



## THE REVIEW

December 2025 / January 2026



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# The Review

## Contents

	Page
Worship in Dec / Jan.....	4
Minister's Reflection.....	5,6
Advent Meetings.....	7
Satsumas, Organ.....	8
News of the Church Family.. ....	9
Nourishing Space.....	10
Concerts.....	11
Shoeboxes.....	12
Card Exchange.....	13
Help needed.....	13
Eco Matters.....	14
Cree, Foodbank .....	15
Church Calendar.....	16,17,18
Downloading Services.....	19

**Editor's note:** The next *Review* will be for February / March 2026. Items for inclusion need to be sent by **17th January 2026** to the email address below. Please only use this address for *Review* items.

*Peter4Review@gmail.com*

### **Worship in December**

Sunday 7th	Revd Janine Atkinson	Communion
Sunday 14th	Revd Martin Nicholls	
Sunday 21st	Revd Janine Atkinson	Carol Service
Sunday 28th	Revd Barbara Bennett	

### **Worship in January**

Sunday 4th	Revd Janine Atkinson	Communion
Sunday 11th	Revd Michael Diffey	
Sunday 18th	Revd Janine Atkinson	& Church Meeting
Sunday 25th	Revd Janine Atkinson	

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### **Christmas Services**

Services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day will take place at

Point in View Chapel, Summer Lane

The Chapel, Exeter Road

Christ Church, North Street

The Methodist Church, Roundhouse Lane (11.30 pm and 9.30 am)

Messages appropriate for the church secretary should be sent to  
the email address    [secretary.glenorchyurc@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.glenorchyurc@gmail.com)

This email address is regularly monitored.

## From the minister...

Dear Friends

One of my favourite Christmas Carols as a child was Phillips Brooks' carol 'O little town of Bethlehem'

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!

Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, the silent stars go by:

yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,

and praises sing to God the King, goodwill and peace on earth.

For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,

while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!

So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven:

no ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin,

where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

O Holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;

cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.

We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell:

O come to us, abide with us, our Lord, Immanuel.

But the older I got the more I didn't get it. I couldn't understand how a hymnwriter (even a male writer) could overlook the pain and noise of childbirth! How could Mary give birth silently (how silently, the wondrous gift is given!) and babies aren't silent when they are born. If they are we worry and every possible effort is made to make them cry – or at least make a noise! Surely the gift of Jesus, born among us, was not silent. It was loud and messy.

As I got older still, I realised that this is a carol of 2 halves!

The first 2 verses tell a story about Jesus' birth 2,000 years ago and the second 2 verses describe the silent coming of Jesus into our own hearts, minds and lives, abiding within us.

The good news of Jesus' birth was something to make a noise about, both 2,000 years ago, and now. Welcoming Jesus is not to be keep quiet once we've done so, it's something to sing and shout about.

It's Advent, a time of remembering, and also of waiting and watching for signs of Jesus coming among us. And it's also a time for proclaiming God with us now as we watch for the signs and notice God at work when people become Christ embodied in the world through their words and actions.

The message of Christmas comes to us in the cry of a baby's birth and the pain of bringing about a new life, after which everything is changed! Neither the child nor the parents can ever go back to the way things were. Everyone is changed

Like Advent, pregnancy is a time of waiting and preparing for the changes that must happen when a newborn enters into our life and shapes our being and doing forever.

I wish you all the peace, hope, love and joy that new life brings, when we welcome *God's* gift of new life for ourselves – Jesus, God Incarnate, Immanuel and with us on earth as in heaven, forever and always embodied in the tiny fingers and toes and the wonderfully disruptive noise of a newborn baby.

Happy Christmas to you and all those you love and care for.

*Rev Janine*



“For me, prayer is not so much me setting out a (Christmas) shopping list of requests for God to consider as it is a way of 'keeping company with God.'”

*Philip Yancey*

*Read more at: [www.brainyquote.com/topics/prayer](http://www.brainyquote.com/topics/prayer)*

## ADVENT REFLECTIONS

**During December we'll meet at 2pm each Wednesday**

to reflect on Christ's birth.

Each week we will meet to do something slightly different –

one week perhaps something akin to study, or perhaps worship, or conversation. Nothing too heavy!



**Wednesdays 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>  
and 24<sup>th</sup> from 2pm for an hour  
in the Vestibule**

Refreshments from 1.30pm



## CHRISTMAS PRAY GROUND AT HOME

### Christmas Card Prayers

As you write and receive Christmas Cards, pray for the person you are writing to, or receiving from.

Perhaps you could pray...

*Dear God, I pray that (name) will know that they are loved and appreciated by me and that they are precious to you.*

*Wrap (name) in your love, Lord God, because she/he is a gift to me*  
*Amen*

**Satsuma Prayers** This prayer idea came from [www.godventure.co.uk](http://www.godventure.co.uk)  
A friend of mine used to say you know it's Christmas when people go out and panic buy Satsumas (whether they eat them normally or not!)

If you have a satsuma (or many!) try this prayer activity

Pray for a different person as you eat each segment



Your prayers could be:

- Short e.g. Dear God Please help and care for [name] ... [name] ... [name] ...
- Specific e.g. asking God to help someone important to you
- Silent or out loud
- Individual or taking turns around a group of friends / family e.g. praying for a person in the group and then eating a segment

NB. you will pray for more people if you use a chocolate orange – but that's not to be advised in one go!

Image [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)

### Organ Music

After morning Worship, I will play

On Sunday 7th December "Sleepers, Wake !" by J.S.Bach

On Sunday 21st December "In Dulci Jubilo !" by J.S.Bach

On Sunday 4th January

" Variation on 'O Come, all ye faithful'" by E.A.Dicks *Peter*



## **News of the Church Family.**

Please remember Pam Diffey in your prayers, after a fall in early August and breaking her leg in three places.

Following operations, we pray that her leg will now heal.

Shirley Fisher has been in Amberwood Care Home, following a fall. Jill Squire is resident in the same home. Three members are in The Homestead, Janet Phillips, Patrica Johnson and Margaret Henshaw.

Lyn Bellamy and Linda Meikle are in Dove Lodge.

They will appreciate a visit.

### **A message from Brian Brett...**

As some of you are aware I am now living in Arizona for several months each year and as I will not be back in Church until January would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy Christmas and send you my very best wishes for the New Year .

### **- and from Jenny Newman...**

A big thank you to the Church for acknowledging my retirement as Church Secretary after 25 years.

I have enjoyed doing the work and supporting the Church in this way but now is the time for other people to take on the work.

I do love the gifts of the picture of the Church created by Peter Street from the Art group and the peace plant. I will try and keep it alive.

I will enjoy an afternoon tea at the Devoncourt Hotel.

Thank you. *Jenny*

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Our thanks to Jenny for her years of dedication and work.

Donations may be placed in an envelope in the church collection, marked

“Donation to CR2EE and to the Bible Society  
in appreciation of Jenny Newman”



**Nourishing Space** is an  
opportunity to relax and enjoy  
reflective worship

**Nourishing Space** is a time  
and place to feed your faith  
and enrich your spirit

It's a **midweek moment** of prayerful reflection  
to help us see God's hand at work in our experiences

Join us in the Vestibule on

**Weds 28<sup>th</sup> January**

for about half to three quarters of an hour

***Stay after the Lunchtime Concert with your picnic lunch  
or bring along a sandwich at about 1.30pm if you want to share in  
some social time or just come for the worship!***

**Revd Janine is available for pastoral conversations  
before the service from 1.15pm and afterwards for a short time**



The Harvest display in the Church on Sunday 5th October before it was all taken to the Food Bank.



## Lunchtime Concerts 2026

**January 7<sup>th</sup>** Duncan Honeybourne *Piano*  
**14<sup>th</sup>** Exmouth Recorder Group  
**21<sup>st</sup>** Mark Waistell *Songs with Guitar*  
**28<sup>th</sup>** Robert Manning *Organ*



### Craft Group Christmas Boxes

Once again the Craft Group and church members have been really busy filling shoeboxes with their knitted clothes and toys and lots of goodies, for the children of Moldova and Ukraine. Although there were not as many as in previous years, due to the spiralling cost of everything, and also the work involved in buying and sorting all the items and covering all the boxes with festive paper, 31 boxes were completed by the end of September. They were blessed by Revd Janine at a Sunday service, before being taken to a collecting point in Spyders Lane, ready for their journey across Europe to arrive in time for Christmas.

From now on we shall be knitting the usual hats, scarves and mittens, as well as jumpers and cardigans and toys for the children but no longer making up shoeboxes. These goodies will be taken up to Spyders Lane in a bulk lot, where the volunteers can use them to fill boxes or send them all together.

We still need donations and knitted goods for next year, brand new, of course, and if you wish to make up a box yourself, this will be gratefully received. Whatever we send will, no doubt, be a joy and a delight to the children. Thank you so much for your help. *Mary Blackburn*

### Christmas Cards Exchange.

From Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> November the baskets will be in the Vestibule for Church friends to exchange Christmas Cards.

Please put both Christian and Surname on the Envelope.

Cards will be delivered to the housebound at home and in Care homes. If you would like to send a card to the Church Fellowship there will be space on the Vestibule Noticeboard to place your card

### Church Choir.

There will be choir practices at 3.00 pm on Fridays 5th, 12th and 19th December to prepare for the Carol Service on Sunday 21st December. If you enjoy singing come and join us.

*Peter Johnstone*

### Your help is needed.

Currently there are two situations in the Church which need extra people for their help.

- (a) Reading the scriptures at the Sunday Service or meeting and greeting the people attending the service.
- (b) Helping with the clients at the Job Café on a Thursday morning.  
Either advising the clients regarding their search for employment or catering / meet and greet.

A rota is made for both situations and each helper is catered for according to how much time they can give on a monthly basis. If you need further information, please contact Val Nuttall. Tel: 271542



## Eco Matters

The U.N. Climate Change meeting of 194 countries, COP 30, took place in November in Belem— a large city near the mouth of the Amazon in Brazil. About half reported taking the actions they promised at the last meeting, COP 29, one year ago. World carbon dioxide emissions are, however, still increasing. China's emissions were previously increasing because of industrial growth but have now levelled off. China is, in fact, the world leader in renewable energy development.

Worldwide, the equipment for renewable energy is more available so that it is now cheaper to produce renewable energy than to continue using fossil fuels. That gives an economic incentive to move away from fossil fuels.

The U.S.A. and India did not send delegates to this meeting.

The U.S. president is well known to be a Climate Change sceptic.

Organised crime and continuing wars are also hindering progress.

The finally agreed document does increase the payments to island nations affected by climate change. It mentions “deforestation” only once and “fossil fuels” not even once. That is very disappointing.

Scientists are monitoring the situation in “the global climate budget” but there needs to be more cooperation between different countries to increase progress.

Technology is improving, making factories more efficient, especially when using electricity, so that less energy is wasted. There is also an appetite for many “nature based solutions” such as planting trees and other plants, improving wetlands and marine conservation areas.

*Peter Johnstone*





Thank you to the Church Craft Group and other people in the congregation who contributed to the Charity Christmas Shoe Box Appeal. 1,000 boxes were sent in October and some 3-4,000, will be transported in the next week to Moldova. Every week teams of volunteers sort the donations of clothing, bedding and curtains which are sorted and packed into coloured sacks to help identify the various donations at the Warehouse. By the end of the year at least 10 truck loads of humanitarian aid and shoe boxes will have been sent to Moldova and Ukraine. Thank you for your continued support. If you are able to, go to the CR2EE website and see pictures of the trucks being unloaded.

The Warehouse will be open on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December to receive donations. Jenny will be able to collect after 4.30pm on Tuesday.

*Jenny Newman.*



The Food Bank is a hive of activity on Tuesday and Friday mornings with people dating all the food donations. Other people are putting the food into date order in the storeroom and other people are picking up various items of food to make up the bags of food which are then collected or delivered to the people in need.

## **Toy Service on Sunday 30th November. Thank you**

For the Gifts for the Salvation Army appeal. Thank you to all who have kindly donated gifts for those children in Devon who will receive the gifts you have kindly donated.

**December**

**Tuesday 2nd**

2.00 Elders meeting

**Wednesday 3rd**

9.30am Art Group

12.30pm Lunchtime Concert

**Thursday 4th**

9.15am Job Café

**Friday 5th**

7.00pm Table Tennis

**Saturday 6th**

9.45am Coffee Morning

**Sunday 7th**

10.30am Family Service

with Holy Communion

Revd Janine Atkinson

**Wednesday 10th**

9.30am Art Group

**Thursday 11th**

9.15 Job Café

**Friday 12th**

7.00pm Table Tennis

**Saturday 13th**

9.45am Coffee Morning

**Sunday 14th**

10.30am Family Service

Revd Martin Nicholls

**Wednesday 17th**

9.30am Art Group

**Thursday 18th**

9.15 Job Café

**Friday 19th**

7.00 Table Tennis

**Saturday 20th**

9.45am Coffee Morning

**Sunday 21st**

10.30am Carol Service

Revd Janine Atkinson

**Saturday 27th**

9.45am Coffee morning

**Sunday 29th**

10.30am Family Service

Revd Barbara Bennett



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January

**Saturday 3rd**

9.45am Coffee Morning

**Sunday 4th**

10.30am Family Service  
and Holy Communion

Revd Janine Atkinson

**Tuesday 6th**

2.00pm Elders meeting

**Wednesday 7th**

9.30am Art Group

12.30 Lunchtime Concert

**Thursday 8th**

9.15am Job Café

**Friday 9th**

7.00pm Table Tennis

**Saturday 10th**

9.45am Coffee Morning

**Sunday 11th**

10.30 Family Service

Revd Michael Diffey

**Wednesday 14th**

12.30 Lunchtime Concert

## January

### Thursday 15th

9.15am Job Cafe

### Friday 16th

7.00pm Table Tennis

### Saturday 17th

9.45am Coffee Morning

### Sunday 18th

10.30am Family Service

Revd Janine Atkinson

11.30am Church Meeting

**18th –24th    Week of Prayer  
                    for Christian Unity**

### Wednesday 21st

9.30am Art Group

12.30 Lunchtime Concert

### Thursday 22nd

9.15am Job Café

### Friday 23rd

7.00pm Table Tennis

### Saturday 24th

9.45am Coffee Morning

### Sunday 25th

10.30 Family Service

Revd Janine Atkinson

### Tuesday 27th

2.00pm Glenorchy Crafters

### Wednesday 28th

9.30am    Art Group

12.30am Lunchtime Concert

### Thursday 29th

9.15am Job Café

### Friday 30th

7.00pm Table Tennis

### Saturday 31st

9.45am Coffee Morning

## How to download the Sunday Service:

1. Find the website *[glenorchychurch.org.uk](http://glenorchychurch.org.uk)*

2. Scroll down to “Service Recordings and Reflections”.

Look below for “Audio recording” and the date of the service you want to listen to.

Click on “here”.

3. You can listen online by clicking the play button—but it is better to first download the service by clicking the download button at the top of the screen.

4. In “Downloads” you can find the service labelled with its date.

Open it and click the play button.

5. After listening to the service you may want to delete it to clear computer memory.

*Peter Johnstone*

# **Glenorchy United Reformed Church**

Exeter Road, Exmouth EX8 1PL

## **Minister**

Revd Janine Atkinson

## **Church Secretary**

Mrs Jenny Newman BEM

## **Church website**

[www.glenorchychurch.org.uk](http://www.glenorchychurch.org.uk)

*contact: [info@glenorchychurch.org.uk](mailto:info@glenorchychurch.org.uk)*