

New Horizons

NOVEMBER 2019



Lest We Forget

THE CORNERSTONE



Bournemouth Park Road,
Southend-on-Sea, SS2 5JL
(For car park on Central Ave, sat navs
use SS2 5HR no 59)

www.thecornerstonesouthend.org.uk

Email:

cornerstonequestions@outlook.com

WORSHIP AND ACTION

Sunday 10.30 am **Morning Worship** and Junior Church.
Holy Communion is celebrated during Worship on the
4th Sunday

FAIRTRADE Coffee and tea is served after Morning Worship

Please stay to talk with each other in an informal atmosphere.

Sunday 6.30 pm **Evening Worship** will be held, and Holy Communion
celebrated, as set out in the monthly magazine and
as announced in Church.

Tues 10.00 am **Time of prayer** together for, the Fellowship, those
with special needs, our neighbours, and the world-
wide Christian Family. All are welcome to join with us.

Church Meetings are generally held in alternate months on the third
Thursday at 7.30 pm. The dates and times will be published in this
magazine and announced in Church.

Tues 10.00 am Tea and Coffee in the Foyer
11.30 am "Cornerstone Crafters"
(1st and 3rd Tuesdays or as announced)
2.30 pm Christian Forum (2nd and 4th Tuesdays)
4.00 pm Messy Church (1st Tuesday in the month)
19.30-21.00pm Digging Deeper (3rd Tuesday of each month)

Wed 9.30 am The Cornerstone Toddlers during Term Time
5.45 pm Pilots. Ends at about 7.00 pm.
6.00 pm Beaver Scouts and Cub Scouts
7.45-9.15 Scouts
7.30 pm Elders' Meeting (1st Thursday)

Fri 6.00 pm Junior Badminton
7.00-9.00 Youth Club

**We do offer Christian Marriage, Baptisms and Funerals so please talk to
the Secretary or any Elder if you feel that we can help.**

Little Turtles Pre-School meets on Monday to Friday from 9.00 am during
term time. Please see one of the Junior Church Leaders for details.



Letter to the fellowship

If the question “Why keep a diary?” were to be asked, there would probably be as many answers as persons questioned.

They can be a record of the past - The diaries of Samuel Pepys will always be a go-to reference book about London in the time of the Great Fire. They can be reminders of events to come - a visit to the dentist, an important meeting etc. Diaries come in many forms and for many years in our house all the family events, school trips, holidays and everyday happenings were kept in one desk diary specifically designed for Clergy, ministers and those who had a wish to see the Church year set out in detail. All the daily readings from the lectionary were there, all the festivals, all the important dates to be built into the Sunday services, all the public holidays for the whole of the country and lots of possible alternatives that someone somewhere might be celebrating. If you Google “Special Days in November” you will find one at least for every day of the month. Some are serious, some are very general and some are just flippant. But there they are and I want to combine the two 'lists' so to speak and look at some which are in our lives just now.

As I write, we are planning a special day on the 2nd of November when we will be hoping to welcome people from the area to come and remember their departed loved ones in their own special way. The building will be open in the afternoon for quiet reflection, quiet music or reading areas, and the chance to light a candle in memory of our own family and friends no longer with us.



There will be the chance to have a chat over a cup of tea and some cake. By the time you read this All Souls Day, which is what we are marking will have been and gone, hopefully with a good response, but with the chance for it to become a local annual event we believe. The day before was All Saints Day when those men and women who have been beatified after a life of work, prayer and actions given in service to God, are recognised in this particular way by the Roman Catholic Church. They are not all Catholics but all have led

exemplary lives and at least two miracles, often of healing, are attributed to them which have been tried and tested by the panel who make such decisions.



Moving on through the diary we come to November 11th and I think it would be hard to find someone who does not have this date in their mind at this time of Year. Poppies are worn by all the reporters and presenters on television, The Royal British Legion are out and about selling them to further their marvellous work for all those affected by wars in any way and, as the day approaches, barriers will go up in Whitehall as preparations are made for the Act of Remembrance at the Cenotaph. I am old enough to remember that on the 11th, at 11 o'clock, the whole world seemed to stop as the church bell signified the start of a Nationwide silence, be you in school, in a shop or on the street everything stopped, traffic included as we all remembered as a nation, the Fallen of the two World Wars. Sadly, as with Sunday Opening, this has been lost and it is in small communities that if you are in a group at that significant time you stop. But now we have Remembrance Sunday, on the Sunday nearest to the 11th and the remembering is done then. It should not just be on one day but at least it is there then and can be a reminder to us all of the results of conflict through the years.

There are few families who are not affected by the two World Wars and conflicts since, and the up and coming interest in Family History brings stories of the lives of the men and women who gave their lives in the service of their country.

We must also remember the words of Jesus recorded in the gospels, "Greater love has no one than this - that they lay down their lives for their friends" and that from the man who gave the greatest sacrifice of all, for all of us. Jesus came to earth, lived among us and gave us freedom as he died the most horrific death for each and every one of us, the ultimate act of love for his friends. Battles are fought over greed, nationalism, political desire or ideology. Jesus had no part of any of that, He gave his life completely unselfishly, one man giving

the whole world complete freedom, as we read in Gal 5.1 'It was for freedom that Christ came...'

There cannot be many of us that will not recognise the next quote, used so often in the introit sentences at funerals, as the coffin bearing our loved ones on their last journey on this earth, enters the Church or Chapel, "I am the Resurrection and the Life, he who believes in me will live even though he die, and everyone who believes in me will never die." John 11 24.25

May we always remember and show future generations how to keep it alive in their minds too.

Alison Shannon



The Poppy

Nature created a flower
With petals of brilliant red.
Who'd have thought such a beautiful flower
Would be used to remember the dead.

For when all the guns have stopped firing.
And there's only the mud and the rain.
God sends down his little red flowers
To cover the lads who remain.

So, remember every November
When we hold our Remembrance Day
Of the lads who lie 'neath the poppies
And the price they had to pay.

(Anon - Facebook)

Prayers for our Fellowship and those we know

Prayers can be for joy and sorrow, health and sickness, good news and bad in addition to those for our own needs and guidance.



Please pray for all our church activities that take place during the month. There are many who come along to our premises, week by week who some of us may not know by name or even by sight but who are in need of our prayer. We may not be able to attend the clubs and organisations but our prayer is essential to support the leaders and attendees.

We especially remember in our prayers Carole, Alan, Danielle and all the family and friends of Win Holmes, who passed away last month. We pray for comfort Lord, in their deep loss.

There are many who find it difficult to get to Worship week by week and we think especially of Hilda Burgess, Jan Fox, Pat Goodhew, Margaret King and Hilda Prior. We pray for those who are ill, in constant pain, recovering and awaiting or receiving treatment:

Ann Crowhurst, Roy Davis, Olive Goodyear, Lisa McCrae, Ron Root and Mick Thorp.

In our prayers this month, may we remember all those and their families, who have died, been injured and affected by war.

We also pray for those of our fellowship who are finding life difficult at the present time either with health, job or family worries. Give them peace of spirit and the knowledge that God knows of all their difficulties and hears all of their prayers.

Father, hear our prayers

Amen

Please feel free to use the Prayer Book placed on the Prayer Table, in the Foyer, to write down any names or events you want to be prayed for during the Service and in the Church Prayer Meeting.



Do make use of our prayer cards, whether to give thanks or to request prayers in specific need. You may remain anonymous if you wish.

There is a collection box on the prayer table in the foyer. Requests will be prayed over at the Tuesday prayer group and other appropriate times.

Say One For Me

There is a dedicated post box on the railings by the Bournemouth Park Road entrance inviting members of the neighbourhood to send us their prayer requests for our Tuesday Church Prayer Meeting.

We pray that this scheme will help The Cornerstone be and be known as a church that cares.

Prayers for peoples and matters outside of our fellowship

Father we pray for our fragile world.

The relationships between all human beings, whether as individuals, families, friends or just the people we meet. That we may treat each other with consideration, respect, listening to their views and putting our points with humility and always considering that we might be wrong.

The way we look after your world that you have created for us to take care of whilst we dwell in it. Remind us daily that for every action we take, there is a consequence that can be for good or harm.

Sometimes it is difficult for us to see further than the end of our noses so, open our eyes and our ears to recognise what is our effect on humanity throughout creation.

SECRETARY'S NOTEBOOK



How quickly the days have passed from summer to autumn, and in the garden we have pulled up beans, tomatoes and courgettes, sown broad beans and planted garlic and brassicas ready for spring. Strawberry runners have been potted up; the autumn raspberries have finished fruiting and will now over winter before being chopped down in spring to come again for next year. A morning cleaning up the greenhouse revealed that some of my aloes had babies so these also needed potting up. Each plant has its cycle and requires its own particular care regime in order to flourish. A bit like human beings, all different and all needing to be treated and loved for who we are in order to reach our full potential.

I expect some of you have been following the activities of XR - Extinction Rebellion - with carrying degrees of admiration, apathy or horror, and this latest round of demonstrations has certainly made its mark for bringing the state of the planet to our attention, even as it disrupted the daily lives of many. They do however have valid arguments - we are far too wasteful and too ready to throw things away without much thought for what happens to them once they have left our control. I was raised in a "make do and mend" household - if it could be reused it was! and if I didn't need it, someone else might. Failing that there was always the Nearly New or Jumble Sale, which we seldom see these days.

Plastic seems to be a big problem in our society and some are calling for it to be banned. Yes, I think we all despair at the amount of plastic packaging at the supermarket, but at the same time don't we all like our apples to be perfect and unbruised? At home, I think there is still a place for plastic - I use freezer bags to maximise available space, and wash and re-use them several times. If I used foil or glass containers, they would take up more space meaning less can be stored and leave gaps which consume more power than necessary. Clingfilm is perhaps the hardest to decide about, as it is very definitely single use only. But it is also very good at preserving part-used food items for another day, that would otherwise be thrown away, you know that recipe that calls for the juice of half a lemon and

it might be days before you need the second half. At church, the gluten free bread roll for communion comes in a pack of four, and I have been individually wrapping them in clingfilm before freezing so the whole pack can get used. Otherwise we would use one and dispose of the rest each month. I am not particularly comfortable with using clingfilm, but there does not seem to be another efficient method at the present time. Cereal box inners are good to wrap today's sandwiches, but not for long term storage as they let in too much air. I do intend to try making and using beeswax cloth wraps to see if that is a viable alternative - watch this space.

Our Minister began his sabbatical at the start of October, and also underwent a wisdom tooth extraction, Ouch! We wish him well for his trip to Canada to visit a large and growing church, and see how differently things are done there.

Our Messy Church in October focussed on the Holy Habit of Biblical teaching, with the example of the "Armour of God" passage being a help for everyone.

Roger Brett led our first Sunday service of the month, reminding us that faith cannot be hidden away in a box, it needs to be lived out in order to grow; nor should we expect thanks for doing the things our faith requires of us.

Our Annual Commitment for Life service on 13th October was led by Linda Mead, who brought us telling statistics about the state of the world, and particularly the UK's very high position on the carbon emissions table. She pointed out that climate change was likely to have a much greater effect on the poorer countries, even though they tended to have the lowest carbon emissions. Food for thought for us all.

John Amos visited on 20th October, demonstrating with a game of Hangman the difference between Honesty and Hypocrisy. John, as ever, did not pull any punches and pointed out that as much as we knew what we should do, we often found that difficult and became hypocrites. Yes, we all like our electrical gadgets, appliances etc. but do we damage our world. (See previous paragraph.)

At the time of writing we are expected a visit from the Rev Andrew Royal on 27th October.

Two Community initiatives which have recently come about are the street-side prayer box "Say One for Me" and the "Space to Remember" event on 2nd November. Please join me in prayer that both these will be a real blessing to the neighbourhood.

We were saddened to learn of the passing, during October, of our member Win Holmes and send our continued prayers and love to Carole, Alan and the family. Win's funeral is on Monday 11th November, details elsewhere in this magazine.

At the church meeting on 28th November, we will be electing Elders to serve the church for a three-year term from January 2020. I would encourage all members to attend if possible, if transport is an issue please do let me know.

December will be under way before the next issue of this magazine is published, and our usual Advent and Christmas events are being planned. As most of you will know it was decided not to have a toy service this year - last year the usual recipients were overwhelmed by the generosity of the towns general population we could not find anyone to accept your gifts. However, Clive reports that when he finally took the toys to Neptune Ward in June, they were very grateful to receive them then. So rather than collect toys in December and store them for six months, we are considering a collection to coincide with our children and youth Sunday in June 2020.

Finally, I will be away the weekend 15-17 November at the meeting of the URC Mission Council at The Hayes, Swanwick and thank those who have offered to deputise for me during my absence.

Ruth Dixon

The funeral of Winnie Holmes will be on:

Monday, 11th November at 1.20 p.m.
In the West Chapel,
Southend Crematorium

News from the Forum

It is one of those months when we can only tell you about one of our meetings due to the timetable for the magazine production.

On October 8th we had a welcome return visit from Bob Delgarno. Bob has spent a lifetime researching local history and as technology has advanced, he has recorded the history of the areas around Southend in great detail, both orally and in film form.

He brought along a power point presentation of the “Parish of St Lukes” for us on that afternoon. It is the area we are living in, where our church is, where many of the group grew up in, went to school there and although they didn't know it worked in also.

The area covered goes from where the new stadium will be built off the Eastern Avenue, almost into Rochford that way, then down to Prittlewell and the seafront along almost to Shoebury.

Initially it was an area of fields and little in the way of housing. Along Bournemouth Park Road there was the school and about six houses near North Avenue, a lane going through opposite the school and little else in 1908.

We asked the question “Where did the children live who went to the school?” but there wasn't an answer at this time. There had been a workhouse, a Priory with a silent order of monks employing a large number of workers to keep it functioning, but the development of accommodation and housing came very quickly in the early 1900's.

In 1908 there was a barrier across the road just past the school, but the terrace houses all appeared in the next ten years and the bigger houses further up the road were built in the 1930's.

Lots of reminiscing, about play areas, lanes explored and “When we were...” went on after the talk, lovely to hear and to know that the talk was so enjoyed by the group.

Thank you Bob, see you again we hope.

Our next meeting is a quiz from Shelagh, as I said before bring the right hat with you that afternoon!

And then next month we will be welcoming Nina to tell us all about Beatrix Potter.

See you there
Alison Shannon

**“The Church Meeting”
by Zoy Hunt**

Who invented ‘the church meeting’?
A date nobody wants to attend
where minutes are read, apologies made
and agendas have to agend.
Where the Church Treasurer (God Bless her)
lists “income” and “expenditure
funds, gifts and whatever
with warnings of what not to spend.

Who invented “the church meeting”?
At a time when your body says - ‘Ah’....
just wanting to wind down, digesting my meal
not go for a drive in the car.
Where the comfortable seats (for some reason)
though used in other meetings,
are banned - so no cheating.
Feet, back-ache, to bitter end.

Who invented “the church meeting”?
Did St Paul give his blessing to these?
Have I missed a commandment somewhere?
Will somebody tell me please?
We trust the Church Treasurer (God Bless her)
to round robin her paper
and we trust the Elders to Elder
Just let us know what you decide.



Peter's Piece

The Lord's Prayer. 6.

Thy Kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.

The Kingdom of God, or The Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew's Gospel, possibly not to offend his Jewish readers, is not like human kingdoms having a geographic location, it is wherever God dwells and reigns. Psalm 2:4, Isaiah 40:22, 66:1. *Jesus said the kingdom of God is in your midst. Or among you, or within you.* Luke 17:21.

When God dwells in us and reigns in our lives that is God's Kingdom within us. This is true also for each congregation of God's people, there is the Kingdom of God. We are Kingdom people and invite others to trust in what God has done at Calvary so as they respond in faith, God comes to live in them, and they too become Kingdom people and so God's Kingdom has come.

We tend to stress the truth of salvation and forget the truth of God's Kingdom's indwelling and rule. It's true that by faith we are saved from the condemnation that sin brings, but the result is not just a one-off glorious salvation but a continuing, on-going living as Kingdom people, with God living in us and reigning over all we say, think and are, God's Kingdom has come.

There is coming a day, after our Lord's return and our resurrection, when God will create a new earth and astral heaven and when *God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.* Revelation 21:3. God's Kingdom will have fully come; it will be Heaven on a new earth, for eternity.



Digging Deeper

The next meeting is on Tuesday 19 November 7.15 for 7.30 pm. We continue our perusal of the NT Epistles, with, this month, a look at Paul's two letters to the Thessalonian Christians.

All are warmly welcome

Revised Common Lectionary for November 2019

- November 3, 2019 - **Readings for All Saints Day**
Daniel 7:1-3, 15-18, Psalm 149,
Ephesians 1:11-23, Luke 6:20-31
- November 28, 2019 Deuteronomy 26:1-11, Psalm 100,
Philippians 4:4-9, John 6:25-35
- November 10, 2019 Haggai 1:15b-2:9, Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21,
Job 19:23-27a,
2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17, Luke 20:27-38
- November 17, 2019 Isaiah 65:17-25, Psalm 98,
2 Thessalonians 3:6-13, Luke 21:5-19
- November 24, 2019 Jeremiah 23:1-6, Psalm 46,
Colossians 1:11-20, Luke 23:33-43.
- December 1 2019 - **First Sunday of Advent**
Isaiah 2:1-5, Psalm 122,
Romans 13:11-14, Matthew 24:36-44.

Your greetings this Christmas

Once again, may we remind you that we shall be putting the post box in the foyer from early December, so that you may send your Christmas cards to those in the fellowship and save on postage.



We shall also be printing the usual list in the magazine for those who wish to pass on your greetings in a way that saves both paper and postage. Please speak to Anne or Michael if you would care to do this. Or, you can do it the traditional way by card and Royal Mail.

As always, our treasurer will be pleased if feel able to make a donation to church funds as the result of any savings you might make in postage and cards.

Advance Notice

“Cake and Carols”

Sunday, 15th December, from 5 p.m.

Get into the festive mood and come along to the church from 5 p.m. to enjoy Cake and a Cuppa, then join us in singing some of your favourite carols.

Nigel Mead

Trying to do the Lord’s work in your own strength is the most confusing, exhausting and tedious of all work.

But when you are filled with the Holy Spirit, then the ministry of Jesus just flows out of you.

Corrie Ten Boom

You'll never believe it!

- ❖ I was practicing, trying to remember the correct way to throw a boomerang. Suddenly, it came back to me.
- ❖ When I was little my mum used to feed me alphabet soup, claiming I loved it. I didn't really, she was just putting words in my mouth.
- ❖ When my wife told me to stop impersonating a flamingo. I had to put my foot down.
- ❖ Where do I see myself in a year? I don't know, I don't have 2020 vision.



The next edition of New Horizons!

The next magazine will be a joint issue for December 2019 and January 2020 and will be published a week later than usual on 8th of December.

Would our contributors remember to send the Editors details of the special services and events during the Advent and Christmas periods **but by the usual time of 9.00 a.m. on Thursday 21st November please.**

We always welcome contributions from any of our readers, wherever they are. Reports, stories, thought provoking articles and even funny stories are all very welcome.

**A large print version of this magazine is available.
Please ask an editor if you would like one.**

**Alternatively, you can view it on line.
See the website address on the front cover**

Flower Donations

Nov

- 3rd Geoff and Val Hayman
- 10th Ron and Shelagh Root
- 17th Shawn and Anne Clarke
- 24th Parent & Toddler Group



Dec

- 1st Peter and Zoy Hunt
- 8th Roy and Trixie Davis
- 15th Rob Milbourn (in memory of Sandra)
- 22nd John, Stella Duboux and family
- 29th Ruth and Frank Dixon

Sunday Coffee/Tea Rota

Nov

- 3rd Val Hayman and Stella Yates
- 10th Anne Clarke and Val Mead
- 17th Stella Duboux and Joan Harvey
- 24th Machrina Ejaz and Sandra Russ

Dec

- 1st Brenda Kemp and Leng Kingston
- 8th Anne Clarke and Val Mead
- 15th Carole and Alan Cornwall

Tuesday mornings "Drop in"

Nov

- 5th Stella Duboux and Brenda Melling
- 12th Joan Harvey and Maureen Stone
- 19th Carole and Alan Cornwall
- 26th Carol Smith and Pat Pates

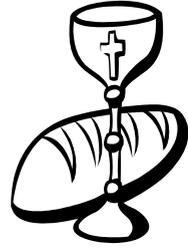
Dec

- 3rd Stella Duboux and Brenda Melling
- 10th Joan Harvey and Maureen Stone



Communion Offerings

These collections are taken at the two Sunday Communion Services during the last hymn and are for charitable organisations outside of The Cornerstone.

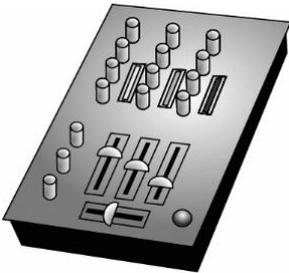


The final collection in October for Peaceful Place had not taken place before the magazine was in publication. Therefore, we shall give the amount in the December issue.

November	Rumania
December	Christian Aid

Rumania

This is a charity that we know well through our good friend and frequent lay preacher, John Amos. It supports an orphanage in Rumania through both money and some people who go out there to help. John often gives us an update on the continuing work there and some of the great success stories.



Recording of services

We are now sound recording every Sunday service, so please let Vic Crowhurst know if you would like a copy for yourself, someone who could not be with us that day or perhaps to give to someone to listen to how well we sing!

For special and festival services we may make video recordings and if you would not wish to appear in these, then please speak to anyone at the sound and vision desk before the service starts. There should be a prior warning of the services involved.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY
(Also see weekly Notice Sheet)

Nov	(Our Minister on the 2 nd month of his sabbatical)		
Sun	3 rd	10.30 a.m.	Morning Worship Sarah Wilson/Peter Hunt
Tue	5 th	4.00 p.m.	Messy Church
Thu	7 th	7.30 p.m.	Elders' meeting
Sat	9 th	9.00 a.m.	Big Breakfast
Sun	10 th	10.30 a.m.	Remembrance service Roger Brett
Thu	14 th	7.30 a.m.	P.M.G. meeting
Fri	15 th		Mission Council at Swanwick (Ruth attends) until 17 th Nov inclusive
Sun	17 th	10.30 a.m.	Morning Worship Rev Celia Whitman
Tue	19 th	7.30 p.m.	Digging Deeper
Sun	24 th	10.30 a.m.	Morning Worship (H.C.) Roger Brett
Thu	28 th	7.30 p.m.	Church meeting, including elders' elections
Sat	30 th		Christmas Pantomime (please see Robert Wiseman for details)
Dec	(Our Minister on the 3 rd & final month of his sabbatical)		
Sun	1 st	10.30 a.m.	Advent Sunday, Morning Worship Roger Brett
Tue	3 rd	4.00 p.m.	Messy Church
Thu	5 th	7.30 p.m.	Elders' meeting
Sun	8 th	10.30 a.m.	Morning worship - Junior Church, Pilots & Young People's service; 'Getting Ready' led by Nicola Grieves
Sat	14 th	9.00 a.m.	Big Breakfast
Sun	15 th	10.30 a.m.	Morning worship John Amos
Sun	15 th	5.30 p.m.	Carol service preceded by refreshments
Tue	17 th	7.30 p.m.	Digging Deeper?
Wed	18 th	9.30 a.m.	Toddlers
		10.00 a.m.	Toddlers Christmas nativity & party
		5.45 p.m.	Pilots Christmas celebration & party
Sun	22 nd	10.30 a.m.	Morning Worship (H.C.) Roger Brett
Tue	24 th	3.30 p.m.	Christingle service Ruth & Mary
Wed	25 th	10.30 a.m.	Christmas Day Rev Derek Kingston
Sun	29 th	10.30 a.m.	Morning worship Roger Brett

WHO'S WHO?

Minister	Rev Sohail Ejaz MA	
	On Sabbatical, please contact The Secretary	
Secretary	Ruth Dixon	(01702) 464186
Treasurer	Ann Blackwell	07753 348856
Envelopes	Mike Mead	07802 749912
Gift Aid	David Osborn	(01702) 611337
Preachers List	Mary Goodhew	(01702) 467512
Junior Church	Ruth Dixon	(01702) 464186
Joint Leaders	Mary Goodhew	(01702) 467512
Pilots	Derek Goodyear	07863 208914
Prayer Fellowship	Peter & Zoy Hunt	(01702) 864814
Digging Deeper	Peter Hunt	(01702) 864814
C'Stone Toddlers	Mary Goodhew	(01702) 467512
Scout Group	Lorna Skippon	(01702) 477309
Christian Forum	Alison Shannon	(01702) 464737
Use of Premises	Roger Brett	(01702) 479874
Flower arranging	Joan Harvey	
	Val Mead	(01702) 296189
Editorial Team	Anne Clarke	(01702) 293102
	af.clarke52@gmail.com	
	Michael Wardle	(01702) 613840
	mjb23wardle@btinternet.com	

Please remember that your Elders are ordained to serve our members and friends who have pastoral concerns, and especially so during the time of our Minister's Sabbatical.