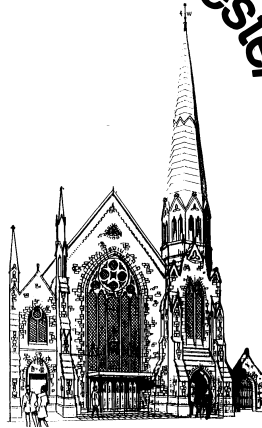


NEWS

United Church Dorchester



JUNE 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

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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

7th June

Trinity Sunday

Genesis 1:1 - 2:4a

Psalm 8

2 Corinthians

13:11-13

Matthew 28:16-20

14th June

Exodus 19:2-8a

Psalm 100

Romans 5:1-8

Matthew 9:35-

10:8 (9-23)

21st June

Jeremiah 20:7-13

Psalm 69:7-10 (11-15) 16-18

Romans 6:1b-11

Matthew 10:24-39

28th June

Jeremiah 28:5-9

Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18

Romans 6:12-23

Matthew 10:40-42

Dear Friends,

I hope you and yours are surviving – some will be flourishing – in this period of lockdown. What I want to share is for those of you who are on a fixed income without extra financial pressures brought about by staying home. I am one of those and I realise I am saving money during this time. I'm not going out for coffee or meals. I won't be going on holiday this summer. You may be in a similar position.

We've been reminded recently of the problems charities are having, not being able to hold fundraising events. I am suggesting that this is a time to think about those charities you usually support, often in person, and remember to offer them a donation. This, of course, includes the United Church in Dorchester.

At the bottom of this letter you will see the monies the church is losing through not being open. A few people have responded to the invitation to find a way to keep giving their weekly offering. A couple of people have sent a cheque to Colin Gannaway in recognition of what we are losing. Hopefully, others of you who use the blue envelopes will be hoarding them up for when the church is able to be open for worship again. However there will still be a significant shortfall. You may like to consider how much you value the church and the gospel it proclaims and send an extra donation.

Only you know your financial situation. I'm not telling anyone what to do. I'm asking those of you who find you are saving money to seriously consider what you do with it. I shall certainly be giving to several charities including the church.

With love to you all,

Brenda Stephenson

What the church is losing at the moment

Cash in plate and envelopes on Sundays about £2100 per month

Lettings are down 95%ish so losing about £4,000 per month

Wednesday Coffee and Stalls about £750 per month

Donations from Coffee Lounge and Church Shop amounted to £12,500 last year

To donate money to UCD, please send a cheque, payable to United Church Dorchester, to the treasurer, Colin Gannaway. If you use the envelope scheme, please enclose one of those envelopes so that the cheque can be linked to you.

Everyday Prayer

Ever loving God, give us that spirit which can endure delay patiently, and not lose heart nor allow the vision of better times to fade. Point us to Jesus, who endured all things with constant hope. Amen

Church Family News

We give thanks for the lives of Mary Toop and Lloyd Thomas, who died in May. Both had been members of the United Church since its formation in 1978, Lloyd originally as a member of South Street Methodist Church and Mary as a member of the Dorchester Congregational Church. In the next Vision magazine there will be some memories of these two committed members of our church, who gave so much of themselves. We remember their families and friends in our prayers.

'When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. (Acts 2:1-2)

Lockdown continues, friends, and as does this surreal changed landscape but we somehow seem to be surviving and in some areas even flourishing?

As you know my instinct often is to try look at our special stories as recorded in the Scriptures so long ago and insist (sometimes stubbornly and if I'm honest, somewhat tenuously!) that they are as relevant today as they were, often by attempting to link the "then" with the "now".

Well, we go again: Having "celebrated" Easter in a completely different way, I write this in the run-up to Pentecost.

There were the disciples also adapting to a greatly changed landscape. First he was dead, then he was alive again. Then he was there with them, and then he was gone up in the cloud, so Luke tells us. Before the crucifixion they really didn't know what was going to happen but after the resurrection I'm sort of guessing with all that teaching they received explained it somewhat? But I'm also guessing that for that short period of, what, a week or so, they were once again somewhat perplexed, lost and wondering what the heck was going to happen next?

Oh look, just like now!

It is only a few weeks ago that we were washing our hands whilst singing 'Happy Birthday' and learning to bump elbows rather than shake hands and, mostly making a joke of it all. So very different now and again if you're honest probably rather fed up with it and somewhat frustrated?

But there is change, there is development and we are adapting, just as those first disciples were in the early days after the Ascension. And it always seems to me that what really made the difference, what totally transformed that motley crew into a dynamic and impressive evangelistic team was that amazing gift of God, which arrived on that very different Pentecost? Just as we faced a different Easter, so they were approaching a familiar festival with trepidation and probably deep concern?

And the surprising God who they knew, and we know, did indeed once again delightfully surprise them! Also incidentally fulfilling the promises that Jesus had offered in his farewell discourses. And note that the story begins with them gathering together. For comfort? For fellowship?

Whatever the reason, they found by being together they were ready to receive the wonderful gift of the Spirit which Luke describes as arriving sounding like a violent wind and visible as individual flames. How exciting and dynamic and as I say surprising but I suppose that once it had arrived they suddenly laughed as they fully understood Jesus' words and Jesus' promises fulfilled?

We too, thanks to our pastoral visitors keeping in contact, supporting and delivering written services, or emails giving us links to video services or live Zoom services, are in a similar boat, I'd humbly like to suggest? For, physically separated as we are, we are pulled together and held together by our common commitment, our fellowship and indeed that self same Holy Spirit which arrived that amazing Pentecost?

May that Spirit keep you strong, and aware that you are loved and supported!

Your Minister,



Revd Pete and Mrs Debs Brazier

As you know, Pete and Debs are leaving us this summer and moving to Yorkshire. The circuit is giving them a leaving present, but, since Debs has been working for us at UCD, the stewards have decided that we ought to make our own presentation as well. If you would like to contribute, please do so by sending a cheque, payable to United Church Dorchester, before the end of June, to our treasurer, Colin Gannaway.



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.

Information sheet

Following a Zoom pastoral committee meeting, we have put together an information sheet of useful numbers during Coronavirus for our local community. Please have a look on the website. It will be printed for those who do not have computer access and receive a hand delivered news sheet.

Christian Aid News

I do hope that you are keeping fit and well in these difficult times.

Although by the time you read this officially 'Christian Aid Week' was several weeks ago, due to begin on Sunday 10 May, it is not too late to donate. Obviously there has been no possibility of holding our normal fund raising events because of the current emergency. Would you consider making a donation to Christian Aid please? All donations will be going to the Coronavirus Appeal to support countries that are least well equipped in terms of health provision to deal with the illness.

The account is: *Dorchester Christian Aid (at Lloyds TSB)*
Sort code: 30-92-69 Account number 00753286

For those who are able to Gift Aid their donations, a form is available to download from the church website, to complete and return to Tony Boyden - or contact me by phone.

Alternatively, you may wish to give directly via the Christian Aid national website (where you can also explore a range of ways of getting involved with Christian Aid Week online).

In addition, Mary Martin has kindly devised a paper-based quiz which will be available from the beginning of June. Each entry will be £3 with a top prize of £20 and a second prize of £5 will all proceeds going to Christian Aid.

Copies will be available from me or can be delivered. Closing date is Saturday, 3 July.

Very many thanks
Tony Boyden

Knitting a Teddy Bears' Picnic

Stuck at home and need something to keep you busy during these weeks of isolation? Why not join in and help us to create a big Teddy Bears' Picnic! You can knit, crochet or sew bears in any way, shape, form or colour you like; or make some food for them to eat; or a blanket to sit on – no limits to your imagination! Think of a sunny summer's day when we will hopefully all be outside again celebrating better times, and let your imagination take over.

We are hoping to display our creations later this year, and then sell the items to raise money for Royal Voluntary Service. So get started now and let me know what you are making; once we are able to we will either pick your creations up or you can post them to our office in Dorchester.

Any questions please contact Maria Jacobson, Service Manager Dorset Home Library Service.



Vision Magazine

There will be 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 most likely need to be done in a different way, so watch this space!

Holiday Lunch Club

Despite the straitened circumstances we currently find ourselves in preparations for this summer's Holiday Lunch Club.

However, there are some major changes from previous years. The most important one is that we have now become an official charity and our name is DORCHESTER FAMILY SUPPORT. We had plans to expand – having a school uniform "shop", offering help with reading and maths to our children and extending the days we offer support in the summer to Easter as well as Christmas. Needless to say all these plans have been "furloughed" until such time as we are back to something approaching normality.

We do plan to go ahead this summer with a condensed version of what we normally offer. We shall use Thomas Hardy School as our base and will give families specific time slots to pick up their boxes of foodstuffs. Unfortunately, there will be no coffee/chat/play this year as we adhere to social distancing norms which I suspect may well still be in place to some degree in August.

Several agencies have already warned us that there will be an increase in the families who will need some help this summer. The Dorset Area Schools Partnership are helping over 200 families at the present time and most of them are not known to us from previous years so you can see the need we are likely to face this year.

So we still need your help – financially and with your prayers. As always if you need any further information please contact me, Kath Joslin, via the project's current email: dorchesterhfc@gmail.com Thank you.

SUMMERTIME IN DORSET

Oh to be in Dorset in the lovely summer time
When the hills stand proud and green,
When the sea adorns itself in blue,
And reflects the dancing waves in a glittering hue!

Oh to be in Dorset with the open roads
That seem to beckon 'Come this way' –
You may follow and discover little coves – (no-one knows),
Or go ahead to where the warm wind blows.

Oh to be in Dorset when the earth is young again,
When all-things seem to breathe and shine,
The rivers fill and fountains reach full height,
Here in summer Dorset has its law divine
in the summertime!

Kay Ennals

Bernard Thorogood, who was URC General Secretary from 1980 – 1992 and worked for CWM (Council for World Mission) from 1970 -1980, has died recently.

Lockdown 1665

In the plague of 1665, the diarist Samuel Pepys felt very positive about lockdown as he managed to quadruple his earnings. Around the same time, Isaac Newton, a Cambridge student, discovered the laws of gravity whiling away the hours at home as his university was on lockdown.

Marmalade

Oliver is still making marmalade to raise funds for his expedition to Peru. If you would like some, please phone Val Gould. Delivery or pick-up can be arranged.



MAF helping to fight Coronavirus in Africa

Throughout its 75-year history, MAF has been serving isolated communities across the developing world. Yet during the outbreak of coronavirus, the word 'isolation' has taken on a whole new meaning. Implementing every precaution to protect its staff and the remote communities MAF serves, the organisation has been quick to offer support wherever possible.

In April, the WHO and South Sudan's Ministry of Health asked MAF to transport coronavirus test kits to Wau, a two-hour flight from Juba. Communications Officer Jenny Davies, based in Juba, has watched the country brace itself for coronavirus. 'It feels like being on the edge of a precipice' she says. 'Washing hands with soap seems such an unlikely weapon in a country where crises are usually fought with guns.'

Although testing in Africa is a real issue, MAF's Regional Director for Africa says most governments reacted more swiftly than many of their European counterparts. 'We had Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo very recently, so Africa is used to fighting viruses' he explains. 'Authorities took it very seriously because of their experience — this could be one reason why the spread of the disease appears to be slower in Africa.'

Action for Children Update

Despite the strange times we find ourselves in the calendar moves on, and 12th July will be Action for Children Sunday. Sadly we won't be able to meet at church to celebrate it the usual way, but we are hoping that the Zoom Service on the 12th will centre around this special day and remind us all of the fantastic work Action for Children are doing not only in Dorset but across the country.

Many of you will have collection boxes which traditionally are brought in on that Sunday. This year, when donations are even more important to all our charities than usual, can we ask you if possible to deliver your boxes to Diana Leeming's house on either Tuesday 7th or Thursday 9th July; if you are unable to do so please let us know and we will try to make other arrangements. Anybody wanting to make a donation to AFC can also drop them off at Diana's house.

We have also decided to stay positive and think ahead, so we will be doing the knitted Christmas Angels again this year, to be handed out in the community, at church and during our Carol Singing events. Many of you will have taken part last year and might just like to start on this project again during this time of enforced isolation. If you haven't done it before but would like to give it a go please contact Diana for a pattern — they are easy to make and don't require a lot of wool.

Thank you for all your support, please keep in touch and keep safe.
Your Action for Children Committee

Notices for news sheet

The deadline for the July news sheet is Sunday 21st June. 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.