

OUR NEWS

DECEMBER 2020



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BUY LOCAL: GIVE A GIFT OF HOPE THIS CHRISTMAS

The 2020 Cornish Christmas Giving Catalogue is now available to download. Your gift will help transform the lives of people in need in Cornwall and there is something for every budget.

Featuring 20 charitable organisations and all of Cornwall's foodbanks, the catalogue provides an opportunity to give a gift of hope to someone in Cornwall this Christmas by giving a gift of love to friends and family.

The Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen, Bishop of Truro welcomes readers to this year's catalogue. He says: "This year, 2020, has been a year like no other. None of us, at the beginning, could have predicted the significant impact Covid-19 would have had upon us.

"For me, one of the most striking and alarming features of it was the way in which it magnified existing inequalities. Put simply, the poorer and more

vulnerable you were already, the more likely you were to succumb to the virus. That is not a situation any of us should be content with. And of course the ongoing economic effects of the pandemic will be felt most severely by those who are least able to cope with them.

"So I encourage us – one and all – to take a stand against such inequality by using this alternative Christmas catalogue. Let's make sure that at least some of our Christmas spending this year supports those who need our help the most."

Read more about the organisations included in this year's catalogue on the diocesan website by clicking [here](#).

JOIN IN THE BIGGEST EVER SOUTH WEST CAROL SERVICE THIS DECEMBER 5 & 6

The biggest ever South West Carol Service is now just two weeks away! We may not be able to gather together for the traditional Christmas carol concerts and school nativity plays this year, but we can take part in a unique online Christmas extravaganza instead.

Billed as a 'celebration of all the good things that take place at this time of the year', the event will include musical performances from Exeter Cathedral Choir and London Community Gospel Choir, alongside award-winning Folk trio Wildwood Kin and worship leader Lucy Grimble. Local singer songwriter Joe Hardy, has also collaborated with



25 South West Worship Leaders to create a special recording of a traditional Christmas carol. Local primary schools are also taking part in the region's biggest ever nativity play.

In a year that has been so difficult, it's hoped South West Carols will be able to

bring festive cheer and lots of smiles into people's homes.

South West Carols will take place on **Saturday, December 5 & Sunday, December 6**, from 7-8pm each night. It will be broadcast live on the southwestcarols.com website, as well as on Facebook and YouTube, with live presenters and audience interaction throughout.

If your church is taking part, don't forget to let people know! There are resources available for you to use including a media release template. Click [here](#) to access the media pack.

DIOCESAN SYNOD MEMBERS APPROVE 2021 BUDGET

It feels as though Lebanon is going through the ten plagues of Egypt following August's huge explosion, the political unrest that has followed and the ongoing impact of Covid-19, Revd Nabil Shehadi told members of the Diocesan Synod, which met in November.

The Beirut-based mission partner for the Christian Mission Society told how the churches in Lebanon are going to the streets to feed the hungry, care for the vulnerable, and to rebuild homes lost to the explosion – helping neighbours and bringing hope.

He also talked about how important it was to seize the opportunity of online ministry with both hands, as it enables us to reach people who otherwise would not come to church. He said: "This ministry is a gift of this great tragedy. To reach across the earth."

Among other items on the agenda, the synod also considered and approved the budget for the coming year.

Commending the budget to synod, Bishop Philip said: "We need to avoid being opportunistic in favour of being strategic, and I am absolutely committed to that. That means that change must increasingly be on our agenda, in a way it has not been for decades, or even centuries."

The synod received reports on Setting God's People Free, the membership of and elections for synod between 2021 and 2024, and adopted a diocesan scheme for the inspection of churches, as well as the diocesan safeguarding strategy.

Read more on the diocesan website [here](#).



LIVING
IN LOVE
& FAITH

LISTEN & TALK ABOUT LIVING IN LOVE & FAITH

The Bishops of the Church of England have invited the whole church into a process of mutual listening about the issues of human identity, relationships, marriage and sexuality. These are topics that we often find it difficult to talk about, and on which there are very serious disagreements within the church.

HOW WE TALK & LISTEN IN LOVE & FAITH REALLY MATTERS

Living in Love and Faith (LLF) invites every member of the Church of England to listen and talk about these topics, including with people who have different views and experiences to us. These conversations are about complex issues, and about how we talk and listen to each other and how we remain united even when we disagree about things that really matter.

The conversations will be based on a book and accompanying resources, which have been prayerfully and carefully prepared for us to use.

Read what Bishop Hugh has said and more information about what will be happening on the diocese website [here](#).

CHURCHWARDENS YEAR BOOK 2021 AVAILABLE

The Churchwarden's Yearbook 2021 is available now.

This year's edition covers everything from Common Worship readings to reference material to help churchwardens such as a summary of the new Church Representation Rules 2020 and New Faculty Rules 2020 and more.

This year's book costs £13.95 with free delivery when ordered direct from Churchwarden Publications. More information is available by emailing enquiries@churchwardenbooks.co.uk or by phoning 01985 840189.

COVID-19 LOCKDOWNS HIT VULNERABLE HARDEST THE LONELINESS OF DEMENTIA

For people living with dementia in care homes, the impact of this pandemic has been devastating. What seemed like short-term measures have gone on and on with consequences worthy of a dystopian novel.

Except this is terrifyingly real for the most fragile and vulnerable in our community. Families separated from loved ones and loved ones left to a terrifying world of masks, collapse of life-shaping routine and absence of human touch from those who love them. Care-workers do everything they can, but the nature of dementia makes communication and retention of vital information almost impossible. The fear of families that their loved ones feel abandoned is very acute.

In the news recently was the story of the daughter arrested trying to take her very elderly mother out of the care home so she could look after her at home. It's a situation many can relate to, and who wouldn't want to do the same?

Three women (Jan, Pam and Jenny) from our diocese and their loved ones,



PICTURED ABOVE: Pam & Reg. Pam, from Launceston, has been married to Reg for over 61 years. They've grown up and grown old together, built a life and raised a family. But Pam hasn't seen him since his birthday on March 1. Reg has Alzheimer's and was taken into a home late last year.

suffering from dementia have shared their stories with Jac Smith. You can read their moving testimonies on the diocesan website [here](#).



TRANSFORMING MISSION

HOLY TRINITY, A PUB AND AN EXTRAORDINARY GIFT DAY

Many churches want to reach out into the community, but not too many choose to do so by buying a pub. Holy Trinity in St Austell has done exactly that.

Holy Trinity sits at the centre of St Austell, presiding at the top of Fore Street, circled by a road and its community. The pub, the centuries old Hop and Vine, is on the opposite side of the road, next to the market square. Earlier this year, the church bought the now disused pub, knowing it would be a great way to connect with their community. But how would they raise the money to renovate it and make it a workable space?

Prayer is the bedrock of life at Holy Trinity, and the pub venture was something they prayed about consistently. Heather Batho, the church's Operations Manager, explained the vision. "We have recently become part of **Transforming Mission**, which has been very exciting, but we knew if we really wanted to make an impact on our town, we had to be more visible. Buying the Hop and Vine means we have the potential to become a genuine community resource – we will be able to offer a community café, space for many groups including parenting, divorce recovery and Christians Against Poverty (CAP), a debt counselling service."

The historic square that exist between the church, the pub and the market

house will be emphasised by taking down some of the railings outside of the church and levelling the ground between them. This opens the space, creating an events and community space – a vital resource once this pandemic recedes. The space will be called Trinity Square.

As part of the scheme of works, Holy Trinity hopes to complete some re-ordering. It began with installing glass doors making everything within the church visible from the outside, including as you walk up the hill. In addition, they want to put the historic Victorian pews on castors so they can be wheeled around to create more usable space for activities.

"Opening the church with the glass doors has had a huge impact. We have definitely increased footfall to the church and bridged that perceived gap between community and congregation." Says Heather who believes that keeping the community informed has been key to their success. As the works progress, they plan to have film footage showing from the display window at the front of the pub, keeping everyone invested by keeping the wider community informed.

Read the full story [here](#).

SAFEGUARDING STRATEGY LAUNCHED AT SYNOD

The diocese's **Safeguarding Strategic Plan** was launched at Synod in November and sets out who we are, what we do and how we are governed. The plan, which aligns to the diocesan aims, outlines our four term priorities for safeguarding:

- * Being survivor led;
- * Safeguarding our communities;
- * Increasing capacity & supporting our parishes; and
- * Strengthening our leadership culture.

Over the next couple of months the team will be identifying what actions it needs to take, this will include taking account of national policy and reports (e.g. the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), local reports (Past Cases Review 2) and feedback from parishes. Watch this space for more information about how you can contribute your ideas and share best practice.

CHRISTMAS CARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

There was stiff competition in the diocese's annual Schools Christmas Card competition with hundreds of entries from 16 schools judged.

Bishop Philip, Bishop Hugh and Katie Fitzsimmons, Director of Education had the difficult task of selecting winners expertly assisted by local artist Lindsey Morgan-Lundie.

After much debate, Scarlett Connor, 7, from Marhamchurch Primary School was chosen as the winner of the Bishop of Truro's award. Verity Reeve, 8, from Archbishop Benson School was selected as the winner of the Bishop of St German's award. Samuel Ireland, 6, from Archbishop Benson School in Truro was selected as the winner of the Education Department award and Eva King, 9, from St Mary's Primary School in Penzance was selected as the winner of the Diocesan Secretary award. Ava Cattran, 8, from St Mary's Primary School in Penzance was named as the winner of the Artist's Commendation Award.

Each of the winners of the bishops' awards will receive a certificate, £25 book vouchers and £100 Amazon vouchers for their school.

Read more on the diocesan website [here](#).



IN PROGRESS: St Martin's churchyard in Liskeard is undergoing a transformation and right, plans for St Mary's churchyard in Penzance



MAKING SPACE FOR NATURE - IN ADVENT & BEYOND

A UN report has made it clear that worldwide loss of biodiversity is accelerating. In Cornwall, churches are joining with others to challenge this and 'make space for nature' in gardens, churchyards and other wild and beautiful places which nature needs in order to survive.

The Diocese of Truro's environmental officer Luci Isaacson has been working with Cornwall Council's Karen Hall to support St Mary's Church in Penzance and St Martin's Church in Liskeard as they implement plans to make space for nature on their church premises.

Wildlife corridors are being created in both towns as part of the Green Infrastructure for Growth and Making Space for Nature projects. Karen says: "We produced a **case study** for St Mary's churchyard in Penzance, and are currently carrying out works at St Martin's churchyard, Liskeard. St Martin's looks a bit muddy at the moment but by next year it should be looking great!"

Work at St Martin's should be drawing to a close by the second week of December. A community/congregation planting day had been planned while the works were taking place but due to Lockdown 2.0, these plans have been postponed until spring.

To find out more about how to link up your church with Cornwall Council's projects to challenge biodiversity loss, get in touch with **Luci**, who can assist you.

As we move through the darkening days of Advent, we are called to a time of reflection on the work of God in creation and preparation for the coming of the light and renewal of Christ.

Green traditions such as the making of an Advent wreath using evergreen materials from garden and woodland and the decorating of homes with evergreens remind us that even in the dark times, the true life of the world, the life of God, never dies.

We are grateful to Revd Anne Brown of the Atlantic Coast Cluster for developing a sequence of 'green' bible readings and reflections to use during this time – either in church or at home. You can download them **here**.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

DECEMBER

1 Diocesan Roadshow - Penwith & Kerrier, 7pm. Click on the title to find out more.

1 Cornwall Air Ambulance Virtual Christmas Carol Concert with Bishop Philip, 7pm. click on the title for details.

3 Meet the Funders Workshop, 2pm. Click on the title to find out more.

5 & 6 South West Carols, 7pm. Click on the title to find out more.

13 Children's Society National Christingle Service, 9am. Click on the title to find out more.

GET IN TOUCH

If you have a news story or a diary date to share, please get in touch: 01872 360037 comms@truro.anglican.org before the 17th of each month.

OTHER LINKS

Church Risk Calendar: <https://www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/church-risk-calendar/>

Churchwardens National Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/churchwardens/members>

Charity Commission Newsletter: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-commission-news-issue-65/charity-commission-news-issue-65>

AWARD FOR DIOCESE'S SUSTAINABILITY ADVISOR

The Diocese of Truro's Renewables and Sustainability Advisor Stephen Chidgey has been presented with a civic award by Hilary Frank, Chair of Cornwall Council.

Stephen, who lives in Tregonetha, has been responsible for many environmentally friendly initiatives in his local community including installing a biomass boiler and toilet in St Wenn Church which led to the church winning a national green award. Stephen said: "While I'm truly honoured and humbled to get this award, I genuinely feel I'm receiving it on behalf of the whole St Wenn community. I'm very proud to live in such a kind and mutually supportive neighbourhood. We work on projects together and it's that sense of being there for one another that makes this place so special."