“lest we forget”

“They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old, Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn, At the going down of the sun and in the morning, We shall remember them”

NOVEMBER 2023
NOVEMBER DIARY

Sun. 5th 11.00am Family Worship & HC – Revd Colin Biggs
Sun. 12th 10.55am Remembrance Day – Sabrina Gröschel
Wed. 15th 10.30am Elders Meeting
Sun. 19th 11.00am Family Worship – Mrs A Biggs
Sat. 25th 10 til 1 Christmas Sale etc – see poster on page 6
Sun. 26th 10.30am Family Worship – The Minister
11.30am Church Meeting
Sun. 3rd Dec 11.00am Advent Sunday & HC – Revd Colin Biggs
12.45pm Church Family Advent Lunch

WEEKLY ACTIVITY

Tuesdays 10.00am – 1pm Coffee mornings and lunches

Mission Statement

Lavington’s mission is to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness encompassing the love of Christ and to share this through worship and service.

We are a Fairtrade Church

Answers to October Fun

Dear Friends,

During the last week of my sabbatical, Suzy and I stopped at a campsite near the little village of Kemmel. The village is surrounded by farmland, with some lovely quiet footpaths through the woods and countryside. The village is not far from Ypres, a name that may be more familiar. Ypres in my mind conjures up images of World War 1 and the awful muddy trenches where thousands of young men lost their lives. Today Ypres is a small city that has been rebuilt with some impressive architecture; it has the title ‘city of peace’. Ypres welcomes many visitors from around the world and has an impressive tourist information office.

Perhaps unsurprisingly the history of the area is all around, in a wooded area (privately owned but now open to the public) a family had set up a ‘stations of the cross’ route which led to a cave that had been used for shelter during the war. This had been set up in memory of family members who had died in WW1. You usually find fourteen pictures of the ‘stations of the cross’ around the walls of a Catholic Church - these are produced by different artists and can be very varied in style. As many of you will know, the fourteen images remind viewers of the story of Easter, from Jesus being condemned to death right through to Jesus being laid in the tomb.

In the small village of Kemmel we found a small museum that explained about the history of this agricultural area, their buildings and farming techniques which were very similar to ours in rural Devon in the 1800’s and early 1900’s. The village also had a small military cemetery, with the familiar rows of gravestones. One evening I visited the cemetery to pay my respects and to pray for peace. The recent scenes of horror and destruction in Israel and Gaza remind us that the lessons of the past have sadly not been learnt; our prayers for peace continue to be needed in a world of violence and destruction.

So, as we approach this year’s Remembrance Sunday, we will all be acutely aware of the many places around the globe still struggling with conflict and loss of innocent lives. In Israel, Palestine, in Ukraine, Yemen, South Sudan
and other places around the globe that don’t reach our regular news updates.

May we also plant the seeds of kindness, peace and compassion in our lives and in the lives of those around us. As we pray for peace in our lives may we also pray for peace for all in conflict around the world.

God bless you during this time of remembrance.

Rob Weston
Minister

HARVEST FESTIVAL

What a happy Harvest Festival we celebrated last month. The sun poured in and the church looked lovely especially after the additional gifts had been received on the day.

It had been agreed that this year we would give the entire amount raised to Bideford Foodbank. They, like all other charities, have suffered badly since the pandemic with the cost of living increase having reduced everyone’s income. In fact, all the money paid by those who came to the tea was able to be given to Foodbank as there were no expenses this year thanks to Jill Davis who had saved enough Morrison vouchers to cover the expense. Thank you, Jill. So along with all the non-perishable food items we also donated £150 in cash.

Thank you to you all. We hope you enjoyed the tea and social time together.

Editor

Christmas Cracker joke.

What does the word minimum mean? 
A very small mother!
YOURS

The life that I have is all that I have,
and the life that I have is yours.
The love that I have of the life that I have
is yours, and yours, and yours.
A sleep I shall have, a rest I shall have
yet death will be but a pause.
For the peace of my years in the long green grass
will be yours, and yours, and yours.

A coded poem used by the real Violette Szabo to send messages from occupied France. It is attributed to Leo Marks, a cryptographer for the Special Operations Executive.

THE BLESSED DEAD

They lie at rest, our blessed dead;
the dew drops cool above their head,
they knew not when fleet summer fled.

Together all, yet each alone;
each laid at rest beneath his own
smooth turf or white allotted stone.

When shall our slumber sink so deep,
and eyes that wept and eyes that weep,
weep not in the sufficient sleep?

God be with you, our great and small,
our loves, our best-beloved of all,
our own beyond the salt sea-wall.

Christina Rosetti (1830 – 1894)
WHY DO I WEAR A POPPY?  Author unknown

Why do I wear a poppy?
I’ll tell you if I may,
because I believe remembrance
is not only for one day.

I wear it for the fallen,
and for those falling, still.
For those who come back broken
in body or in will.

For the parents, spouses, children
where bereavement takes its toll.
Whose pain will never leave them,
it eats into their soul.

For the wino on the corner,
of his old life, nothings left.
Now he wishes when in battle
he had died a hero’s death.

For the lad who loved a kick-about
in the park with all his mates,
but now his legs are held together
with pins and metal plates.

For the selfless men and women
whose final journey home,
is in a Union flag-draped coffin
on comrades’ shoulders borne.

For all those marching proudly
in Remembrance Day parades.
My poppy’s worn in gratitude
for the sacrifice they made.
w/c 5th

Dear Lord, at the time of writing this prayer, a stray rocket from Islamic Jihad hit a hospital in Gaza, killing nearly 500 people who had sought shelter there after the senseless attack by Hamas on Israel. This has created an exodus of a million Palestinian refugees from Gaza, which is now on the brink of a major humanitarian disaster. In the short term, we pray that aid of all kinds will eventually get through to the Gazans. In the long term, we pray that a peaceful solution will be found to this long-standing and interminable war. Peace is achieved by talking, not fighting.

w/c 12th

Dear Lord, today is Remembrance Sunday, when we commemorate those who died in the two world wars and later conflicts and when we have the opportunity to honour and thank those who survived. May we be reminded of the horrors of war and the constant need to be striving for peace.

w/c 19th

Dear Lord, may we pray that as the colder weather approaches, provision will be made for those who struggle to pay their heating bills, that Covid will not be too much of a problem this year and that the junior doctors' pay dispute will be resolved before winter.

w/c 26th

Dear Lord, today we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King, when we acknowledge Christ as the King of the Universe, the rightful king of all nations on earth and He who should be enthroned in every heart.

We ask all this in Jesus' Name. Amen.
CHRISTMAS COFFEE MORNING & SALE

SATURDAY
25th NOVEMBER 2023
10am to 1pm

Cakes
Gifts

Jewellery
Raffle

Christmas

Light Refreshments

We would greatly appreciate gifts for the stalls and raffle please, homemade cakes / new items etc
T’was the month before Christmas, and all through the town people wore masks, that covered their frown. The frown had begun way back in the Spring when a global pandemic changed everything. They called it corona, but unlike the beer, it didn’t bring good times it didn’t bring cheer. Airplanes were grounded, travel was banned, borders were closed across air, sea and land. As the world entered lockdown to flatten the curve, the enemy halted and folks lost their nerve. From March to July we rode the first wave, people stayed home they tried to behave. When summer emerged the lockdown was lifted but away from caution many folks drifted.

Now its December and cases are spiking, wave two has arrived much to our disliking. It’s true that this year has had sadness a plenty and we’ll never forget the year 2020. And just round the corner - the holiday season, but why be merry is there one good reason to decorate the house and put up the tree who will see it no one but me. But outside my window the snow gently falls and I think to myself let’s all deck the halls! So, I gather a ribbon the garland and bows as I play those old carols my happiness grows. Christmas is not cancelled and neither is hope. If we lean on each other I know we can cope.

Christmas Cracker joke.  
*Where did Tarzan buy his clothes?*  

*At a jungle sale!*

ANON
NOVEMBER ROTAS

MINISTRY of FLOWERS
We thank those who are providing flowers for our sanctuary this month and those who will arrange them if asked to do so.

5th Mrs B J
12th Mrs H P
19th -----------------------
26th Mrs H M

SIDESMAN DUTIES
5th Mrs L C / Mrs J C
12th Mrs A B / Revd C B
19th Mrs H M / Mrs E B
26th Mr C W / Mr P J

VESTRY DUTIES
5th Mrs A B
12th Mrs L C
19th Mrs J P
26th Mrs J D

COMMUNION
Preparation 5th Mrs J D / Mrs A B
Servers Mrs J P / Mrs L C

BIBLE READERS
5th Mrs J P
12th Mrs A B
19th Mrs S M
26th Mrs H M

OFFERTORY STEWARDS Mrs A B & Miss J S
NOVEMBER ROTAS  
TUESDAY CAFÉ

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We only have one birthday in November and that is for S M on 16th. Every year I hope there will be another person with a birthday to keep S company. I will have to put an advert in the Gazette I think.

So, S, soak up all the congratulations, love and best wishes for yourself on the 16th. We hope you enjoy your very own special day.

No wedding anniversaries this month for our current fellowship - that I am aware of - but a Golden Wedding anniversary has reached my ears. Some of you will remember A (W) and R C. A was brought up at Lavington from a very young age where her mother, M W was a Primary age Sunday School teacher for many years. R moved to Bideford with his parents at some stage and came with them to Lavington and the rest as they say, is history. They will celebrate their Golden Wedding on November 10th. A and R, we send our love, congratulations and best wishes to you both for a very happy day.

Editor
NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY

R H is now recuperating at home following his time in hospital. We hope that R will soon improve and feel stronger. L S has had a knee operation but is getting on well at home. She hopes to return to worship when able and we send our best wishes for a speedy recovery. Whilst away with her family H M damaged her leg, making mobility painful. We hope you will soon be fully recovered H. B C is now being looked after in Golden Sands, Westward Ho! joining L G and A M. Our thoughts and prayers are that he will soon feel settled and also remember L and A too.

R and S W have concerns about S’s father, B who has been in hospital following a fall. We hold them and the family in our prayers. There are many others missing from our fellowship, others in residential care, those who are worried or anxious about themselves or their family and friends. We send you all our loving thoughts and prayers.

May the God of hope and peace surround you with his love and grace.

A

CHRISTMAS APPEAL

The Elders have decided not to have a Christmas Appeal this year due to the increasing demands on people’s finances.

The church has made a charitable donation of £150 to the Bideford Christmas Day event to support their work amongst the lonely and those in need. At our church meeting later in November the Treasurer will ask for suggestions of charities, local, national or international we wish to support at Christmas. We usually support 4 or 5 charities.

However, if you still wish to make a charitable donation this Christmas the Treasurer would be pleased to accept your donation and if there is a particular charity you would like to support, please indicate on the envelope. Thank you.

A
FAVOURITE HYMN:
O COME, O COME, IMMANUEL

This hymn, in its original Latin form, dates back to as long ago as the 8th century. Each verse was sung separately by monks on the seven days before Christmas in anticipation of Christmas Eve, as part of Vespers (Evening Service). At a much later date, all seven verses were amalgamated into one hymn.

Each verse begins with a call to Christ to come to Israel and the people of God to rescue them from the clutches of Satan and send them instead on the 'heavenly road', each verse being followed by a refrain which promises that Christ's appearance is imminent.

The title comes from the well-known verse from Isaiah 7:14 "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel", which in English means 'God with us'. Each verse then begins with the word O and a phrase from one of the two testaments which reflects a passage in which the birth of the Messiah is prophesied. For instance, in verse 4, "O come, O Branch of Jesse's stem," refers to Isaiah 11:1, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse". Jesse was the father of David, the second king of Israel, out of whose stock the Messiah would come. There are fifteen biblical references to be found in the verses in all.

The English translation from the Latin was made by John Mason Neale (1818-1866), an English clergyman and first appeared in 1851 in Medieval Hymns. Neale was a prodigious writer of prose, translations and hymns. Because of ill-health he was unable to pursue the normal career of a vicar, but instead ran a retirement home for poor men in the East End which he later extended to include poor women and orphans.

The hymn derives much of its sense of longing from its tune, which is based on the music from a fifteenth century French mass. It was adapted to suit Neale's words by Thomas Helmore (1811-1890). Although other tunes have been written to accompany it, this tune has proved to be the most popular by far and is called 'Veni Emmanuel' after it.

The hymn is usually sung at Advent, though many books of Christmas carols also contain it. The Irish singer Enya recorded a hauntingly beautiful version of it.
CHURCH MEETING

On Sunday 26th November 2023 worship will start at 10.30am so it can be followed by our next Church meeting at 11.30am. This enables our Minister to be present and chair the meeting. Church members will receive their agenda and papers for the meeting in November. This meeting is important to provide a place where questions on the building and fellowship at Lavington, its upkeep and management, the Minister and Elders role can be discussed and voted upon. Please make every effort to attend the meeting as you are not required to come to worship first. If unable to attend please can you send your apologies via an Elder. Thank you.

Alison Biggs church secretary

CHRISTMAS POSTBOX

The Elders have decided that this Christmas we will start using the Christmas Postbox again following a 3 year absence, due to Covid and Health and Safety restrictions.

The Lavington post-box will be in the vestibule on Sundays December 3rd and 10th

After 10th the cards will be sorted and you will be able to pick them up from church on Sundays, 17th or 24th.

Please note that - as always - the postbox can only be used to ‘post’ cards etc to folk of the Lavington family. We regret that we cannot undertake to deliver any not taken on 17th or 24th, so if you are able to deliver any, please take them. In the New Year any uncollected cards will be disposed of.

If sending one card to the whole church family, please also use the postbox. Thank you!

Editor
ECO CHURCH NEWS

Two more URC in the South Western Synod recently registered with the Eco Church Award scheme, they are Furrough Cross URC in Torquay and Plymstock United Church in Plymouth. This takes the total registered with the Eco Church scheme in South Western Synod to 46% and the total number of churches with awards to 29%.

Revd Chris Baillie has recently retired to Lynton and is one of our Synod’s Green Apostles. Chris is the convener of the Net Zero Task Group which is helping the United Reformed Church ensure that we reduce our carbon emissions to zero by 2030. Whilst this is a significant challenge to meet in the next seven years, it is possible particularly by using carbon offsetting schemes. Eventually we should be able to achieve zero emissions by using renewable energy sources for all our needs.

Rob

PREMISES NEWS

It is hoped that the scaffolding by the Willet Street entrance will shortly be removed, confirming that Devon Glass have now completed the installation and painting of the new window and frame above the hall. The Elders have recently received quotes for the removal of the immersion heater in the upstairs room and this work should begin soon, thanks to our plumber Daniel Prouse. Once his work has been completed, we will be able to instruct Braddicks to fit the carpets upstairs and the vinyl flooring in the upstairs room.

Rob

Christmas Cracker Joke.

*What did the snowman say to the other snowman? Can you smell carrots?*
STIR UP SUNDAY / PLUM PUDDING

Stir Up Sunday is the popular name for the Sunday before Advent Sunday. By tradition it was the last occasion on which Christmas cakes and puddings could be made if they were to be ready for December 25th.

Surprisingly, the name *Stir Up Sunday has nothing whatsoever to do with stirring up the pudding mixture!* It was called *Stir Up Sunday* after the Collect for that day: *Stir up we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people, that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works; may be plenteously rewarded.*

As the Sundays of the Church year are governed by the moveability of Easter, Stir Up Sunday does not fall on the same Sunday each year but is always the Sunday before Advent.

WHAT STAR SHALL WE FOLLOW

How ancient and lovely this news from afar,
    a baby, a mother, the kings from afar,
Come close now, Lord Jesus, we ask you to stay
    and show us your face in your people today.

What star shall we follow but one that leads here
    to a baby born homeless and a family in fear?
What heaven shall we long for but one that starts there
    for all the world’s children in your tender care.

We thank you, Lord Jesus, for coming to earth,
    for the light in the darkness that shone at your birth.
For life in its’ fullness, that you promise today,
    and the hope of a baby asleep on the hay.

*Sent in from P C*
*Author unknown*
Its’ that time of year again folks! You know, the time of year when we are constantly renewing subscriptions for everything for the next year! Connexions continues to thrive and we are able to keep the cost at 50p per magazine.

However, the cost of postage has increased greatly – from 68p at the start of 2023 to 75p per stamp now, so to post 10 copies to you will cost £7.50. If you can’t pick up your copy from church, we would appreciate it very much if you could contribute to this cost or we could keep your copy each month if you would call in at Lavington on a Tuesday morning at our weekly coffee mornings and pick it up then.

For those of you who regularly pay for your postage – because you live away, non-churchgoers, friends of Lavington etc, please continue to do so. We thank you for your generosity.

Please complete the form below and give it with your payment (cash or cheque) to Janet Palmer in an envelope during November, please.

Editor

Cut here ---------------------------------------------------------------

Please use this form when paying.

I enclose cash / cheque for £5 plus donation towards postage. Please make cheques payable to Lavington URC, Bideford.

NAME and surname in CAPITALS ___________________________________
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Tel; 01237 422213 e-mail goodliving@btinternet.com
Fun Page
To get you into the Festive mood can you name the titles of these carols and songs. You may need a sheet of paper to write your answers on!

1. if daddy had only seen......1,3,5,7,5,5
2. westward leading..... 2,5,5
3. and man will live for evermore......5,3,5
4. shining in the east....3,5,4
5. born this happy morning.....1,4,3,2,8
6. O what fun it is to ride....6,5
7. had to hurry on his way....6,3,7
8. look down from the sky....4,2,1,6
9. gonna find out who’s naughty and nice.....5,5,2,6,2,4
10. on Christmas day in the morning......1,3,5,5
11. peace on earth and mercy mild......4,3,6,6,4
12. my true love sent to me.....1,3,5,5
13. and heaven and nature sing.....3,2,3,5
14. I am a poor boy too.....3,6,7,3
15. happy golden days of yore....4,8,1,5,6,9
16. sweet singing in the choir....3,5,3,3,3
17. I hear they are calling....3,5,2,2,5
18. follow that star....6,6
19. though the frost was cruel....4,4,9
20. above thy deep and dreamless sleep.....1,6,4,2,9
Who’s who at Lavington URC
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e-mail lavington.treasurer1@gmail.com
Enquiries for weddings and baptisms are welcomed.
Please contact Church & Hall Bookings Secretary above.

The December / January issue of Connexions is due out
on Sunday November 26th
Please give items for inclusion to Janet Palmer or send by email to
palmer.jan@tiscali.co.uk

Before or at the latest – Sunday November 19th

Connexions is edited by Janet Palmer
and printed and assembled by Jenny and Ricky Cawsey