

Bromsgrove
Methodist
Church and
Centre

In Flanders Fields John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.



November 2022

Bromsgrove Methodist Church and Centre: encouraging, supporting and developing followers of Jesus Christ and sharing God's love in the wider community

REGULAR SERVICES AND KEY CONTACTS

SUNDAY

1st
 9.00 am
 10.30 am
 Morning Worship
 2nd
 10.30 am
 Morning Worship
 3rd
 10.30 am
 Morning Worship
 4th
 10.30 am
 Morning Worship

- Holy Communion at one 10.30 am service each month
- Evening Services at 6.00 pm on some Sundays
- Special Services as arranged.

Please see the Centre Pages for full service details

Tuesday to Thursday 9.15 am – 9.30 am Morning Prayers

Tuesday 12.30 pm Lunchtime Service (monthly)

Minister: Rev Steve Levett

151 Birmingham Road, Bromsgrove, B61 0DJ

Tel: (01527) 575017

Centre Office: 19 Stratford Road

Bromsgrove, B60 1AS Tel: (01527) 835843

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Email: bromsgroveroombookings@gmail.com

Find out more at www.bromsgrovemethodist.org.uk

Nove

Welcome to your November 2022 FORUM

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Material for FORUM to the Editor, c/o Centre Office Or email: les.jim42@btinternet.com

Opinions expressed are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent the views of the Church at any level.

Why I support the Royal British Legion - a personal view

Late October and early to mid-November is a season of remembrance. These days we tend to give Trafalgar Day (October 21st) a bit of a swerve, perhaps because of the entente cordial between ourselves and our once old foe France and the fact that they were allies in two world wars.



I tend to avoid Halloween (October 31st) if by that we mean the pumpkin carving/give us a sweet or else/ let's dress up as a notorious killer/let's make light of death and evil kind of festival; 'Another American import designed to make us spend money' I can hear my long-departed father lamenting!

As I've got older I've warmed to the days of remembrances which are All Saints (November 1st) and All Soul's (November 2nd). There are so many people whom I have looked up to and loved who are no longer with us and whom I like to give a little thought to, and remember, and give thanks for, and take fresh inspiration from. The loss of my brother-in-law this last March 1st will bring added poignancy this year. Of all the occasions of remembrance in this period this is the one most obviously of some Christian root. Whilst I'm not of the persuasion of faith that leads me to want to pray for the departed I do often find it helpful to light a candle. If you wanted to light a virtual candle you can do so on our Circuit website at www.brmethodists.co.uk/ light-a-candle/

Then comes November 5th, that bonfire and fireworks night. This remembrance does have some religious undertones. For many years after 1605 the annual commemoration of the foiling of Guy Fawkes and his fellow plotters was used as an excuse for violence against any Roman Catholics that were still in the realm. Thankfully this sentiment has passed and I've been to quite a few bonfires in a past appointment where the local Catholic priest and congregation were cheerful participants in our churches together bonfire?!

The comes November 11th, Remembrance Day. Perhaps the most solemn and nationally marked of all these occasions, notable for the proud wearing of

poppies and the two minutes silence. On their website I found this: 'The Royal **British Legion** is the national custodian of Remembrance, a role which ensures that those who gave their lives for peace and freedom are remembered. The act of observing a Two Minute Silence began in 1919 following the Armistice at 11.00am on 11 November 1918, at the end of the WWI.' I'm pleased to join in marking Remembrance Sunday and will be able to join the commemorations in Bromsgrove this year on Sunday 13th November.

I'm also glad to financially contribute to the fundraising efforts of the Royal British Legion, who seek to support ex-service personnel and their families when need arises. However, I confess to having mixed feelings about the latter. I find it somehow scandalous that a country with a defence budget of around £42 billion can't find the resources from within that funding to fully look after those injured or otherwise badly affected by their service, and instead to some degree leaves them to be reliant on charitable giving from the British public (The RBL raises



over £120 million each year, something like 0.28% of the defence budget). However, one of the important roles of the Royal British Legion is to campaign for and be an advocate for the concerns and needs of current and former service personnel; to challenge the Government of the day in relation to matters such as living conditions, welfare provision and the like. Perhaps a little remembered, and dare I say almost forgotten, purpose of the forming of the Royal British Legion was to keep the Government honest after the first world war; to make sure they did not forget returning service personnel now that the war was over. The Government had promised them a land fit for heroes, but post war conditions made it look like the Government of the day was going to find reason to backtrack on promises of provision and employment. Whilst from the beginning the Legion (itself the result of at least three military associations coming together) was concerned with directly providing welfare it was also always about, and has continued to be about, advocacy and campaigning. For more information see www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/ campaigns-policy-and-research/policy-and-research. This work continues to need funding. That is why I support the Royal British Legion.

Rev Stephen Levett

Front Page

In the spring of 1915 a Canadian doctor, Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, after losing a friend on the battle front near Ypres, was inspired by the sight of poppies growing in the battle scarred fields to write the now famous poem called "In Flanders Fields"

After the end of the First World War the poppy was adopted as a symbol of Remembrance.

The first official British Legion Poppy Day was held in Britain on 11th November 1921 inspired by this poem. Since then the Poppy Appeal has been a key annual event in the calendar of our nation and many more countries around the Commonwealth and the world.



In Memory

We give thanks for the life of

Dan Harrison

who passed away recently following a long period of illness.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Pam and the family at this difficult time.



Will they never fade or pass!

The mud, and the misty figures endlessly coming
In file through the foul morass,
And the grey flood-water ripping the reeds and grass,

And the steel wings drumming.

The hills are bright in the sun:
There's nothing changed or marred in
the well-known places;
When work for the day is done
There's talk, and quiet laughter, and gleams of fun
On the old folks' faces.

I have returned to these:
The farm, and the kindly Bush, and the young calves lowing;
But all that my mind sees
Is a quaking bog in a mist - stark, snapped trees,
And the dark Somme flowing.





1916 2016

Connection: Overstrand Methodist Church, Norfolk and the Cenotaph

Whilst Lesley & I were on holiday recently in Norfolk we were based in the village of Overstrand. In the road which ran alongside our hotel we found Overstrand Methodist Church which is unfortunately no longer in service.

A little research revealed the following regarding the building:

"Arts & Crafts" building, erected in 1898 on land given by Lord Battersea, who asked his friend & architect Edwin Lutyens to design it (as well as his own home, the Pleasaunce, also in Overstrand).



Lutyens' design was inspired by a Victorian lifeboat house: appropriately given its proximity to the sea.

That is what it was intended to look like, and indeed many visitors to the village ask if it was once the village lifeboat station!



Sir Edward Lutyens was one of the country's most prominent architects known for adapting traditional architectural styles to the requirements of the time. The Methodist Church in Overstrand was one of only two nonconformist churches designed by Lutyens.

He designed many country houses, public buildings and

war memorials probably the most well known of which is the Cenotaph in Whitehall.

The Cenotaph

The memorial was unveiled in 1920 as the United Kingdom's national memorial to the British and Commonwealth dead of the First World War and was rededicated in 1946 to include those of the Second World War and has since come to represent British casualties from later conflicts. The word "cenotaph" is derived from Greek, meaning "empty tomb". Most of the dead were buried close to where they fell thus the Cenotaph symbolises their absence and is a focal point for public mourning.

The original temporary Cenotaph (constructed of wood & plaster painted to look like stone) was erected in 1919 for a parade celebrating the end of the First World War, at which over 15,000 servicemen, including French and American soldiers, saluted the monument. Over a million people visited the site within a week of the parade.



Calls for the Cenotaph to be rebuilt in permanent form began almost immediately. After some debate, the government agreed and construction work began



in May 1920. Lutyens made minimal design alterations from the temporary memorial. The Cenotaph is built from Portland stone. It takes the form of a tomb chest atop a rectangular pylon, which diminishes as it rises. The memorial is austere, containing almost no decoration. From each side hang three flags.

The permanent Cenotaph was unveiled by King George V on 11 November 1920 in a ceremony combined with the repatriation of the Unknown Warrior, an unidentified British serviceman to be interred in Westminster Abbey. After the unveiling, millions more people visited the Cenotaph and the Unknown

Warrior. The memorial met with public acclaim and has largely been praised by academics, though some Christian organisations disapproved of its lack of overt religious symbolism.

The National Service of Remembrance is held annually at the site on Remembrance Sunday; it is also the scene of other remembrance services.

The Cenotaph is a grade one listed building and forms part of a national collection of Lutyens' war memorials. Dozens of replicas were built in Britain and other Commonwealth countries. While there was no set or agreed standard for First World War memorials although the Cenotaph proved to be one of the most influential. Lutyens designed several others, which all shared common features with the Whitehall monument.

The public acclaim for the monument was responsible for Lutyens becoming a national figure, and the Royal Institute of British Architects awarded him its Royal Gold Medal in 1921. For several years afterwards much of his time was taken up with war memorial commissions including Manchester and Norwich in UK; India Gate in Delhi: Irish National War Memorial Gardens in County Dublin; Thiepval Memorial in France and Anglo-Boer War Memorial in Johannesburg.

Jim Buchanan

REMEMBRANCE Operation Frankton 1942

You may have never heard of this operation but you will probably know the story as depicted in the film "Cockleshell Heroes"



It was one of the bravest and most dangerous of missions of World War II. The aim was to destroy German and Japanese ships in Bordeaux docks which are situated sixty miles from the coast and were to be reached by paddling up the River Gironde.

The estuary of the river was very heavily fortified and the plan was to land on the French coast just south of the river mouth.

The folding kayaks("cockles") would then be carried overland to the river.

The landing was on December 7th so it was possible to travel under cover of darkness much of the time but it was also very cold.

The submarine H.M.S.Tuna arrived with the six kayaks and their two man crews. One kayak was damaged before it could be launched. The other five landed but one crew was captured and executed before they reached the river and another two died of hypothermia before they reached Bordeaux.

The three remaining kayaks made it to Bordeaux but one was discovered by the Germans whilst waiting to enter the port The other two crews attached limpet mines to various boats which resulted in six of them being sunk. The surviving marines set off in pairs to cross France into Spain and on to Gibraltar. Two were caught and executed but two (Capt. H G Hasler & Marine Sparks) made it to Gibraltar and reached the U.K. four months after the raid.



I have visited the area many times during the last forty years and whilst the region has developed and the remains of the German infrastructure have begun to disappear the story will not be forgotten because there are several monuments to these heroes. This December will be the eightieth anniversary of the raid. The Frankton Memorial was unveiled at Le Verdon in 2011.

Anne Norton

PS A Memorial to Operation Frankton was unveiled on the 25th April 2015 at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. The plaque is a replica of the one used in the memorial at Le Verdon, France. The memorial is adjacent to the site of the Combined Operations Command memorial.



John Simpson Kirkpatrick: An Aussie Hero Simpson and his donkey

John Simpson Kirkpatrick was born in Britain but later moved to Australia.

In August 1914 he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force, serving at Gallipoli the following year as Private John Simpson in the 3rd Field Ambulance, Australian Army Medical Corps. He served from the time of the landing at Gallipoli on 25 April until he was killed in action on 19 May.

Simpson became famous for his work as a stretcher-bearer. Using one of the donkeys brought in for carrying water, he transported wounded men day and night from the fighting in Monash Valley to the beach on Anzac Cove. He did so through "deadly sniping down the valley and the most furious shrapnel fire".

Unfortunately he was killed by machine-gun fire while carrying two wounded men and was buried on the beach at Hell Spit.

The war diary of the 3rd Field Ambulance commended "the excellence of the work performed by Pte Simpson continuously since landing".

Simpson was posthumously "Mentioned in Despatches". His first donkey was known as Abdul, Murphy, or Duffy.

This statue is situated in the grounds of the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne with others situated around Australia.



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Headstones

The rows of headstones silent stand Their message clear, though mute; That we, in Britain's peaceful land Must silently salute.

Our peace was bought at dreadful price
Through rain and fear and mud —
World conflict fought not once but twice
So twice the cost in blood.

Each headstone bears a single name A single husband, son Who, when the call to duty came They did what must be done.

So, think upon those rows of stones Be silent, still as they Remind us of those silent homes From when they went away.

Yes, spare a while to think of them It's just two minutes' time; And say aloud, just once again That well-remembered rhyme:

They grow not old as we grow old, Nor do the years condemn; But as the days and nights unfold, We will remember them





Catalogues are available but are very small showing the Christmas cards, food and a few gifts only. There is a much more extensive range of goods online. Please let me know if you would like a catalogue or go online but please order what you need through me so I get the discount towards church funds.

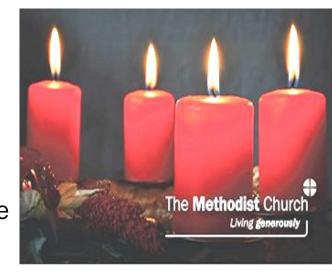
Janet Millward

MISSION IN BRITAIN ADVENT OFFERING

Envelopes will be available in late November. Our offerings support a wide range of Mission in Britain Fund projects, such as:

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- Ministry and mission with all ages
- Methodist Action on Poverty and Justice
- Chaplaincy placements
- Using church and heritage properties in imaginative ways to share the gospel



Charity and Missions Committee



CHRISTMAS and CRAFT FAIR 26th November 10.30-12.30

Handpainted Cards and Goods

Glassware

Woodwork

Cakes and Home Made Food

Gifts

Siher Jeweller

Traidcraft Food and Craft

Knitting and Crochet

Pottery and Mosaics Toiletries





Bacon Butties

Tea, coffee and cakes

If anyone has good quality toiletries to donate please contact Jean Wall Good quality gifts (not bric-a-brac) can be given to Janet Millward



November 2022

6th

10.30 am Holy Communion Rev Julia M Pellett

13th

9.00 am Holy Communion Rev Steve Levett

10.30 am Morning Worship Mrs Sarah Leeson

20th

10.30 am Morning Worship Rev Steve Levett

27th Advent Sunday

10.30 am Morning Worship Mr John Webb

6.00 pm Holy Communion Rev Steve Levett



Christ, be our light!

Shine in our hearts.

Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in your church gathered today.

Christ, be our light: Bernadette Farrell

CHRISTMAS POST 2022

The Christmas post will be back at the Centre this year. The box will be in the Foyer on Sundays 27th November, 4th and 11th December. During the week it will be in the Office. Sorted cards will be available from 4th December.

Please note that **December 11**th will be the last Sunday collection. This gives time for the cards to be sorted and then for people to collect them — even if they are going away for Christmas. Please post as early as you can and remember to post only cards which people will be able to pick up themselves. We sort but we don't deliver!

As always, the post is run for the benefit of Action for Children – please give generously. Last year's total was a wonderful £410. If you are not sending cards, perhaps you would like to give a donation instead.





Janet and Brian Henderson (Post Organisers)

Wednesday Meeting Point

Programme for November



Wednesday November 2nd Postcards from the Past Wednesday November 16th Surprise Surprise

We meet at 7.30 pm in Room 6. All are welcome.



If you're shopping the Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales or buyingearly Christmas presents, make sure you use #easyfundraising.

Over 7,000 brands will donate, so you can raise a FREE donation for BROMSGROVE

METHODIST CHURCH every time you grab a bargain!

https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/offers/trending-offers? utm_campaign=blackfriday-

22&utm_source=social&utm_medium=facebook&utm_content=raisemore -bf22-f1

Amongst the retailers who offer donations are:

Amazon Argos Booking.com Currys Dunelm John Lewis

Coffee Shop - The Future

It has been great meeting all the volunteers and customers of the coffee shop over the last 4 weeks. We have some wonderful volunteers and some delightful customers, making the Coffee Shop a happy place to be.



I have been asked by the circuit to come and work with the helpers to see ways that we can reinvigorate the Coffee Shop, which has been a victim of Covid, in terms of losing regular volunteers and customers over this time.

I have been involved in setting up Coffee Mornings around the Circuit and at the cafe at Church Hill. I also set up a Youth and Community Cafe in Alvechurch, where I live.

There is enormous outreach potential here in Bromsgrove and I am really looking forward to seeing how we can encourage more people to the Coffee Shop and perhaps into the life of the church.

Our main obstacle is volunteers so please would you consider these different ways that you can be involved

- 1. Volunteer to help in the cafe for 2 or 4 hours once a week; once a fortnight; once a month whatever suits you best.
- 2. Volunteer to sit on the "Chatty Table" to make sure that everyone who wants to can have someone to talk to.
- 3. Volunteer to go on a rota to make home-made cakes or soup.

- 4. Come along to the coffee shop and enjoy refreshments with us.
- 5. Spread the word invite people to come with you. Highlight the volunteer opportunities here to anyone you think might be interested.
- 6. If you have any suggestions to improve what we are doing, please tell me.

7. PRAY

Some small changes will start to happen over the next few weeks but we hope to start 2023 with new volunteers in place, more opening hours and more variety on the menu! I am excited to see what we can achieve here!

Please contact me by email at churchcommunityandout-reach@gmail.com or by phone on 07884191101

There is also a Craft morning planned on November 10 to make Remembrance Stones.

Please look out for further details closer to the time.

Sally Meredith



Bromsgrove Crosslinks

Befriending Scheme



Objective.

To phone someone who is socially isolated/lonely within the community to provide mental stimulation and friendship to enhance their wellbeing.

We are happy to take referrals from professionals or people can self-refer.

Our volunteers provide a regular phone call by arrangement but we are not replacing any professional support.

Please text the contact number below, or email us to refer.

bromsgrovebefriending@gmail.com
Text 07508 352 270





HYMNS WE LOVE

"How Great Thou Art"

by Carl Gustav Boberg - StF No. 82

1. O Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder consider all the works thy hand hath made,

I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder, thy power throughout the universe displayed

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee: how great thou art, how great thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee: how great thou art, how great thou art!

2. When through woods and forest glides I wander and hear the birds sing in the trees;

When I look down from lofty mountain, and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze:

(Refrain)

3. And when I think that God, his Son not sparing, sent him to die, I scarce can take it in

that on the cross, my burden gladly bearing, he bled and died to take away my sin:

(Refrain)

4. When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation and take me home- what joy shall fill my heart; then shall I bow in humble adoration, and there proclaim: my god how great thou art: (Refrain)

COMMENT

This well-known and loved hymn follows the theme of Psalm 19, verse 1 "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows his handiwork". It originated in the majestic hills and valleys of Sweden, where, in 1835, the Rev. Carl Boberg, a Lutheran minister wrote these stirring words, following it is said, a walk interrupted by a summer thunderstorm. Boberg was also a politician, serving for fifteen years as a senator in the Swedish parliament. Boberg wrote the first three verses, and a fourth verse was added in 1948. The hymn came to England via Germany and Russia, being translated by Stewart Hine, who had been a missionary with his wife in western Ukraine. It was also published in USA, where it was used by evangelist Bev Shea, at Crusades, including the one held in New York in 1957, where it was sung a staggering 99 times!

Speaking of evangelical crusades, we are currently looking at the project "Everyone an Evangelist" with a view to talking about our faith and sharing it with others. What better words to use to sum up what we believe than those of verse 3? "On the cross, my burden gladly bearing, he died to take away my sin". It is reminiscent of that other wonderful sentiment in hymn 418 "We have a gospel to proclaim, good news for all throughout the earth". But the hymn began with the author's recognition of God's majesty and power through his creation. The refrain just emphasises the deep feeling of worship with the words "Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee, how great thou art!" In the first two verses Boberg speaks of "awesome wonder" including mention of "stars, thunder and God's universal power displayed". He continues with the very poetic words- "Through woods and forest glades I wander, hear the birds sing in the trees, look down from lofty mountain, hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze."

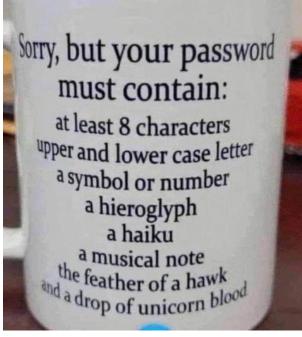
In the last stanza, having praised God with our lives and having run our course, the Christian looks forward to being "taken home", where adoration of God may continue with the eternal proclamation "My God, how great thou art".

Every blessing, JOHN

Humour Corner

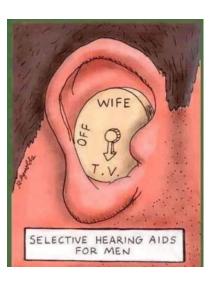


"Your call is very important to us...
Please enjoy this 40 minute flute solo"



Did you hear about the restaurant on the moon?

Great food, no atmosphere.



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The Lop-Sided Grin

She turned the pages slowly as the pictures told their tale, Tracing with her fingertip, the old nostalgic trail.

Stirring many memories of a once familiar place;

A little Nissen building at a wartime Naval Base.

'Hello', he said, I'm Peter'.' Hello', she said. 'I'm Jill'.

Those simple words and precious moments are remembered still. Yes, once in a lifetime moment, destined to be the key To direct their future journey post-war history.

But from those precious moments they faced long years of war,
Through D-Day and its aftermath, with snatched leave back on shore.
Then parting to serve overseas in countries far and wide
Until the dreadful atom bomb began to turn the tide.

The following months passed slowly 'til time came to return
To face different traumas while endeavouring to learn
How to pick up pieces of careers and Civvy Street,
And to make two people's love story almost complete

She turned the pages slowly, with albums piling high, Continuing their story of over fifty years gone by. Into the room he walked to lay a new book on her knee, 'That's for Millennium moments enjoyed by you and me'.

The kind grey eyes were twinkling, the lop-sided grin still there, But time had changed the youthful gold for silver in his hair, It started many years ago with precious moments then And very often through their lives those moments lived again

Do you recall the words we spoke that night when time stood still? 'Hello', I said,' I'm Peter'. 'Hello' you said, 'I'm Jill'.

Written by the late Jill Clough and submitted by Anne Norton

And Finally....

What a lot has happened since our last edition of FORUM.

Sadly we had the loss of Queen Elizabeth II and the end of the Elizabethan era. Consequently we now have our first King for seventy years. In the words of the National Anthem..."long may he reign over us".

We have now had 3 Prime Ministers in Downing Street, 3 Chancellors of the Exchequer and numerous other changes in the top ranks of the Government since the beginning of September. All this in the middle of a cost of living crisis, affecting very many people, compounded by the disruption in the political arena and the continuing effects of the war in Ukraine. We have to hope and pray that the latest "new" Government will find ways to create more immediate economic stability with fairness at all levels of our society and initiate workable plans for the future.

Closer to home, you will now be aware of our Church's parlous financial position which was discussed at the Church Council meeting on 25th October. A summary of this meeting is enclosed with your copy of FORUM for you to reflect on the situation.

To paraphrase the words of J F Kennedy in his inauguration address in January 1961..... ask not what your Church can do for you - ask what you can do for your Church.

Looking forward our next edition of FORUM, this will cover the months of December and January. The deadline date for copy will be **Sunday November 13th**. Please e mail content to me at les.jim42@btinternet.com or hard copy in the FORUM folder in the Church Office.

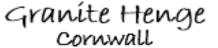
As a final thought, considering the current situation in the United Kingdom, perhaps we can hope for a true **CHRIST**mas and not just an ordinary **X**mas this year.

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Jim Buchanan







The perfect break away in picturesque Looe
Bank Voles Nest and Deer's Holt
Adjacent semi-detached cottages
Each sleeps 4 – book either or both together
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CHURCH ACTIVITIES AT THE CENTRE

MONDAY

6.00 pm Girls' Brigade

TUESDAY

10.00 am Toddler Group

10.00 am Knitting Group

WEDNESDAY

6.00 pm Boys' Brigade Anchor Boys

7.15 pm Boys' Brigade Juniors

7.30 pm Meeting Point (1st & 3rd)

SATURDAY

10.30 am CAMEO (1st & 3rd)

During the week other groups and organisations run activities at the Centre too. See the noticeboards for information.

COFFEE SHOP

10.30 am to 12.30 pm

Monday to Thursday

Closed on Friday & Saturday





We will remember