

No 833

Glenorchy
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
EXETER ROAD - EXMOUTH

THE REVIEW

**December 2020 /
January 2021**



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THE REVIEW

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Editor's note: I hope that you will find this issue of the *Review* interesting, with a mixture of news and other items. The Sunday "reflections" will continue to be circulated and put on the website, together with recordings of services.

The next issue of the *Review* will be for February. Please send any items for inclusion by 23rd January.

Editor: sheila@sheilabrain.com

Glenorchy United Reformed Church is delighted to welcome you back to church for the Christmas season and the New Year. Services resume on 6th December, but the regulations mean that numbers will still be limited and you will need to reserve your place if you wish to come. This is especially necessary for the Carol Service on the 20th. Please contact Jenny Newman on 275457 or e-mail info@glenorchychurch.org.uk



Services in December

Sunday 6th December

Family Service with Holy Communion

Led by Revd Michael Diffey

Sunday 13th December

Led by Revd Roz Harrison

Sunday 20th December

Carol Service

Led by Revd Peter Brain

Friday 25th December

10 am: Christmas Day

Led by Revd Sabrina Groeschel

Sunday 27th December

Led by David Lee

Love and congratulations to all who celebrate an anniversary or birthday in December and January



Reflection for 6th December

Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8
Prepare the way of the Lord



Isaiah's words in the OT reading were addressed to people who for years had been living through a crisis and whose whole world had been shattered. If the Israelites had learnt nothing during the years of Exile then that period of history was completely wasted.

We know from our own experience in the 20th century that world shaking events often have a double and seemingly contradictory effect on human life. They can bring about both a renewal of national loyalties and a wider vision of 'one world'. This was very much the case during Israel's exile. The collapse of the nation brought about an intense awareness of the uniqueness of Israel's calling. The exile awakened a new world consciousness; Israel's faith was launched by the vision of new horizons. The people realised that they must look beyond their own circumscribed community to the whole civilised world if they would behold the glory and majesty of God's purpose in history.

It was to this new future that Isaiah's message to the exiled people pointed. His commission was to speak tenderly to Jerusalem - proclaiming to a despairing people that God was coming not to judge but to release them from captivity. Pardon, deliverance, restoration, and grace are the characteristic notes of his message of comfort and hope. It was a vision of a new age.

It is this to 'new' age which the Gospel writers testify.

Isaiah spoke of 'a voice crying in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord'. (Is.40:3). For Mark the voice in the wilderness is John's, calling upon people to prepare for the coming of Jesus. His message is one of comfort, forgiveness and new beginning to those who find themselves in a wilderness of suffering and despair.

Mark has no lengthy genealogy in the way Matthew & Luke begin their Gospels in order to establish Jesus' credentials, no stories of the birth of Jesus, no angels or wise men, no lengthy prologue as in John's Gospel to indicate how Jesus stood in God's great scheme of things. With no nonsense he goes straight to the heart of the matter - Jesus' call to share a new vision and change direction.

Matthew, Luke & John all similarly feature John the Baptist's call to repentance as the way of preparing for the coming of Jesus. For all the Gospels, John the Baptist represented the old order who spoke for the prophets of the past. He called on the people to prepare by committing to live in a new way, to be open to the reality of God's presence in the coming of God in Jesus, enabling our lives to be renewed by his Spirit.

Michael Diffey



Christmas Post Box

There will be a red post box in the Church entrance from 6th December for you to post Christmas cards to house-bound members of the congregation. Cards will be delivered during the two weeks beginning 14th December.

Also, If any housebound members would like help with posting cards to family and friends, please let Jenny know.



Christmas Carol Service—20th December

This year our carol service cannot follow the time-honoured pattern and generate the usual volume!

Those who attend will share in a subdued but nonetheless heart-felt reminder of the Christmas story in readings and songs. A booklet will be prepared for the congregation, with all the words of the readings, carols and prayers.

Note: You need to book your place with Jenny, please.

A recording of this service will then be available on the church web-site, with a copy of the booklet to download, to encourage those who cannot attend in person to feel part of the worship. This should be on-line that afternoon so that people can join in the same evening, which would be good. A memory stick will also be available for those who would like to hear it that way. At least we can sing out in our own homes!

There will also be the usual weekly reflections circulated to those not on-line. I do hope you are all able to participate in some way.

Peter Brain



Gift Service 29th November

Thank you for the wonderful response to the Toy and Gift appeal for Children and Young People for Christmas.

Several bagfuls were collected, despite the restrictions. Although we were not able to meet for worship on that day, a special recording was made of the worship material, led by Revd Peter Brain and including a talk by Andrew Cutler of the Salvation Army who came to receive the gifts. This is now available on the website or on memory stick.

Christmas Shoe boxes



Thank you to all who helped out with the shoe boxes either by providing items or helping to fill them. 58 boxes were packed which was wonderful! Although we were not able to be in church for the planned service on 22nd November, Revd Barbara Bennet included a reference to them in her “Reflection” for that day. Here is what she said:

“If we had been together today we would have blessed the shoeboxes that you have lovingly filled. Sadly we could not do that – but those boxes are already blessed; they have been filled with blessings and love as each one has been filled with the gifts chosen so very carefully and packed so beautifully. If you want God’s blessing on them as they journey towards their recipients then you could say:

‘Bless Gracious God, these boxes. Bless those who give and those who receive, and help us all to see Jesus in everyone we meet’.”

Jenny adds: The truck with the shoe boxes and any aid they can fit in will depart Exmouth during the week beginning 7th December. Please pray for a safe journey .

The warehouse will not be open again until March.

Mission boxes

Thank you to all who handed in their boxes and donated directly recently. £461.63 was raised and as a result we were able to send donations to all three 2020 charities, with extra to Rehoboth in Zimbabwe where the situation is really bad at present.





Walking Group Friday 11th December Exmouth Seafront



Yes, we are allowed to go out and walk in the fresh air again in groups of up to six...

We shall meet at 10am in the Camperdown car park here in Exmouth and walk along the front, taking a different route for the return. Please let Brian (268824) or Bob (269942) know if you plan to come, so that they have an idea of numbers.

January walk: to be decided. Information will be circulated in the New Year.



Allotment Diary

Echiums at the Allotment

Three years ago, Phil Lunt, who used to help at the allotment, gave us two echium seedlings in three-



inch pots. They thrived at the allotment, forming large rosettes of leaves in 2019. The long hot, sunny spell in May and June 2020 (do you remember it?) probably suited these natives of the Canary Isles. One had blue and the other red flowers. They are a relative of borage, a common wild flower and are beloved by bees. Both reached twelve feet tall and were a talking point for our neighbours.

Peter Johnstone

Editor's note: by coincidence we also had an echium in our garden this year, having waited three years to see it flower. A strange and impressive plant!

In Memoriam

Pat Baker

Pat Baker died on 26th November. She was a daughter of the Mair family who ran the shop on the Strand selling artists' materials etc. If you look at the pen and ink drawing of the old Glenorchy Chapel, this was copied from two old photographs and was drawn by Thomas Mair who was Pat's grandfather. Pat was the wife of Rev Chris Baker who went into (Congregational) ministry from Glenorchy. She and Chris were active members of Glenorchy, where they were married. Pat was Leader of our Primary Department and Secretary of the G P Committee.

Revd Amanda Harper

The South Western Synod is saddened to learn that Reverend Amanda Harper died peacefully on November 26th. She was diagnosed with a rare form of ovarian cancer in April, which sadly did not respond to treatment. Amanda had been Minister of Southernhay URC since September 2016 and had preached for us several times at Glenorchy. Our thoughts and prayers are with the congregation at Southernhay and with Amanda's family.

Church Finance

A very big THANK YOU to everyone who has continued to support Glenorchy financially. Whether you donate through the bank, in your weekly envelopes or by cheque (to Jean our treasurer). your generosity is much appreciated.



Eco Matters

A couple of items this month relating to the Transition Exmouth group, of which we became a Corporate Member a few years ago :-

Towards the end of October they launched a new website OurplaceOurplanet. The website highlights steps we can all take towards a more sustainable future, covering Energy, Waste, Food, Transport and Nature. Each of these topics lists five 'first steps' we can undertake, plus over fifty 'next steps' - ideas which need more organising. There are also links to carbon footprint calculators.

The website arose from a meeting in November 2019 involving Transition Exmouth and reps from over 50 local groups, businesses and individuals as well as District and County Councillors. Exmouth Town Council has funded the building of the site and the Transition group has compiled the content. The Town Council are sharing the site from their homepage and all their official communications. There are also links to local businesses and groups who can help achieve each of the 'steps'.

It's great that so many different local bodies including the council support this initiative which should help strengthen the community's response to climate change and the shrinking supplies of resources. If you have access to the internet do have a look at their website

<https://ourplaceourplanet.org/>.

The other item relating to Transition Exmouth is that they are holding their AGM 2020 on Thursday 10th December from 7.30 to 8.30pm, via Zoom. I can provide you with the link to register if you wish to 'attend'.

Geoff Smith

Eco Extra



The following message comes via the eco-church network from Anne-Marie Culhane of Tidelines, a group focussing on exploring the Exe estuary.



We are delighted to announce the Exe Estuary Box, a pack of activities about what the Exe estuary means to us as an estuary community. FREE and suitable for all ages and abilities. It is something you can take part in on your own, with a carer, a friend or with family. We are keen to reach those with an interest in the estuary past, present and future and people who may be isolated or at home particularly over the Winter.

You can drop in and pick one up from the porch at 42 Park Road, Exmouth. Or we can post boxes out to people, drop them by bike at a central point or at people's homes. They fit neatly through most letterboxes! They can be posted back or dropped at any library in the estuary in the book returns box. If people are self isolating or struggle with mobility we can arrange to pick them up.

For more information and a useful video:

<https://tidelines.uk/blog/the-exe-estuary-box/>

The light of the Christmas star to you,
The warmth of home and hearth to you,
The cheer and good will of friends to you,
The joy of a thousand angels to you,
The love of the Son and God's peace to you.
~ *Irish Christmas Blessing*

LUNCHTIME CONCERTS JANUARY



According to the latest regulations, we will be allowed to resume the concerts for the second half of the season. Numbers have to be limited to 40 including performers with social distancing as on a Sunday and there won't be the normal refreshments beforehand.

It will be necessary to book your place in advance: please contact Jenny Newman if you wish to come.

January 6th - Duncan Honeybourne (piano)

Duncan is a concert pianist and has played for us over several years now. He lives in Weymouth and organises the lunchtime concerts there.

January 13th - Mark Hansford (baritone) and **Josephine Pickering** (piano) I will be joining Josephine for one or two organ and pianos duets halfway through to give Mark's voice a rest. Mark and Josephine have now performed for us on more than one occasion.

January 20th – Andrew Millington (organ) Andrew was the Director of Music (organist and choir master) at Exeter Cathedral, so you may be sure that he's a top notch organist.

January 27th – Melanie Mehta and **Jane Anderson-Brown** (sopranos) and **Daphne Murphy** (piano) Melanie has been to us before but it's a first time for the other two.

February 3rd – Samantha Muir (guitar) This will be a welcome return for Samantha who lives at Sherborne.

David Lee

A Poem for Lockdown...

A brief pageant of English verse
can you identify them?



I won't arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
I'll sanitise the doorknob and make a cup of tea.
Nor go down to the sea again - I won't go out at all,
I'll wander lonely as a cloud from kitchen to the hall.
There's a green-eyed yellow idol to the north of Katmandu
But I shan't be seeing him just yet and nor, I think, will you.
While dawn comes up like thunder on the road to Mandalay
I'll make my bit of supper and eat it off a tray.
I shall not speed my bonnie boat across the sea to Skye
Or take the rolling English road from Birmingham to Rye.
About the woodland, just right now, I am not free to go
To see the Keep Out posters or the cherry hung with snow,
So no, I won't be travelling much, within the realms of gold,
Or on to Milford Haven - all that's been put on hold.
Give me your hands, I shan't request, albeit we are friends
Nor come within a mile of you, until this trial ends.

Author unknown

contributed by Janet Phillips

Eddie was spending Christmas with his grandparents. On Christmas morning the family went to church. As they went in Eddie noticed a picture of a group of men in uniform on the wall, and asked 'Who are all those men in the picture?' His grandad replied, 'Why, those are our boys who died in service'. Dumbfounded, the little boy asked, 'Was that the carol service or the Christmas Day service?'

The Year's Journey

by Iris Hesselden

We're on a journey through the year,
We'll travel on together,
Through all the ups and downs of life
And every kind of weather.
There may be rough and rocky roads,
There may be hills to climb,
But some days there'll be peaceful paths
And gentle, healing time.
And on this journey, through the year
We'll meet old friends once more,
And share the joys of memories
The way we've done before.
And as we travel on our way,
Whatever lies ahead,
We'll share the love that never dies
And lights the path we tread.
And so, with hope to lift our hearts,
And faith go be our guide,
We'll take the journey through the year
Together, side by side.

contributed by Lyn Bellamy



Let's approach Christmas with an expectant hush rather than a last minute rush



Community Larder October 2020



Demand is going up - November so far is 20% up on the peak months of April and May. December in the past has been 30% up on November. News tells of West Country infections well below the national average, which draws attention away from it being 10 times what it was 6 weeks ago. It is realistic to plan for a huge further increase in need for the foodbank !!

On the positive side, donations of supplies and cash continue to come from the whole locality. A major donation has been the time, freely given, by so many people within and outside the Larder - no-one gets any remuneration, and we have continued without a break throughout the crisis - in fact without a break since we started in late 2012!!

Christmas Day this year is a Friday, so for the first time in years we will close for that one day, but open again on Monday 28th December even though it is a bank holiday. People's needs don't stop for holidays - and at the major Christian Festivals we should especially look after others - as do people of all Faiths!!

In addition to food supplies, we all need to provide caring and compassionate support for people claiming benefits, trying to stay connected to friends and family and staying positive.

Exmouth Community Larder



Calendar for December / January

December

Sunday 3rd

10.30am Family Service
with Holy Communion
Revd Michael Diffey

Friday 11th

10am Church Walk
(see p 13)

Sunday 13th

10.30am Family Service
Revd Roz Harrison

Sunday 20th

10.30am Carol Service
Revd Peter Brain

Friday 25th

10am Christmas Day Service
Revd Sabrina Groeschel

Sunday 27th

10.30am Family Service
Mr David Lee

January

Sunday 3rd

10.30am Family Service
with Holy Communion
Revd Barbara Bennett

January

Wednesday 6th

12.30pm Lunchtime Concert

Friday 8th

10am Church Walk (?)
- to be confirmed

Sunday 10th

10.30am Family Service
Revd James Thorneycroft

Wednesday 13th

12.30pm Lunchtime Concert

Sunday 17th

10.30am Family Service
Revd Peter Brain

Wednesday 20th

12.30pm Lunchtime Concert

Sunday 24th

10.30am Family Service
Revd Sabrina Groeschel

Wednesday 27th

12.30pm Lunchtime Concert

Sunday 31st

10.30am Family Service
Revd Michael Diffey


The **Table Tennis** group will hope to start again in the New Year at their regular time of Friday at 2pm. Dates to be confirmed.



Christmas Puzzle Corner

Done your Christmas shopping yet?
At M&S?? Never mind!

Just fill in the **Missing Spaces**.

- 1 A thing and some people from Luke's story:
 M & S
 - 2 Some people and a thing from Matthew's story:
 M . . . & S . . .
 - 3 Two words used by the angel to describe Jesus:
 M & S
 - 4 Hopefully hung up at Christmas (but not this year!)
 M & S
 - 5 "In his **M 's S** he trod, where the snow lay dinted."
 - 6 And two recent editors of this Review:
 M . . . & S
- 

*Last month's answers were all examples
of a **corona** (but no virus!)*



The Work Club will not be opening again until the New Year. Date to be announced once a decision is reached about when and how to resume.

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