



Parish of Newton Abbot and Oghwell

WEEKLY NEWS

26th July 2026

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FROM OUR RECTOR

Dear Friends

On our recent holiday to France, Judy and I walked along a beach that seemed to be almost entirely made up of shells. Many of them were old oyster shells from the oyster beds that were scattered all along the coastline, but there were far more besides those. Unsurprisingly, many of the children we saw were busy finding as many pretty shells as they could. I've done that many times in the past. Perhaps you have too. But despite how it looked, the beaches we walked on had far more sand than shells. And while it might be possible to count the shells on a beach, counting the grains of sand would be an impossible task.

That thought takes us to Genesis chapter 22, where God made a promise to Abraham and about the number of descendants he would have.

"I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

A quick google search told me that it's possible to fit around 50,000 grains of sand on a man's palm. As for the number of grains of sand on beach... one website offered this solution.

Estimates suggest there are roughly 7.5×10^{18} (7.5 quintillion) grains of sand on Earth's beaches combined—but this number is wildly variable. A single beach might have 10^9 to 10^{12} grains, while a tiny pocket could hold just 10^3 to 10^6 . The answer depends on grain size, and even how you define "sand".

From [How Many Grains of Sand Are on a Beach? - CompleteEra](#)

This is where we need to understand that the Bible isn't always meant to be taken literally. The Lord's promise to Abraham is a metaphor, designed to express the vastness of his future family, not an exact number. And praise God who keeps his promises, that family is now vast beyond counting and continuing to grow!

From one man, Abraham, and he as good as dead (see *Hebrews 11:12*) has come a family of believers across both testaments that is impossible to count. And given that the world's population is at its largest right now, there are certainly more Christians alive today than ever before, (*over 2 billion according to many estimates*), with the numbers already enjoying their eternal rest with Christ even larger still!

These 'grains of sand,' individual believers, are all known to God, who even knows the number of hairs on all our heads. And just as sand and beaches are found across the world, so there are now believers in every country on the planet, including in those places where to accept Jesus as Lord or possess a Bible or attend a church will land you in prison.

Abraham must have struggled to get his head around that glorious promise. Perhaps we do too, not least because the churches in our parish are small, ranging from the high teens to the mid-50s on most Sundays. But the next time you feel as if the church is shrinking or dying and you feel daunted by the number of unbelievers, go and stand on a beach. Let the grains of sand flow through your fingers as you cast your eyes to the right and left and remember this: The church is far larger than we can imagine, and by God's grace... it will continue to grow!

Grace and peace,

Dave

Please pray for:

Our Church, our parish, benefice and diocese, our Rector Dave Brown, Team Vicars Gareth Regan and Fr. Matthew Cashmore, Curate Jon Bealey, and all others who carry out their own form of ministry.

Our King, His Majesty King Charles III, members of the Royal Family and our government.

The Anglican Church of Tanzania

The churches of the Yealm and Erme Mission Community, their clergy Kim Lovell, Andy Atkins, LLM Tricia Stringer, and for all who live and worship in Yealmpton, Wembury, Revelstoke, Newton Ferrers, Holbeton, and Brixton.

Residents in the following streets: Hunterswell Road, Imperial Mews, Jellicoe Road, Jetty Marsh Road, Jubilee Road, Keyberry Close, Keyberry Mill, Keyberry Park and Keyberry Road.

The sick and suffering including: Sheila F, Sally F, Marie G, Martyn, Eve T, David L, Ted P, Cherie G, Ryan H, Orla P, John and Joyce Sand their family, Anna C, Peter W, Karen H, Adam B, Ann J and any others who are unwell.

Ben, Sarah and family as they care for Noah.

The families and friends of the recently deceased.

Please let us know about anyone needing our prayers.

Readings for 26th July

Abbotsbury and St Paul's Churches: Matthew Chapter 13, verses 31 to 35, and 44 to 52,
and Isaiah Chapter 44, verse 18 to Chapter 44, verse 5

All Saints' Church: Genesis Chapter 25, verses 6 to 23, and

Matthew Chapter 13, verses 31 to 35, and 44 to 52

Parish Prayer Gatherings

Our next **morning** Parish Prayer Gathering will be on **Monday 27th July** at St Paul's Church starting at 9:15 a.m.

No Prayer gatherings in August. They resume on 7th September at St Paul's Church starting at 9:15 a.m.

Morning Prayer, Coffee, Tea and Cake every Thursday.

A good group attended the first of these services at All Saints' Church, Highweek 16th July at 9 a.m.

A **slight change of plan**. The service is based on Church of England Common Worship, so the language is more modern than the Book of Common Prayer.



Podcast of the Week- From Hindu monk to Christian: Rahil Patel on karma, grace and finding Jesus

Rahil Patel spent 20 years as a Hindu monk, pursuing God through prayer, fasting, pilgrimage and strict spiritual discipline. But beneath his success as a respected teacher, troubling questions remained. Then, after a series of unexpected encounters with Christianity, Rahil walked into a London church and experienced the moment that changed his life. He joins Luke Martin on the Unbelievable podcast to share his remarkable journey from Hindu monasticism to faith in Jesus, and why moving from karma and striving to grace proved so difficult. A fascinating conversation about spiritual longing, religious pluralism, grace, history and the search for God.

Listen via the link below or wherever you get your podcasts.

[From Hindu monk to Christian: ...-Unbelievable? – Apple Podcasts](#)

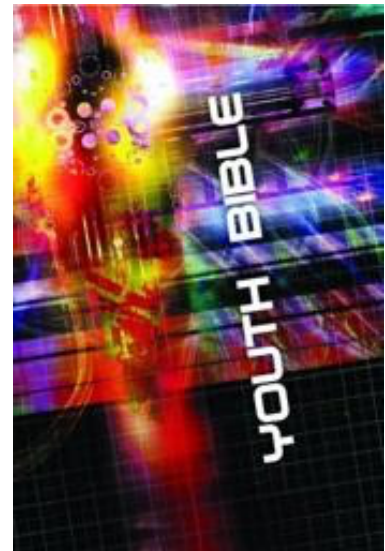
Buy a Bible for a School Leaver

Each year the Parish buys one of these Bibles for each of the Year 6 children leaving All Saint's Marsh and Wolborough Church of England Primary Schools. They cost £13 each, meaning the cost is over £600.

If you'd like to sponsor one or more Bibles this year, please make your donation in an envelope marked School Bibles and place it in the offering.

Alternatively, if you use the tap and pay machines at church, make your donation £13:00 and we will see what the gift is for.

Thank you.



Evensong will be held at **West Ogwell Church** at 5 p.m. on **26th July**.

Parking is permitted in the grounds of Gaia House, but **please be very quiet within that property**.

Come and experience a traditional evensong in the beautiful West Ogwell Church.

**An Invitation to
Afternoon Tea** at
the Rectory for the
congregations of:

**All Saints' Highweek,
St Bart's Ogwell and
St Mary's Wolborough.**

Please RSVP if you
would like to come.

AFTERNOON TEAS AT THE RECTORY

DAVE AND JUDY WOULD LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO COME
FOR AFTERNOON TEA AT THE RECTORY (5 COACH PLACE)
ON FRIDAY 24TH JULY FROM 3PM

OR

ON FRIDAY 14TH AUGUST FROM 3PM

RSVP: 01626 335862

OR EMAIL rector@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk



**The All-Saints' Church Holy Communion Service on 26th July
will start at 9 a.m.** This will be a slightly shortened service (with 3 hymns), followed
by refreshments at Fairhaven, Highweek Village.

The Romanian Orthodox Church, who normally use All Saints on the first and third Sundays
of each month, have asked to use the church on the fourth Sunday of July because their
Archbishop is paying a visit.

If you drive to church, I suggest you try to park away from the church, as the Orthodox
congregation may be arriving before we leave. You may park in the Highweek Village Inn
car park provided you remove your car before 12 noon (unless you are having lunch there).

General Synod Report

The General Synod met in York in July 10-14 for the final session of this current five-year
term. The five-day gathering was defined by the vital debates on safeguarding, the ongoing
conflict in the Middle East, expressing solidarity with Palestinian Christians, and a
significant motion on same-sex relationships' compatibility with Christian discipleship,
which was lost. There were also key debates on clergy conduct, environmental policy, as
well as a motion on recognising neurodivergent individuals as a blessing.

There were a number of legislative items which were passed and now go before Parliament
for approval. To keep us focused, each day began and ended with worship.

So as not to be too insular, there was an address by an Anglican Communion guest, the Rt
Rev Jorge Cabral from Portugal, and Ecumenical guest Archbishop Luc Terlinden from
Brussels.

Being on the Synod is intense, demanding and challenging. It brings together a mix of people from different traditions and backgrounds, clergy, laity and bishops.

Synod was formally dissolved with the reading of writs from His Majesty the King and then before prorogation there was a communion service led by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Elections for the new Synod take place from 21st September through to 13th October, with results announced on 19th October in time for the new Synod to commence in November.

Clare Lillington

(Clare is a member of our PCC and our Church Treasurer. She attends Chudleigh Parish Church.)

Father Matthew's Biker Pilgrimage

On Thursday 23rd July, following a special Mass at St. John's at 10.00am led by Fr. Robin and after a swift visit to St. Catherine's school for a wave off in the playground, I'll begin a journey of around 9,000km to many of Europe's great Marian shrines.

Over the coming weeks I'll be travelling by motorcycle through much of Europe, visiting places where Christians have prayed for centuries, meeting people along the way, and gathering the stories that will become my forthcoming book, *Two Holy Bikers*, to be published by Bloomsbury in October 2027.

Although I'll be many miles away, please know that you will not be far from my thoughts. At every single shrine I visit I shall be praying for our two churches, for every member of our congregations, and for all those who have asked for prayers. In a very real sense, you will be making this pilgrimage with me. If there is one thing I hope you remember whilst I'm away, it is that every candle I light, every Mass I attend, and every prayer I offer at these holy places will include you.

If you would like to follow the journey, I'll be posting regular updates, photographs and videos at www.twoholybikers.com, where you'll also be able to see my progress across Europe. I hope it will give you a sense of sharing in the adventure and the pilgrimage, even from home.

Thank you for your prayers, your encouragement, and your support over these past months. They mean more than you know. Please continue to pray for a safe journey, and I look forward to returning in September with many stories to tell and, I hope, a renewed sense of all that God is doing in our lives and in our parishes. In love,

Fr. Matthew

COMING EVENTS

Lunch with God. Wednesdays at Golden Lion Square 12:15 to 1:45 p.m. Bible teaching.

Charity Coffee Morning. 25th July from 10 a.m. in the Hall at St Paul's Church in aid of Christians Against Poverty.

Evensong 26th July at 5 p.m. at West Ogwell Church.

Parochial Church Council. 27th July at 7 p.m. at St Paul's Church.

Youth Group for ages 11 to 17 at **The Avenue Church on 25th July**, 7.30 to 9 p.m.

Special Women's Breakfast. Summer with the Holy Spirit. 1st August at 8:30 a.m. at the Rectory. Book with Judy by email at mrsvicar16@gmail.com or telephone 01626 335862.

Craft Club. 4th and 18th August at 2 p.m. at St Paul's Church.

Women's Breakfast. Saturday, 8th August at 9:30 a.m. at Leisure Lounge Café.

Afternoon Tea at the Rectory for the congregations of: All Saints' Highweek, St Bart's Ogwell and St Mary's Wolborough. 14th August, 3 p.m. To book your place email rector@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk or phone 01626 335862.

Men's Breakfast. Saturday 15th August, 9:00 a.m. at the Leisure Lounge Café.

Joint Parish Communion Service. 30th August 10:30 a.m. at St Bartholomew's Church, Ogwell.

Evensong. 30th August. 6 p.m. at St Bartholomew's Church, Ogwell.

CHURCH SERVICES

26th July

All Saints' Church, Holy Communion at 9 a.m.

Abbotsbury Church, Service of the Word at 9:30 a.m.

St Paul's Church, Holy Communion at 11 a.m.

St Luke's Church, Mass at 11:15 a.m.

West Ogwell Church, Evensong at 5 p.m.

2nd August

Abbotsbury Church, Holy Communion at 9:30 a.m.

St Bartholomew's Church, Holy Communion at 9:30 a.m.

St Mary's Church, Wolborough, Matins (BCP) at 11 a.m.

St Paul's Church, Service of the Word, at 11 a.m.
St Luke's Church, Mass at 11:15 a.m.

9th August

Abbotsbury Church, Service of the Word at 9:30 a.m.
All Saints' Church, Holy Communion at 9:30 a.m.
St Paul's Church, Holy Communion at 11 a.m.
St Luke's Church, Mass at 11:15 a.m.

EVERY WEDNESDAY 10 a.m. Holy Communion at St Paul's Church, Devon Square **and**
10 a.m. Said Mass at St Luke's Church, Milber.

EVERY THURSDAY 9 a.m. Morning Prayer (Common Worship) followed by refreshments
at All Saints' Church, Highweek.

ALL WEEK St Bartholomew's Church in Ogwell is normally open for private prayer during
daylight hours.

PARISH CONTACTS

Team Rector: Rev Dave Brown. Day off Thursday
rector@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk 01626 335862

Team Vicar and Vicar of St Luke's, Milber: Fr. Matthew Cashmore. Day off Monday
father@slsj.co.uk 07555 924862

Team Vicar: Rev Gareth Regan: Day Off: Friday.
gareth@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk 01626 201237

Curate: Rev Jonathan Bealey curate@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk 07886567732

Licensed Lay Minister: Keith Butler: puffin@blueyonder.co.uk 07980 457919

Churchwardens:

All Saints': **Paul Cannock** allsaintswarden@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk
Abbotsbury: **Pauline Giddings** abbotsburywarden@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk
St Mary's **Sharon Lawrence** salawrence21@outlook.com 07794 108166 St.
Paul's **Lorna Tresidder** stpaulswarden@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk
St Bartholomew's **Stella Llewellyn** stellallewellyn@icloud.com 01626 906814
and **Gwyn Hughes.** gwynhughes@icloud.com 01626 365028

Anna Chaplain: Kim Martin annachaplain@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk

Organist: Steve Cox 079 686 21511 or 01626 854228 stephen.cox54@talktalk.net

Parochial Church Council Secretary: Karen Hooker.
pccsecretary@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk 07999 891029

Safeguarding Lead: Rob Palmer 07792 081776 treb0r@hotmail.com
Weekly Parish News by Email. **John Calderwood.** news@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk
07760 226488

Other Communications Media (website and social media)
comms@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk

IT Support it_support@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk

Parish website: www.newtonabbotparishes.co.uk

Parish Office at St Paul's Church, Devon Square.

The office is normally open Monday to Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Phone
01626 211346 or email office@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Newton Abbot Town Council. 01626 201120 www.newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

Shopmobility, Ring & Ride, Community cars – 01626 335775

Teignbridge Council – 01626 361101, www.teignbridge.gov.uk

THAT Foodbank. 8 Queensway House, Queensway, Newton Abbot. TQ12 4BA. Tel:
01626 437310, email: office@thatfoodbank.com Website: www.thatfoodbank.com

Footnote. Thank you very much to those of you who have sent me contributions for
our weekly news. Relevant photos are very welcome.

I aim to circulate each weekly issue on Wednesday to give notice of the coming weekend's
events and perhaps report what happened last weekend.

Please let me have any news of past events, notice of future activities or any other
information that may be interesting or useful for our Church members, by Tuesday for the
next day's issue.

If you know of anyone who does not receive this weekly email, but wishes to do so, please
ask them to email me. John Calderwood news@newtonabbotparishes.co.uk