

# **Tuckingmill Baptist Church, Camborne**



## **December 2021**

Two years ago, at the end of 2019, all sorts of people had all sorts of hopes and, they might even have said, "visions" for 2020. That phrase meaning *perfect eyesight* - "20-20 vision" - had caught on in the Christian world too.

But obviously nobody had any idea how all of those "visions" - no matter how firmly they claimed they were in some sense "inspired by God" - were going to be turned upside down as that virus we are now only too familiar with was to sweep the globe.



Back at the end of 2004, Jenny and I were preparing to move back to Cornwall. Our first Sunday officially

here at Tuckingmill was actually Jenny's 50th birthday. And we had a 17-year mortgage lined up, reckoning that odd term would lead up very simply to my retirement date in 2022. We didn't quite get that right, as the government decided to tinker with the age of retirement ... but we were only one year out!

Our predictions don't always come out right. But we still have to make some kind of plans, based on our best guesses, things that we think we can reasonably well see in the pipeline.

It's a pretty sure-fire bet that there won't be an 8-page January 2022 church magazine, for example, as I have other things I would prefer to do between Christmas and New Year.

And even if the Coronavirus stuff does mostly settle down through the coming year, I can foresee it's going to be a somewhat disturbed year for you.

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Having been here for just light of 17 years now, things have dropped into largely comfortable rhythms - like well-used slippers that have moulded to your feet. But this time of relative calm is set to come to an end shortly, and my last big job here is to prepare you for this as effectively as I can, based on what we reasonably *can* foresee.

So - as the church members here will already know - Jenny and I will deliberately be off the church scene for nearly three months in the middle of next year. We're thinking that we will both be engaging in projects with an organisation that you might have heard of if you read the small print on the *Grace Baptist Mission* monthly news, called "OneHundredFold".



If you check out the organisation's website, it makes it sound as if we have suddenly become tech wizards: *OneHundredFold is a group of technology specialists who believe that mobile technology has a transformative role to play in making the gospel of Christ accessible to every individual on Earth.*

Actually, we'll be working on the material that these actual tech guys will be making accessible across the globe. Most likely we will find ourselves adapting stuff that has al-

ready been prepared for *GBM* broadcasts and literature, or the *Reformation Today* magazine, into formats suitable for inclusion on the latest digital media. Ideally, we'll try to get someone from the organisation to give you a better understanding of it all before we embark on it.

"Embark" is a bit of an overstatement, though. It's not as if we will need to go overseas on this period of "sabbatical". The way that working from home has developed over the last couple of years, we might not even need to leave the county!

So you might think ... *if they're doing this working from home ... so why the absence from church? Can't we just get some visiting speakers in?*

Yes, this will all mean quite a bit of disruption to some of the church's normal routines. You are absolutely right. But - and you might think this sounds all back-to-front - that is precisely what was intended. This whole idea of a "sabbatical" has arisen *in order to* give the church some practice, after all this time, to our not being here. Because a year later we *won't* be.

I'm really not trying to boast or impress by saying this, but there are all sorts of things that I or Jenny have accumulated as responsibilities, official or not, over our time here. And the time is coming up when you will need to decide which of these to continue with - and the who and the how?

There's the obvious stuff that I do: leading the services. In one sense, it's relatively easy to just book visiting speakers ... but how do you

try to make sure you get a balanced diet of Scriptural preaching month on month, year on year?

But do you want a weekly notices sheet? A monthly magazine? A church website? - with recorded sermons (video or audio?)? A new Bible verse every week in the front window of the Chapel? A different poster on the front of the building every month?

Who's going to prepare the agenda for and/or chair the more official meetings? - for church members, for the elders, for the officers (trustees, as they will soon be, technically)? Who's going to maintain the church diary of everything booked and arranged, even a year or more in advance?

Who's going to do the church heating? What's going to happen about the church youth work? Do we want to continue to have refreshments on Thursday (or Sunday) evenings?

And how is the process of searching for a new pastor going to impinge on these things, too? Can we just suspend that for the three months of this "sabbatical"? What if there is a seamless transition between me and my successor? And what if there *isn't*?

We could sleepwalk through 2022, and these things would then overwhelm us as 2023 dawns. Or we have this "dry run" for that pastoral transition - or "interregnum" - this coming year. To identify the inevitable cracks in the system and address

what we can *now*, while they're still of a more manageable size.

Goodness knows, right now, whether Christmas this year will prove to be a brighter affair than it was last year, with the Boxing Day Lockdown. And goodness knows the precise details of 2022, as yet. But we can peer ahead and can - and *must*, if we are being responsible - make some provisional plans. This load of stuff that I've just written about will be one of the biggies for the church for this coming year, I'm absolutely sure.



But we are not called to map out the future with total precision. Instead, we are called to walk *by faith*. Our God is the one who sees the future (and the past) with perfect understanding. He even sees into our hearts, with perfect vision and gracious compassion.

So he knows that there are things coming up that we would rather *not* have to face. We might never have that quiet life or peaceful retirement that we might think we're due.

But he *knows* what is good and right for us. And if, as we must remember, at Christmas (and Easter) time ... and if ...

*He who did not spare his own Son  
but gave him up for us all,  
how will he not also with him  
graciously give us all things?*

(Romans 8:32)

Peter Ham

<b>Sunday meetings:</b>	<b>10.00 a.m.</b>	<b>6.30 p.m. (cafe church)</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> December	Family carols: Genesis 49:8-12	Video
12 <sup>th</sup> December	Family carols: Isaiah 60	Video
19 <sup>th</sup> December	Family carols: Matthew 2	Carols by candlelight
26 <sup>th</sup> December	No meeting	No meeting
2 <sup>nd</sup> January	Philippians 1:18-30	Video
9 <sup>th</sup> January	Guest service	Video

**Other meetings:**

6 <sup>th</sup> December	10.00	Men's Bible study
9 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>10.45</b>	Prayer meeting
11 <sup>th</sup> December	10.00	Decorating the Chapel
16 <sup>th</sup> December	7.30	Prayer meeting
23 <sup>rd</sup> December		(No meeting)
25 <sup>th</sup> December	10.30	Christmas Morning <i>Show and Tell</i>
30 <sup>th</sup> December		(No meeting)
5 <sup>th</sup> January	7.30	Joint prayer meeting at RBC



	<b>Stewards</b>	<b>Teas</b>	<b>Flowers</b>	<b>Creche</b>	<b>Cleaning</b>
<b>5 Dec</b>	Greg	Marsha / Jenny	Heather		J/J/J Carter
<b>12 Dec</b>	Heather	June / Phil	Lilian		Peter / Jenny
<b>19 Dec</b>	Kay	Heather / John B	...		Heather / Kay
<b>26 Dec</b>	No	...	...	...	meeting
<b>2 Jan</b>	Greg	Marsha / Jenny	...		J/J/J Carter
<b>9 Jan</b>	Heather	June / Phil	Marsha		Peter / Jenny
<b>16 Jan</b>	Kay	Heather / John B	Jenny		Heather / Kay
<b>23 Jan</b>	Jenny	Arwen / Jennifer	Lilian		Greg / Marsha

(Cleaning is for the week *following* the stated Sunday)

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Why, oh why, do people still insist on Christmas crackers? The coloured paper hats, the jokes and the little toys that usually fly across the room when you pull the cracker ... they all seem to be equally mocked and despised!

At least we spare you the toys and the hats in our December edition of the magazine. Get your best groans at the ready!!

(Answers are on the back page - upside-down!)

- 1) What do angry mice send to each other at Christmas?
- 2) What do they sing at a snowman's birthday party?
- 3) Why did Santa's helper see the doctor?
- 4) What happened to the man who stole an Advent Calendar?



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- 5) What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck?
- 6) What is the best Christmas present in the world?
- 7) How did Scrooge win the football game?
- 8) Who is Santa's favourite singer?
- 9) What do Santa's little helpers learn at school?
- 10) What did Santa say to the smoker?
- 11) What do reindeer hang on their Christmas trees?
- 12) What goes 'Oh, oh, oh'?
- 13) Why did the turkey join the band?
- 14) What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?
- 15) What do snowmen wear on their heads?
- 16) How do snowmen get around?
- 17) What do you call an old snowman?
- 18) How does Good King Wenceslas like his pizzas?
- 19) Who hides in the bakery at Christmas?
- 20) What do you call a cat in the desert?
- 21) What did Adam say to his wife on the day before Christmas?
- 22) How many letters are in the Christmas alphabet?
- 23) What carol is heard in the desert?
- 24) What does Santa get when he's stuck in the chimney?



- 25) What athlete is warmest in winter?
- 26) What do you get if you eat Christmas decorations?
- 27) What's the most popular Christmas wine?
- 28) What did the beaver say to the Christmas Tree?
- 29) Why are Christmas Trees like bad knitters?
- 30) What do you get if you cross a bell with a skunk?
- 31) What do you call a bunch of chess players bragging about their games in a hotel lobby?
- 32) What's green, covered in tinsel and goes *ribbet ribbet*?
- 33) Which famous playwright was terrified of Christmas?
- 34) What do you call a reindeer who can't see?
- 35) Why did no one bid for Rudolph and Blitzen on eBay?
- 36) What does the Queen call her Christmas Broadcast?
- 37) What did Father Christmas do when he went speed dating?
- 38) Why don't you ever see Father Christmas in hospital?
- 39) Why is it getting harder to buy Advent calendars?



- 40) Knock, knock Who's there?  
Arthur...  
Arthur who?  
Arthur any mince pies left?

(Answers on the back page)





- 1) Cross Mouse Cards
- 2) Freeze a jolly good fellow
- 3) Because he had low elf esteem
- 4) He got 25 days
- 5) A Christmas quacker
- 6) A broken drum... you just can't beat it
- 7) The ghost of Christmas passed
- 8) Elf-is Presley
- 9) The elf-abet
- 10) Please don't smoke, it's bad for my elf
- 11) Horn-aments
- 12) Santa walking backwards
- 13) Because it had the drumsticks
- 14) Frostdite
- 15) Ice caps
- 16) They ride an icicle
- 17) Water
- 18) Deep pan, crisp and even
- 19) A mince spy
- 20) Sandy Claws
- 21) It's Christmas, Eve
- 22) Twenty-five, because there's "no L"
- 23) O camel ye faithful
- 24) Claus-trophobia
- 25) A long jumper
- 26) Tinsillits
- 27) "I don't like Brussels sprouts"
- 28) Nice gnawing you
- 29) They keep loosing their needles
- 30) Jingle Smells
- 31) Chess nuts boasting in an open foyer
- 32) Mistle-toad
- 33) Noël Coward
- 34) No-eye deer
- 35) Because they were two deer
- 36) The One Show
- 37) He pulled a cracker
- 38) Because he has private elf care
- 39) Because their days are numbered

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