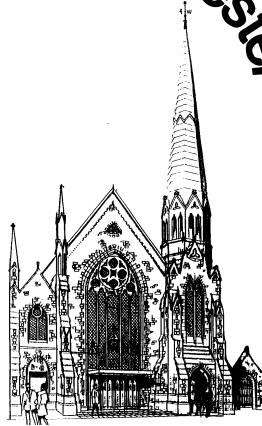


NEWS

United Church Dorchester



JULY 2020

Registered Charity No: 1137996

Methodist and United Reformed
Part of Churches Together in Dorchester

Minister:

Rev Peter Clark 01308 425978

Please contact one of the Church Stewards if necessary

Church Secretary: John Hilton

Senior Steward: John Parson

Church (general number): 01305 262462

Church office: 01305 457477

Website: unitedchurchdorchester.org.uk

Private Tel & email removed from web version

Lectionary readings

5th July

Zechariah 9:9-12

Psalms 145:8-14

Romans 7:15-25a

Matthew 11:16-19,
25-30

12th July

Isaiah 55:10-13

Psalms 65:(1-8) 9-13

Romans 8:1-11

Matthew 13:1-9,
18-23

19th July

Wisdom of

Solomon 12:13, 16-19
or Isaiah 44:6-8

Psalms 86:11-17

Romans 8:12-25

Matthew 13:24-30,
36-43

26th July

1 Kings 3:5-12

Psalms 119: 129-136

Romans 8:26-39

Matthew 13:31-33,
44-52

Opening the Church for Private Prayer

Government guidelines now allow us to open the church for private prayer. A small group has considered the implications, bearing in mind the need for social distancing and good hygiene during the present covid-19 epidemic. We have decided to open the church on Sundays from 11.30am to 12.30pm, so that it does not overlap with the Zoom service, and between the same times on Wednesdays. We hope to start on Sunday, 5th July.

Visitors wishing to pray will enter through the main doors from South Street. The doors from Charles Street will remain locked, and those with keys should not try to enter that way. There will be a steward at the door in case there is a queue. In the foyer, a second steward will insist that visitors use the hand gel which we will provide, and offer them a face covering if they do not have their own. In the church, there will be only about fourteen, well-spaced chairs, and a third steward will monitor the church and the exit. When visitors wish to leave, they will exit via the door at the front to the right of the organ, and turn sharp right to go down the alleyway back to South Street.

All doors will be propped open, so there will be no need for visitors to touch the door handles. All bibles, hymn books and toys etc will be removed. Visitors may, of course, bring their own. The toilets will not be available.

The stewards have been consulted, and we have now decided to go ahead. We need volunteers who feel able under the current Government guidelines to act as stewards. No-one should feel under any pressure to take part, but, if we had, say, twelve volunteers, then it would work out at one duty every fortnight. If you are willing to help, please let John and Wendy Hilton know.

John Parson

Everyday Prayer

At this time we thank God for our friends, those who are there when we need them to support and encourage us; those who share our joys and sorrows, bless and heal and bring love into our lives. Help us always to be grateful, and to be good friends to others. Amen

Church Family News

Many, many thanks for all your letters, cards, flowers, messages and prayers of love and support following the death of Lloyd on 18th May. Despite the current restrictions, with invaluable help from Revd John Walker, Revd Gwyneth Owen, Revd Brenda Stephenson, Heather Reed and Alison Cocks, we were able to share in a brief but memorable service for him at Weymouth Crematorium. Thank you everyone.
Kath Thomas, Alexander and Mary (Lloyd's sister)

'For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. (Isaiah 55:12)

I choose this text with my tongue firmly but sadly in my cheek for as I write lockdown is gradually being reduced and although there is a certain degree of joy and metaphorical hand-clapping, I think there is also quite a considerable amount of continuing anxiety and concern that the sacrifices that had been made over the last months could be undone by overzealous "going out in joy".

People have been able to shop for 'non-essential' items though in truth I'd never thought of clothes and shoes as such? Then again, perhaps it just shows what a privileged life I have led that I take such things for granted?

And in the light of all the chaos and demonstrations resulting from yet another racist event in the USA, which has resulted in sympathy events on this side of the pond, reminding us that folk here in the UK are still not treated justly and equally, I am aware that in my whole life of 60+ years I have never been abused, ridiculed or treated detrimentally simply because of the colour of my skin.

I can't help feeling that seeing an officer of the law callously squeezing the life out of George Floyd, whilst his colleagues made no suggestions that he was being overly brutal, has perhaps brought it home to many of us how jolly privileged are those of us who are 'white British'?

Actually the privilege of living in the UK was underlined this week when I received a video to be used at United Church Dorchester from our chosen major charity this year, the Mission Aviation Fellowship, which starts recounting how so many of us are feeling challenged by isolation during lockdown, but it then goes onto an aerial image of an African village. There it almost doesn't have to say the next line that, for many in other parts of the world, that is an everyday experience and has been for years.

Again it made me reflect upon the restrictions that I might have grumbled about and the strange relief at the recent gradual reductions that have been happening. I hope and pray that I shall be more realistic in my appreciation and gratitude once this strange period is over? And talking of this strange period, this week I received a new hymn written by John Bell of the Iona Community. The tune isn't spectacular but the words I think are very powerful:

We will meet when the danger is over,
we will meet when the sad days are done;
we will meet, sitting closely together
and be glad our tomorrow has come.

So let's make with each other a promise,
that when all we've come through is behind,
We will share what we missed and find meaning
In the things that once troubled our mind.

We will join to give thanks and sing gladly,
we will join to break bread and share wine;
and the peace that we pass to each other
will be more than a casual sign.

Until then may we always discover
Faith and love to determine our way.
That's our hope and God's will and our calling
For our lives and for every new day.

© John Bell WGRG Iona 2020

I hope and trust you are managing well in this difficult (though not impossible) and improving time, and I pray that folk will continue to be careful, kind and understanding as we adapt to the changes.

Your Minister,



Angela Fisher

Angela retired from her post as pastoral visitor at the end of June. She has been supporting our ministers pastorally in many different ways for more than 7 years. She visited those who were ill at home and in hospital by mutual agreement with the ministers. She has organised many services especially those for special occasions in residential homes, nursing homes and sheltered housing in Dorchester, as well as running activities. These activities have included our own church members, but also many others. She has organised the Solos group, which has included many trips out. She has encouraged many to start coming to church and has supported them in getting to know the church and people within the church. She has supported the pastoral committee in all they do including Quiet Christmas and Death Café. We wish her well in her retirement and in her new home. Thank you Angela.

Support Service

Worried about going out? Finding it hard to cope with queueing? Family too far away to help? Needing to self-isolate?

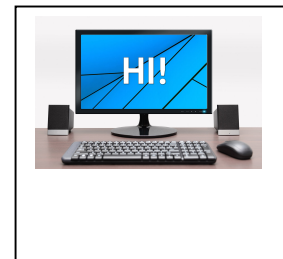


Please don't struggle on alone and put yourself at risk. Don't forget there is a cheerful and willing band of younger folk from church who are very happy to help out. Lockdown may have eased a little but the future months still seem uncertain. We are happy to continue shopping, collecting prescriptions or other tasks as long as needed so if you, or folk you know, need support then please don't hesitate to make contact.

Support is being coordinated by Gill & Peter Robinson.

Coffee and chat

As part of our continuing efforts to help everyone feel that they are still part of a larger community, we have been investigating how best to create 'virtual' or online meetings for groups of church members. Many of us will be used to using things like Skype or Facetime for one-to-one video calls, and we have now found a way of doing something similar but with larger groups.



So some of us have been meeting in virtual or online 'coffee and chat' sessions – three times a week, at 11.00 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Currently, around 20 of us have signed up to join the chats on various days, with somewhere between 10 and 15 people at each session. If you think you might be interested in joining this group (on any of the days), please email coffee.chat@unitedchurchdorchester.org.uk and we'll send you further details. These details will confirm that you only need very basic computer skills.

We will guide you through (either with written instructions or verbally by telephone) exactly what you need to do and you will discover that you have learnt something new at the end, as well as having a good chat, face-to-face, with a group of your friends.

Zoom service

Join members from across the circuit for a weekly Zoom service every Sunday at 10am led by our local ministers and lay preachers. To receive your first Zoom invitation to this service e-mail Rev Gwyneth Owen.

Prayer Chain

If you would like prayer for yourself or others at any time, please contact Penny Fennell. Details can be given anonymously, and confidentiality within the prayer chain is absolute unless there is a safeguarding risk.

Foodbank and Holiday Lunch Club

Thanks to many generous donations the Foodbank is currently very well provided for financially, but it is recognised that there will be many more families needing the holiday lunch club and donations to this local charity would be very gratefully received. Even though the Government has just decided to continue the voucher scheme during the school holidays, the charity has decided to continue to provide food for families in need through the summer. A £15 Government voucher for food for the week is not a lot to feed a growing child.

Vision magazine

There was no Vision magazine for June/July, which would normally have been distributed by now. This is due to the problems of both printing and distribution. However we are looking at ways that the Aug/Sept edition can be printed and distributed. This will not be given to you by your pastoral visitor but a small band of distributors, who will deliver in a specific geographical area, e.g. Castle Park. All those living outside Dorchester will have their magazine posted. If you feel able to deliver near where you live, please let Wendy know.

Notices for news sheet

The deadline for the August news sheet is Sunday 19th July. Please send notices for inclusion to Myra Dawson.

Church Website

Don't forget to check out the church website (<http://unitedchurchdorchester.org.uk>), which is managed by Susy and Kevin Rogers. As well as a downloadable version of the news sheet, it also gives information about the church and its various groups, events, reports and how to contact specific members/groups. The website belongs to the church as a whole so you are encouraged to contribute. Where possible, go, discover and explore!

Data Protection Act

In common with most other churches and organisations, the United Church Dorchester keeps pastoral records of the names, addresses and telephone numbers of regular worshippers and friends. The information is used for church purposes only, is never communicated to any other body and is held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Please notify us in writing if you do not wish your data to be held by us in this way.