

## Upcoming dates

**Monday 8 December**  
**12.00pm** Chapter meeting  
Mark's house

**Tuesday 9 December**  
**10.00am** Rural deans' meeting  
Stage Cross  
**2.30pm** Handbells  
St. Mary's, Black Torrington

**Wednesday 10 December**  
**10.00am** Morning prayer  
St. Mary's, Black Torrington

**Saturday 13 December**  
**7.00pm** Quiz, Tetcott

**Sunday 14 December**  
**11.00am** Café church  
St. Mary's, Black Torrington

**11.00am** Holy communion  
St. Leonard, Clawton

**6.30pm** Evensong  
St. Alban, Beaworthy

## Commentary

*In Protestant churches, in the United Kingdom, it is common for Advent wreaths to have four red or purple candles reflecting the Advent liturgical colours. The four Advent candles are linked to the Sunday Revised Common Lectionary readings for Advent, each candle representing those looking toward the patriarchs; those who have gone before us (week one), the Old Testament prophets (week two), John the Baptist (week three) and Mary the mother of Jesus (week four). They enhance and make beautiful what is an isolated and reflective time. This month is deliberately set aside some time so that we can 'clear house', prepare our bodies, and our souls, to greet the Christ child at his beginning. This time is not to be tangled into the noise and mess and busyness, use this time to deal with what is essential. Paul.*

### Please pray for:

**All who have died recently**, including Stuart Marwood, Ashwater, and Sue Marwood, friends and family.

**Those who are ill**, including Ian, Helen, Steve, Cathy, Peter, Stewart, Natalie, Helen, Abigail, Rene, Brian, Ian, Sandra and River Onyx.

### Our Benefice schools.

**All those who** give generously to the Foodbank on a regular basis and those who receive food.

**All who are living under conditions of conflict**, including those in Ukraine, Russia, Palestine, Israel, Sudan, Yemen, Iran and Congo and Syria.

### Mission prayer

You go nowhere by accident. Wherever you go, God is sending you. Wherever you are, God has put you there. He has a purpose in your being there. Christ, who indwells you, has something He wants to do through you where you are. Believe this and go in His grace and love and power

## Ruby Country Benefice

**Sunday 7 December 2025**  
**2<sup>nd</sup>** Sunday of Advent

## GRAPEVINE

**The parishes of Ashwater, Beaworthy, Black Torrington with Highampton, Clawton, Halwill and Tetcott**

## Welcome to Worship

### Sunday 7 December

**9.30am** Morning service  
St. Peter ad Vincula, Ashwater

**11.00am** Holy communion  
St. Mary's, Black Torrington

**11.00am** Morning service  
St. Peter & St. James, Halwill

**5.30pm** Tea and evening service  
Holy Cross, Tetcott

*Ruby people: Worshipping in God's country*

## Old Testament

### Isaiah 11: 1-10

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.

The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious. In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the surviving remnant of his people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath and from the islands of the Mediterranean. (NIV)

## Epistle

### Romans 15: 4-13

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope. May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written: "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing the praises of your name." Again, it says, "Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people." And again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; let all the peoples extol him." And again, Isaiah says, "The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope." May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (NIV)

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## Gospel

### Matthew 3: 1-12

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (NIV)