

Five Alive

The Magazine of the Redruth Team Ministry

St Euny Redruth, Christchurch Lanner, St Andrew Pencoys

St Andrew Redruth and St Stephen Treleigh

(REDRUTH PCC - registered charity no 1204231)



FAREWELL TO FATHER CHRIS

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Richard and Rosemary Robinson: magazine@redruthchurch.org.uk

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A VIEW FROM THE TRAIN

Well this is a first. I'm writing this article sat on the floor of the cross country service that originated somewhere in Scotland, and is bound for Plymouth. I joined at Birmingham New Street and have finally found enough space to sit on the floor. Although I sense frustration from some of the other ten passengers in this vestibule, as my feet keep getting in their way! Make that 11 as another joins us at Bristol Temple Meads!

As we head toward the beginning of March, we are into Lent. A time traditionally referred to as a "time of penitence". (Now 13 of us in this little vestibule!!).

Some years lent feels like a thing to be endured. I remember lent 2021 I decided to ignore it, as life felt "lenty enough" after lockdowns, losing dear ones, and so much change amidst frustration from people that life was not as they felt it should be. Other years it feels like a challenge to be embraced with energy and intention.

This year I am very much looking forward to engaging with "generosity". The home/bible study groups are exploring a course that was written by Exeter Diocese a number of years ago. It explores what it is to be generous.

Generosity is a bit of a spiritual discipline. You know the story of the widow's mite, where the widow gives a tiny amount, but it is a huge sacrifice for her to give. The point of the story is not about the amount she gives, or the percentage of her income, or the impact it has. The point of the story is that her she is moved to give abundantly of what she has, because she wants to give to God.

I will be honest that I have an agenda in offering this course for our contemplation this Lent. I have been really struck by some responses to conversations about giving (not just financial, but all kinds) in our parish. In every case, there has been a quick and almost defensive response to the topic of giving. It's a really interesting thing to observe, and I am not sure why defensiveness is the response. I wonder if perhaps you notice defensiveness arising as you read my words here?

As I sit on the floor of a train vestibule, slowly losing the feeling in my feet, whilst trying to remember how much better this is than the previous nearly two hours of standing, I am reminded of some of the people I've spent time with in Birmingham. Many of my degree course colleagues are muslims working for agencies that are first responders in areas of significant need. Several have colleagues on the ground in Sudan, in refugee camps around the world, in some of the most significant situations of need on the planet. It makes my few hours of "suffering" on a train floor pale into total insignificance, and I give thanks for the privilege of travelling home on a train, in safety, from study on an amazing course which has been paid for by the government. I am so privileged (even if I can't feel my feet!)

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But that's the thing with generosity, or pretty much any attitude. For one thing, it takes practice. We need to practice being generous, and to do that we need to feel motivated to do it; to feel it is important. And secondly, it comes amidst a wider suite of spiritual disciplines that are all rooted in knowing, and being formed by God.

Whether we talk about time, money, hospitality, talents and skills, or our presence; being generous should be rooted in our relationship with God. And when it is, we have nothing to be defensive about.

So please do engage with the Lent material (whether in a group, with a friend, or on your own) and reflect on how you might seek to embrace generosity and a characteristic in your life. It's about giving freely with intention, within what you are able to give. It is sometimes about sacrifice, but then only with thought and consideration and acceptable. It is always about giving back to God what God gave you to begin with, and what was never really yours to hold onto. Generosity is about accepting God's hold over you, and desiring to join in with his love for the world and its people.

Revd Becca Bell

FAREWELL FR CHRIS

Five Alive join with the rest of the Parish in wishing Fr Chris, Becca, Izzy, Isaac and 'Dougie' well as they move to a new home and Parish.

You will always have a place in our hearts and prayers.

Rosemary and Richard

An Old Promise on Two Wheels

May I tell you another bike story? Don't worry, this isn't one of those reflections about the "spirituality of the open road" or the ontological transformation of owning a motorcycle. This one is about an old promise.

Six years ago, back in Bristol, I bought my first bike. It felt like stepping into a fuller version of myself—as though God had patiently waited for me to grow into this particular joy. During college, however, I discovered *the* bike. A 1250cc Harley Davidson Sportster S. It was, to my mind, perfection on two wheels. I already had a bike—but this was the dream.

Around this time of year (Lent), I shared my enthusiasm with my tutor group. As we talked, my wise spiritual director gently questioned my desire. Was it simply appreciation? Or was it edging toward lust—want elevated above need? She encouraged me to offer the dream to God. To let it go.

So I did.

For six years, I rode my faithful bike along Cornwall's glorious roads, through sea-salted air and sweeping bends, grateful for what I had. The dream bike remained just that—a dream quietly surrendered.

Then came a new chapter: being appointed vicar in Newquay. With a change in the air, I began to wonder whether the time had come to revisit that old longing. After conversations with my wife and other wise voices (always essential!), I returned to my spiritual director. This time, her response surprised me: yes. Now was the right time. The desire no longer felt restless or grasping. It felt peaceful. Right.

And so, six years later, the old promise found its moment.

I share this story not to justify a new purchase, but because Lent can sometimes stir up deeper questions. We may feel that God withholds. That he doesn't understand what we long for. That he is distant from the small, personal desires of our lives.

But Scripture tells another story. "Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37). And in John 10, Jesus says he came that we might have life—life in all its fullness.

That doesn't mean every passing want is granted. Sometimes love means learning to release. Sometimes faithfulness means waiting. As Ecclesiastes reminds us, there is a season for everything.

What I've learned is this: God knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows when a desire would own us—and when we are finally free enough to receive it with gratitude. Like any good parent, he wants what is truly good for his children.

This bike is simply a reminder to me that God is faithful. He sees. He knows. He cares—even about the small joys.

And he feels the same about you.

May you trust his timing this Lent—and know his goodness in every season.

Amen.

Revd Chris Harrigan

ST STEPHEN TRELEIGH

As I write this, the rain has again appeared after what was a pleasantly bright morning. There seems to be no end in sight for a period of dry weather and our thoughts and prayers are with all those who have been affected by the recent storms.



Our first monthly Tea Party of 2026 was able to go ahead after the terrible Storm Goretti as Cormac had arrived promptly to temporarily close off the church paths while they made safe any broken branches and an uprooted tree which was leaning towards the east wall. The replacement of three roof slates and guttering is in hand. Thanks also go to Kevin Dodds who moved larger pieces of branches safely into the Hawthorn Garden and swept the paths of loose debris. On Tuesday, 10th February the Tea Party with Treleigh schoolchildren and their families was again an enjoyable event in spite of the heavy rain. Trish's Craft Table was very popular as being only a few days away from Valentine's Day, the children, with great enthusiasm, made Cards to give to whomever they wished, mostly a parent as far as we could see. Our new red chairs have made such a difference to the whole atmosphere of the hall, are easily wiped clean of sticky finger marks and crumbs and most importantly are comfortable. Thank you Fr. Christopher for your involvement with this.

On Sunday, 8th February we were pleased to welcome two Baptismal families, a toddler, and two adults from one family and an 11 year old boy with his relatives. It is always a Blessing and a joy when families choose to be Baptised in our beautiful church and for them to share this special Sacrament with the congregation during the Service of Holy Communion which was led by Reverend Becca.

We continue to keep our church open until midday on Thursdays after our service of Holy Communion but it's not often we get visitors in to join us for a cuppa, biscuit and chat or to look around, say a prayer or light a candle, however, the Wayside Chapel is being used and prayers left on our Prayer Tree. The Busy Bees Nursery children do come in from time to time which is always a great delight.

On Maundy Thursday, 2nd April at 10am there will be a congregation led service of Morning Prayer followed by "Stripping of the Altar". On Good Friday at 10am, Licensed Lay Reader, Jim Seth will lead us in the Stations of the Cross, hopefully this will be held in the Hawthorn Garden but if not in the church where our beautiful pictures portray the dreadful journey that our Lord Jesus Christ took to the Cross.

Our DCC is not until after this goes to print and therefore we have no firm dates for our Summer Fete, Christmas Fayre and other fundraising events but hope to have these confirmed in the next issue. Our Churchyard, though battered from the recent bad weather, has begun to show the Glory of God in the beauty of the crocuses, primroses and daffodils, enhanced by the songs of our resident blackbirds and robins who always seem to appear as we walk the church paths and it won't be long before the jackdaws and crows will be scattering twigs outside of the porch as they noisily prepare their nests.

I know that the whole Parish of Redruth will be sorry when Fr. Christopher, Becca, Izzy and Isaac leave us for pastures new, not so very far away and we, at St. Stephen's Church, Treleigh wish them well as they continue their journey of Faith and thank them all for the enrichment that each one of them has brought to our church communities, not forgetting of course, Dougie the dog."

Christine Cunnningham

ST EUNY

If you have visited St Euny in recent months you could hardly fail to notice the rather unsightly fencing around the west wall of the graveyard. A team from Cornwall's CORMAC have been working hard on repairs to the boundary wall which is now beginning to look almost complete. The rebuilt wall fits well with the original sections and is an improvement in safety. The last section is now being constructed and we hope that it will be finished by the end of March. All being well we will celebrate Easter without the temporary fencing in place. If the weather improves, we might even have a decent pathway to the south side of the enclosure. Easter Day this year falls after the clocks move forward for British Summer Time, giving us a little more time to sleep in! The sunrise Service will be held as usual at St Euny, the sunrise time being 6.14am, with morning twilight beginning around thirty minutes before that, at 5.45am. Lookout for details of the service start times. We will serve warm hot cross buns after the service and look forward to seeing you there to open our Easter celebration.

It has been a wet couple of months for us all. It has been noticeable that the roads around Churchtown have been flooded regularly. Janet, who lives in the farm and comes to Open Cafe regularly on Wednesdays noticed that the surface water increased significantly after the St Euny mineshafts were capped, interrupting the flow of water percolating underground. Fortunately, the houses have not suffered from water incursion, although the St Euny Tower has more damp than usual. We were lucky that the January storms have had little impact other than blowing down our porch lamp, and the few branches that fell have now been cleared sufficiently for safe use of the area.

Jane Selway, faithful member of St Euny for over thirty years, has moved to Harbour House, Portreath, temporarily, whilst she considers a move further afield to be closer to her daughters. Jane has taken this decision with her typical stoicism and practical resolve. We miss her at church and wish her well in her new home.

After a re-think about the pantomime it has been decided that there will be a cancellation for this year and we will look forward to a performance next Christmas time. Apologies go to all those who have been disappointed by this.

The Harrigan Family will be leaving us at the end of the month, and we would all like to pass on our thanks, love and good wishes for the future in Newquay. We look forward to our last Eucharist with Father Chris on 15^h March. We will miss him and the whole family, and we look forward to hearing more from them in future.

Linda Beskeen



BRIGHT BLESSINGS FROM CHRISTCHURCH LANNER

YOU are very welcome at all of these services and events

Christchurch remains open 10.00am– 4.00pm and Holy Communion is celebrated each Sunday at 9.30am. The third Sunday is a Communion with new music and each Wednesday there is a Prayer Book Communion Service at 11.00am followed by a Bible Study. *The LAST Sunday of each month will continue to revolve through the six worship settings and starts at 10.30am.*

OTHER EVENTS AT CHRISTCHURCH: *Margaret's Last Monday Tea Party 2.00pm – 4.00pm.*
The date is Monday MARCH 30

FUTURE EVENTS: The games afternoons and the film nights are advertised in the weekly pew sheet. **BUT GAMES ARE NOW EVERY TUESDAY 2pm – 4pm.**

FILM NIGHTS: The next date is **FRIDAY FEBRUARY 27 / 6.30pm for 7.00pm.** The film is "Sweet Home Alabama". The March date is Friday March 27.

METHODIST / ANGLICAN LINKS: Links are continuing and a joint Lent Study Group has been planned. Building on the success of the first joint service it is hoped that another one will be in the diary very soon. The theme for all the parish Lent groups is **GENEROSITY IN ALL OF ITS FORMS.**

SEASONAL SUNDAYS: This is a NEW initiative and follows the amazing Crib Service. The project has been devised by Julia KB. and hopes to attract an intergenerational congregation but with a new approach to church.

There will be opportunities for play, singing, Bible reflection, activities, refreshments, informal seating arrangements and prayers. People of all ages are really welcome and SEND provision is a priority.

The 'pilot' continued on Sunday February 15 with an event focusing on **PANCAKES AND LOVE.** **The MARCH event is planned for MARCH 28, 2.30pm.** The theme will be passed on Palm Sunday. There will be publicity through the various screen outlets and Christchurch hopes that a new congregation will be able to find God's love for them in a new and exciting way.
THANKYOU JULIA.

Christchurch continues to rejoice in the diversity of its community, hopefully reflected in all that we do, and in our worship. The floods did very little damage to the church, but some people experienced flooding and we send them our love and prayers. And, we all went out to lunch on February 22!!

ST ANDREW REDRUTH

I am writing this article in mid-February before Lent and Easter. I have just received the draft service rotas for the Parish and for the Local Methodist service and penned my duties in the diary with a mixture of anticipation, duty and the daunting task of 6 sermons in the next 9 Sundays! The Lent Group at Treleigh begins on Tuesday week, following Rev Becca's suggested course on Generosity so I shall be preparing my PowerPoint presentations and embedding the videos and making sure we have Lenten songs to sing in our Night prayer/Compline in the next week. The Treleigh "Upper Room" house group is a joy to lead and to be part of and in many ways those groups that meet in homes seem so much closer to how early Christians would have met so I urge you to find one of the Lent Groups and make it your own Lenten observance this year.

Yesterday I had a 'Teams' video conversation with a researcher for "Songs of Praise" who wanted me to talk about the impact of the Carn Brea Cross on the wider community which I was delighted to do. This year marks its 50th anniversary and so it will go up early on the 14th March and the BBC will be filming the erection of the cross at 9am and the service at the cross at 2pm. It is interesting how many people post on social media asking when the cross is to go up each year.... And when the weather is bad, *whether* it will go up. In fact, in 50 years only Covid and Foot and Mouth has prevented it!

My first view of the cross was Easter of 1976. Lez and I were teaching in London but came down for the holidays. It was just there... stark on the hillside but in many ways accompanied my journey back to faith and into Christian ministry. We moved to Redruth in 1978 and became involved in almost immediately with Sunday School at St Euny and then the "Worship Workshop" at Pencoys and then the ecumenical house group "Solomon's Porch" which met in our house in Trewirgie Road. That group had worshippers from Redruth Baptists, the Methodists, our Anglican Churches and even the occasional Roman Catholic. From it came church wardens, several priests, Local preachers and Readers and it was at this time I really learned what it took to put that cross on the hillside each year... and how important it is as a symbol of witness.

For me it marked a thin place, one of those places where God seems closer than anywhere else, and each year I tried to make it an annual pilgrimage to walk up and pray there.

On a few occasions I have managed to get up there to 'help' but not being the tallest of people found myself on tip toes trying to reach it while between younger, taller and stronger bodies! But *just my small effort* of lifting as it as it journeyed across the rocks to its mooring point, was enough to focus the mind on the journey that Jesus made with only Simon of Cyrene to help.

Continued

..... **ST ANDREW REDRUTH** *continued*

And 'focus' is perhaps what that cross means to me each year. Easter, the time of re-birth, of seasonal change, of recharging of batteries and the reflection of all that is good that God provides with such generosity. My prayer at the cross, as I look out across the town is partly for individuals in the different streets that I recognise from Carn Brea... but mostly that prayer is, "Ok God... I'm up here again, what do you need me to do?" And just as importantly, "What do you need me to put down?"

Then I head down the hill, promising to myself that I will try to listen and be open to what God requires!

So look out for Songs of Praise and make your own pilgrimage to the cross this year if only from the distance and ask in a word of prayer, "what do you need me to do Lord?"

Jim

FROM THE REGISTERS

BAPTISMS

08 February	2026	Daniel Herbert	St Stephen Treleigh
08 February	2026	Arthur Robert Jonathan Williams	St Stephen Treleigh
08 February	2026	Christopher Carlos Anthony Williams	St Stephen Treleigh
08 February	2026	Michelle Williams	St Stephen Treleigh

FUNERALS

20 January	2026	Pauline Gunn	St Stephen Treleigh
06 February	2026	Ethel Rachel Rosemary Forsyth	St Stephen Treleigh

INTERMENT OF ASHES

02 January	2026	Irene Murray	St Stephen Treleigh
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FLAPJACK

Firstly, when you read this, the church in Pencoyls will have been CLOSED for three weeks. The FLAPJACK community is very sorry and regrets that this action has become necessary. The problem arose due to the amount of water that poured into the electrical systems during the recent storms and rain. Electricians have visited church but it will need a detailed survey and the subsequent work that will become essential. In the meantime the FLAPJACK community worships in the Four Lanes Chapel .

LAMPSHADES IN THE LADIES LOO Well done to those who organised the recent coffee morning that raised £450.00 to support the renovation of the toilets in the Pencoyls Hall. Thankyou to Sean and Tracey who are carrying out the work. Maybe the men's loo could have a chandelier!!

SUNRISE CENTRE COFFEE MORNING

Following the recent interest in prostate cancer, both locally and in the media, there will be a coffee morning the Four Lanes Chapel to raise funds for the Sunrise Centre on **SATURDAY MARCH 21, 10.00am – 12noon**. Thankyou also to those who are collecting change at home in jars, and to the Wednesday Club who have made the **Sunrise** their charity of the year. **AND!!** Just so that you know, there will be a **Sunrise Centre** fund-raising event at THE PENVENTON on **Saturday June 20, 6.30pm**

FLAPJACK PLANNING MEETING

The next meeting will be on SUNDAY MARCH 1, 12.30pm.

MEMORIAL TO JENNY EVA

The whole Four Lanes and Pencoyls community were saddened to learn that Jenny's health battle had come to an end. Her funeral was held on February 16 and was led by Sarah, Hayley (Methodist ministers both then and now!!) and FP. Jenny was a life-long Methodist and an enthusiastic founder member of FLAPJACK and a supporter of every activity within the village is re-united with her beloved husband Barry and greatly missed by her daughter Claire, as well as the whole community.

THE OPEN PANTRY, THE MONTHLY QUIZ BINGO, THE WEDNESDAY CLUB AND THE WARM SPACE GAMES

These all continue as usual. Special thanks to Brian and Sheila for the pantry, to Rob for calling Bingo, to Christine for scoring the quiz and providing the prizes, and to Susan, Donald and their volunteers for the Wednesday Events

FP

2026 LENT COURSES

We're pleased to invite you to our **Lent Course Small Groups** starting Monday 16 February. These groups are a wonderful way to reflect and grow together through Lent.

Group details:

Mondays – 7:00 pm at Rector Becca's house

Lent course with Jason/Becca

Tuesdays – 7:00 pm at Trish & Robin's house

Lent course with Jim

Wednesdays – 11:00 am at St Andrew's Crypt

Lent course with Margaret

Wednesdays – 11:45 am at Christchurch Lanner

Lent course with Father Peter

Wednesdays – 6:00 pm at Methodist Chapel, Four Lanes

Lent course with Father Peter

We will be looking at '**Surprised by Generosity**', a Diocese of Exeter Lent resource, a seven-week course based on Luke's Gospel, exploring God's generosity and our call to live generously.

For resources you might like to use during the course, please see this booklet:

<https://exeter.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/All-Small-group-resources.pdf>

Everyone is welcome — whether you can attend one session or more!

For contact details, please visit the parish website:- www.redruthchurch.org.uk



Grief Group – (sharing and caring for one another during grief)

It's another Tuesday at 4pm and we welcome a new member, someone known by some but not known by others. We sit and listen as we hear a familiar story of loss, of death. We hear and feel the sorrow, the tales of bad experiences with hospitals, with surgeries, the guilt that we all carry. Should we have done this or that, did we miss something obvious, could we have done more? And so we again share our individual loss, how we cope or don't cope, what helps, what doesn't help.

Our stories are all different but we share an unfathomable emptiness and loss. We all now stand alone, not lonely, just alone. No matter how many family and friends love us and desperately try to help us, we are now alone.

The two hours we spend together are not all sadness and crying. We laugh, our humour often dark and around hospital life. We now have a dedicated 'Watsapp Group.' Which has already proved it's worth during our recent storm. We can check in on each other, make arrangements to meet, just chat or off load. It's good to know someone will respond if you message. Good to know there's others who totally get you as everything, yes everything changes when someone close to you dies.

We are all aware that some find death something they can't approach, are afraid to mention it for fear of upset. We are not afraid, we have faced it. Please be kind, ask us how we are, it matters.

Our Group is completely open to anyone experiencing the grief of a loved one dying. Don't grieve alone. It really does help to share.

Contact is easy. Just mention it to anyone within our churches and they will direct you on.

The Redruth Parish Memorial Book

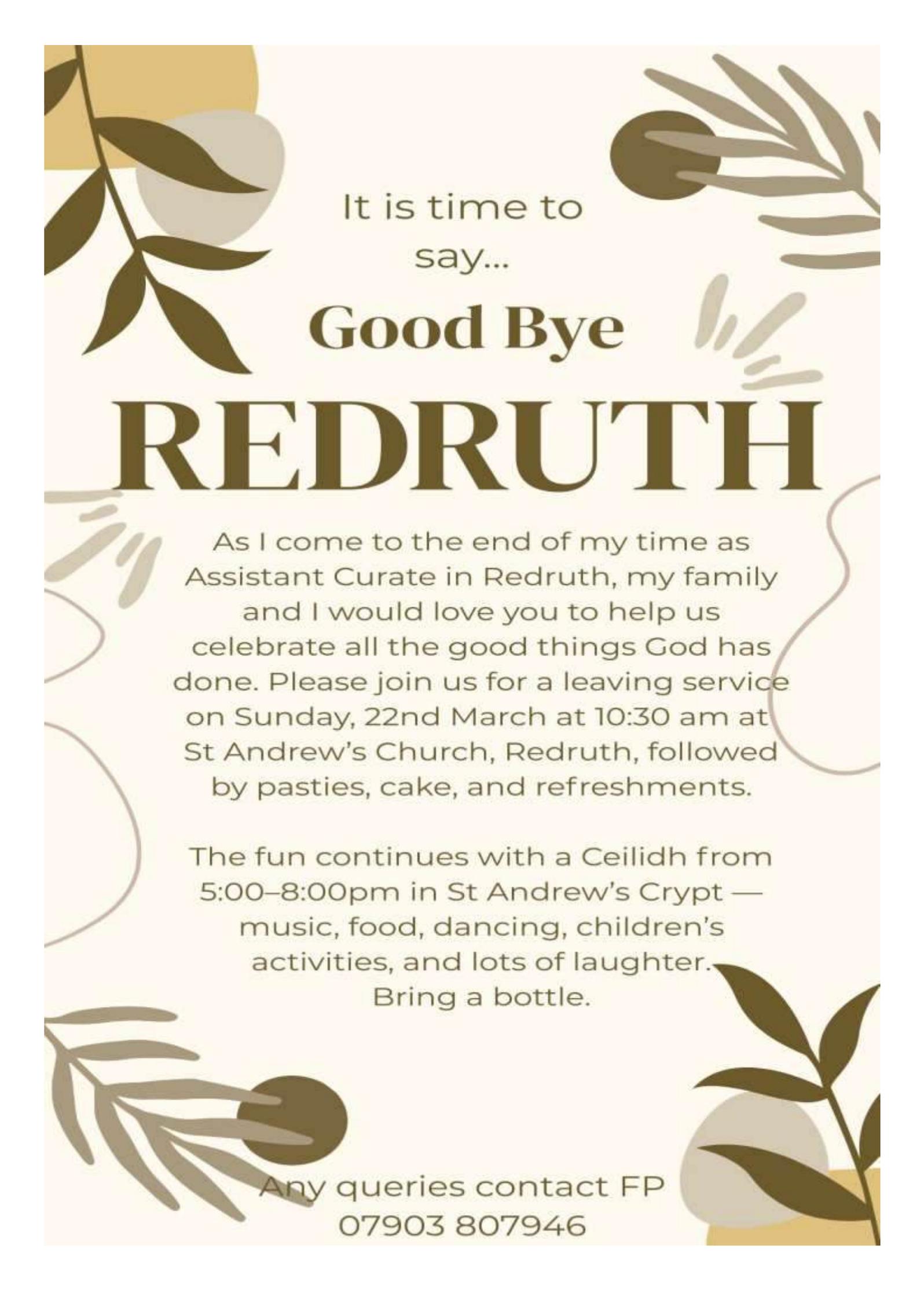
Last November we welcomed Bishop David to the parish to dedicate and bless the new Memorial Books. The books were made possible by the kind donations and support of Funeral directors and individuals; all recognising that memorialising loved ones who have died is an important part of processing grief, and living with grief beyond the initial shock. The books are handmade to the highest standards and are simply beautiful. As is the case they are kept in.

They are displayed in St Euny Church, where family members can view their loved ones names (the pages may not be turned daily, and so an appointment should be made if you particularly wish to view a date).

If you wish you have a name entered in the Memorial books, you can contact Simon Cooper in the office enquiries@redruthchurch.org.uk He will pass on a form and the payment details. Currently the plan is to send the books off once a year (each book holds six months of dates) for names to be entered by the calligrapher. Your loved ones name will be entered on the page holding their date of death.

The PCC has agreed some parameters around who may be entered. But these are very relaxed; more to give us right of refusal to names which may cause distress. So whether your loved one died recently or years ago, locally or far away, you may wish to consider using the book if it is helpful for you to remember them in this way.

The Form will also be available to download from the website in the section about funeral care.



It is time to
say...

Good Bye

REDRUTH

As I come to the end of my time as Assistant Curate in Redruth, my family and I would love you to help us celebrate all the good things God has done. Please join us for a leaving service on Sunday, 22nd March at 10:30 am at St Andrew's Church, Redruth, followed by pasties, cake, and refreshments.

The fun continues with a Ceilidh from 5:00–8:00pm in St Andrew's Crypt — music, food, dancing, children's activities, and lots of laughter.

Bring a bottle.

Any queries contact FP
07903 807946

COME JOIN US

"See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare"
Isaiah 42:9

The Benefices of Towan Blystra, St Withiel & St Wenn invite you to the
Institution by Rt Revd David Williams, Bishop of Truro and the Induction
by Clive Hogger, Archdeacon of Cornwall
of

Reverend Christopher Thomas Harrigan

To be inducted as Vicar of the Benefice of Towan Blystra and Rector of
the Benefice of St Wenn and Withiel, with oversight responsibilities.

Monday 30th March at 7.00 pm
at St Michael's Church, Newquay
Refreshments afterwards

My way to Compostela
Day 24 part 1
Santa Catalina de Souza to Acebo
29Km

As we dwell over breakfast this morning consulting our guidebook, it is clear that we face two challenges. The first is to endure the path that runs parallel to the LE-142 road for 12Km, to then continue for the next 17Km crisscrossing the same road. The second is that it's up hill all the way till we reach one of the highest points of the day's walk at La Cruz de Ferro which sits at 1505 metres (4,940 ft) So with those thoughts in mind we set out on the trail, slowly climbing an uninspiring landscape till we reach the village of EL Ganso, one of the crumbling semi abandoned villages that were once inhabited by the Maragato people. In the 12th Century the village once boasted a monastery and a pilgrim's hospital, today there is one single small albergue and an adjoining bar which had a Cowboy theme! What the village lacked in facilities it made up for with the spectacular view across the valley to the snow-capped peak of Monte El Teleno, from here we continue with the road to our left. This part of the path is maintained by a local group (the friends of the way) to ensure that pilgrims can navigate safely the blind corners when crossing the road. After 3.9 Km we cross the Puente de Panote which carried us over the arroyo Rabanal de Viejo. From this point the path begins to climb steeply for the next 3.2 km through a woodland area of native mixed trees consisting of Holm Oak (encina) Oak (roble) and Pine (pino), In the middle of this mixed woodland we came across a magnificent specimen 'the pilgrim oak' which had a wood bench built around it's base where the weary pilgrim could sit and rest awhile in peace and solitude under the shading canopy of its branches. We took a short stop here to enjoy the peace of our surroundings there being no traffic on the road to disturb the tranquility of the moment. On leaving the tree behind us a further 2km brought us into the large village of Rabanal and our mid morning refreshment stop, no need to guess what we would have!! Rabanal has a long history of caring for pilgrims going back to the 12th century and is mentioned in Aymeric Picaud's classic itinerary as the 1Xth stage of the Codex Calixtinus, the Knights Templar also had a presence here to ensure that pilgrims had a safe passage over the remote mountain pass. Today the village continues to offer shelter for the weary pilgrim with two albergues. One of the albergues, Gaucelmo, is administrated during its open season by the London based Confraternity of St James, of which I am a member. Volunteers from the confraternity, staff the albergue throughout the season. Ruth, a dear friend from my working days was a volunteer here. We did not stop here, I did however introduce myself to the albergue team and had my pilgrim record stamped. Across the small courtyard from the albergue is the parish church of Santa Maria. Reputedly built in the 12th century by the Knights Templar, it is now occupied by an order of Bavarian Monks, it also has provision for ten pilgrims who may wish to stay for more than two nights as a form of mini retreat, during which they can enjoy the pleasures of Gregorian plain song and vespers each evening at 7pm. Having said goodbye to the albergue I headed off to join the rest of the gang who, no doubt, have bought all the croissants in the café, and contemplate the road ahead which will bring us to what is one of the most symbolic structures on the Camino.

Len Cunningham

BOOK CLUB

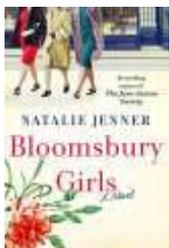
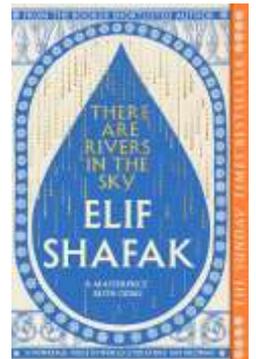
The Lincoln Highway by Amor Towles

1954 Nebraska. 18 year old Emmett Watson has just been released after serving a sentence for involuntary manslaughter. His father, who had his dreams of becoming a farmer shattered, has died while Emmett was incarcerated. Billy, Emmett's 8 year old inquisitive, intelligent kid brother is being looked after by kindly neighbours, Sally Ransom and her widowed father. Among Billy's most treasured possessions are a compendium of stories about heroes and adventures, and a series of postcards that their long lost mother sent them from various towns between Nebraska and California some years earlier. On his release Emmett decides that he and his brother need to make a fresh start, and they take a road trip which Billy hopes will lead them to their mother, using the postcards as clues.

As Emmett and Billy are about to depart for their journey along the Lincoln Highway, they are joined by two other members of the correction centre where Emmett has been detained. Duchess and Woolly, who did not wait until their sentence officially ended, have followed Emmett to Nebraska with their own plan, one that will take them all on a fateful journey in the opposite direction - to New York City.

This is the second book that our group has read by Amor Towles, although totally different in style and subject matter. Every chapter was seen from a different character's point of view and we thought that he perfectly portrayed each of them in a way that they spoke and acted. We thought that they seemed older than they actually were, but put that down to the time in which the book was set. We decided that all the young men were victims of circumstances and could feel sympathy for them. Having one adventure after another, at times this book was very amusing, with the conclusion totally unexpected.

Our new book is *There are Rivers in the Sky* by Elif Shafak. This book explores themes of memory, loss and history across centuries, as seen through the eyes of three characters linked by the Thames and Tigris rivers. A lost poem from ancient Mesopotamia unites an orphan from London, a Yazidi girl in modern Turkey and a tattooist in contemporary London.



Next month's book is *The Bloomsbury Girls* by Natalie Jenner set in 1950's London.

Susan Perry

We were pleased to welcome Katherine for the first time who hadn't quite finished *The Lincoln Highway*, along with two others. so we were careful not to divulge any spoilers! We meet again on March 2nd at Margaret's house at 10.00am. Do please join us if you like reading - you may well have a treasured book you would like us to share! Just give me a ring if you want to know more 07930 471837

Margaret

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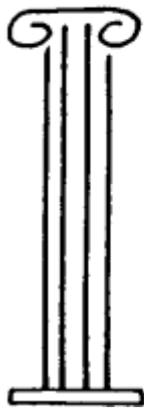


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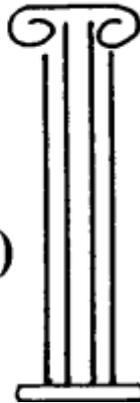
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