JULY DIARY

Sun. 2nd 11.00am  Family Worship & HC – Mrs Alison Biggs
Sat. 8th 11.00am  Church Meeting – drinks from 10.30am
Sun. 9th 11.00am  Family Worship – Revd John Robinson
Sun. 16th 11.00am  Family Worship – Revd Colin Biggs
Wed. 19th 10.30am  Elders Meeting
Sun. 23rd 11.00am  Family Worship – Sabrina Gröschel
Sat. 29th 10.00 til 1pm  Summer Fayre
Sun. 30th 11.00am  Family Worship – Mrs Alison Biggs

Joint Worship with Methodists

AUGUST DIARY

Sun. 6th 11.00am  Family Worship & HC – Revd Colin Biggs
Sun. 13th 11.00am  Family Worship – The Minister
Sun. 20th 11.00am  Family Worship – Sabrina Gröschel
Thu. 24th 3.00pm  Rob’s Sabbatical and Cream Tea
Sun. 27th 11.00am  Family Worship – Revd Colin Biggs

Tuesdays 10.00am – 1.00pm: Tuesday Café & 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

Cover photograph: Westward Ho! beach
Dear Friends,

‘Summertime and the living is easy’ words from a song by Gershwin from Porgy and Bess. What does summer mean to you? Cream teas, hot weather, sea and sand or gardens and trips. In the past when our children were growing up we spent time away on holiday either in France or visiting a new part of Britain. Now as we’ve become older, we avoid going away during the summer months and enjoy playing host to the children and grandchildren instead. What is important is the memories we have made and those we are yet to make. As I think back to summers in the past there are a myriad of memories that come to mind. Whatever your memories it is linked to times past. Time can leave us feeling ‘on top of the world’ or ‘down in the dumps.’ Our different life experiences are always changing and life is constantly moving forward. The passing of time brings us a variety of experiences and makes each of our lives unique.

The secret with time is to know what to do with it, fruitfully filling our God given time so our lives feel enriched and supported by our actions. In this magazine we shall read about plans to celebrate 375 years since the founding of Christian worship, a time of reflection and thanksgiving for witness in the past. We are also encouraged to meet as the present worshipping fellowship at our church meeting to discuss the way forward for this congregation in the future. Should we ignore the past or learn the lessons it teaches? Should we stand up for our beliefs or listen to others? We need to seek God’s guidance and help, for He holds time in the palm of his hand. Whatever changes and chances we face God never changes. He is the constant in whom we can trust and hope.

I often wonder where time goes. Like me are you often trying to find enough time to get everything done? Or are you fearful of what the future holds? Is it time we let go and trusted in God’s timing? Each day we need to take the opportunities we are given – moments to work and rest, time to care for others and then receive love and care from family and friends, times of wonder in creation and space to worship and reflect spiritually. In August we shall welcome our Minister and his wife back from their time in Europe. They will share with us time spent away recharging their batteries. There are
times we know that God has been our travelling companion, guiding our feet and leading us forward. We believe that whatever the future may bring, whatever challenges we face or trials we may have to endure, God will be there giving us the strength and resources we need and a faith that cannot be shaken. During this summer period may we see time not as a threat, but a God given gift to enable us to live life to the full.

Alison Biggs

I take this opportunity and on behalf of all of us, to thank both Colin and Alison for willingly agreeing to write our opening pages for Connexions during Rob’s Sabbatical.

Editor

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AN IMPORTANT ANNIVERSARY!

This year, 2023, Lavington is celebrating 375 years since our founding in 1648. We celebrated the 350th anniversary in 1998 in a big way but times are different now and so the event will be scaled down. However, the Minister and Elders felt that it should be remembered and celebrated.

This anniversary is not to be confused with celebrating the number of years we have worshipped on this site in Bridgeland St. which is now 327. In 2021 we should have celebrated 325 years on this site but because of Covid and lockdowns etc we were not able to do so.

So, we will have a founding celebration on the weekend of September 16th – 17th and we very much hope that you will be able to attend. We will also be inviting friends and guests.

The only thing that is planned at this stage is that the Revd Michael Hodgson (1987 – 1993) will share the Sunday morning worship with Rob. Michael is the only one of our past Ministers who has not yet retired so it will be lovely to see him here again. His current pastorate is in Weybridge, Surrey.

If you have any suggestions as to how to celebrate on the Saturday afternoon, please speak to any of the Elders fairly soon, so that suggestions can be pooled and decided on. Following the celebrations, we will share an Anniversary Tea together.

As there will not be another Connexions until the end of August I need to bring this to your notice now in the Summer Connexions. Don’t miss out, reserve the date in your diary now, September 16th and 17th! There will be a reminder in the September Connexions.

Ed.

JOINT SERVICE

Just a gentle reminder that our next joint service with our Methodist friends will take place on Sunday July 30th. This service will be at Lavington and led by Mrs Alison Biggs.
Can you believe it, we are half way through the year already! How scary is that? Best not to think about it really, just take it a day at a time!

Here are the birthday friends for July –

M H  
B J  
J D  
E G  

12\textsuperscript{th}  
15\textsuperscript{th}  
19\textsuperscript{th}  
22\textsuperscript{nd}  

Just one birthday in August  
G M  
4\textsuperscript{th}  

Your Lavington friends wish you all very happy birthdays and send you love and best wishes for your own special day.

In July we have 3 couples celebrating wedding anniversaries. R and S celebrate theirs on 21\textsuperscript{st} and co-incidentally on the same date, S and J will be celebrating theirs also. The 2 couples were married many years apart though. The third couple celebrating are P and M J on 24\textsuperscript{th}.

In August we have 2 couples celebrating anniversaries. C and A B have theirs on 5\textsuperscript{th} and on 21\textsuperscript{st} H and J V will celebrate theirs. Congratulations to both couples. Your Lavington friends send love and good wishes to all five couples. We hope you all enjoy your own special day.

\textit{Ed.}

\textbf{Just think}.......Chocolate covered raisins, cherries, orange slices and strawberries all count as fruit so eat as many as you want!
w/c 2nd
We are having an exceptionally warm and sunny spring and summer and we are grateful for this, but we now need plenty of rain to help our crops to grow and to keep the reservoirs full. It would be good if you could send us the sun during the day and the rain during the night to keep us all happy.

w/c 9th
We hope, probably in vain, that the war in Ukraine will stop, saving the lives of both Ukrainians and Russians. Hopefully, this will lead to the repatriation of refugees to their home countries and the return of the world’s economies to reasonable levels again.

w/c 16th
Let us pray that the better summer weather will not lead to more economic migrants travelling illegally across the Mediterranean and the English Channel in search of a better life, instead of fighting for their lives in unseaworthy vessels, as we have just witnessed off the coast of Greece, with a possible death toll of more than 700.

w/c 23rd
Let us think about the people of this country; those falling into debt and poverty because of high mortgage rates or high levels of rent, high energy prices, high food bills and especially those who have added problems such as illness, disability, the need for carers and all the myriad of other problems that accompany modern life.

w/c 30th
We pray also for the well-being of those people who will be coming to the West Country for a holiday this summer. May those of us who will be going on holiday, either in this country or abroad and those who, out of choice or necessity, will be staying at home, have a good time and come back refreshed in the autumn. May you be with us all in whatever we choose to do.
We ask all these things in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.  C
INVITATION TO A CREAM TEA

Time is marching on, as they say! Before we know it, Rob’s sabbatical will be over. By the time you receive this, 2 of his 3month break will have come and gone. He will return to work on August 1st and I know we will all be pleased to see him again.
With that in mind the Elders have already invited Rob and Suzy to come over in August and tell us all about their Sabbatical and time in Europe. I’m sure they will have plenty to share with us. Hopefully they will bring Poppy with them. Following that we will all share a Cream Tea together.
The date is **Thursday August 24th at 3pm** in the halls. Please do come and enjoy this unique occasion.

___________________________________________________________

WATCH THIS SPACE!

Our good friends at Muddiford URC have kindly invited us for a Cream Tea at their church on a Thursday afternoon in August. The Elders are currently negotiating a date with them. We will let you know the date as soon as it is arranged.
You may remember that 2/3 years ago after Covid when Jill arranged a series of summer social activities - which we called *Holiday at Home* – on that occasion Jill arranged a visit to Muddiford with a Cream Tea.

*Ed.*

___________________________________________________________

CHURCH MEETING

A reminder that on Saturday 8th July at 11am we shall be holding our next Church meeting. Refreshments will be served in the church halls from 10.30am and the meeting will start at 11am.
Paperwork will be available from 25th June. Please make every effort to attend or if unable to, send in your apologies via any Elder. Thank you.

*Alison Biggs, church sec.*
HOW QUASIMODO GOT HIS NAME

Even if you haven’t read the novel ‘The Hunchback of Notre Dame’ by Victor Hugo, you’ll have seen the film (or excerpts from it) where the main character played by Charles Laughton, is called Quasimodo, but have you ever wondered why he has such a strange name?

Quasimodo is born a hunchback and because of his deformity, is spurned by his parents who leave him in Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris where, in medieval times, people used to leave orphans and deformed children. He is found by Father Frollo who calls him Quasimodo. This is because he was found on the Sunday after Easter, which we call Low Sunday but which in the Catholic Church is sometimes called Quasimodo Sunday.

The reason that it is given this name is that the opening words for the service for the day when the priest approaches the altar is ‘Like new-born infants’, or, in Latin, “Quasi modo geniti infantes’. The full text is from 1 Peter 2: 2, which is “Like the new born infants you are, you must crave for pure milk (spiritual milk, I mean), so that you may thrive upon it to your souls’ health. Surely you have tasted that the Lord is good.”

On this day, in the Catholic Church the congregation is called to remember its newest members, whether they are people taking their first communion or are recent converts, where they are likened to new-born children who need nourishment from the church in order to grow spiritually.

The medical term for hunchback is congenital kyphosis and is caused by a collapsed vertebra in the neck, causing the head to grow outwards rather than upwards, and thus produces a hump in the back. It is difficult to detect in new-born children but thankfully these days it can be corrected by surgery and is therefore a rare condition.
JULY ROTAS

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

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OFFERTORY STEWARDS Mr & Mrs R C
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OFFERTORY STEWARDS: Mrs A B / Miss J S
NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY

It is a joy to have J C with us again in the worshipping fellowship and hope she will not have to wait too long before her second hip operation which will mean she is pain free. P C is now home and receiving care so she can become more mobile. She is always pleased to hear from Lavington folk and we send her our love and prayers. Our editor, J P has shingles and we hope that it will heal quickly J without causing too much pain or discomfort. We remember S M, our organist, following the sad passing of her much-loved dog, Zico. Hopefully H M will have received good news which will aid her mobility following her recent scan. We also pray for C and L W as they worry about family health issues.

Unfortunately, P J has had a nasty accident involving a sharp knife which means he has severed tendons in the index finger of his left hand. Following visits to 3 hospitals he finally received treatment in Exeter. His finger is splinted for the next 6 – 8 weeks which restricts his gardening activities and means he cannot drive. P, we hope the finger will have healed well once the splint is removed.

Welcome news from M M is that she has become a Great Grandmother for the 13th time, a baby boy named Teddy John. M says she is sure he won’t be unlucky but it is certainly a blessing. Congratulations M to you and the family.

There are others we miss from our fellowship because they can no longer attend worship, are in residential care, are anxious or worried about themselves or their family and friends. We send you all our loving thoughts and prayers. Together may we gain strength and courage from the God of hope, love and peace.

A

Smile awhile

A woman went to the Post Office to buy some stamps for her Christmas cards. The clerk asked her, “What denomination?” “Oh, good heavens! Have we come to this? said the woman. Well, give me 25 Catholic ones and 25 URC ones!”

13
Lavington URC
Summer Fayre

Saturday 29th July 2023

10am to 1pm

Coffees/Teas

Cakes/Savouries

New Stall

Raffle

Bric a Brac

All welcome

Gifts / savouries for stalls are welcomed
Recently the Christian Aid committee have met for a regular meeting and I can report back to you a number of things that are happening etc.

Firstly, and sadly, we are having to say goodbye to Lindsey Brading, our longstanding Secretary of 8 years who has been the Secretary every committee would wish for. She has given selflessly of her time and commitment and in thanking her, our Chairman presented her with a Garden Centre voucher on behalf of the committee.

It is expected that a new Secretary will be appointed at our next meeting in August.

Our Treasurer is pleased with what we have raised so far during Christian Aid Week but she is still waiting for a couple of churches to send their collections to her. Some churches raise monies throughout the year and added to the Christian Aid Week collections we already have £2535. Lavington’s contribution was £230. Hopefully, the final figure will be published in our next Connexions.

The musical concert we organised for May 19th with South Molton Town Band and the South Molton Methodist Circuit Choir raised an amazing £602. This money will be used to support the Christian Aid Malawi Appeal. If you were there and contributed in any way to that magnificent amount, we thank you for your support.

Other events for the remainder of 2023 are the annual Summer Supper on July 26th which will be held at Bideford Baptist Church this year at 6pm. Rather than a fixed price for the supper, we are asking for donations with a recommendation of a minimum £6 per person, please.

Later, in September, the annual Quiz will be held on September 8th at Lavington at 7pm. Teams of up to 6 persons, £5 per person to include hot drinks and cake. More details nearer the time.

The annual Carol Concert will be held at High St Methodist Church on Tuesday December 5th, at 6pm. We have already started to book choirs for this concert.

*J P and L Lavington’s reps*
FAVOURITE HYMN:
WILL YOUR ANCHOR HOLD

This rousing hymn was written in 1882 by Priscilla Jane Owen, who lived in Baltimore, Maryland, USA, of Irish-Welsh descent. Born in 1829, she belonged to the Union Square Methodist Episcopal Church in that city. She worked there for fifty years as a youth worker and Sunday School teacher and was a prolific writer of hymns for children as well as adults.

This hymn was inspired by the passage in Hebrews, chapter 6, v.19, referring to God’s promises to us: ‘It is like an anchor in our lives, an anchor safe and sure’, where she uses the anchor as a metaphor to describe how the Christian faith can act as a bulwark against adversity in life: “When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain,
Will your anchor drift or firm remain?’

The music was written by William J. Kirkpatrick (1838-1921), who was born in County Tyrone in Ireland, but whose parents emigrated to the USA when he was very young and settled in Duncannon, Pennsylvania. He later moved to Philadelphia in the same state where he studied music and carpentry and where he became proficient at a number of instruments including the cello, fife, flute, organ and violin, as well as vocal music and became a very able cabinet-maker.

He belonged to the same denomination as Priscilla, involved himself in the life of the local church and with his musical talent became a prolific writer of hymn-tunes. By the end of his career, he had published about 1000 of them and in conjunction with others, published about 50 volumes of hymnals, which sold millions of copies.

He started life as a cabinet-maker, but as his composing progressed, this became a full-time occupation.

He is best remembered for writing the music to ‘Away in a Manger’. He married twice and with his second wife he travelled all over the world.

The hymn was later adopted as the anthem of the Boys’ Brigade, which has the motto ‘Sure and steadfast’. 

C
HOW DID THEY KNOW?

Lawrence Anthony, a legend in South Africa and author of 3 books including his bestseller The Elephant Whisperer, bravely rescued wildlife and rehabilitated elephants all over the globe from human atrocities, including the courageous rescue of Baghdad Zoo animals during the US invasion in 2003.

On March 7, 2012, Lawrence Anthony died.
He is remembered and missed by his wife, 2 sons, 2 grandsons and numerous elephants.
Two days after his passing, the wild elephants showed up at his home led by two large matriarchs. Separate wild herds arrived in droves to say goodbye to their beloved man-friend.
A total of 31 elephants had patiently walked over 12 miles to get to his South African House.
Witnessing this spectacle, humans were obviously in awe not only because of the supreme intelligence and precise timing that these elephants sensed about Lawrence’s passing, but also because of the profound memory and emotion the beloved animals evoked in such an organized way, walking slowly for days and making their way in a solemn one-by-one queue from their habitat to his house.
Lawrence’s wife, Francoise, was especially touched, knowing that the elephants had not been to his house prior to that day for well over 3 years; but they knew where they were going.
The elephants obviously wanted to pay their deep respect, honouring their friend who’d saved their lives – so much respect that they stayed for 2 days and 2 nights without eating anything.
Then, one morning they left, making their long journey home....... 

Ed.
PREMISES

As part of the ongoing refurbishment of the upper rooms, the stairlift has now been fitted. Unfortunately, our whole refurbishment programme has slowed down considerably because since the end of Covid it has not been possible to employ the necessary skilled workmen to finish the outstanding work. However, we continue to persevere and the fitting of the stairlift is another project we can tick off the list!

Another job we have been waiting a long time for is the replacing the triangular window and frame in the hall. In Rob’s absence the church secretary has continued to press Devon Glass to complete this, but unsuccessfully thus far. This of course is why the scaffolding is still up by the back door. Until that job is done it can’t be taken down.

Also, we can report that this week Andy of Hiax has started the planned work on the exterior of the building which is scheduled for this summer. This will not impact our summer activities in any way.

The Elders

A LESSON IN LYING

A Minister told his congregation, “Next Sunday I plan to preach about the sin of lying. To help you understand my sermon, I want you all to read Mark Chapter 17”.

The following Sunday, as he prepared to deliver his sermon, the Minister asked for a show of hands. He wanted to know how many had read Mark Chapter 17 and almost every hand went up.

The Minister smiled and said, “Mark’s Gospel only has 16 chapters! I will now proceed with my sermon on the sin of lying”

Answers to June Fun
Fun Page

What’s my name (girls)

1. 6th month (4)
2. Between A – Z (3)
3. She lives in a cage (5)
4. Belief (5)
5. Prosecute (3)
6. Knitting stitch (5)
7. Former coin (5)
8. Apple pudding (9)
9. A bird (5)
10. Early in the morning (4)
11. A herb (8)
12. Clinger (3)
13. On the moors (7)
14. Contrary gardener (4)
15. Past resident of number 10 (6)
16. Jack’s companion (4)
17. A nut case (5)
18. Happy (3)
19. Yes, she is a fruit (10)
20. A song at Christmas (5)
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Enquiries for weddings and baptisms are welcomed.
Please contact Church & Hall Bookings Secretary above.

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Please give items for inclusion to Janet Palmer or send by email to
lavington.connexions@gmail.com
Before or at the latest – Sunday August 20th

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