

# The Edgemoor Mission Community

Message from the Archdeacon

Introduction and Profile

And

Parish Profiles

DIOCESE  
OF EXETER  
 THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  
IN DEVON

The Edgemoor Group of Parishes

Charles, Hestray, Nympton, Mollten, Twitchen, Bishops Nympton, Mariansleigh, Rose Ash, Knowstone, East Anstey, West Anstey, Molland





## **A message from the Archdeacon of Barnstaple:**

This post presents a fantastic opportunity for an imaginative and creative priest to work with a committed group of parishes seeking to deepen their working together as a Mission Community, to bring together churches and communities, and to grow in faith and discipleship. We would hope that the right candidate will bring experience, energy and innovation to this role of Team Rector, as part of a committed ministry team, lay and ordained.

In a recent meeting the CWs expressed their readiness to embrace the possibility of encouraging first incumbents to apply – a person of prayer who will bring new and fresh ideas; a person who will walk alongside the very able ministry team (lay & ordained), treasuring the old but also challenging and encouraging us to try new ways.

### **Our Diocesan Vision**

We seek to be people who together are:

#### **Growing in Prayer**

Prayer is conversation with God and is part of a healthy Christian life. Prayer is a life-giving activity that opens up deep places within us to God's transforming grace. It is essential if we are to become the people and the Church God calls us to be.

#### **Making new disciples**

As the Christian story is less and less known, we must find new ways of telling the story, of explaining the faith and giving a reason for the hope that is in us. With Jesus Christ as our companion and guide, we can travel through life differently.

#### **Serving the people of Devon with joy**

As followers of Jesus Christ, we want to make a difference in the world and make God's love and justice known. In our church life, we seek to be local, participatory, and outward-looking.

Further information regarding our Diocesan Vision can be found in our Next Steps document at

[www.exeter.anglican.org/who-we-are/vision-strategy](http://www.exeter.anglican.org/who-we-are/vision-strategy)

#### **Living in Mission Communities**

Our strategy centres on Mission Communities - parishes working together to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ more effectively in Devon. The phrase Mission Communities sums up what we need to be as a Church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: **mission-orientated, community-focused, and locally-rooted.**

Mission Communities help us to work together and support one another better. They enable us to be more flexible in our mission and more responsive to the different contexts and cultures of Devon.

A Mission Community aims to express the fullness of the life of the Church **locally**. This will include:

- regular prayer and worship
- pastoral care
- evangelism and mission, often in collaboration with ecumenical partners
- opportunities for learning, teaching, nurture and growth for disciples of all ages
- youth and children's work and worship
- equipping members for ministry in the community and helping the local Church to grow and develop
- connecting with the local community, especially in service to the poor
- good stewardship of time, resources and buildings

If our Mission Communities are to flourish, they need to be more than just a structure. They need to live and embody the life of Jesus Christ and to share that life with others. Jesus came so that we can have life in all its fullness. That is our vision and our hope for the Church in Devon.

In this Profile, you will find something of the vision and challenges of this Mission Community. I commend it to your study and prayer as you seek to discern your next step in ministry.

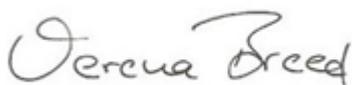
### **Deanery & Diocese**

The Mission Community falls within the Archdeaconry of Barnstaple, and so under the care of the Bishop of Crediton. The Edgemoor MC is in the South Molton Deanery whose Rural Dean is The Rev'd Adrian Wells. Adrian is a member of the Little Dart MC.

In the Diocese of Exeter, we are working together to live out our three diocesan priorities - to grow in prayer, to make new disciples and to serve the people of Devon with joy. We aim to be a diverse and truly representative diocese, and particularly welcome applications from women and those from minority ethnic groups. Not only is Devon a beautiful place to call home, but we believe the Diocese of Exeter is a great community of which to be a part.

You are warmly invited to contact me directly if you would like a confidential conversation about the post.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Diocese.



The Venerable Verena Breed

Archdeacon of Barnstaple

We are striving to be an inclusive diocese and welcome all suitably qualified applicants

# Introduction to the Edgemoor Mission Community



*Beautiful rolling fields amongst large areas of moorland are typical of the landscape of the area. In this view from the southern edge of Exmoor looking across Molland Parish, Dartmoor can be seen on the horizon. Photo: M Hammick*

The Edgemoor Mission Community consists of ten rural parishes within, or near, the south-western part of Exmoor National Park. All are within easy reach of the A361 North Devon Link Road, the main centre of Barnstaple and the local market town of South Molton. There are good rail and road links to the rest of the country at Tiverton Parkway station and the junction with the M5. There are renowned surfing and bathing beaches, and rocky coves on the North Devon coast, all a short drive away (or perhaps a good bike-ride for the more active).



Edgemoor lies to the east and north of South Molton, in the district of North Devon. The main part of the Community is within easy reach of the North Devon Link Road, with others close to the edge of Exmoor.



*Looking south-east from Exmoor to the heart of Edgemoor-country. Photo: M Hammick*

Exmoor is a very special area of rare beauty, recently designated as the North Devon Biosphere, the first of six to be designated in the UK, as part of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme

Exmoor is 267 square miles of rolling hills, deep wooded valleys, windswept moorland plains, and rugged coast—with only a handful of quaint villages and hamlets and upland farmland, criss-crossed by tall beech hedges and deep lanes. The areas of wild grass and heather are grazed by a combination of sheep, cattle and the descendants of the ancient breed of Exmoor ponies, as well as herds of red deer.

The low levels of light-pollution mean that Exmoor was one of the first ever designated European Dark-Skies areas and has been granted International Dark-Sky Reserve (IDR) status by the International Dark-Sky Association. This means the night-sky is protected and lighting controls are in place to prevent light pollution. All this makes it a haven for astronomers, but also for wildlife that can be badly affected by artificial light.



Weather on the moor can be a bit bleak in winter, but mild and sunny in the summer, and the many deep valleys provide both shelter and shade for animals and plants. Indeed, Exmoor is noted for its rich flora and fauna, as well as its clean air. For many of us this also means very productive vegetable gardens and the high quality of local produce is well known.

Camping, hiking, biking and riding are major pastimes in North Devon, and all sorts of sporting activities are catered for in the towns of South Molton and Barnstaple. For example, one important sporting venue is the Tarka Tennis Centre in Barnstaple, with sessions for all levels from beginners to National standards.

There are many campsites, riding-stables and outward-bound centres, as well as a sailing club and good trout fishing at Wimbleball Lake, and the North Devon Yacht club at Instow. There are some great pubs and restaurants on the coast as well as in local villages and towns.



*Barnstaple is the main town in the area and has a wide range of shops and services including hospitals and schools etc. Photo: Dietmar Rabich / Wikimedia Commons / "Barnstaple (Devon, UK), Clock Tower"*

The main towns range in character from the more tourist-oriented areas of the north coast to the inland market towns supporting the mainly rural, farming communities further south. The main supermarket chains have delivery services throughout the region: including Asda, Waitrose, Sainsburys, Tesco and some local shops and greengrocers also deliver.

The area is well-served by local schools from small, village-based primaries through to sixth-form colleges in the main towns. Petroc College is based in three locations in Barnstaple and Tiverton, a short drive down the A361 Link Road. Petroc offers a range of Further and Higher education courses. The people reflect the changes that have been taking place throughout the country over the last 40 or more years. The old, somewhat isolated communities have been opening up and increasing numbers of younger families with children are settling in the area. That said, North Devon is still remarkably unspoilt, with rural communities able to absorb the "newcomers" whilst retaining many of the qualities of "Old Devon".

One of the greatest recent technical changes has, of course, been the internet. Rural Devon has not been well served by internet providers up to now, but recent initiatives mean that there are more and more fibre-optic and microwave links available for both business and residential use. It is government policy to ensure this improvement continues, and most church- and everyday-business is based upon the regular and reliable use of the internet.

### **Edgemoor is a wonderful place to live!**



*Sunset over the western edge of Exmoor Photo: M Hammick*

## Introduction to the Edgemoor Mission Community

We are a Benefice of ten Parishes and eleven Churches, spread along the western and southern edge of Exmoor. We are mostly small and wide-spread villages, each with unique characteristics. Although we have many families with young children, our congregations and PCCs are mostly drawn from the older people of each community.



*A service on the Village Green, Rose Ash Photo: M Hammick*

With such a large Mission Community, we have an informal split into two groups of parishes. Our newly appointed Team Vicar (previously a curate in the Mission Community), has responsibility for 4 Parishes – Bishops Nympton, Mariansleigh, Rose Ash and Knowstone (please refer to the map on page 4), while a new Team Rector (you?) will have overall responsibility for the Mission Community, as well as specific responsibility for the remaining 6 Parishes. This will enable our Clergy team to focus on mission development in a discrete group of churches, to get to know the local people and churches.

We are a strong and well managed Benefice with an active Ministry team (retired, part-time and lay leaders), supported by a united group of Churchwardens, making for a strong and cohesive Mission Community. Churchwardens meet regularly to review the work, sharing of tasks and plan the way forward – if anything the departure of our previous leaders has made us even stronger and collaborative.

After the departure of our previous Team Rector and Vicar in late 2021, our PCCs, Churchwardens and Ministry Team (non-stipendiary and retired clergy, and lay volunteers), were quick to re-organise service rotas and take on the burden of administrative work for the Benefice, as well as to provide Ministry and Pastoral support to the wide-spread communities.

It is important that we stress, therefore, that our Parishes are now well-placed to handle a substantial proportion of the administrative work for the Mission Community. This, combined with appropriate administrative and secretarial support, will free up time for our clergy to be “priests”, and for pastoral and other community activities will be available to support a new Team Rector.

Our congregations, the Team Vicar, active ministry team and all our Church officers are much looking forward to working with a new Team Rector to expand the Church in the Edgemoor Mission Community.

## Our Vision

We are very much on a journey, and we hope and pray that YOU will walk with us, leading, encouraging, nurturing, and challenging us. We are seeking to grow as disciples and in our discipleship. In our Mission and Ministry we seek to embrace people in our communities who might want to explore their spiritual needs, and especially to encompass all generations.

Our vision for local schools includes increased involvement by clergy and well-supported lay teams. We are reaching out to our local schools and want to develop and strengthen further the Church’s links with the future generations in our communities.

Our churches are vibrant parts of local communities; we want to be good, loving neighbours, sharing our skills, with each of us using the gifts God gives us, led by our Rector and Vicar, and with the support of the rest of the Ministry Team.

We can see growing room and need someone with fresh eyes, ideas and enthusiasm to show us the way. We are keen to develop both our own faith and that of others who are not currently part of the Christian community. We are aware that, without this vision, our rural churches will not survive.



*All Saints church, North Molton, is at the administrative heart of the Edgemoor Group.*

We know that community and individual worship, being underpinned by prayer and led by the Holy Spirit, are key to achieving all of the above. We are also aware that it is not easy to distil a “single vision” for all ten parishes into a cohesive whole; we will all have different priorities, strengths and weaknesses in our various communities.

But our parishes work together well, supporting each other, sharing skills and other (although we can always do better in this regard).

### Tasks and Responsibilities

We have shared and discussed our view of the tasks and responsibilities that a new Team Rector, and Team Vicar, will have across our ten Parishes as follows:

- To provide inspirational leadership to the Ministry team and the ten Parishes, encouraging unity and cooperation
- To be clearly visible in our communities as much as possible, engaging in pastoral work and joining in community events.
- To recruit, train and support Lay Ministers (licensed and non-licensed), so that they can take on delegated tasks and roles within a capable and creative combined Ministry Team.
- To develop a readily identifiable leader in each Parish (in this Diocese called “focal ministers”), whether clergy or laity, to whom that community can turn; and to delegate authority to those leaders in order that they can then work as a broader Ministry Team to bring the word of Christ to all.
- To grow a volunteer team to give administrative support to the Benefice, as well as in spiritual and pastoral roles already described, to work more effectively as a team to “Free our Churches to be Church”.
- To lead and develop various forms of worship.

### We are looking for a Team Rector who:

- Has an appreciation for, and clear understanding of, the beauty and demands of a Rural Ministry.
- Has an understanding of, and is willing to learn about, the complexities and challenges of running a large Benefice, each parish of which has its own special character and needs.
- Who is:
  - a prayerful Rector, who loves people, and who will lead a multi-generational Christian community;

- someone who will relish being part of our communities by building relationships with people of many different understandings and spiritualities.
- Can lead us in worship which:
  - Fits in with the traditions and character of our congregations and communities, and help develop our Christian lives.
  - Includes fresh expressions of church, in activities such as messy church, café church, virtual church etc.
  - Is innovative in the use of creative channels of communication such as social media to reach out to all age-groups.
  - Unites us in our Parishes and brings those Parishes closer by example through prayer, teaching and preaching.
  - Will work fruitfully with our Team Vicar and the wider ministry team; and,
  - is able to communicate his or her faith in meaningful ways to all, including both church- and non-church-goers.
- Will encourage and grow more lay participation, including people who have taken part in training courses such as Wings for Worship and Foundations in Christian Ministry.
- Understands how to lead but is happy to delegate tasks and roles to others, remembering the importance of the word “Team” in the job-title, and is able to understand and demonstrate the value of delegating responsibilities, encouraging and enabling others to flourish.

(Oh – and a full driving-licence is an essential for this post, as is a willingness to venture out in all weathers and seasons. A four-wheel drive vehicle would be an asset – though we are willing to give lifts in adverse weather if needed!)



*A not untypical winter's scene on the edge of the Moor.*

*Photo M P Hammick*

### What we have to offer

We may not have an immense footfall in our Churches, although attendances can be high for special events during the year. But, as a percentage of the community served, our attendance is higher than for many urban churches.

Our Churches are important for another reason in that they might well be the only “public place” available in a village. They are often used for other activities, such as concerts or exhibitions and have built up many loyal supporters. Even those who profess not to have faith still believe in the value of the Church in the community and provide us with a lot of support for this reason.

The parishes recognise their responsibility to provide a core administrative service to the Team Rector and Vicar, and the new Incumbents will have a supportive clergy and lay team, as well as

many others who wish to assist in freeing them from the administrative burden. We hope that this will allow them to work according to their calling.

We have worked on setting in place a good Ministry Team, and by the time the new incumbent is appointed, we expect to have the following people in place:

- A Team Vicar (already in post)
- Two associate priests, part time SSM
- Two active retired priests holding PTOs
- A licensed reader
- A pastoral assistant

Also, we appreciate the importance of some downtime for our priests. We encourage and support the need for a weekly break, with a day or so off-duty, and recognise the importance of a periodic sabbatical, or retreat, to revitalise and strengthen them.

### The Vicarage

A pleasant, four-bedroom vicarage is located in the village of North Molton.

It is a modern, four-bedroomed, detached house in its own grounds, ten minutes' walk from the church, with its own driveway curving down from the main street.

It is not overlooked, being secluded by mature trees and shrubs. The south facing house has magnificent views over adjacent farmland and towards Exmoor.

The accommodation comprises:

- Entrance lobby with door into the hallway which has stairs leading to the first floor.
- There is a large living room with patio doors and a large well fitted kitchen/dining room with room off currently used as an ironing and sewing room. The kitchen door leads to a utility room with WC, the study and the back door which has a small recess with boiler-room off, containing a combi-boiler and rail for clothes airing.
- On the first floor there are four double bedrooms with fitted wardrobes, two having the benefit of a wash basin and a bathroom with bath, shower cubicle and W.C. There is a large linen cupboard on the landing with cupboards above.
- The study, which links the garage to the house, has the benefit of separate access to the driveway via a lobby with large storage cupboard and internal door to the garage which in turn has a door to the garden. The driveway has parking for a number of vehicles.
- The house which is double glazed throughout, has oil-fired central heating and an open fire in the living room.
- There is a good-sized garden, laid to lawn on the west and south sides, this area having a very small pond, a greenhouse and gates at either end, and a large vegetable patch.

### Lay and local support

Each of our Parishes has a strong and loyal (if small) team to support and develop the church in their respective communities. The lay members and congregations provide local links into our communities, welcoming new residents, organising community activities, and spreading the Word of God to all.

Our previous Team Rector and Team Vicar left/retired at the same time in October 2021, after many years of ministering to all. The support of our ministry team of clergy and lay leaders was, therefore,

crucial in the re-establishment of a rota of services as we, in common with the rest of the nation, emerged from the worst of the Covid-restrictions.

As already mentioned, the “Virtual” services have continued, albeit in a slightly different format, and now include a weekly “Local House of Prayer”, and monthly “Evening Meditations”, led by an incredible volunteer lay team. Our previous Vicar set up a weekly, online, combined newsletter and sermon, and this is something that we would like to consider for the future – together with any other such ideas.



Exmoor Ponies grazing on the southern edge of the moor, a few weeks after the foaling season Photo: M Hammick

### Summary

The Edgemoor Mission Community is a truly rural Benefice of ten parishes located in one of the most beautiful parts of Southwest England. The communities are traditional in character, although new and younger people are slowly moving into the area.

We face many challenges typical in today’s church but have identified the ways in which we believe we can address those problems and build on our successes to date.

We are looking for a Team Rector to join the Team Vicar, and who should be ready to provide strong, encouraging leadership, but also to increase the involvement of Lay Ministers, and be active and visible in the parishes.

### Conclusion

We believe that we have provided a true picture of the Benefice, as well as some of our main aims for the future, and some of the qualities we seek in a new incumbent. We hope that this will give potential applicants enough information to decide whether to apply for the post.

We are of course very happy to answer further questions and to arrange for anyone to spend time with us to see what we are all about “for real”!

This is a beautiful and relatively unspoilt part of the country, a lovely place to live and work. We hope that you might consider joining us in this Green and Pleasant Land. Have a look at us at

<https://www.edgemoorparishes.org.uk>



### Useful links

The following links take you to useful and informative sites for more information about the area. The Instagram sites are primarily photographs – but also lead to other similar sites which deal with more specific aspects of life on the Moor and its environs.

<https://www.iknow-uk.com/articles/north-devon-tourist-information>

<https://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/>

<https://www.instagram.com/nationaltrustsouthwest/>

<https://www.instagram.com/visitdevon/>

<https://www.instagram.com/exmoor.experience/>

[https://www.instagram.com/exmoor\\_national\\_park/](https://www.instagram.com/exmoor_national_park/)

<https://www.darksytelescopehire.co.uk/exmoor-dark-sky-experience>

<https://www.northdevonbiosphere.org.uk/>

<https://www.luttrellarms.co.uk/blog/latest-news/stargazing-on-exmoor-europes-first-dark-sky-reserve>

## **Parish Profiles**

Bishops Nympton

Charles

East Anstey

High Bray

Knowstone

Mariansleigh

Molland

North Molton + Twitchen

Rose Ash

West Anstey

Zoom Church

## St Mary's, Bishop's Nympton



Bishop's Nympton, with a population of some 1200, is a growing village within one of the largest rural parishes in North Devon, situated three miles from the market town of South Molton. The area is primarily based on agriculture and there are several local farming families who have worked the land here for generations, although a wide range of occupations and professions are now represented.

Bishop's Nympton Primary School and Pre-School are linked to East Anstey Primary School, forming the Exmoor Link Federation of Schools.

The modern Community Centre is used by a variety of social and activity groups. It is a very popular venue for wedding receptions and private parties. A highly successful Community Shop, manned by volunteers, has been running for ten years. More recently a popular Community Club has been established.

There is a thrice-daily bus service to and from South Molton and we have easy access to the North Devon Link Road (the A361).

Our worshipping community is predominately aged over 50, although there is a strong desire to encourage younger families to join us. As our worship gently moves away from the "traditional" to a "more relaxed" format, we do our best to include those who find change difficult. Welcome and fellowship are our strong points.

Our usual monthly pattern of Sunday services include: one Holy Communion, one Morning Prayer and one Breakfast Church (All-Age Worship). Mid-week services comprise one Holy Communion, two of Celtic Prayer and a Local House of Prayer meeting, which backs up the "Bishnym Neighbours" pastoral-care group.

With the recent closure of the village's Methodist Chapel, we have lost our time of joint worship with our Methodist brothers and sisters. However, this has not stopped our continued shared provision of a well-supported, monthly, Community Sunday Lunch, or their welcome attendance at some of our services.

For the past 45 years Bishop's Nympton has hosted a Summer Club that has been open to all children of primary-school age in the surrounding area. This is now run by the Edgemoor Group; hopefully this will be able to resume once the current pandemic is under control.

Pre-Covid, ordinary service attendance was, on average, 20: for festivals, the church would be filled to full capacity. Breakfast Church became very popular as more families joined, some coming from "Budding Bishops", a mother and baby/toddler-group held in the Parish Hall. We also ran "Team Tabasco", a well-attended youth-group, which met informally for Bible-study and pizza at the vicarage. We know that we must work hard to re-build all of these.

### The church

St Mary the Virgin is a large, Grade 1 listed church in the centre of the village, with one of the tallest towers in the county. It dates mainly from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, although some parts are much older, and its history and architectural qualities attract many visitors.

The tower houses a peal of six bells which are rung regularly by our own team of ringers as well as visiting teams. Indeed, St Mary's has been the venue for a number of bell-ringing competitions.

Inside, the church has a peaceful air, with its wagon roofs, medieval chancel-roof, and a spacious interior with a lovely arcade. At the rear of the church there is an attractive Norman font. There is a magnificent organ and we are fortunate to have two organists to play for us.

We have opened up a section of the back of the church to create a comfortable space for after-service fellowship and small worship groups. This all combines to make the church a very popular venue for weddings and baptisms.

The large churchyard is maintained mainly by volunteers. Although we are in the process of raising money for essential repairs to the tower, we have continued to pay our share of the Common Fund in full. We wholly endorse the following six priorities for our next Team Rector:

- To be able to lead and enable a variety of worship
- To carry out pastoral visiting
- To be strong in preaching and teaching
- To support and train lay ministry and delegate to lay people
- To be visible and active in the wider community
- To encourage unity and cooperation between the parishes



Our particular vision is for us reach out and draw younger members of our community into our church family, and we are so delighted that the new Team Vicar is in place and picking up the reins, supporting and guiding us in this work.

We believe that the appointment of a sympathetic and communicative Team Rector will only add to our ability to expand and grow the Church in our parish and we look forward to welcoming a new incumbent very soon!

#### Snapshots of life at St Mary’s Church, Bishop’s Nympton



Parish Remembrance



Breakfast Church



Story telling by Team Tabasco



Budding Bishops meeting in the Parish Hall



After service Fellowship



Outdoor service on the Green

## St John the Baptist Charles

The Church of St John the Baptist is a 17<sup>th</sup> century building situated in the village of Charles, and within a widespread area of scattered farms and houses. Although small and fairly isolated, we reach out into the community of surrounding parishes and work closely with the Methodist Church at Brayford and All Saints at High Bray. At present we have two services; the first Sunday in the month is Holy Communion at 6pm and the fourth Sunday is Lay-led Morning Prayer at 10am. On a rotational basis, every month we combine a three-church service with High Bray and Methodist Chapel.



Our church and churchyard are much loved and well cared for. The six bells are serviced and rung on occasions. The church is regarded as the nucleus of the village (there is no village hall or shop), so the door is always unlocked to welcome people at any time. The Tarka Trail is close by and walkers and cyclists regularly pass through the village; their comments in the visitors' book are always heartening to read.

Our PCC meetings are friendly and succinct. Our finances are in good order; we are up to date with all our expenses and endeavour to keep up to date with the Common Share. We donate to charities on a regular basis.

Although our services are traditional, they are well attended; we also try to attract younger people who live in our parish. Our children who have fled the nest come back to be wed and have their children baptised here; many who once lived in Charles wish to be buried here.

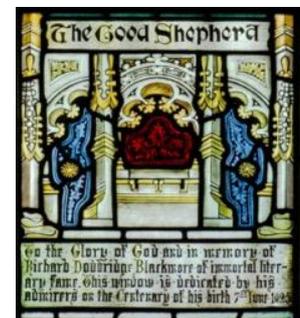
Through advertising, we make much of festivals celebrated in Charles throughout the year. For example, our harvest-festival is a tribute to all farmers; our patronal service is a tribute to St John the Baptist, and at Easter we celebrate the Resurrection of Christ. Afterwards we offer refreshments and sometimes a BBQ of locally-sourced meat/vegetarian food, and of course homemade cakes!



Our 2022 Christmas Carol service along with Charles Christmas Choir was very well attended, and afterwards we toasted the birth of Christ with mince-pies and a glass of mulled wine. It is important to mention that in the summer we held a Charles Fest of music and food, and in 2021 invited the village community for a long-overdue get-together after the covid isolation.

Events for fund-raising in recent years include concerts, a Charles yard-sale and the Lorna Doone Pageant (2019), an event of music and drama where locals, including enthusiastic teenagers, celebrated the 150th anniversary of the writing of

the Lorna Doone novel. The author, R D Blackmore, as a young person, spent time in Charles village, living in the Old Rectory with his uncle and grandfather who were the rectors, and who are buried here. A window in the church is dedicated to the novelist.



We regularly hold a 'History of Charles Exhibition' in the church depicting life through history in the area, with cream teas and libations.

We warmly welcome a new Incumbent who understands rural ministry and recognises that each of the eleven parishes has its own, unique character.

## St Michael's East Anstey



East Anstey parish includes the hamlets of Oldways End and Waddicombe with many outlying farms. Oldways End used to have a Methodist chapel and hall, which closed in 2019 and was sold. The village shop closed in 1990 and the local pub closed in 2010. Parish numbers are approximately 250 with a village primary school of around 40 pupils, mostly brought in from surrounding villages.

The Church of St Michael stands to the north side of the village and dates from approximately 1100AD. The tower is Norman and the bells are mainly late-mediaeval, dating from 1450 to 1935 (they are currently at Taylors' Foundry in Loughborough for refurbishment). In

the last ten years we have repointed the tower, re-leaded the roof, renewed all the water-fixtures and decorated the inside of the whole church. The cost was about £250,000, all of which was found with help from Heritage Lottery Fund and other grants, as well as local fundraising.

Our Common Fund and team expenses have always been met. We run a Parish Giving Scheme and, combined with the generosity of parishioners at functions, this allows us to keep our funds in good order.

Our congregation is in the 50+ age bracket and, when all are fit and not on holiday, we muster between 10 – 20 on most Sundays. We now have two clergy-led services per month: one Holy Communion and one Evening Prayer. We have one lay-led service each month, drawing from a team of five or six people willing to lead a service. The fourth Sunday is a joint service with West Anstey; this is also lay-led.

All our PCC are active members of the church and we are discussing ways to encourage more people to be members of our group and enjoy the social life of the church.

The number of parishioners on the electoral roll accounts for nearly 10% of the parish's population, showing that there is great interest in their local church. This is demonstrated more clearly in the festival services, when it is common for us to get a full church with up to 60 attending.

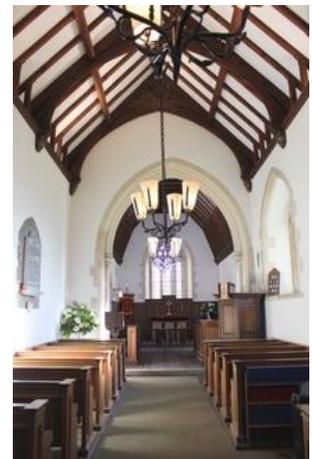
There is great potential and enthusiasm for growing the church. For example, we have for many years been able to run lay-led services when no clergy were available. This has allowed us to keep our weekly services – which are important to us. However, we recognize that we need support and encouragement to continue this.

As we have shown above, our church has a good basis upon which to grow its congregation. We have discussed having different types of services to attract more people and this will be put into action once the covid problems subside.

Additionally, we are looking at the possibility of a 'drop-in' form of clinic, supported by the clergy, to develop the role of the church within everyone's lives.



We are looking for a person who is willing and able to help us grow our church, point us in the right direction, and keep our beautiful church and community open and working with God for another thousand years at least.



## All Saints, High Bray

Our church dates back to the early 13th century; its first Vicar, William Fitz Rogo, was installed in 1267. The church is on the hill overlooking the village of Brayford, a community of approximately 300 people, surrounded by family farms. We also have a growing population of incomers from more populated areas and of young families, attracted to our rural position on the edge of Exmoor. Many of our people work in the town of Barnstaple, 14 miles to the west of the village.

Our wider community is blessed with three churches: All Saints High Bray, St John the Baptist in Charles just a mile away, and the Brayford Methodist Chapel located in the village. We work and plan together, to ensure that services and events are available to the wider community in each of our churches.



Brayford is host to the Brayford Academy, an active and creative primary-school, attended by approximately 35 students, not only from Brayford, but also from villages 15 or 20 miles away. We have a village hall in which community and private events take place during most weeks in the year, including a Village Market on every second Saturday in the month, organised and managed by members of our High Bray congregation. In addition, High Bray hosts a weekly bell-ringing session for people from the village, ringing our peal of six mediaeval bells.

Twice a year we have held “Puddings and Songs” which fills the church to its 120-seat capacity with the singing of hymns and songs; students from the academy participate in skits and plays, and members of our village tell stories of the past. High Bray also hosts community festivals at Easter, Harvest Festival, and at Christmas Eve when we have candlelit Readings and Carols, all of which fill our church with people from our wider community.

In summer, the three churches join together in an outdoor worship at Brayford Bridge in the village, followed by a barbeque, which draws in residents and visitors to our area. The academy each year puts on a Christmas play in High Bray, to “standing room only”. And High Bray hosts weekly rehearsals of the Brayford Community Singing Group.

Our worship at High Bray uses both CW and BCP services, and we have recently created a lay-led “gathering” once a month, when members of the congregation, and the village, read passages from the Bible and prayers, sing familiar hymns, and discuss a reading which someone has found challenging.

High Bray itself has ten active “participants” attending services regularly each month, with an average Sunday-service attendance of 12-14, drawn from occasional visitors, members of other parishes, and intermittent members of the congregation. High Bray’s door is never locked, and we welcome all to our services. We read many messages in our visitors’ book from those who find beauty and peace in our building, and its lovely churchyard, on top of the hill.

High Bray maintains a comfortable balance in our bank-account in both restricted and unrestricted funds, with savings accumulated over the past 15 years through donations, fund raising, and bequests. We have met the agreed Common Fund requests from the Diocese, and carried out recommended Quinquennial repairs. Major repairs and renovations of the building, such as the restoration of our medieval bells in 2011, and the repairs to the tower, have been very generously supported by contributions from our whole community.

We welcome the opportunity, in partnership with our Vicar, to increase further the creative presence of All Saints in the activities of our village, to re-establish the support of the Church for those in need, and to further the mission of the Church as a public witness of our faith.



High Bray – Christmas Eve



Bells BBQ

## St Peter, Knowstone



Knowstone is a parish of about 200 people and is made up of three settlements – Knowstone, East Knowstone and Roachill, plus farms and outlying dwellings. We are just off the A361 North Devon Link Road about half way between junction 27 of the M5 motorway and the town of Barnstaple.

Our parish is mainly agricultural with 27 farms. The number of milking herds has diminished since the 2001 outbreak of foot & mouth disease but there are still several cattle herds, two of which have won prizes at shows. The majority of farmers, however, raise sheep.

### INSTITUTIONS

We have a strong parish council looking after the needs of our parishioners. We also have a hard-working team looking after our parish hall, organising various activities and our annual Summer Show.

### FACILITIES

Our church, located in Knowstone, looks over the Masons Arms Inn (a Michelin Star establishment) and with views across Exmoor. Next to the church is our parish hall, frequently used for dances and other activities such as quizzes, badminton, pilates and art classes.

### COMMUNICATIONS

Parishioners are kept informed via a number of methods:

- \* Church notice boards
- \* Bi monthly publication 'In Touch' delivered to every dwelling
- \* The Knowstone website – which has a section for our church
- \* The Knowstone Facebook site
- \* The Edgemoor website

### OUR CHURCH

**WORSHIP TRADITION:** Traditional church of England. We do not use incense but we do expect members of the clergy to wear appropriate vestments. We use Common Worship and we have two services each month (apart from Christian festivals). We have Eucharistic (Communion) services on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month and family worship on the 4<sup>th</sup>. We do not have weekday services except for Christian festivals e.g., Good Friday. The normal pattern is taken from the book of common prayer and hymn book 'Hymns Ancient & Modern.' There is usually a talk, hymns and prayers. Our average attendance is 5-10 parishioners.

The attendance for Christian festivals is much greater – e.g. our Carol Service, Harvest Festival and Good Friday, where we have a 'Walk of Witness' up to Knowstone Inner Moor, followed by a service at the three crosses erected close to our Millennium Stone. We do not have a choir or music group, but we do have an organist and the hymn-singing is hearty.

Neither do we have mid-week activities at church or children's groups. However, some of us in Knowstone attend mid-week Bible studies. We do not have an authorised pastoral-care team, but our Parochial Church Council make sure that anyone who needs help or support is not ignored.

Here are details of baptisms, weddings, funerals and interment of ashes over the past five years: -

Baptisms: .....	5
Marriages: .....	1
Funerals: .....	9
Interment of ashes: .....	2

No. on the church electoral roll..... 10

Proportion of worshippers living outside the parish..... 25%

Our church was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and is grade 2\* listed. At the last Quinquennial Inspection there were no serious matters to attend to. The church has a seating capacity of 120 and is fitted with under-pew heating for the central pews. The church is open '24/7'. This means that any parishioner who wishes to pray can do so.



Visitors to our church are keen to see a recently-completed project in which a staircase that once led to the Rood Loft, and which had been boarded up since 1561, is now open to the public, together with some very interesting text and wall-paintings. This project was entered in the annual 'Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association' country-wide competition, in which church projects of notable interest are reviewed, and the five best are selected for final judging. The winning architect is awarded a gold medal presented by the King of Prussia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Happily, St. Peter's Knowstone won!

We do not have a church-hall but the hall owned by the parish council is always available to us. However, the church is the venue for our annual flower-competition.

Our finances are adequate, despite the serious drop in income due to covid 19. However, we are able to pay the Common Fund each month. We are considering the introduction of a 'Friends of St. Peter's Church' fund-raiser in 2022. Collections at festival services – Harvest Festival, Good Friday, Christmas Carols, are sent to local charities – e.g. North Devon Children's Hospice, Devon Air Ambulance Trust, Shelter Box et al.

Our vision is of a well-attended church with people of all ages, with particular emphasis on younger folk, whilst making sure that the current members of congregation stay with us.

#### NEW TEAM RECTOR AND VICAR:

The recent appointment of a Team Vicar with special care of the four western-parishes, including ours, has been a great blessing. We hope that she, together with a new Team Rector, will have the confidence to delegate tasks to the PCCs, leaving Rector and Vicar time to carry out good works for the community without the burden of too much administration.

Ideally, the new Rector be a leader with a vision of what will be good for our parish and the other parishes in the benefice; for example, Bible reading meetings to show how Christianity was foreseen by the prophets and how it developed under Jesus, the Apostles and beyond.

As we have an elderly congregation, the Rector and Vicar will no doubt wish to undertake some pastoral work to support the efforts already in place by PCC members. All members of our clergy are encouraged to support activities run by our churches and parish halls such as quiz nights, summer fairs and garden parties.

Knowstone Parish is a delightful part of our county and very close to Exmoor. Our people are friendly and always ready for a chat. A new Rector will be warmly welcomed and well supported!

## St Mary's Mariansleigh



Mariansleigh Parish is situated 4 miles south of South Molton and is the most southerly community in the Edgemoor Group. The parish consists of two settlements, Alswear and Mariansleigh. Mariansleigh itself was first documented in the Domesday Book. Its name originates from the church, St. Mary's (original patron St. Marina), and 'Leah', which means clearing (indicating the site of the first settlement here). The earliest record of Alswear is on a 1765 map which refers to it as "Alzer", although we believe the village existed prior to this date.

Today, the combined parish population was 155 in 2001, but we are growing and numbered 164 in the 2020 census. Almost 20 of our people were under 19 years old in 2020. We are very dependent upon farming as a source of income, with almost no other forms of local employment.

Mariansleigh Church stands in a well-kept churchyard in the centre of the village. The main part of the church was built in about 1250, probably replacing an oratory that was built around 600AD, and enlarged in 1500. It has since undergone several restorations, the last of which took place in the mid-1930s, following a devastating fire which destroyed the interior of the church, although the tower and the porch were saved. The bell-chamber houses six bells which are still rung on special occasions.



Mariansleigh is a very typical, small community, with a long history that has gently faded over the years. We have no shops or pubs: today, the Church and Parish Hall are the centre of our community life. They serve both Mariansleigh and Alswear.

The P.C.C has a strong team of 7 who work hard to raise funds to support the church. We are very pleased that the new Vicar is in place and look forward to working with her to help her meet and talk to the people of the parish, and to help us as we work together to keep the church alive and active in Mariansleigh and Alswear.

The appointment of a Team Rector would of course be the final piece of the "puzzle", and we are very excited by the potential for growth that a good team of Clergy can bring to this and other local parishes.

## St Mary's, Molland



Molland is situated on the southern side of Exmoor National Park, some five miles from the market town of South Molton. The Church is in the centre of the village, together with the London Inn pub and the village hall.

Most of the village and surrounding farms are part of the extensive Molland Estate, and many of the "green and cream" cottages are now let to people who work away from the village. There are still three large farms which enclose the village in the valley, all of which are family-farmed with dairy, sheep and beef. There is also a large game-shooting enterprise centred on the village and surrounding farms, all of which form part of the Parish of Molland.

The church is a Grade 1 listed building, the nave and tower being 15<sup>th</sup> century replacements of an earlier structure, with the north aisle added in the 16th century. The font is Norman and is the only surviving part of the earlier church. One of the main features are the

box-pews with individual doors, dating from the 1740's. It is featured in "England's Thousand Best Churches" by Simon Jenkins.

We currently have two services per month; one Holy Communion and one Morning Prayer (often lay-led). Special services are held at Easter, Harvest Festival and Christmas, and we have a large Remembrance Day Service incorporating the adjoining parishes of East and West Anstey. It is hoped that St. Mary's will be chosen to host the final of the Devon Bell Ringers Association competition in June 2022 (which has had to be cancelled for the last two years because of the pandemic). The village hall is used as a reception-venue after all the "special services", the harvest-supper being a good example.

Attendance at regular services varies between 10 and 20, but the carol service in past years has always attracted a "full house" of some 100-plus. For special services we have an organist, but on a "normal" Sunday morning we use recorded music. We occasionally have weddings, baptisms and funerals.

A Parish Giving Scheme has been set up, and this, together with various fundraising events, has made it possible to keep the Church finances in a reasonably healthy state. Our Common Fund has always been paid in full, although there are only 15 on the church electoral-roll.

The churchyard is an attraction to many visitors, especially in the spring when there is an abundance of snowdrops followed by daffodils; during the summer months wild flowers abound along the edges - which are left uncut until the autumn. On a clear day, the Dartmoor's high tors can be seen from the churchyard.

It is hoped that the new Team Rector will be able to come to St Mary's to take a Holy Communion service and to meet many of the residents whenever time permits.

## All Saints, North Molton & St Peter, Twitchen



All Saints Church, North Molton is Grade-1 listed: it was built approximately 600 years ago next to the village square, overlooking Exmoor, and presides over the second-largest parish in Devon. The bell-tower houses a peal of 6 bells which are rung regularly, although the tower's exterior masonry is in need of repair. At the bottom of the tower is a rudimentary kitchen area partitioned from the nave. The Sanctuary is surrounded by dark oak panelling which is Jacobean.

Portable wooden ramps provide disabled access. The church is usually open daily from 0900 to 1800. There

are facilities in the adjacent Old School building.

The large churchyard is the village burial ground. It is well maintained and the Parish Council contributes towards its upkeep. The war memorial is beside the lychgate.

### Congregation and Services

There are 50 names on the Electoral Roll.

We enjoy a close relationship with North Molton's Methodist Chapel. Responsibility for the Harvest Service, followed by lunch, alternates between the two congregations. Other joint services are held in both Chapel and Church.

Prior to the Covid pandemic the regular service pattern:

Sundays: 1000 Holy Communion with hymns and sermon; coffee served afterwards.  
Evening: very occasional informal services.

Wednesdays: 0930 Communion Service: a quiet contemplative time, usually focusing on saint's day or notable event, a brief reflection by the celebrant, no hymns.

Holy Week & Easter: All the special services for the period. Easter Sunrise service at the Froude Stone on Exmoor.

Christmas: Christingle, Carol Service, Crib Service/interactive Nativity play, Midnight Mass

Christmas Day: 1000 Holy Communion

Currently we are experimenting with a pattern of different services on Sundays.

### Congregation

Pre-covid Average Sunday attendance 38 but is now considerably reduced.

Wednesday: 15 regulars, sometimes more.

Age range: largely over 60. Few children or young people attend services. (The Methodists run lively groups, including the Friday Club, for children and teenagers.)

About 25% of any given congregation do not live in the parish.

Music is important and several members of the congregation are able to play the organ for services. A group playing from a selection of instruments - organ, keyboard, violin, clarinet, flute - frequently accompanies the hymn singing. Prior to lockdown a choir of up to six persons led the singing.



## **Events**

Before the pandemic Advent and Lent courses, about 15-20 persons, were held of an afternoon with a repeat evening session. There was a 6-week Bible Study group of about 6 people

The weekly coffee morning, the Luncheon Club and Lent lunches are well supported.

## **Fund Raising and Charity**

Fund raising events have included a quiz and All Saints Bazaar. We have held flower festivals, concerts and a series of lectures in Church. Donations have been made to local and national charities. The church porch is a drop-off point for items donated to South Molton food bank.

## **Finance**

A reduction in the size of the congregation over a number of years has led to a significant reduction in the income of All Saints and the Covid pandemic did not help matters. That said, we pay our monthly Common Fund contributions in full.

## **Feoffees**

North Molton Church Lands Feoffees support the capital expenditure of the Church and have rental income from 6 cottages and 2 flats in the village. The ground floor of the Old School which comprises a kitchen, toilets and 2 meeting rooms is available for hire. Redevelopment of the ground floor is under consideration by the Feoffees.

## **The Vicarage**

Situated part way down East Street it is a brisk 5-minute walk to Church. The house is well appointed, enjoys views over open countryside and has a large productive garden.

## **The Village**

The village of North Molton is situated just outside the Exmoor National Park and much of the parish lies within the Park. Travelling by car, the sandy beaches of North Devon are 50 minutes distant.

The population of the parish is approximately 1,050. In North Molton village there are about 350 houses with extant outline planning permission for approximately 100 new-build homes. The majority of the properties are inhabited by local villagers but there are also second homes and holiday lets. Although having relatively limited access to local services, the village thrives and has a garage, hair salon and the Poltimore Inn. The Inn also houses the popular "mini-shop" which is open from 11am till late each day, and stocks a range of basics such as milk, bread, butter, baked beans etc. (as well as dog food and similar!)

The sports club is run by volunteers and has excellent facilities for football, cricket, skittles, archery and social events. There are many adult community groups including The Nomads, an amateur dramatic group, which attracts large audiences for its annual production.

It is 4 miles to the town of South Molton where there is a health-centre, other medical services, a bank, good range of shops and facilities and a vibrant pannier market. Monday to Saturday there are 3 daily return bus trips between North and South Molton.

## **Education**

The community primary school on the edge of the village is housed in modern accommodation. There is a good relationship between the primary school and previous Vicar who visited regularly, and Open Book into the school. Contact between school and church was severely curtailed by the pandemic, but we hope that will all change as the virus recedes in importance.

Nursery facilities (Penguins and Robins) are situated on the same site.

South Molton Community College provides secondary education and there is a further education college in Barnstaple. Buses and Taxis are available to help children get to and from school.

The Libra School at South Radworthy provides special education and support for vulnerable children who have experienced difficulty in mainstream education.

## St Peter, Twitchen



The scattered, rural settlement of Twitchen is an archetypal Edgemoor parish, for the moorland rises to the east within a few hundred yards of our church which, together with our Village Hall, are at the centre of our small community.

A Grade-2 Listed building, Twitchen Church is modest but attractive. The first church was erected in medieval times and was rebuilt in 1844 by John Tapp, Churchwarden, with the exception of the fifteenth century tower and the three bells. The church contains its original Norman font. The stone column that can be seen inside the entrance gate to the churchyard was originally located within the church

surmounted by a cross.

A daughter-church to All Saints, North Molton, St. Peter is none the less independent, with its own loyal following for traditional rural worship. We currently hold two regular monthly services, with usually between four and twelve communicants, plus the various festivals where attendance can be up to eighty. We are very fortunate with the help given by our Rector and local clergy.

For such a small community, St. Peter is blessed with strong support and has always been totally self-funding, working closely with the Village Hall committee on fund-raising projects. Recent work includes re-leading the windows and major repairs to the Tower (after the above-left photo), with £25,000 raised locally!

(Photo right by Martin Bodman, CC BY-SA 2.0)



## St Peter, Rose Ash



Rose Ash on a quiet summer's evening: the church-tower can be seen higher up on the left. Photo: M Hammick

Rose Ash is a small hamlet sitting on a high ridge, surrounded by outlying farms and houses. The farms are almost entirely devoted to raising cattle and sheep. The air is pure and views are stunning, with many spots having almost 360-degree panoramas stretching from Dartmoor to Exmoor.

Our history was defined by the almost 300-year "battle" between the Southcombe family, (rectors of Rose Ash for 275 years), and

the local landowners in the "big house" in the centre of the village. Part of that legacy is an exquisite setting for the church, green and surrounding houses, all of which are listed to preserve the unique character of the place.

The church itself is a typical, but substantial building, extensively and carefully restored in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and refurbished about 20 years ago, but we still have a few structural "challenges" with our stonework. We hope to have the bells restored at some point and would eventually like to upgrade the organ: both improvements would hopefully attract more outside events and involvement in the life of the church.



In addition to the church's own listing, all other buildings around the Green have been listed to preserve the unique character of the place. Photo: M Hammick

We have regular attendance of about ten people (and sometimes more), twice a month, but feel that with our new Vicar, supported by a Team Rector, we can soon increase that number. The church is popular with worshippers from other parishes and the proximity of the excellent village hall and green make it a suitable venue for a variety of services and related events.



Chatting after a well-attended outdoor service on the Green

We are a small hamlet and do not have the benefit of a local shop, school or public transport. That said, a recent influx of younger people, together with their children, are bringing a fresh perspective and, possibly, a more active population.

Local roots are still quite strong in Rose Ash, and many people visit the churchyard to pay their respects and tend to the graves of relatives. But this does not often translate into direct support for the work of the church – or indeed the maintenance of its fabric. Thus, although the PCC is a close-knit team that manages to keep things “on the road”, they face the all-too common struggle against a growing apathy to religion in the wider community.



One of the many footpaths and bridleways through unspoilt grazing-land surrounding Rose Ash. Photo: M Hammick



Our church was sympathetically restored in the late 1800s, and again in 2001. Photo: M Hammick

Regarding the main challenges facing our PCC, we feel that the greatest problem is that of overbearing church-bureaucracy. This weighs down upon vicars, dragging them away from the pastoral work that is key to reviving interest in, and support for, our local church. We strongly believe that unless our Clergy have the time to visit people and be active in the community, we will continue to lose visibility and support for what we do.

In this, we recognize that we are no different to countless other small parishes. We look forward to seeing how others are addressing these issues and are keen to work with our recently-appointed Vicar, as well as a new Team Rector (and the rest of the Edgemoor Group), to keep the flag flying!

(Please also see: <https://www.roseash.info/>)



We think it would be hard to find a more lovely wedding venue! Photo: M Hammick

## St Petrock, West Anstey



West Anstey is a small village on the river Yeo just south of Hawkridge, which forms part of Exmoor.

Our church is a grade II\*-Listed building. It dates mainly from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and was restored in 1879 and the pulpit, alter and reredos date from this restoration. There are fragments of medieval glass that have survived in the south chancel window and there are also a few medieval tiles.

Our small PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our Church and to become part of our parish family. Our services and worship put faith into

practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament. We try to enable all to live out their faith as part of our parish family, through:

- Worship and prayer: learning about the Gospel, and developing our knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Mission and outreach work.

To facilitate this work, it is vital that we maintain the fabric of the Church.

### Worship and Prayer

We have 3 services a month.

Holy Communion (BCP and CW)

Lay led Morning Prayer shared with East Anstey

And Outdoor Church.

### Mission

Earlier this year our Church decided on an individual aim which was:



To set up and launch "Outdoor Church" to encourage families, children old and young. To make Church accessible, open and current. We are delighted to say we have had 3 joyful sessions. It is gentle, welcoming,

joyful and free

Children and families are invited to join us round a fire in a field next to West Anstey Church for OUTDOOR CHURCH.

We are outside whatever the weather!

***To come a stay a while  
In the land where the wild things are  
And the place where the periphery reigns  
You may learn things here that serve you  
When you return to your pathed way.***



A time to throw yourselves into walking, tree climbing, singing, dancing, smores eating, serving and playing mandolin.....we are blessed with the weather and the beautiful place and beautiful people.

## Our “Twelfth Church”

During the pandemic, when our church buildings were closed, a weekly “virtual” service was set up using zoom and was well attended with up to 80 joining each week.



The “Virtual” services have continued, albeit in a slightly different format, and now include a weekly “Local House of Prayer”, and monthly “Evening Meditations.

This has given us the space to explore different themes, with music, poetry, readings and prayer – to develop into whatever our Zoom congregation want it to be. With people now able to attend more regular “live services”, we will be holding “seasonal” zoom-services.

Zoom services seem to have provided a space for regular fellowship and spiritual reflection – here are some comments:

- *“I feel it a great privilege to be part of these wonderful Zoom services we have. They have held us together these past months and, as was said this morning we have grown into a caring and joyous family.”*
- *“Thank you for your support over the Zoom lockdown, our Zoomers Church has been and is very special to me.”*
- *“I miss you all -there's not much I miss from lockdown, but it is certainly your fellowship- I will treasure that.”*

We want to see where this leads us and, as Covid retreats, we hope we can evolve to meet the challenges of a changing and somewhat unsettled world.

### Anstey Christians Together

This was/is a home-group to allow people meet regularly once a month for fellowship, prayer, bible study, discussion and friendship. The group was started many years ago and we have met in each other’s homes around the East Anstey/West Anstey/Molland area – sometimes meeting up on Anstey Common for a mid-summer celebration.

This group has had great fun planning ways to reach out to those outside of the church. Frequent trips to Lee Abbey have been a bonus and a real bond has formed between us – which has enabled us to work as a team with Messy – now Outdoor - church, Zoom services and LHOP.

ACTs have not met together in person since the covid outbreak, but are intending to pick up where we left off as soon as everything is back to “normal” and it is completely safe to do so.

We are all praying that the new Team Rector will encourage and support us, embracing all aspects of reaching out to those outside of traditional Church – in whatever form that might reveal itself to be.