FREE
to every home in the village**

St Michael the Archangel

part of the Otter Vale Mission Community

Bringing Jesus Christ to our Community

We are here to help in any way we can – so please contact us.

Getting Married? ... Considering Baptism?

Please contact our Team Vicar, Revd. Mark Ward 01404 814282
revmarkward@btinternet.com

Could someone else from the Church help you?

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PLEASE NOTE The last date for copy for the August/September edition is
Mon 1st July 2024.

An online version of this magazine is available to download from our website.

The opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the opinions of St Michael's Church. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, we can accept no liability for errors. The Editors' decisions are final.

A Letter from our Team Vicar



I love this time of year when the sun is high in the sky and the days are at their longest. There is something wonderfully joyous and therapeutic about feeling the sun shining on you. It reminds me of a prayer that God gave to the Israelites over three-thousand years ago. It is a blessing that we still use today:

The Lord bless you and keep you;
 the Lord make his face to shine upon you and
 be gracious to you;
 the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and
 give you peace. [ESV]

You can find this in Numbers chapter 6.

It is a beautiful thing to pray for another person, and at its heart is that image of the Lord God's face shining upon us, an image that makes a lot of sense if you enjoy the experience of the sun shining upon you.

The same image is used again and again in the poetry of the Psalms. David wrote many of the Psalms. In number 4 he prays to the Lord, "Let the light of your face shine on us." But when he is feeling troubled in Psalm 13, he cries out in prayer, "How long will you hide your face from me?"

To have the Lord God's face to shine upon you is a great blessing; when his face is hidden, things seem much darker. It is interesting to see, then, that there are some people described in the Bible who would prefer God's face to be hidden.

In the awesome visions of the book of Revelation, John sees people who are hiding in caves and 'calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne."' (chapter 6, verse 16) But why? Why would anyone want to hide from God's face?

When the sun shines, it is glorious. But it does tend to show up any dirt on the windows and the dust on the television screen. The sun exposes the grime as well as making life brighter. The Bible uses the little word 'sin' for all the things in our lives—and we all have them—that make us a bit grimy. If someone did not want to be shown their sin, they might prefer to hide from God's face. But the Gospel offers a much better way: We let his face expose the good and bad in us; we confess, knowing that Jesus died to cleanse us; we receive his forgiveness and let his face shine upon us.

May the Lord bless you and make his face to shine upon you.

Mark

Children's Page

All Creatures Great & Small!

In the last issue of The Messenger, we invited you to go on a minibeast and small animals hunt around St Michael's churchyard. Did you manage to do that?



If you didn't, you missed some treats. One of the birdboxes now has 'tenants'. Mr & Mrs Blue Tit are working hard to feed their babies. The wildflowers and hedgerows are a takeaway café with lots of insects and grubs for the chicks to eat.

The many wildflowers are also providing pollen for bees and other pollinators.

This photo was taken in early May.



We've also spotted bats and found a vole's nest!

Our next project is to make a wildlife pond – by recycling an old tractor tyre. Our thanks go to John Hallett for providing (and delivering!) the tyre. We'll keep you up to date on its progress. The Church of England is hoping that churchyards will soon be designated as 'green spaces'.

Dates for Your Diary

Friday 21st June (3.45 – 5.30pm)

Environment Party & Picnic

NB No meetings in July & August



Messy Church is generally for the 3 – 11 years age group but everyone is welcome. At each meeting, we provide tea for the children. We then have lots of fun with storytelling, crafts, games and songs. Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

For more information email Rosemary: HUDSONROSEMARY@HOTMAIL.COM

Children's Crafts

Birds' Nest Craft



You will need:

2 paper plates or circles of white card
 Thick card (5cm x 10cm approx.)
 Wool
 Yellow & brown paper
 String
 Scissors & hole punch
 Glue/stapler
 Felt pens/paints

Instructions:

Cut one of the plates/circles in half
 Decorate the top half of the full circle to look like sky
 Decorate the half circle to look like a nest
 Glue or staple the 2 pieces of cards together

To make the pompoms:

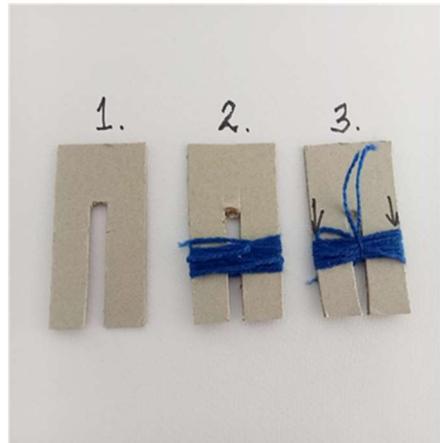
Step 1 – Cut a template out of thick card

Step 2 – Wind the wool around the template.

The more wool you use, the bigger the bird!

Step 3 – Using a small length of wool tie a knot around the middle of the wound wool. Then cut along each edge (as shown by the arrows).

Fluff out the pompom and trim to shape



Next:

Stick the pompom birds into the nest, add some yellow paper beaks and paper eyes.

Cut up some brown paper for 'nesting material'.

Punch a hole at the top and thread through some string.

Your indoor birds' nest is now ready to hang up!

Nothing

No day, no night, no wrong, no right,
 no blame, no game, no worry, no hurry,
 no fear, no smear, no pushing or rushing,
 not this day, or this minute, or anything in it,
 can separate us, from the Son of trust, the Son of light,
 the Son of day and the Son of night,
 the Son who cares and the Son who said,
 'I'm forever alive, no longer dead.'
 the Son who knows and understands,
 offers his heart and offers his hands.
 Nothing below and nothing above
 can separate us from the one who is love.

Romans 8 v 38-39

Dave Hopwood davehopwood.com

Used with permission

Open Garden

Thursday 18th July (2 - 5pm)

at

Little Wotton, Bendarroch Road, West Hill
 (next to RBL)

£5 per person (to include refreshments)

Plant Stall

Parking available in the church car park

For more details, and to book, please call Sue Lock

01404 812947

Proceeds in aid of St Michael's Church



The Men's Shed

My name is Dave Holland. I retired from the Police in May 2020, having served 22 years in Mid and East Devon and latterly Exeter. Before the police I had 10 years working in road transport, maintenance and engineering and prior to that I was in the Army.

I met Peter Graddon at "Steamers" a cafe and racing simulator establishment in Cullompton. Luckily it was one of their theme days: sports cars through the years. Some of the old machines there were fantastic, my wife spotted a V12 E type Jaguar! Peter suggested I could pursue my new hobby of woodworking at Men's Shed: his passion was woodturning.



I plucked up the courage to visit the shed on a Saturday morning in June 2023 and Tony Pugh told me what it was all about. They provide a repair, and in some cases full manufacture, of commissions from local groups and members of the public. Anything is considered. They have members with many skills, woodworking, metal work, electrical work, model making and restoration to name a few. I signed up!

A week or two later I had my first full session. I was teamed up with Mike, one of the committee members, for the day. Mike has a civil engineering background and is very skilled with his hands. I have assisted Mike with a couple of commissions, planters, a table and a woodworking bench, each one built from scratch. I picked up so much from Mike over the next few weeks, it was brilliant.

Everyone I have met at the shed has been welcoming and engaging, always including me in a project. I have also, over several months, been trained in how to use various machine tools and hand tools.

All that is expected from a member is to join in, be willing, be supportive and very importantly have fun and a laugh.

Being supportive and understanding has been very important for me, that is towards me from the members. In May 2022 I began to suffer some very strange motor function symptoms. Within a year I was diagnosed with Parkinson's. I was completely taken by surprise, shocked and more than a little worried. Joining the Men's shed has helped me immensely.

Read my full story on The Men's Shed page of www.whmessenger.info.

West Hill Garden Club

As we move into the high summer months of June & July we can enjoy all the good things having a garden brings us. Whether it's flowers from the rose garden, the cutting garden or the herbaceous border, the first home grown salads or freshly harvested peas & beans from the veg patch, they all contribute to a sense of satisfaction & pride for gardeners.

At present members are busy sowing seeds, taking cuttings, splitting plants etc as we prepare for the **Garden Club Stall at the PTFA Village Fete**. This will take place on Sat. June 29th on the School Playing Field & is always a very happy occasion. Over the years the village has supported us so well, and we should like to thank you all, and to encourage you to do some more shopping again this year. There will be lots of plants to choose from and all the money raised is used to pay for future speakers at our monthly Club meetings.

Our **June meeting will take place on Thursday 13th June in the Village Hall at 7.30pm when the Speaker will be Cheryl Fellows-Bennett speaking on David Austin Roses**. Cheryl will be talking about the history of the company, the man himself, and how to buy, plant and care for Austin Roses. Surely everyone would love a least one Austin Rose in their garden!

In July we are going out again. The date is **Thursday 11th July when we are visiting Bickham House at Kenn, meeting there at 2.00pm**. Teas will be available. The garden covers six acres with a profusion of flowers and vegetables to be seen inside the walled garden area, as well as several other areas of interest all ready to be enjoyed. Car sharing will be arranged at the June meeting.

We always welcome visitors and new members to our meetings. Any enquiries please contact:

Chairman Sheila Gillam (01404 814074) or Secretary Pauline Wade (01404 813191).

Monica Highnam

Tea & Toast & Toys on Fridays

We continue to meet every Friday at 8.45 am at the Village Hall during school term time. We are really looking forward to welcoming some new faces: Toddlers and Pre-Schoolers, Mums, Dads, Grandparents and Nannies, who can enjoy a cup of tea, coffee or fresh milk, and some toast and marmalade (or jam); and you don't have to have a small person in tow!

If you have enjoyed coming along, do bring your friends and neighbours, old and young alike.

Give us a ring if you want to know more: **Ann** (813886) **Pam** (814096).

Living through Trouble

Preparing for Cafe Church in May on the story of Joseph, I was struck by the many everyday people in the Bible, whose lives were filled with one trouble after another.

We often look at the stories (especially when we read them to our children or grandchildren) from the angle of their adventures and successes,

- Joseph becoming a great ruler in Egypt
- Moses leading the people out of slavery
- David overcoming a threatening giant
- Jonah surviving being swallowed by a whale
- Daniel being rescued from a den of lions
- The apostle Paul escaping from Damascus in a laundry basket

to name just a few.

But do we look behind the scenes of the lives of these people, or the lives of the prophets whose personal stories we hear less often? Do we view them as people like ourselves, and look at what they endured?

Do we ask ourselves how we would have coped? And do we look for the golden thread running through these stories and our own?

That thread is summed up by Joseph himself, who told his brothers *“You thought this for evil, but God thought it for good.”* This was not to say that God approved what Joseph’s brothers did, (Genesis 37) rather that He transformed the outcome to bring good out of it: the saving of many lives.

In the New Testament Jesus tells his disciples: *“In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”* And Paul writes: *“we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to (his) purpose.”*

Is this just for a chosen few? What is His purpose? His purpose is that all mankind should be restored to relationship with Him. The saving of many lives. Those who love Him are those who have already responded to His love and put their trust in Him for every situation. They are the ones who can testify to this truth.

A verse known by many is Jeremiah 29:11 - *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”* Jeremiah proclaims this word from God to the people of Israel just before they are overwhelmed, in stages taking nearly 20 years, by Nebuchadnezzar’s armies and gradually all taken into captivity in Babylon. In context, it comes immediately after a reassurance that after 70 years God would bring them back home: a prophecy which was fulfilled in an amazing way through a powerful pagan ruler. So what does this mean for us today?

To quote a Psalm which many love, it is this: *“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You [are] with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me”* (in other words: strengthen me).

In all these stories the golden thread is that God is walking beside those who trust Him, through thick and thin. He walks beside us as One who Himself knew what it meant to be vulnerable, because He too went through trials greater than any of ours. It doesn't mean we will be spared trouble or sickness or grief, but that God will be there alongside us and we can know that however hard, however gut-wrenching, it may feel at the time, He **will** transform it and we **will** one day be able to see just how He has brought more good than we could ask or imagine.

This is my faith. This is my testimony.

Ann Pangbourne

Ottery St. Mary Floral Art Club

Members and visitors thoroughly enjoyed our May demonstration, “Toy Stories” by Allison Finch who travelled from Dorset to be with us.

We now turn our minds to June and July and on Friday 14th June, members are encouraged to take part in “The Lonely Bouquet”. Small bouquets are left in random places around the local area for the finder to take home and enjoy (or perhaps pass on to someone else), underlining the NAFAS (National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies) theme of “Friendship through Flowers”. Hopefully some readers of The Messenger will come across a “Lonely Bouquet” on the 14th June – if you do, we hope that it makes you smile and brightens your day.

Our June Club night is our annual garden visit, which is a members' only evening. This year several of us are off to Sidmouth to visit Byes Reach and enjoy a sociable evening together - hopefully the weather will be kind to us!

On Tuesday 16th July we welcome Irene Hickson with her demonstration “Fashion Trends”. Irene has been demonstrating for many years and so we are sure to have a wonderful evening with inspiring arrangements. As always, Irene's designs will all be raffled at the end of the evening. For any members reading this, the July competition is “Happy Holiday” – please take part if you can as it really is lovely to see everyone's different interpretation of each of our competition themes.

Visitors are always welcome to come and enjoy our Club nights with us so why not join us for Irene's demonstration at **West Hill Village Hall, Beech Park, West Hill, EX11 1UQ – 7.30 pm on Tuesday 16th July.**

Any enquiries: Karen Taverner, Club Secretary – 01404 811807

Welcome Café

Our Welcome Cafés are held on the last Friday of every month in the church hall at the back of St Michael's. We have a regular group of customers and it is always lovely to see new faces as well. If you haven't been yet, why not take a break and join us? You are assured of a warm welcome, friendship, lots of coffee, chat and delicious home-made cake!

Please make a note for your diary, in June we are open on 28th and in July, we will be there on 26th. We would love to see you there.

If you enjoy making cakes or helping in the kitchen, our loyal team of helpers would be very grateful if you could lend a hand every now and then. It is always good to share the jobs, so they don't come round as quickly. If you would like to help, please contact: Sue Bonnie 01404 812370.

Otter Valley Rotary

In the last few weeks we have welcomed Mark Isaacs from Ottery Football Club and Brian Fernley from the South West Airfields Heritage Society. Mark spoke to us about the challenges involved in the running of the Football Club and their plans for some refurbishments to their Clubhouse. We look forward to supporting them and building further links with the Football Club as a fellow local organisation in the town.

Brian gave us a comprehensive presentation entitled 'Hunting the Hunter' detailing the part Dunkeswell played in WWII. Members were fascinated by the history of the airstrips there, the important role the US Troops played and the sorties they flew. Brian shared recorded interviews from local people who remembered those times, and also the tactics employed to reduce the impact of German U boats on the Allies.

Our Rotary Community Raffle for 2024 gives opportunity for organisations to raise money for themselves whilst all the organising and productions of tickets is done by us, but using your own logo. And your organisation gets to keep 90% of ticket sales whilst Rotary only take 10%. It's an excellent way of making money for your community organisation. Tickets are sold up until October, with the draw made in November. In the last 16 years the Raffle has made an incredible £600,000 for local organisations and last year alone over 15,000 tickets were sold. Top prize is £1,000! There is more information on the raffle's website at dcr.org.uk or please email Mike Huxtable at mthuxtable@aol.com.

If you are interested in joining Otter Valley Rotary, or would like to find out more, please contact our Secretary David Incoll at d.incoll@live.co.uk. We meet each Tuesday evening at the Tumbling Weir Hotel for a meal, often a speaker entertains us afterwards, and there's plenty of time for fellowship.

Emma

Devon Historic Churches Trust (DHCT) Cycle Ride

We have already published the date of the cycle ride in 2024. This is just a gentle reminder that it will take place on Saturday 14th September.

Team West Hill has supported the Cycle Ride for many years, with the



generous sponsorship of people in the village, raising funds for St Michael's Church and the Devon Trust. It is a wonderful way of appreciating the beautiful countryside and special parish churches in our locality.

Our team has sometimes been an individual bike rider, one year we had five riders, which was a record! Would you like to join the team? If so, for details, please get in touch with: Richard Bonnie 01404 812370.

Councillor's Column

Potters/Morrisons planning application



In light of the significant level of objection to the Potters Country Market planning application, I had thought that the owners might withdraw their application and revise their plans. Instead, they have 'doubled down' and submitted a lengthy 'rebuttal' letter outlining why they consider their application to be policy compliant. As far as I am concerned, the newly submitted rebuttal letter does not overcome the strong grounds for refusing the application, and I am pressing EDDC to formally refuse the application.

Local Plan – green wedges

EDDC will imminently be consulting on a number of further matters relating to the Local Plan. You will recall that EDDC previously consulted on the draft plan including site allocations in December 2022. The most relevant matter for West Hill residents in the forthcoming consultation is the 'green wedge' between West Hill and Ottery St Mary which had been adopted in the West Hill and Ottery St Mary Neighbourhood Plan. It protects the open space between the two communities and makes development on it more difficult. This green wedge (and many others across the district) is under threat from development and I would urge as many people as possible to respond to the consultation in support of maintaining it.

Devon County Council – Combined County Authority

Devon County Council has voted to establish a Combined County Authority (CCA) with Torbay Council. I did not vote in support of this because I am concerned it will result in yet more bureaucracy and cannot see what

tangible improvement it is going to deliver for the lives of Devon residents. I also think it is intrinsically undemocratic for Torbay Council with a population of 139,000 to have three seats on the CCA, when DCC with a population of 953,000 also only has three seats.

Tipton School – relocation

There is currently a public consultation running until the 19th June on the potential relocation of Tipton school to a site at Thorne Farm, Ottery. Whilst this primarily impacts the village of Tipton it is also relevant for families within West Hill whose children attend Tipton School. Whilst I recognise the long standing and serious impacts of flood risk on the lower school site in Tipton I do believe that the school should remain in Tipton. Two potential sites have been identified within Tipton and in my view every effort should be made to overcome barriers associated with those sites, rather than simply moving to Ottery. Full details of the consultation can be found both on Tipton School's website and Devon County Council's website.

Cllr Jess Bailey

Tel: 01404 814056

Email: Jessica.Bailey@devon.gov.uk

Hospiscare News

Funding update..

In the last edition, we mentioned about fair funding for Hospiscare. We are continuing this lobby and we still urge you to write to Dr Sarah Wollaston and Bill Shields, Chair and CEO of the ICB, to ask them to fund Hospiscare fairly so we can continue to provide outstanding-rated care to local patients and families living with terminal illnesses.

Due to a £2.5 million funding deficit, we have sadly been forced to cut back our vital services from April 2024. This includes reducing bed numbers on our ward in Exeter from 12 to 8 and reducing our weekend community nursing service.

As an independent local charity, it costs close to £10 million each year to provide our services - 82% of which the hospice raises itself with the help of local people.

Our local community is already so generous. We can't keep asking local people for more money to fund our healthcare - but our costs have increased greatly in the last 12 months.

Only 18% of our funding comes from the government – compared to an average of 37% nationwide. For two years, we've have been actively lobbying for an increase in our funding to this average level, but it hasn't happened - and now we've had no choice but to reduce our services - which isn't fair to the people of Devon.

We haven't given up, we're going to keep fighting for fair funding. If you'd like to know more, please visit www.hospiscare.co.uk/fair to see how you can help, or telephone 01392 688000

Although we can't change a terminal diagnosis, we want to continue to be there, ensuring that those with life-limiting illnesses receive expert palliative and end-of-life care at no cost to them, their family or loved ones. We want to be there for the friends and families of our patients, providing the support and advice they need. But as a local charity, we are reliant on donations and gifts in wills to fund our services.

Cadhay Summer Fete: Saturday 24th August Noon to 4pm

Save the date for this great day out. Beautiful Gardens and House Tours available. Live music, entertainment, BBQ, refreshments in the tea-room, bouncy castle, balloon modelling, stalls, raffle and so much more, a guaranteed fun day out for all the family, please do come and support the Otter Vale friends.

Contactless card machines will be available but please do bring cash.

Well behaved dogs on short leads welcome. Entry – donation to Hospiscare.

By the kind permission of Mr R Thistlethwayte of Cadhay.

Gardens across Devon open to support your local hospice

From March until September, gardeners across Devon will be opening their gates to the community and welcoming the public to explore their green spaces in return for a donation to Hospiscare. Over 58 gardens will be participating in the annual fundraising event, including wild gardens, cottage gardens, a newly planted school peace and vegetable garden, a honey farm, and an award-winning Victorian Fern Garden.

Open Garden booklets are now available from your local Hospiscare shop or Morrisons in West Hill.

If you are interested in the work of Hospiscare, please contact Area Fundraiser Toni Hiscocks 01392 688067/07921 845 615 or email t.hiscocks@hospiscare.co.uk

Your generosity truly makes a difference to local people.

Everyday our specialist Doctors, Nurses and healthcare professionals are caring for over 700 patients across Exeter, Mid and East Devon.

West Hill Greeting Cards

Full colour greetings cards of landscapes and images of West Hill.

£7 for 10 cards & envelopes with free delivery in the village. Only 20 packs remaining – buy now!

Ring Sue on 01404 812 370

The Royal British Legion West Hill

Movie Nights

Doors open at 7pm, Film starts at 7.30pm, Admission free. All welcome!

3 rd June	Young Victoria
10 th June	The Producers
17 th June	Blackbird
24 th June	Ticket to Paradise
1 st July	Mordecai
8 th July	Shirley
15 th July	My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3
22 nd July	The Contract
29 th July	The Beautiful Game

Bingo Nights

Sundays 2nd, 16th & 30th June and 7th, 21st July

Jazz (with City Steam Jazz Band)

Sundays 9th June & 14th July (7pm for 7.30pm)

Dads' Nights

Fridays 14th June & 12th July

Mums' Nights

Fridays 28th June & 26th July

Opera Nights

Summer Break

Pop-Up Restaurants

Sunday 30th June Syrian Buffet Lunch 1200-1430

Codfather – Fish & Chips

Every Thursday from 1600-1900

D-Day Movie Night

Thursday 6th June 1930

The Longest Day

D Day Barbecue & Jazz Afternoon

Saturday 8th June from 1300-1700

Ottery St Mary Heritage Society and Museum

Registered charity CIO no. 1179598

Our Museum is now open for the summer season on Thursdays and Fridays from 10.30am to 4pm and on Saturdays from 11am to 3pm. Please come and visit but check on our website before doing so just in case there are any last minute changes: www.otteryheritage.org.uk. There's plenty to see and a new exhibition by our youngest member all about the history of Pixie Day which takes place this year on Saturday 22nd June.

Our monthly members' talks take place at The Institute, Yonder St., Ottery St Mary EX11 1HD on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Guests are welcome at £3 payable at the door. Please check our website for any changes, but the schedule is as follows:

Tuesday 18th June (7.30pm at The Institute)

The Poltimore House Story

Keith Weedon tells the fascinating story of Poltimore House, its role in the Civil War, its decline and rescue.

Tuesday 16th July (7.30pm at The Institute)

The Sherwill Journals

June Harvey describes the experience of discovering, transcribing, researching, putting in context and publishing an historical manuscript. This talk will tell the excitement of the detective work which goes into such endeavours and the rabbit holes down which such research can lead.

All enquiries, including membership, stewarding and participation in archiving to:

Lynda Murlewski, Hon. Secretary: otteryheritage@gmail.com.

TheO6 Needs Help

TheO6 provides valuable support for the youth of Ottery and surrounding villages. Activities include Schools Work, Weekly Drop ins, Mentoring, Holiday Clubs and Youth Clubs.

We are seeking finances to enable the work to be extended for a further three years.

If you, or your business, would like to contribute towards our youth work, please contact me or go to the website www.theo6.org.uk where under 'Fundraising' you will see how you can make a donation.

Help us make the world a better place for youth!

Graham Harry

West Hill Men's Supper Club

The Men's Supper Club is enjoying a revival. Meeting once a month on a Monday evening for an excellent meal with wine, then listening to a first-class speaker from a wide range of fields including:- science, the arts, societal subjects, local history and education.

We are a friendly social group who warmly welcome new members. We have been running for many years and are encouraged to see new faces each month.

In March we were brought a better understanding of the science of the planet's climate and how it is changing and last month the career and works of a local commercial artist whose signage and advertising pictures we can see all over Exeter and the surrounding area.

At our last meeting before the summer on Monday 10th June we will hear from Steve Graham about our shared love of chocolate through history.

We then have a break with our next meetings on Monday 9th September and Monday 14th October.

If you would like to join or come along as a guest, please contact Peter on peterkeith29@btinternet.com or 07840 835788.

Last Post for Rick Rugg

This note is primarily for the attention of the 470 houses in West Hill, which were served by postman RICK for 25 years through rain, storm and sweltering heat.

In 2022, I made an appeal, after Rick was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease (MND) and had to give up work. Sadly, Rick died in May, just over two years after his diagnosis.

His wife wanted me to let all the kind folk that donated to the appeal know that they had spent the money on a week in the Lake District with all the family. An opportunity for sharing and making some wonderful memories. I understand that Rick never went away for holidays, so this was something solely due to the kindness and generosity of the residents on his round.

The funeral will be private, but later they intend to have a fundraising event for the MND association. I have asked to be kept informed and will post a notice in The Messenger. If anyone would like to send letters of condolence, I can forward them to his wife.

RIP Postman Rick and Thank You for going the extra mile.

Elizabeth Hall Email: ehall1949@gmail.com.

The Birds of West Hill

The Dunnock is a familiar garden bird, formerly known as the Hedge Sparrow. In fact, the bird is not closely related to the sparrows and formal name was changed in 1923. Over 45 local names have been recorded including hedge creeper; hedge jug; hedge pick; and hedge warbler. Predictably it is a bird seen in hedges. The names hegesugge and shuffling derive from hege for hedge and sugge for flutterer, a correct observation of the bird's habit of fluttering its wings, especially when breeding. It also acquired human names such as isaac, molly and philip. The name Dunnock is based on dun- meaning dull brown/grey colour (which is accurate) and -ock, a suffix meaning small. Its scientific name is *Prunella modularis* with *prunella* referring to the bird's brown colour and *modularis* meaning to sing. The Dunnock has a loud, persistent, scratchy song.



Dunnock

The Dunnock is promiscuous, with many females mating with many males, typically living in groups of up to 3 females and 3 males. An avian hippy! Dunnocks have found this form of relationship (polygandrous) to be the most successful way to maximise breeding success. How mistaken was the Victorian clergy who advocated that his congregation follow the example of the Dunnock "Unobtrusive, quiet and retiring ... the Dunnock exhibits a pattern which many of a higher grade might imitate...!!"

The bird is the most common host for the Cuckoo's egg hence

the name blind dunnock, i.e. it does not see the Cuckoo laying an egg in its nest.

Interestingly the Cuckoo's egg does not mimic the Dunnock's blue egg colouration, as it does for its other host species. Shakespeare referred to the bird in King Lear - "The hedge sparrow fed the cuckoo so long, that it had its head bit off by its young".

Extracted from "British birds – their fascinating stories" published by Geoff Green, available from him (813127), on Amazon (search for the title) or The Curious Otter bookshop.

Otter Vale Probus Club

We are a very friendly club whose aim is to promote fellowship among professional and business men aged 60 and over who have fully or partially retired from their normal working life. We have a wide variety of members from very many professions and walks of life.

The Club is strictly social, non-political, non-sectarian and independent of all other organisations. We welcome new members and we strive to be as sociable as possible. Our dress code is smart casual, with jackets being preferred.

We hold our meetings on the second and fourth Wednesday mornings of most calendar months at the Blue Ball Inn, Sidford. After coffee from 10.00, the meeting starts at 10.30 and consists of a speaker giving a talk of up to an hour with questions from the floor. This is followed by an optional, chargeable, lunch and/or drink at noon. We have a very varied and interesting programme of speakers from many walks of life. Our annual programme also includes three Visit Days and a Christmas Lunch for members and a guest.

Meeting costs are covered by a small annual membership fee. If you are interested in joining an active, sociable club of similar minded men please contact:

John Pulsford, Chairman, Otter Vale Probus Club, 01404 815994

Bad News, Good News

A lady was standing in a queue at the supermarket checkout. She got talking with the lady behind her. They grumbled about the length of the queue, about the weather, about the world news, about politicians ... until the first lady reached the checkout.

She packed up her goods, paid, smiled at the lady behind, said goodbye and went her way.

That night she had a dream.

She was standing in a queue at the gates of heaven. She turned to see behind her the same lady she had met in the supermarket queue. They got talking. The first lady was excited that she would soon be meeting Jesus face to face. She talked about how she had come to know Him as a young woman and how her life had been transformed by Him.

The second lady listened intently and then said sadly, "Why didn't you tell me this before? My life might have been transformed too."

Submitted by **Ann Pangbourne**

West Hill Village Hall

Registered Charity No. 1160370

One off bookings for parties and events remain strong and bookings by our Regular User groups are running smoothly.

Major Events booked include:

- 29th Jun 24 - West Hill Village Fete.
- 6th July 24 - South West Quilters Convention
- 31st July 24 - NHS Blood Donation Session
- 9th Nov 24 - South West Quilters AGM
- 19th Nov 24 - OSM Flower Arranging Christmas Display with staging.
- 23rd Nov 24 - PTFA Ball with marquee.
- 30th Nov 24 - Hospiscare Christmas Fayre
- 8th Dec 24 - Preschool Christmas Bazaar

As mentioned above South West Quilters have chosen West Hill Village Hall to host their Convention on 6th July when they anticipate 150 members will attend. SW Quilters will use the Hall again on 9th November to hold their AGM. Their previous venues of choice have been Exeter Race Course and Exeter Westpoint Arena.

In the April - May 24 Messenger we asked residents interested in becoming a Trustee of West Hill Village Hall to contact Colin Veale on 01404 813830 or e-mail colinveale@btinternet.com. At the time of writing this article we have received interest from one resident but ideally we would like to recruit two new Trustees.

We will hold our Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 17th July in Acorn room starting at 7pm.

We held our first CPR and Defibrillator training session in April when representatives from 8 different user organisations attended. This training will in future be held annually.

The new carpet tiles in Acorn room have been laid and in the school summer recess we will have the walls of the reception area, corridor, stairs and upstairs landing redecorated plus all 15 doors will be re-stained. During the summer recess we will also continue to host Blood Donation sessions when hall availability permits.

Please visit our website

<http://www.westhilldevon.org.uk/villagehall.html> for details of the full range of clubs and activities on offer at the hall, or call Sarah Woolfries on 01404 814216 between the hours of 9.00 and 17.30.

You may also contact Sarah by e-mail on

bookings@westhillvillagehall.co.uk.

Colin Veale, Chairman, Village Hall Trustees

St Michael's Mission Partners: Force Cancer Charity



FORCE is one of the local charities that we support. At their centre in Exeter and at local community hospitals, they provide free support and information to anyone affected by cancer.

They offer counselling, group sessions, complementary therapies, benefits advice, specialist physiotherapy and exercise guidance together with other health and wellbeing support. Their services are available to cancer patients and their families.

The FORCE Cancer Support and Information Centre is on the RD&E Hospital's Wonford site. It is open Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays) between 9.30am and 4.30pm. They also work at the Ottery St Mary Hospital cancer hub, where their volunteers support FORCE's team of experts and the nurses delivering chemotherapy daily.

FORCE is an independent charity which funds local research and buys equipment to improve patient care. The majority of its work is funded by local donations, fundraising, grants, legacies and shop sales.

For more information and advice: Phone: 01392 406151 or

Email: support@forcecancercharity.co.uk

Gems from St Michael's Visitors' Book

- Thank you for the open door, clearly well-loved.
- I came to believe that a power greater than myself could restore my sanity. Thank you.
- I've no idea why I happen to be here but I'm sure You have and that's enough for me.
- Once a week I come to my little sanctuary – for that I thank you. For all its beauty and upkeep and all in God's name, I thank you.
- The parents and children of Pre-School were made to feel very welcome and enjoyed a lovely Nativity. Thank you for all your help and support.
- The most important things are the steps of love we take and live on when we go.
- God love St Michael the Archangel and all its parishioners.
- When I see a little church, I often pay a visit
So, when at last they carry me in, the Lord won't say "Who is it?"
- The peace of the Lord is clearly here.



Submitted by **Pam Johns (Churchwarden)**

How to prove that there is no God

For the people who have faith that there is no God, maybe this article will help to combat the “Fake News” peddled by Christians.

Some Christians point to creation as a proof of God's existence. Others appeal to the historical records of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Still others would cite the reaction of the early disciples who claimed to have met and spoken to Jesus after his resurrection, changing them from people who were scared of the consequences of being associated with him into people who were prepared to die for him.

So how do we prove the Christians wrong? Let's look at creation and evolution first. We have the “Big Bang” theory by which scientists have proved the well-known principle that nothing can produce something. Well, they almost have. Apparently, the calculations didn't quite work out and so it was necessary to invent invisible dark matter and dark energy to help. Alas, they still had problems and so some postulated that our universe is not unique but is just one of an infinite number of universes all coexisting at the same time and in the same place.

However, critics argue that this multiverse concept lacks testability and falsifiability, which are essential for scientific inquiry, and that it raises unresolved metaphysical issues. Ho hum!

Anyway, we still have evolution. Given an existing universe, all we have to do is to be patient and watch for the spontaneous formation of the thousands of proteins necessary for life. Alas, having done the calculations, we will need a huge amount of patience.

The time it would take for one protein to form by chance is much, much longer than the estimated age of the universe. Our bodies need about 20,000 proteins to function, the thought of us being here by chance requires incredible faith. Hmmm!

Then there is fake news. The eye-witness accounts in the Bible and the reporting of non-Christian historians could have been made-up. People will do anything for money and I expect those early Christians amassed great wealth and privilege by spreading fake news.

And the disciples? I think it is reasonable to assume that Jesus was not resurrected. In all likelihood the disciples, who probably liked a joke, went to Jesus' tomb and stole the body without the guarding Roman soldiers noticing. They then went around proclaiming the resurrected Christ. What a hoax! It was unfortunate that the disciples hadn't calculated what would happen to them. Oh! Well.

Anyway, I hope that I have provided some evidence against God's existence. No God - no accountability. Death and then nothing. Or?

Mike Simms

West Hill Women's Group



Friendship is a sheltering tree - Samuel Taylor Coleridge

May 2015 saw the formation of the West Hill Women's Group. After the demise of the W.I. and the generous donation of their remaining funds, it was tasked

to two village ladies to form a new friendship group. Attended initially by 15, it is now 95 strong, with a short waiting list. There is no jam or Jerusalem but fascinating speakers, a walking group, a book club, outings and of course - many new friendships.

This April our speaker gave an informative illustrated talk about the ecological effects on the landscape by local wild beavers who have made the river Otter their home.

Our AGM was held on Wednesday 8th May, followed by our annual plant and cake stall.

'Vikings in the West Country' is the subject for Thursday 13th June. A talk by Derek Gore, archaeologist and honorary fellow of Exeter University. For fans of Netflix's 'Last Kingdom' or the books written by Bernard Cornwell, this should be extremely interesting.

Tuesday, July 2nd is a talk by Emily Lezzeri, of the Ottery Help Scheme. This provides support services to local people and is our nominated Charity of the Year.

Held at the RBL in School Lane, membership is open to West Hill women with an annual fee of £15, which includes refreshments on arrival.

The meetings start at 10.00 for a 10.30 talk. Guests are most welcome to sample a meeting, for a small fee.

For further details please contact Jane Overthrow on 01404 815467 or toverthrow@aol.com.

New to West Hill?

With generous support from West Hill Parish Council, St Michael's Church has produced a Welcome Pack for new residents. It contains information about many of the organisations within the village plus the very useful village map - and a free 'website' pen!

So, if you've moved into the village within the last couple of months and haven't yet received a Welcome Pack, please contact:

Rosemary Hudson

Email: hudsonrosemary@hotmail.com

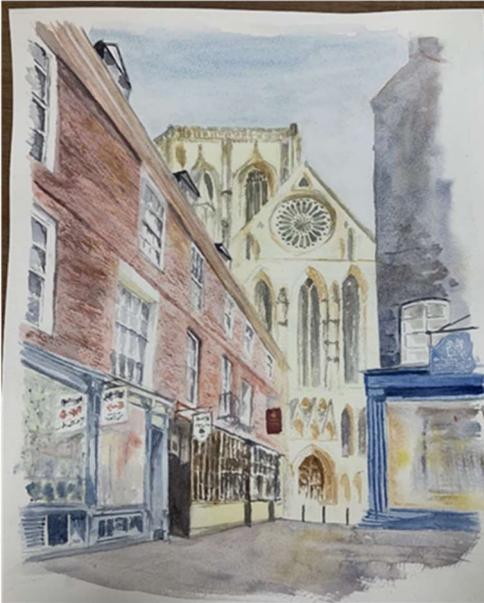
West Hill Art Group

All the male members of the group were very pleased with our latest subject of 'Buildings and Street Scenes'. They loved the precision and perspective required and the results were successful.

Perspective is complicated but vital to give accuracy and 3D to paintings. The main concept is to find your eye level as this creates the eye line. If you are viewing the sea, or any horizon, that automatically becomes the eye line.



Houses of Parliament by Graham Seymour



York Minster by Mick Uttley

Once this is decided, any horizontal parts on the building or street, such as window or door frames or roof lines above that eye line will go DOWN to join that line at a vanishing point. Any horizontal lines below that line on buildings, pavements and roads go UP to meet the eye line at the vanishing point. This is simple one-point perspective leading to a vanishing point. Buildings sit better in a painting if the perspective is believable.

Our finished paintings depicted different places, many of them of special interest to the individual. Each member has a distinctive style and it is interesting to watch these develop. Some use pen and ink as well as watercolour.

Our next project will be the beautiful scenery around West Hill and other parts of East Devon.

Rosemary Seymour Tel: 01404 234122

St Michael's Flower Team



The Flower Team at the church aims to provide an attractive flower arrangement on the pedestal in front of the pulpit throughout the year with the exception of Advent and Lent when the building is kept quite plain in readiness for the festivals ahead. We provide arrangements around the building, on window ledges etc. to celebrate the festivals of Easter and Christmas.

We also join together to make posies *Arrangement by Barbara Bennett* for the Mothering Sunday service and, in recent years, the Messy Church families have played a very big part in this. It is so rewarding to have the participation of the children.

We are a group of around 10 - 12 people who love flowers and enjoy working as a team to add to the beauty of our lovely village church and to give a welcoming feel to our visitors. We meet about 2 or 3 times a year to discuss new ideas and plan the rota for the months ahead. Each member expects to have 2 or 3 turns throughout the year and a turn involves creating an arrangement and maintaining it for two weeks. We are not experts and everyone has their own individual style. Many of us started as complete beginners and we learn from each other.

We are always happy to welcome new people into our group as sometimes members move away or, due to changing circumstances, have to retire for a time. If you are a flower lover and would like more information, please do get in touch with me. I shall be pleased to hear from you. You do not need to be a church attender. The church is there for the whole community, an integral part of the village.

Barbara Buckley Tel : 01404 812814

West Hill Parish Council (WHPC)

Annual Parish Meeting

On 18th April, WHPC hosted the **Annual Parish Meeting** at the village hall. This meeting is a chance for residents to get together and discuss "parish matters". Thank you to Ward Member Jess Bailey and representatives from village organisations who joined us to provide an update on the past year and outline their future plans, also to Sgt Stonecliffe and PCSO Sims who gave an update from the Neighbourhood Policing Team. The WHPC

Chairman's report is available on our website,
www.westhillparishcouncil.gov.uk.

The Chairman reported that some residents had contacted WHPC and Cllr Bailey about news from the Coleridge Medical Centre regarding a new e-consultation service and both Cllr Bailey and Parish Councillors expressed concern about how this could affect residents who are not digitally connected.

After the meeting finished, guests were invited to stay for refreshments and a chat, which happily many of them did.

WHPC Grants

Last year WHPC awarded grants totalling £2,630 to several village organisations. West Hill Pre-School was awarded a grant to buy a play kitchen.

The Council is committed to supporting and strengthening the networks and community groups which help to make a positive difference to West Hill. Our grants policy is on our website



and we invite West Hill groups that satisfy the eligibility criteria to consider applying for a WHPC grant.

Councillor vacancies – consider joining us!

The Parish Council is actively seeking candidates for co-option. We know there is a huge pool of talent amongst our residents. For more information, check the WHPC website or contact our Parish Clerk Anne Oliver for further details. If you are over 18 and live in the Parish, please consider applying.

The Clerk has a new mobile phone number! It's 07450 388198.

Diary Dates

- **6th June** is the 80th anniversary of D-Day and events are being held throughout the UK to mark the occasion. At 11am, West Hill RBL will be laying wreaths at the war memorial. All are welcome to attend this. At 9.15pm, a national lighting of beacons will be marked in West Hill by switching on some lights to illuminate the war memorial. In the clubhouse in the evening the film *The Longest Day* will be shown earlier in the evening. Please check WHPC and RBL notice boards and the WHPC website in case there are any changes to the schedule.

- **8th June** RBL are planning a BBQ at the clubhouse with a live band – no doubt information will be posted around the village nearer the time.
- **29th June** is the annual West Hill School Fete. Drop by the WHPC stand and say hello!

Alison Carr, Chairman, West Hill Parish Council

Contact: Clerk: Anne Oliver 01404 232 100 or 07450 388198

Email: clerk@westhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

Website: www.westhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

Will You be Watching the Olympics?



During the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Paris, a global audience will watch as 10,500 athletes seek to earn a podium position and etch their name into Olympic and Paralympic Games history.

With a total of 3.05 billion unique TV viewers watching coverage of the Olympic Games in Tokyo 2020, it is safe to say that the Olympic Games remain the most loved sports event in the world.

2024 marks the hundredth anniversary of the Olympic triumph of Eric Liddell, a man who, in every way, ran the race of life. Liddell's story, famously retold in the classic movie *Chariots of Fire*, focuses on his uncompromising desire to honour God in his running, unexpectedly winning the 400m Olympic gold medal and claiming the world record in the process.

Running the Race of Your Life: The story of Eric Liddell by J. John, will be included free in your next copy of *The Messenger* as the Olympic Games begin.

Text taken from *Running the Race of Your Life* by J. John (www.raceofyourlife.co.uk) © Philo Trust 2024

West Hill Summer Fete



The 2024 West Hill Summer Fete is due to be held on **Saturday 29th June**. Plans are underway for another exciting afternoon. Save the date!

Interested in having a stall? Individuals or groups welcome.

Please contact ptfa@west-hill-primary.devon.sch.uk

Sidmouth National Trust Supporters Group



The 50th anniversary of the Sidmouth National Trust Supporters Group was celebrated at the Kingswood hotel in Sidmouth on Wednesday, May 8 with a formal lunch.

The group continues to prosper with a full programme of coach trips to National Trust and other historic houses in the Summer and interesting speakers at All Saints church hall in the Winter.

New members are always welcome.

Contact: ntsidmouth@gmail.com



Coming soon.....

To a church near you!

CHRISTIANITY
EXPLORED

Welcome Café

The last
Friday of
every
month



Friday 28th June
Friday 26th July
Open at 10.30am

Take a break!

www.whmessenger.info

West Hill Garden Club

Thursday 13th June
David Austin Roses
Cheryl Fellows-Bennett



Thursday 11th July
Cutting to Bickham House, Kenn

Meetings start at 7.30 in the Village Hall
Visitors very welcome

www.whgardenclub.weebly.com

Neuro Physio Works

Neurological Physiotherapy
and Rehabilitation

Home Visits

HCP and CSP registered

Tel: 07912 606504

Email:

tanya@neurophysioworks.co.uk

Open Gardens
Beautiful Devon gardens open for charity

Perriton Farmhouse, Whimple

Sunday 9 June
1.30pm – 5.30pm

The garden has been created over the last 10 years with extensive plating of mixed wild areas and formal lawns with colourful borders, raised beds for vegetables and a small woodland area housing bee hives.

Dogs: Yes on leads
Toilets: No

Plant Sale & Music by the Piano
Bike Girl

CONTACT 01404 822578

WHERE: Perriton Farmhouse, Talaton Road, Whimple, Nr Exeter, EX2 5QY

MOBILITY ACCESS: Very Limited

ENTRY: £5.00

Tea, Coffee, Soft Drinks & Cakes

Because every day matters
www.hospiscare.co.uk
Registered charity no. 292798



Open Gardens
Beautiful Devon gardens open for charity

Payhembury Open Gardens

Sunday 9 June
2pm – 5pm

Three gardens open in Payhembury on Sunday 9 June.

Moorside, Cedar Cottage and Payhembury Primary School's Peace Garden

Moorside, Payhembury, Honiton, EX14 3JU
This garden's 2/3 acre has been planted to attract wildlife.

Cedar Cottage, 5 Church Lane, Payhembury, EX14 3HS
Church Lane's sloping bank runs the length of six houses and has been planted with a mixture of ground cover plants

Payhembury Primary School, Payhembury, Nr. Honiton, EX14 3HT
Payhembury School's peace garden and vegetable growing area was created in 2023

Parking: In the village hall car park
Refreshments: In the village hall
Dogs: No
Toilets: At the village hall

MOBILITY ACCESS: No wheelchair access

ENTRY: £7.00, this gives entry to all 3 Payhembury gardens. Tickets and maps on sale in the village hall.

CONTACT 01404 841696

Because every day matters
www.hospiscare.co.uk
Registered charity no. 292798



Services at St Michael's



Arrangement by Monica Highnam

Continuation of Zoom Services

On the first and third Sunday of each month at 10am for the whole Mission Community.

See <https://ottervalechurches.org/ministry/ovmc-services/> and search for **online** to find service details, including the Zoom link.

Services in Church

Jun 2	8.00	Holy Communion (said)
	9.30	Café Church
Jun 9	10.00	Holy Communion (sung)
Jun 16	10.00	Morning Worship (All ages welcome)
Jun 21	15.45	Messy Church
Jun 23	10.00	Holy Communion (sung)
Jun 30	10.00	Morning Worship (All ages welcome)
Jul 7	8.00	Holy Communion (said)
	9.30	Café Church
Jul 14	10.00	Holy Communion (sung)
Jul 21	10.00	Morning Worship (All ages welcome)
Jul 28	10.00	Holy Communion (sung)