

# **Rejoice**



**September to November 2025**

**South Molton and Ringsash Methodist Circuit  
Magazine**

# **South Molton and Ringsash Methodist Circuit**

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## From our Minister

Once upon a time there were a bunch of tiny frogs.... who arranged a climbing competition. The goal was to reach the top of a very high tower. And so, a big crowd gathered around the tower to see the race and cheer on all the contestants.

The race began....

But quite honestly no one in the crowd really believed that such tiny frogs would reach the top of the tower. They were saying "It's way too difficult!. They will never make it to the top," and "Not a chance that they will succeed. The tower is too high!"

The tiny frogs began collapsing. One by one, except for those who were a bit stronger and kept climbing higher and higher.

The crowd continued to yell," It is too difficult!!! No one will make it!" More tiny frogs got tired and gave up....

But one continued higher and higher and higher long after all the others had given up and dropped back down to the bottom and he, after a big effort, actually made it to the top! All the other tiny frogs understandably wanted to know how this one tiny frog managed to do it.

One contestant asked the tiny frog how he had found the strength to succeed and reach his goal! But he didn't hear him, and he shouted the question again, but he still didn't hear, so he shouted at the top of his voice, which was really loud for such a tiny frog. But he still couldn't hear him, he was deaf!

How much more could we do if we, like the frog turned a deaf ear to all those who say we can't.

*Author Unknown.*

As Christians, we can take comfort in the knowledge that we are never alone in our struggles. God promises to walk beside us, carrying us through every trial and tribulation we face. So when life throws challenges our way, instead of giving in to fear, despair or those who tell us we will fail, let us hold fast to our faith and trust that God will always be there to guide us and sustain us. With His help,

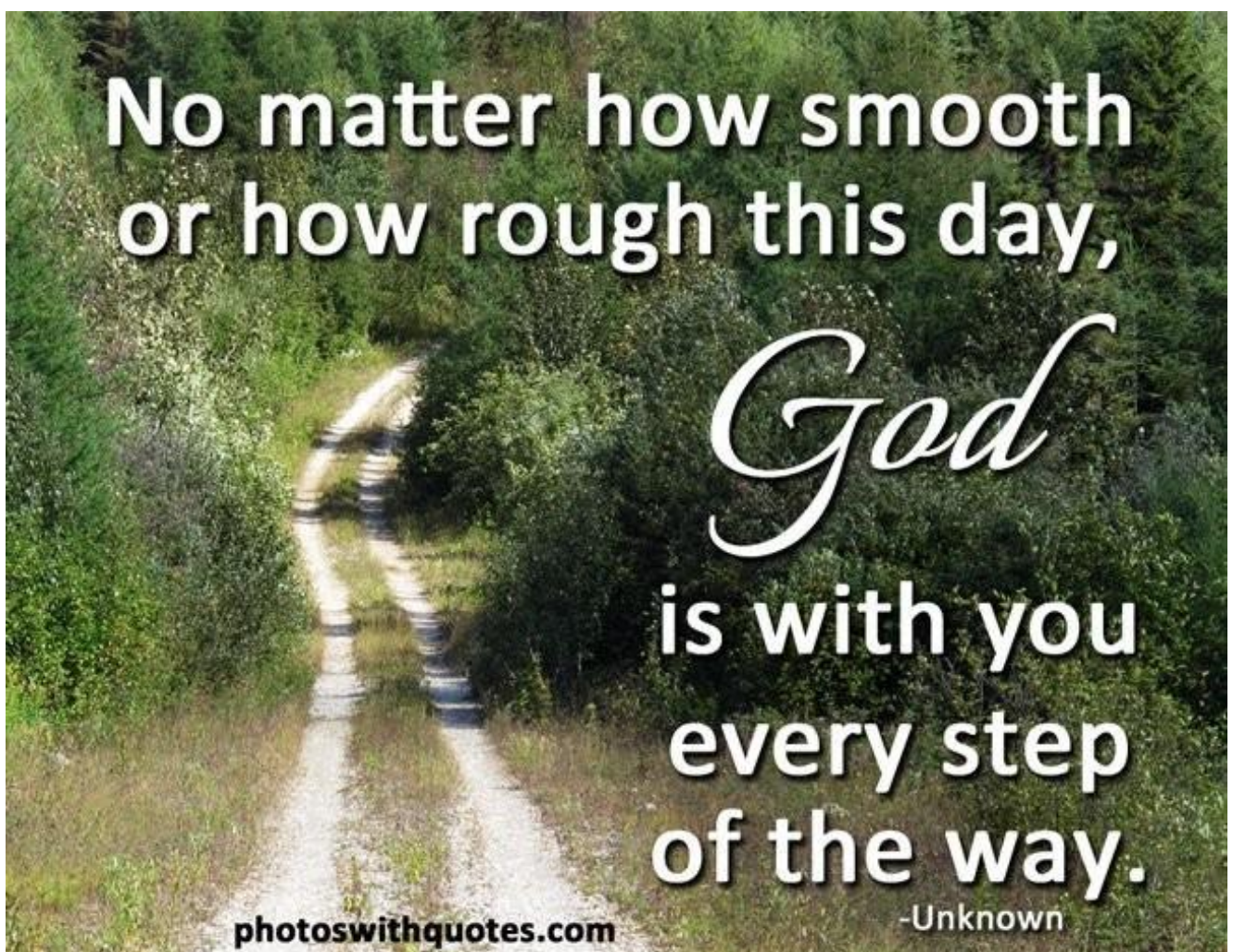


we can overcome any obstacle and emerge stronger on the other side.

Let us remember the words of Jesus in John 16:33, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." As followers of Christ, we can take comfort in knowing that no matter what struggles we may encounter, we have victory through Him who has overcome the world.

So let us lift our heads high, knowing that God is with us every step of the way. With His strength and guidance, we can face whatever challenges come our way, confident that He will carry us through to victory.

Revd Anna Flindell



# **South Molton – Wesley House**

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June, The  
Celebration of the Opening of Wesley House.**



**Exterior of Wesley House**

At 3pm, Rev. Anna Flindell conducted the Opening Ceremony of the refurbishment and alterations to provide access to kitchen facilities avoiding interrupting meetings in the Hall.

**Rev Anna Blessing The New Facility**



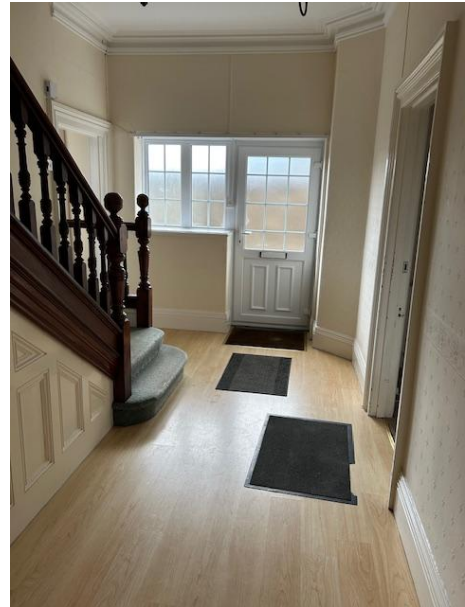
**The Assembled Group Of  
People Watching**

From 3.15 pm there was the opportunity to look around the House, the ground floor providing the Circuit Office where a plaque of The Lord's Prayer was found, Storage for Circuit items, filing cabinets, safe etc., and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors.





**The New Kitchen**



**Ground Floor Entrance**



**Circuit Office**

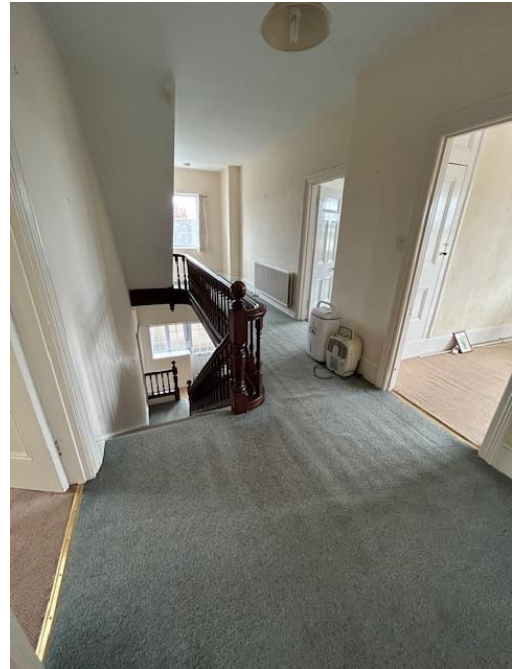


**The Lord's Prayer  
Found In The Circuit**

## Circuit Storage



## Staircase To The 1<sup>st</sup> floor



## First Floor

The first floor comprising rooms with bathroom, all redecorated, with a view to provide accommodation.

There is still work in progress on the second floor, to convert for future accommodation.

**From 3.30 pm there was a 6 minute continuous power point presentation with photos of various stages of the work being done.**

**At 4.15 pm we enjoyed a Bring and Share tea in the Hall, during which excellent musical entertainment was provided by Steph Redman on her flute**



**Tea In The Hall**



**Steph Playing The Flute**

Revd Anna concluded the afternoon with a Blessing

*[Photos by Derek Summers, Keith Rodulson & Jean Blake]*

***Who was the first Minister to occupy Wesley House ? Read about this story in later pages.***



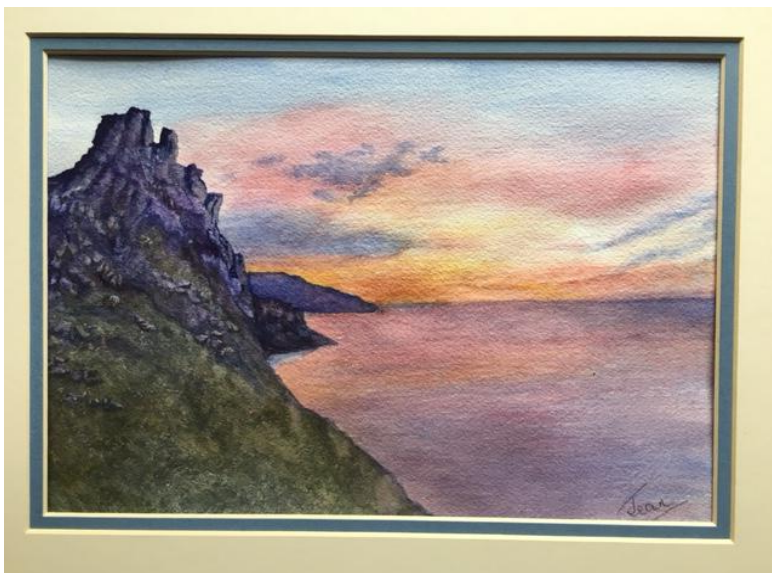
# South Molton – Away Day and Other News

## Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June – The Church Away Half Day.

After a delayed start due to one of the cars having a puncture, we all arrived safely at the Valley of the Rocks. We were able to have a gentle walk admiring the magnificent coastline, after which we enjoyed a cream tea in Mother Meldrum's Tea Garden. The day concluded with an informal inspirational Service led by Derek Summers, at Muddiford United Reformed Church.



**Photos from the  
Valley of the  
Rocks**



**Print of Jean's  
painting of  
the Valley of  
the Rocks.  
What a  
wonderful  
sky. Thanks  
Jean for  
sharing this.  
{Martin}**



**Mother  
Meldrum's Tea  
House**

**Mother  
Meldrum's Tea  
Garden**



**Enjoying tea in the  
garden**

We are grateful to the Muddiford congregation for their hospitality and refreshments. Our thanks to Derek and Gwen for organising an enjoyable Half Day Away.



**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> June - the funeral of Gertrude Francis Brend, 'Gertie'  
conducted by Revd Anna Flindell and Revd. Jane Lucas.**

Gertie, who passed away at the Firs Care Home, Witheridge, had been a faithful and active member at Duke Street for many years until her illness prevented her from attending in person.

The moving tributes by her son, and Rev Jane Lucas who had known Gertie for many years, together with the full attendance at her funeral was an indication of how well loved and appreciated Gertie was by her family, the



Church and many friends. We remember her family in our prayers.

**Barbara Hollingworth (Loyal Member of Duke Street)**

It was with great sadness that we heard Barbara Hollingworth passed away suddenly on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> August. She was faithful member at Duke Street and involved in many of the Church activities until the Sunday before she died. She will be very sadly missed by all her Church friends. Our thoughts and prayers are with her relatives at this time.

**Ern Kingdon (Local Preacher)**

We were sorry to hear that Ern Kingdon, formerly of All Ways End and a much respected Local Preacher, passed away on 15<sup>th</sup> June, aged 100 years.

His funeral was held at Bampton Parish Church on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July, which was attended by some members from Duke Street.

Jean Blake



## Report for Rejoice



**Curious about the Christian Faith? Got Questions?  
Try Alpha!**

**Alpha Course** - Starting on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September 6 pm at Wesley House, North Street, South Molton EX36 3AW

**Alpha explores the basics of the Christian faith in an open, friendly environment. Everyone's welcome. No matter your age, your background or beliefs. It's free, no pressure and you're invited!**

Each session covers a different topic of faith, either in a short talk or video. The Alpha episodes are designed to engage and inspire conversation. They're about thirty minutes long and explore the big issues around faith and unpack the basics of Christianity, addressing questions such as *Who is Jesus?*, *How can we have faith?* and *How does God guide us?*

### **Church Anniversary**

14<sup>th</sup> September 11am – Carol Brown.

Anniversary Tea in the Hall at 5 pm

6.30 pm – Revd. Dr. Tracey Darling

### **Harvest**

12<sup>th</sup> October 11am – Revd. Stuart Innalls. Followed by a Lunch in the Hall at 1 pm

6.30 pm - Mrs Mary Burgess



**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> November between 10 am and 3.30 pm**

We invite you to South Molton Methodist Church Hall where we will have a wide selection of **Christian Christmas Cards, Calendars, Friendship Books, Fireside Books, Christian books, and Gifts available**. This will be a warm comfy area where seats will be available for you to sit down to have a cup of Tea/Coffee and Biscuits and rest awhile. **An opportunity to shop in comfort for your Christmas Cards with plenty of room to browse.**

We are supporting the local Christian Bookshop in North Devon which relies on people to shop locally. We look forward to seeing you there!



Derek

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## **The Circuit Choir**



We have had a very busy and successful Spring Term, with three concerts.

The first was a return visit to Kings Nympton Methodist Church on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June. We were given a very warm welcome, and an excellent supper was enjoyed by everyone at the end.

The singing was splendid and enjoyed by both Choir and congregation.

Gillian Reynolds was an excellent chairman, introducing each piece with facts mostly related to Spring, this theme continued with a recorder solo by Jo Preston, 'Le Rossignol en amour' by F. Couperin, which reflected bird song.

We were delighted to hear from Angela that £306 was raised towards replacing the heaters in the Chapel.

On Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June we braved the stormy elements to sing at Bideford Methodist Church. We shared this concert with South Molton Town Band under their new Musical Director, Mr Chris Willis. Both Choir and Band presented an excellent evening of varied music. The Choir sang during the first half of the evening and included Jo

playing the very beautiful and haunting 'Gabriel's Oboe, by Ennio Morricone. The Chairman for the Choir was John Chapple who introduced each item with some amusing anecdotes.

Diana, who organised the concert, was thrilled that the retiring collection raised £464.70 to Support Action for Children.

Sadly, this was probably the last concert to be held in that magnificent building due to the closure of the Bideford Methodist Church.

The third concert was at Bishops Nympton Village Hall on 20<sup>th</sup> June. In contrast to the weather at Bideford, this evening was one of extreme heat. Despite that, the concert was a great success. The Choir shared the evening with Harmony4 and 15-year-old Lily Boyles who played her flute and sang two solos. Again, our chairman was John Chapple with his usual humour. Refreshments were provided by Bishops Nympton ladies.

This special Midsummer Concert was organised by Gillian Reynolds who had secretly hoped that perhaps £1,000 might be raised in aid of Children's Hospice Southwest, and she was delighted that the total was £1,126, an excellent result.

Our grateful thanks to Gillian for not only chairing the Kings Nympton Concert, and expertly organising the Midsummer Concert, but also for designing and printing programmes for both events.

Of course we are always grateful to Sue, our accompanist for both rehearsals and concerts. Thank you, Sue.

Our Spring term ended with a request evening on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July, when we were able to relax with tea/coffee and biscuits organised by Carenza, while celebrating Ron Procter's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, and enjoying cake brought by Sue (Ron's wife), which was an added bonus.

After a well-earned break we begin the Autumn session on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September, when we will be preparing for visits to Care Homes in South Molton and Witheridge, and two concerts, one at Chawleigh on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, and our own annual concert at Duke Street on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, we extend a warm welcome to all.

Jean & Jo



# **‘The Greatest Story Ever Told’**

## **A review of Bear Grylls Book**

As I read through this book, it was almost as if each of the ‘witnesses’ (Mary, Thomas, Simon, John and Mary Magdalene) was speaking to me personally.

I could almost imagine I was there. Each of the stories showed the feelings and emotions of the relevant person. There was amazement, fear, peace and so much more.

For me, it was lovely to think of what it must have been like to actually see Jesus at work. When it came to John’s ‘testimony’, I wept at the horror, the torture and death of Jesus. Bear Grylls described what it must have been like for him. I thank him (Bear) for that. As Christians we tend to be blazé about ‘Jesus dying for me’. We need to fully realise the depth to which Jesus was prepared to go for us and the agony He suffered for our salvation.

I recommend all who love Jesus, or would seek to find Him, read this book.

A well written and compelling read.

Thank you Bear Grylls.

Carol Ash.

*Bear Grylls is one of the most famous adventurers in the world. A former SAS Trooper, Chief Scout to some fifty million Scouts for fifteen years, and fronts some of the most watched TV shows.*

***This book is available from the Duke Street Book Stall.***

## **The First Occupant of Wesley House.**

Rev. George Bolderston, Wesleyan Minister (1853-1911) became the first occupant of Wesley House, the new Manse, in 1909.

As a youngster, George was engaged in Sunday School work and took up lay preaching at the age of 18. In 1874 he was accepted as a candidate for the ministry and was sent to Glasgow, before training for two years at Didsbury College during the time that William Burt Pope (a notable Wesleyan Theologian) was Theological Tutor. His first ministerial appointment was to Helston, at the tip of Cornwall in 1877, with subsequent service including St Austell (1879), Dartmouth (1881), St Columb (1882), and Gwennap (1884).

In 1909 he became Superintendent Minister in the South Molton Circuit in Devon where he was the first occupant of Wesley House, the new manse. The family home was shared with his wife, Sarah Mary, and their son and two daughters.

Though only 57 years old, in the early months of 1911, George apparently had not been in robust health, but then, unexpectedly and suddenly, he was taken ill while conducting a service at Brayford Chapel on March 7<sup>th</sup>. Despite medical care, he grew weaker and died on the morning of 22<sup>nd</sup> March. The funeral service was attended by a large number of people and several local ministers including the Vicar and the Baptist Pastor. Besides his widow and children, his brother from Felixstowe and other family members were present. Wreaths included tributes from both Men's and Women's Bible Classes which perhaps points to George's ministerial priorities. Interment was at South Molton cemetery. (His widow would subsequently be laid to rest in the same plot).

George's early life.

George Bolderston was born on 26/4/1853 at Woolstanwood near Crewe, in Cheshire. He was the fifth child of John, who was a farmer, and his wife Ann, the couple had at least 11 children including Elizabeth, the great great grandmother of the person who researched and wrote this account of George's life, while on holiday in Devon in 2016 prior to the Covid outbreak.

George's father joined the Wesleyan Methodists as a result of hearing a sermon in Nantwich Wesleyan Chapel from Rev. Thomas Stokoe. It was said that 'from that day his religious life became a powerful reality' and he was subsequently a Methodist class leader for 25 years. Preaching and class meetings took place at the farm until a chapel was built in 1890. George's father also served for many years as a Poor Law Guardian and Chairman of the Nantwich Highways Board, and as a business man 'his reputation was unstained and deservedly high'.

In relation to his upbringing, George's obituary states 'His early conversation to God was the result of the godly training of his Methodist home'.

George Bolderston the Man.

What sort of person was George? An obituary read, 'In all his circuits he left a record of faithful service. Modest and retiring disposition, he possessed a cultivated mind and a warm and loving heart. His preaching was thoroughly evangelical and accompanied by a quiet fervour that betokened a life in close fellowship with Christ. He was a devoted pastor, a wise and capable administrator, endearing himself by his courtesy and

sympathy to the people amongst whom he laboured'. (North Devon Journal 23/3/1911), Another stated 'he was of a kindly but retiring disposition, and was esteemed most by those who knew him best'. **A tribute subsequently placed in the South Molton Chapel remains to this day**, (see the plaque on the wall near the vestry doorway), it includes the scriptural quote,

**'The memory of the just is blessed'.**

This account of the life of his great great grandmother's uncle, was researched by Robert Proudlove, Kirkwall, while on holiday in Devon in 2016, he sent it to Derek in July 2020, with acknowledgements to

- the late Mrs Hilda Proudlove for provision of much family history
- Mr Derek Summers, Church Secretary, South Molton Methodist Church
- Library Staff, South Molton Library
- The North Devon Journal



As this research was sent during the pandemic, Rejoice was not in print, so it was not possible for it to be circulated, but with the current interest in Wesley House, I considered it the opportune time to print it as it reveals when Wesley House was new and the first minister to occupy it.

Jean Blake



## **Burrington**

And just like that it's August and we just wonder where have the last three months gone? But haven't we been very well blessed with some lovely summer weather ?

Here at Burrington we have been busy with our Wednesday Coffee Mornings and have donated £250 to two charities The Alzheimer's research and Over & Above .These mornings are a very important part of our community. On Wednesday September 24th we will be holding our Annual Macmillan coffee morning and will have the usual bring & buy stall with cakes etc. so hopefully we will be able to donate a nice amount for this very worthy cause.

On Saturday August 16<sup>th</sup> we held an afternoon cream tea at the Chapel. The weather was so kind to us – it was really beautiful and lovely to be able to be outside on the lawn. The total raised was a magnificent £360. which will all be donated to the British Heart Foundation. Thanks to everyone who attended and made this such a lovely and successful occasion.

Our Harvest Festival this year will be on Sunday Oct 5th when the service will be taken by Colin Smallacombe at 11 a.m. This will be followed by lunch at Libbaton Golf Club.

Many, many years ago we used to have a thriving Methodist Guild and one of the things we did was give concerts to various churches far and wide. Recently Sue Bailey found a number of old programmes which were quite interesting to look through, so I have attached a few (on the facing page) which may be of interest to a few people. Those were the days when our numbers in the congregation and the Guild were very well supported!

Shirley Webber

GUILD PROGRAMME 1981/2

29/9/81 Devotional

Leaders: Mrs. N. Ellis

Andrew Shapland

Pianist: Mrs. A. Watkins

13/10/81 Optional

Leaders: Mr. S. Down

Jane Webber

Philip Williams

Pianist: Mrs. S. Wright

8/12/81 Slides

Leaders: Mr. P. Bailey

Mrs. W. Chapple

Susan Webber

Pianist: Mr. W. Chapple

22/12/81 Musical Evening

Leaders: Mrs. P. Bailey

Janet Chapple

Claire Short

Pianist: Mrs. D. Bailey

12/1/82 Devotional

Leaders: Mrs. D. Bailey

Mr. S. Wright

Racheal Chapple

Pianist: Mrs. C. Shapland

26/1/82 Visit by W. End Guild

9/2/82 Mystery Evening

Leaders: Mrs. R. Webber

Christopher Ellis

Mr. A. Watkins

Pianist: Mrs. W. Chapple

23/2/82 Devotional

Leaders: Mr. J. Chapple

Mrs. R. Williams

Samantha Wright

Pianist: Mrs. B. Short

25.09.84 DEVOTIONAL

Mrs S Down Janet Chapple

Stephen Wright (Mrs D Bailey)

08.10.84 COFFEE EVENING

To be held at Bouchland

09.10.84 DESERT ISLAND DISCS

Mrs P Bailey Clare Short

Jane Webber (Mrs J Short)

23.10.84 SLIDES

Mr P Bailey Mr S Wright

(Mrs S Webber)

02.11.84 J.M.A. and Overseas

Missions Evening given by the

Muddiford Young People

14.11.84 Ashreigney Guild visit

us at the Parish Hall (Club)

Andrew Shapland Graham

Webber Michelle Williams

27.11.84 MISSION ENGLAND VIDEO

Mr S Down Mr J Chapple

Maria Gale (Christine)

11.12.84 MUSICAL EVENING

Mrs P Short Mrs G Webber

Samantha Wright (Mrs H Bailey)

08.01.85 QUIZ

Mrs R Webber Mr A Watkins

Simon Gale (Mrs S Wright)

22.01.85 DEVOTIONAL

Mrs A Watkins Alison Dallyn

Marilyn Shapland (Mrs W

Chapple)

29.01.85 OPTIONAL

Mrs J Chapple Mr M Short

Helen Down (Anthea Short)

12.02.85 SLIDES

Mr J Watkins Christopher

Wright (Mr M Short)

26.02.85 J.M.A. Evening

Mrs W Chapple Anthea Short

Susan Webber (Mr W Chapple)

01.03.85 CONCERT at Newport

## North Molton

Back in May we held a special VE Day 80th anniversary church service. This included memories from older members of the congregation of VE Day in 1945. We recalled how relief and celebration at the end of hostilities in Europe, were mingled with sadness over lost lives and damaged homes. This service was



**VE Day buffet**

followed by a wartime-themed buffet where two of the older residents of the village cut a special VE Day celebration cake.

In June we joined with groups from across the country to host 'The Big Lunch'. This is the UK's annual get-together for neighbours and communities with 10 million taking part this year for a time of friendship, food and fun. The weather was kind so it was held on the church patio next to the car park. Over 70 adults and children including several non-church goers met together for a BBQ, have their face painted, play on a bouncy castle, chat and make new friends.

The visit of Rev Paul Smith on Sunday 29th June was very memorable. He spoke passionately about the 'when the Holy Spirit comes...' Referring to Acts 2:42-47, he highlighted the hallmarks of the first Christians who; devoted themselves to the apostles teaching, had a common purse, shared in real fellowship, were filled with awe, and grew as the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. The chapel was nearly full as friends from throughout the circuit joined us and then stayed for a bring and share lunch afterwards.

As part of our 2025 Mission strategy we hold monthly outdoor church services during the warmer months and are also using the church field more. In July we invited the local community to a free brunch



and short service. Over 50 attended, afterwards children enjoyed an insect safari exploring along paths mowed between high grass to spot butterflies, grasshoppers, ladybirds and other bugs.

Each week we post on Facebook to promote upcoming services and events. Over 250 different people regularly view posts on the North Molton Methodist Church Facebook page and we also post on the village Facebook noticeboard.



### **We're going on a bug hunt – on the church field**

The Youth Club which has been led for decades by Mike Courtney has closed down for the time being. This term concluded with an evening of games which concluded with a water fight which drenched everyone but was a lot of fun! We are so grateful to Mike for his many years of service, along with other recent helpers; Annabelle, Claire, Ronnie, Naomi and John. We hope to arrange a Youth Club Reunion event this autumn for former members, some of whom are old enough to have had teenagers attend in recent years.

A Saturday wedding vow rededication service was another highlight this summer as we celebrated with Steve & Gay who have been



married 40 years. They started attending our chapel two years ago and are now very much part of our church family. We also celebrated with long-standing church members; Mike & Rose Courtney who marked their Golden Wedding Anniversary with a wonderful garden party which 100 people attended.



### **Church Away Day**

At our recent Church Away Day over 30 adults and children enjoyed time together at a beautiful retreat centre near Tiverton. As well as a devotional time together where we reflected on what God has been saying to us through recent services, we also enjoyed swimming in a heated pool, a country walk, games, conversation and a delicious cream tea. This autumn we are looking forward to our Chapel Anniversary when we will review progress against our 2025 Mission Priorities. Our United Service & Harvest Festival with All Saints is on 12th October. We will also trial a new occasional service called; 'This is my Story' where instead of a sermon a chat-show style interview with a church member will explore their testimony.

John Buckeridge

## The Harmonica Singers.

Harmonica Singers presented their annual concert 'Songs from Stage and Screen' at the Methodist Hall on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July.

The printed programmes invited us to join them for 'the glitz and glamour of the red carpet'. As we entered the Hall we were indeed walking on a red carpet with a star bearing the name of each of the group, including one in memory of a singer, Chrissy Bennet, who died recently.



The singers attired in gold shiny waistcoats, proceeded along the red carpet taking their places on the stage. As the curtains went back we were transported into the 'theatre' with a backdrop of full sized red metallic tinsel foil curtains covering the whole of the back wall, slightly pulled back to show another foil curtain which changed colour and flashed under the spotlight during the performance.

The very full and varied programme from stage and screen was sung with great enthusiasm, including solos, some with props, which delighted the audience.

After the interval, the talented singers again made their way to the stage via the red carpet, this time in shining full length evening dresses, the men wore glittering jackets. The second half continued with some very popular and foot tapping songs.

The concert concluded with rapturous, well-deserved applause for the singers, Di, Eddy, Ian, Sarah, Shelbi and Wendy, who are indebted to Martin who arranged the music and accompanied them, ably assisted by Ron on the drums.

A special mention must be made to 11-year-old Dylan for the stage management, which not only included the lighting effects, but some amusing cameos to three of the numbers featuring 'the sun', 'a tropical tree' and 'a donkey'. (Danny Boyle, watch out)!

This concert was supporting two charities, 'The Cats Protection' and 'South West Blood Bikers', Paul Henderson was present to enlighten us about the vital work of the Blood Bikers. The amount raised was £520.

Congratulations to all involved in the preparation, your hard work is really appreciated, and for a very enjoyable and memorable evening. We were still singing some of the tunes as we made our way home.

*Footnote – (Danny Boyle is the British film director who was responsible for the opening ceremony of the 2012 London Olympic Games).*



Jean Blake

## **Kings Nympton**

In May the South Molton Circuit Choir entertained us with an eclectic mix of light, classical & worship music. It was a wonderful evening finishing with light refreshments.

Our United Churches Open Air Service was held in the village square. It was a 'have it indoor or outdoor ' kind of day, but at 4pm the drizzle stopped and the sun shone for us. Revd Anna led the Service which was well attended.

Our Harvest Festival Service will be on Sunday 21st September at 6pm, led by Deacon Ruth Knight.

We are joining forces with our Anglican friends and holding a joint Harvest Supper on Friday 3rd October 7pm in the Parish Hall. Look out for posters.

Our Annual Charity Coffee Morning Saturday 29th November 10-12noon.

Concert with the Barnstaple Ladies Choir at the Parish Hall on Saturday 6th December, more details to follow.

Angela Bilham



## A “VOICE” FROM THE PAST

Quite by chance, whilst recently studying *The Book of Revelation* with my Home Group, I happened to look at another book, long in my possession, on the “Gravestones in South Molton Churchyard” compiled by the late John Parsons for South Molton & District Archive and later indexed by the late David Ryall before his death in 2008. I happened across an entry- which I must have read several times before- but this time it really made an impact.

The tombstone contained a verse from Revelation Ch.14.v;13 -

*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest their labours and their works do follow them.*

My own Bible being the NIV version-slightly different words-I had to turn to the King James’ Bible belonging to my Granny, Elizabeth J. Beer- a member of the South Molton Methodist Church-who died in 1954 when I was 14, my Mum subsequently brought her Bible home for me.

This quotation was on the tombstone of William Nutt who died on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1945, aged 62 years. It informs us that William-*was a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Society of this Town 34 years.*

William Nutt therefore was born in 1783 and joined the Wesleyans in 1811-just four years after Methodism arrived in South Molton. He must have attended the “Rookery Chapel” – a converted barn in East Street- before a chapel was built here in 1821- to be replaced by our present building of the 1880s.

His grave is on the North side of the Churchyard- just a few steps in from the car park, but if you go to see it be careful because it is on the edge of a steep drop.

Having looked through the Churchyard booklet, I have found no other reference to Methodists so I do wonder where other early Methodists of this Town were buried before the Cemetery was opened in 1857!

Derry Hodgson.





## **Brayford**

Our Annual Strawberry Tea was enjoyed by a record crowd. It was great to see so many people happily chatting away both with friends from the Circuit and Brayford folk. The joy of living in smaller communities!

We managed to find some shade for everyone at our Riverside Service and Barbecue. It was our turn to host the United Service. The excellent service was led by Revd. Jeanette Richardson, and was followed by hot dogs, salads and lots of lovely desserts.

Looking ahead.....

SUNDAY 28<sup>th</sup> September . We are very much looking forward to David Peyton's visit.

Our HARVEST FESTIVAL is on 12<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER. This is a United Service, with Gary Reed.

Our GIFT EVENING is on THURSDAY, 13<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER at 7.00 pm. - We have pulled a few strings and have managed to book the very popular HARMONY 4/5! Do come and join us for what promises to be a great evening.

Ruth Knights

### **South Molton Town Band**

There will be an open rehearsal on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March at the Methodist Church at 7.30. when you will be able to hear the pieces they will be playing the following Sunday in Torquay at the

West of England Band Competition.

Please come and support the Band and enjoy an evening of uplifting Band music.

Everyone welcome.



# THE BOYS' AND GIRLS' BRIGADES

## 1<sup>ST</sup> SOUTH MOLTON COMPANIES



As I write this, we are half way through our summer break. Much needed by both children and helpers.

The summer term ended on a high note with the Awards Evening.

Congratulations to all those who received trophies. And thank you to David Worden for chairing the evening. For the first time we had a collection for our Girls and Boys Brigades which raised £131.60, a wonderful amount which will be shared between the two companies.

Our new term starts on September 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>. We are hoping that more children will come to join us as a result of the fliers given out at the holiday club.

Next term begins quietly with badgework. After half term we begin working on our Christmas presentation. With 4 older girls we are hoping for a surprise!

Monica Fry and Pat Pendle ,



This poem from 2018 is also is also relevant to the current Summer  
and the climate change we are experiencing'

### **Summer 2018**

Wow, what a summer we have just come through  
With just a mere suspicion of rain  
With only one cut of grass made possible  
And the early colouring of the grain.

The only things that grow whatever  
Are the weeds that grow through the brown  
On lawns that have struggled to stay alive  
As the rain has refused to fall down.

The veg plot has somehow managed to survive  
Though scorched and somewhat small  
The fruit trees are there and coping  
But the apples have continued to fall.

The tomatoes have ripened early  
The cucumber has responded well  
Despite the first plants being eaten  
By a mouse who chose in the greenhouse to dwell!

The farmers are feeding their cattle  
On what should be next winters store  
With no pasture in the meadows  
And prospect of any rain still poor.

Just maybe this will make us appreciate  
What we usually take as a norm  
That seedtime and harvest will always prevail  
But sometimes not in the expected form.

Just maybe it will give us time to reflect  
On the conditions in which others live  
And offer our creator the rightful praise  
And be more open to others to give.

For there are some parts of this world of ours  
That struggle year after year  
With no rain and failed harvests  
And for their very lives they fear.

***Rosella Turner 2018***



## Chittlehampton

Well, here we go this is a new guest role for Jen and I today as Josie is currently recovering from a little operation. We wish her a speedy recovery and please take it easy for a few weeks.

Our annual chapel picnic was held in July with our morning service being led by John Chapple. We were then kindly invited to Andante the home of Morley and Sue. Our bring and share lunch was eaten outside in the wonderful sunshine, thankfully the two lovely parasols gave us some shade!!

Later on we moved inside and concluded a lovely afternoon with hymns and prayers led by Gerald. Yet abit more food and cups of tea followed. We are incredibly grateful to Morley and Sue for their kind hospitality.

Coffee mornings are held on the first Saturday of each month running from 10.30am to 12 noon everyone welcome. These continue to be well supported and are a vital outreach in our community. We have our popular stall selling a wide variety of homemade cakes, savoury treats and a huge array of jams and chutneys. We are very grateful for everyone who provides these.

A new event for us this year continuing our community outreach was to take part in the village garden show and fete. We took up our chapel



gazebo and loaded up the tables with bric-a-brac, savoury items and the preserves. Our stall was very popular and the show committee



thanked us for taking part and have invited us back again next year so put the date in the diary 1<sup>st</sup> August 2026.

Dates for coming months

Harvest festival Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September led by Steve Bedford, our week night service will be on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September at 7pm led by John Chapple followed by supper and sale of perishable goods. All welcome to join us.

A joint Anglican/Methodist harvest supper is on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October at Chittlehampton village hall.

Chapel anniversary and gift day is on November 16<sup>th</sup> at 11am our service will be led by Mark Chapple and at 3.30pm we hope you will join us for a concert arranged by Janet Lake followed by our traditional tea.

Every blessing for the coming months

Jenny and Jayne

## **South Molton Women' Fellowship**

For our trip in June we went to Bickleigh Mill. We looked around the shop when we arrived and then had a cream tea. We were blessed with good weather and sat in the sun before returning home.

At the last meeting in July we had a cream tea which Gwen had organised. Our Fellowship is celebrating 80 years on November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. The Sunday morning service will be taken by Mrs Anne Browse who has held offices within the District and was also the National President. Our evening service will be taken by the Revd Anna Flindell. On Tuesday our speaker will be Deacon Joan Cole from Barnstaple.

We were saddened to hear that Barbara Hollingsworth had died. She was a member of our Church and Women's Fellowship. Our thoughts and prayers are with her niece and family.

Dates for the District MwiB. The District Day at St Thomas Exeter with Kerry Scarlett from Faith Rooted community organising on "Hidden Treasures" and will take place on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> November. This day will include Kathryn Trotman's induction as President for our district.

Doreen Lake

# Connexionalism

The concept of Christina Unity was always a hot agenda item. It was established in 1908 by two clergymen, one American and one British originally as a prayer week. Opinions vary as to its exact aims and value. What it has done is to help Christians realise that all the mainstream Churches have a core set of doctrines in which we all believe. What a surprise!! These core beliefs are enshrined in the Nicene Creed, which we have all recited and is in all the service books of all mainstream Churches.

What is different between the denominations is the organisation of the Churches, how worship is conducted and the ordination of the clergy. It is not the purpose of this little item to dwell on this but take the two extremes of say the Catholic Church and a Bible-Christian Chapel and the difference is more than obvious.

During the preparation of Rejoice magazines I end up reading most articles as I put them into their places, which enables me, for instance, to put photos in the appropriate place in the text!

In preparing this edition one theme has stood out to me, that of the Connexional nature of Methodism - a real gift that John Wesley left us with which has stood the test of time. But how many of us realise how important it is and how it is a major feature of the Church. But, what does it mean?

I started to write a definition but found an online version which summarises it very well and is far more eloquent than I could have written. So here it is.....

Connexionalism, in the Methodist Church, is a system of church governance that emphasizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of its various parts. It's a way of relating where individuals and groups (local churches, circuits, districts, etc.) are not isolated but exist with and for each other, sharing resources and responsibilities. This principle highlights the importance of mutual support, shared mission, and the understanding that no local church is entirely self-sufficient.

What wonderful words and what a beautiful concept

Several things have come together in my mind recently.

**Firstly**, one of the main features in this edition is that of Wesley House. The Circuit Property Committee spent many hours discussing possible future uses for this building but none seemed to fit the situation perfectly and costs became well out of our range. Now we have a solution! Part of

it will be accommodation at some time in the future benefiting the circuit as a whole from rent Then the need for some circuit storage, a circuit office has been met But most of all to our brothers and sisters in South Molton who have struggled with providing an outstanding witness in the community for many years without adequate facilities, mainly storage I am sure I speak for all of us when I say how pleased we are that they now have the storage and other facilities which will, I am sure, benefit their ongoing work for God

**Secondly**, I was struck by Shirley's comments toward the end her article from Burrington in which she referred back to the days when churches supported each other directly a lot more than now and alongside the Methodist Guild – even with twenty plus chapels in the circuit at that time..

**Thirdly**, the reintroduced dates list with this edition of Rejoice also fits this theme as it gives us a chance to be more aware of what is on and support other churches when and where we can.

**Fourthly**, and on a slightly different theme, at a recent circuit meeting Kings Nympton requested some money to help them complete the building work on their windows. They were in a difficult situation in that they couldn't use that part of the premises to raise the money but didn't have the money to repair the windows. They are one of our smallest chapels have a limited congregation but have a strong witness in the community and are well respected After brief discussion it was agreed to give them the necessary money. Perfect connexionalism – long may it last,

And a final comment which emphasises even more the supreme importance of connexionalism.

At the ordination of a Minister in the Methodist Church in Great Britain ordination is linked inseparably with 'Reception into Full Connexion'. The Methodist Conference receives into Full Connexion with itself those who are called to exercise an ordained ministry specifically through the Methodist Church. When they are received into Full Connexion ministers (both presbyters and deacons) enter a covenant relationship with the Conference.

Thanks for reading this, I hope you found it interesting.

Martin Hickman

## Linda Mitchell

### Children and Young Families Support Worker at South Molton

What a fantastic academic year, and especially final quarter it has been. I can't believe how quickly the time has passed!

Of course, Teddy Bears groups went out as usual with a celebratory bang... parties, parties, parties. Roll on September so that we can start all over again! Although of course we want to make the most of the summertime... and we have started with 'On Your Marks, our 2025 holiday club!

We have been delighted that so many children were signed up to take part: **58** in total, which was pretty much maximum capacity! And, we were even more delighted that so many children actually turned up on the days: **56 in total**. The youngest of them were *almost* 5 years old, and the eldest were *almost* 12 years old. Although of course' not *all* children were in attendance *every day*... we simply couldn't have accommodated that within our hall space.

To offer a clearer picture, due to days out and family holidays; there were **30** children with us on day one, **29** on day two, a bumper **38** on day 3 and **28** on day 4, which was awesome! Our maximum capacity for any one day was *ideally* **36**. And of course, with that many children comes an army of volunteers... in fact **16** of them (across all four days), broken down as follows; 2 group leaders and 3 or 4 additional helpers each day' caring for and supporting each of the three 'village' groups that the children were split up into. **Thank God** for each and every single volunteer, including those from our own church and those that came to us from the Baptist Church to help; as without so many, we couldn't have ensured that our 'age related' adult to child ratios were met' in order to keep all of the children safely engaged with the variety of activities undertaken.

And what activities did take place? you might may well ask...

Well, each day began with a getting to know each other session, referred to as 'starting blocks', whereby within their village groups the children; built and decorated structures out of cardboard boxes, made name badges and team torches, and were focused by their team leaders on questions designed to help them learn about each other. They were also



given sporting facts to remember (that were changed daily), in order to earn themselves medals; which were totalled up at the end of each day to determine which 'village' were declared *the winning team*.

Myself and the volunteers were amazed at how competitive it became amongst the teams, as the children all worked really hard with their eyes firmly set on the prize: the coveted trophy.

Once out of their starting blocks, all teams were drawn together as one' within 'the stadium' zone, in the middle of the hall, whereby all inclusive of volunteers, took part in an aerobics session. After that the children played games and undertook challenges, which were linked to the sport for the day. These of course resulted in earning more medals, to be included in their accumulating daily totals!

After that, each day the children were treated to a different puppet show, which shared a story from the bible, followed by a commentary to help focus their thoughts and considerations on what the puppets had shared with them. Then it was time for the children (and the volunteers) to take some well-earned rest, with quiet(er) time, refreshments and a team discussion back in their villages.

Refreshments over, the teams were called back together again as one, within the stadium zone' for more physical exercises and mental challenges, and to let off steam with the holiday club theme song and dance.

Each day ended with a performance of *Ready Steady Enders Street*: a drama set at the GETFIT leisure centre, which was performed by some of the leaders from each of the villages. Each day's performance focused on the characters working hard to overcome adversity' and show themselves as being a great team, with qualities that would make God proud.

Finally, before being returned to their parents, on the days that weather permitted, the children were taken out into the garden and encouraged to play sporting type games together.

To top things off, we got to celebrate all that had happened at holiday club, on the following Sunday - with Sunday Club' at morning worship. During this time our congregation got to experience some of what had taken place at holiday club, along with some of the families of the children that had taken part in the holiday club program. Here, they too got to celebrate their children and our wonderful volunteers

being awarded with gifts and certificates for taking part, as well as watching 'live performances' of the holiday theme song, a puppet show, and the final episode of the unfolding drama: Ready Steady Enders Street.

I really hope to be able to recreate this wonderful time in the future with more holiday clubs. Here's to praying for it to happen!

Much love Linda

Xxx











## From the Editor

With colourful flowers blooming during the Summer, and accompanied by bird songs, I am reminded of a poem by Dorothy Gurney, which my grandmother wrote in my autograph book when I was a young girl -

The kiss of the sun for pardon  
The song of the birds for mirth  
You are nearer to God in a garden  
Than anywhere else on earth.

With all the Summer activities reported in this new edition of Rejoice, I am sure you will have felt these sentiments.



My grateful thanks to the editorial team, Martin for the layout and technical advice, Anita and Derek for printing, Ruth for proof reading, and the contributors, for yet another splendid edition of Rejoice, and also to the distributors.

Jean

Please Note, that the absolute deadline for  
copy for the next issue of Rejoice is

Midday Sunday November 16<sup>th</sup> 2025:

If you have access to email, please send item to:

myanconeus@gmail.com

or, alternatively please leave in the *Rejoice*  
pigeon hole at Duke Street.. Thank you,