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CONNECT

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Dear

Cast all your anxiety on Him
because He cares for you.
1 Peter 5:7

Dear Friends

The Overwhelming Love of God

There are some things in life that are difficult to put into words: a beautiful sunset, the birth of a child, an unexpected act of kindness, the love we feel for someone very dear to us. We can describe them, but somehow our words never quite seem enough. The Bible suggests that God's love is like that – only infinitely greater.

The apostle Paul prayed that Christians might grasp "how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ" and might "know this love that surpasses knowledge" (Ephesians 3 v 18–19). It is a wonderful contradiction: Paul wants us to know something that is beyond our knowing! Perhaps that is because we sometimes make God's love too small. We imagine that God loves us when we are good, when our faith is strong, when we pray regularly or when life is going well. But when we fail, doubt, struggle or wander away, we wonder whether God might love us a little less. The extraordinary message of Christianity is that God's love does not depend upon our performance.

Jesus shows us what the love of God is really like. He welcomed people others rejected. He touched those others avoided. He forgave those who had failed. He noticed people whom everyone else overlooked. And ultimately, he went to the cross. As Paul writes: "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5 v 8). Notice those words: **while we were still sinners**. God did not wait for us to become worthy of his love. He loved us first. And perhaps that is something many of us need to hear.

Whatever our past, whatever mistakes we have made, whatever burdens we carry, we are loved by God more deeply than we can imagine. Christian faith begins not with trying harder to earn God's approval, but with opening our hands and receiving a love that is already being offered.

The apostle John puts it beautifully: "We love because he first loved us." God's love is wider than our failures, deeper than our fears, stronger than our doubts and greater than anything we face. We may spend a lifetime discovering its depths – and still only have begun.

God bless you, David

Bible Study details until the end of the year

Week beginning Nov 2…**Gospels**: 'Do miracles and exorcisms really happen?' Mark 1 v 21-28; 2 v 1-12; John 11 v 32-44

Week beginning Nov 16…**Letters:** 'Is the New Testament teaching on sex outdated?' 1 Corinthians 6 v 12-20; Ephesians 5 v 21-33

Week beginning Nov. 30…**Revelation:** 'What about judgement, hell and the afterlife?' Revelation 20 v 11-15; Luke 16 v 19-31

Week beginning Dec 14…**God's book in summary and any questions?**

Commitment for Life

Life-giving Faith | Defiant Hope | Generous Love

Prayer Partners

Prayer for Interfaith understanding

O God beyond our imagining, greater that the vastness of the universe, yet more intimate to us than we can possibly conceive, your love is stronger than any suffering or torment, your arms stronger than any crippling anxiety, your touch warmly comforting amidst tears.

We come into your presence, eager to unload all the things that trouble us, and eager to partner with you in the weaving of hope.

We come with prayers for your suffering children in places of conflict and war: all the places where tears and blood soak the very soil that ought to bring forth flowers.

We pray for all those afraid as the language of hatred pervades political language.

Open our hearts, we pray, to our neighbour whose religion is different and strange to ours that we might receive blessings from them; may we see them as partners in peace building, dutiful friends in searching for flowers of hope amidst stoney ground, allies in the struggle for justice.

And be with us as we witness to
your love which knows no bounds.

Amen.

By Peter Colwell

Communion Offering for November

Children's Hospice South West

children's hospice SOUTH WEST

For more than 30 years Children's Hospice South West has been caring for children and young people with life-threatening conditions by providing children's hospice and professional family support services. We are dedicated to making the most of short and precious lives through the provision of the best possible hospice care for children and young people with life-limiting conditions. The care offered at each of our three hospices is not just about medical and nursing support for sick children but enriching lives of the children and their whole family.

Christmas Lunch

Yes, Folks, it's that time of year once again and time to plan our Christmas Lunch for 2026. It is taking place on **Sunday 13th December** following worship and I hope as many of you as possible will be able to join the festivities.

At the beginning of December I would be grateful if everyone would pay in advance (as you always do) so that I have the exact numbers attending. The cost will be the same as in previous years - **£8.00 per head.** Meanwhile, please pop the date into your diaries - but I will remind you in next month's Connect.

November Rotas

	Flowers	Readers
November 1st	Flower Fund	Jane
November 8th	Patricia & Esmond	Stella
November 15th	John	Sally
November 22nd	Val	Isabel
November 29th	Flower Fund Advent	Philip
December 6th	Advent	Jane

CHURCH EVENTS DIARY – NOVEMBER 2026		
SUNDAY 1ST	**SUNDAY WORSHIP** with Our Worship Team	**11.00AM**
SUNDAY 8TH	**REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY WORSHIP** with Mr Brian Jones	**11.00AM**
SUNDAY 15TH	**COMMUNION SUNDAY WORSHIP** with Revd. David Jewell	**11.00AM**
SUNDAY 22ND	**SUNDAY WORSHIP** With Revd, Dr. Keith Clements	**11.00AM**
SUNDAY 29TH	**SUNDAY WORSHIP – Advent Hope** with Mrs Stella Paterson	**11.00AM**
SUNDAY 6TH	**SUNDAY WORSHIP – Advent Peace** TBA	**11.00AM**

INDUSTRIOUS ANTS

The minute invaders scurried through a hole under the front door near a tell-tale pile of earth. Lines of them marched across my timber floor. Ants! Tiny workers, constantly, industriously at their task, looking for food, serving their colony and their queen. I wanted to be rid of them, but I couldn't help admiring their diligence.

Ants are a positive example of hard work in Scripture. In contrast, the lazy "sluggard" is admonished in Proverbs 6:6 to "go to the ant … consider its ways and be wise!" Then in Proverbs 30:24-25 the author refers to ants as "small" and "extremely wise" because they combine their "little strength" to "store up their food". Each ant works within a bigger role and purpose.

We all get tired and even feel lazy at times, and it's important to have rhythms of rest. But this image is here to encourage us - not necessarily to do *more* or *better,* but to work diligently wherever God has placed us, knowing everything we do is for His purposes. Or, as the Apostle Paul reminds us: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord" (Colossians 3:23). Then, like the ant storing food for winter, we'll store up "treasures in heaven". (Matthew 6:20).

Drawing close to Jesus in our work gives us fresh hope and an eternal purpose, even during hard tasks. What a privilege to serve the King!

When are you more tempted to try and live in your own strength? How does it feel when you deliberately do your work alongside Jesus and in His strength?

Dear Jesus, thank You for strengthening me for the tasks you have given me. Please use me as part of Your salvation work on earth.

Source: Our Daily Bread

Autumn leaves

teach a simple Christian lesson: even when things change or fade, God's presence and promise of new life remain constant**.**

One crisp autumn morning, a little red leaf hung tightly to the branch of a tall oak tree. All summer long, it had rustling song of the forest. Now, the air was cold. The green colour inside had faded away to reveal a brilliant, fiery red, and the other leaves were beginning to let go and drift gently down to the soft earth."Why are they letting go?" it wondered, "If I let go of this branch, I'll fall, and I'm afraid it means it's the end."

An older leaf smiled in the breeze and said . "It is not the end, little one. It is a change designed by the One who made us."

"Who made us?" the little leaf asked.

"God," the older leaf answered softly. "He made the spring green, the summer growth, and now these bright colours. He holds the whole forest in His hands. When we let go, we aren't forgotten. We go down to rest in the soil, to nourish the roots and to make way for new life when spring comes again."

The little leaf looked down at the colourful carpet below and out across the quiet woods. For a moment, fear tugged at the edges of the little red stem. Then it remembered how God had fed the tree all summer, how He kept the sun shining, and how His love never changed, even when the seasons did. With a soft sigh of trust, it released its grip on the branch.

The cool autumn wind caught the little red leaf, spinning and tumbling it in a graceful dance until it landed safely on the warm, blanketed ground below.

The Lesson Behind the Leaves

- **Hidden Colours:** Just like hidden colours (yellows and reds) are always inside green leaves waiting to be revealed when the light changes, God's steady presence is always with us even when we cannot see or feel it.

- **Releasing Fear:** Falling leaves remind us to let go of old worries, fears, or habits so God can work something new in our hearts.

- **The Promise of New Life:** Autumn reminds us that winter and endings are not the final chapter—just as Jesus rose to bring everlasting life, spring always returns.

Assistance Needed

There are many things that need doing on Sunday mornings before worship that we hope someone may be able to help with.

Your Elders are often busy elsewhere - operating the digital, welcoming the speaker, ensuring the hymn numbers are out up, putting out the tables in the hall to name but a few. Probably the most difficult for us to cover is 'door duty' when people are welcomed and given an order of service. Our dear friend John Fife undertook this duty until ill health prevented him from continuing. Please consider whether this is something you could help with.