

Cullompton Baptist Church

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The Network

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**"He came down to earth from heaven,
Who is God and Lord of all.
And his shelter was a stable,
And his cradle was a stall.
With the poor and mean and lowly.
Lived on Earth our saviour Holy."**

Once in Royal David's city

The lines above express so well and clearly my theme for this Advent season: "The down-to-Earth God".

We celebrate the fact that God himself literally came down to earth as an ordinary baby. His circumstances were humble. His parents were poor. The first witnesses were ordinary folk or outsiders. Yet this King brought us three gifts.

Life forever with God.

The right to be Children of the King of Kings.

Finally, Jesus shows us what a down to earth human like us should look like.

As we sing our carols, tell the story and share life together, we have so much to be thankful for.

"Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever". Hebrews 13:8.

Here is our verse for the year. I chose it because despite living in an uncertain world and uncertain times, Jesus is the one constant thing in our lives. He never changes. So

up to Easter we will journey with Jesus through his earthly life. Then we will see after Easter how he builds his Church and comes to us now. Finally we will see how the present and future come together through the example of the Thessalonian Church.

That is a glimpse into 2023. Alongside this, I am working with some folk who have ideas for outreach. I am also anxious to find ways so that we have more time simply being together and having fun. So may I end by thanking you for all your help and support throughout this year.

May you and your loved ones have a happy and Christ-filled Christmas and a blessed and peaceful new year.

In the love of Christ,

Glen and Rowan Graham

BMS

This Christmas will be very difficult for Afghanistan. They have asked for prayers especially for:

- Farmers to have means to feed their families,
- Ruby, BMS assistant, and her colleagues, that the Lord would sustain them as they work with those in desperate needs.

Peace in Afghanistan.

Freda

Christmas Cards

As most of you know, we have not given cards to people we see and “say” Happy Christmas instead. Since lockdown, I have made “Christmas Card” phone calls.

This year, we will be giving a donation to Spurgeons Child Care instead of buying cards.

Freda and Norman

TakeTime

An article from TakeTime magazine describing how the TakeTime meditations practice began

How did it begin?

It all began when a prisoner with no faith background asked the chaplain, “How do you pray?”

The chaplain, Rev Clive McKie, replied “Simply speak to God in your mind.”

She said, “I’ve tried that – it doesn’t work!”

Having attended some Ignatian spirituality retreats, Rev McKie explained that if we use our imagination to picture a setting in which Jesus is present, it is easier to stay focused.

The prisoner replied, “Let’s do it!”

Clive described the healing of the leper in Matthew chapter 4, and then gave her an opportunity to speak to and then to listen to Jesus. At the end, the prisoner responded, “I met Jesus and asked him into my life!”

Over the coming months it became clear that she was experiencing the Holy Spirit at work in her life, changing her behaviour and bringing her hope and peace.

Another young lady asked Rev McKie, “Who is Jesus – he’s big in America isn’t he?”

Having then been led in a meditation, she said, “The weird thing was that although I didn’t know Him, He has always known me”. Several months later she reported that her faith was now the most important thing in her life.

It was the women in the prison who urged Clive to put the meditations online and so the Taketime website was created.

People then wanted access to scripts and to use Taketime meditations in their own contexts. As a result, Clive and the Taketime Team developed the Taketime Practitioner Training for Adults and Youth, which is now available online.

With interest from teachers in schools, the online Taketime Practitioner Training for Primary and Secondary Schools was created. There are now about 400 trained Practitioners and about 100 Christian organisations using Taketime.*

Glen is a qualified TakeTime practitioner trainer for adults and youth.

If you want to know more, do please come and talk to Glen, or have a look at the TakeTime website.

* <https://taketime.org.uk/blog/taketime-introductory-article-for-church-magazines/>

Sunday Services - 10:30 am in Church

4th December - Advent Communion. Luke 1: 26-38

11th December - Family Service. Luke 12: 1-20

18th December - Carol service.

24th December - 2pm. Christmas (Eve) Service

1st January - Mince Pie Service.

8th January - To be announced.

15th January - Covenant and Communion Service. Hebrews 13: 5-8

22nd January - Sunday Service. Colossians 1: 15-20

29th January - Sunday Service. Matthew 16: 15-20

Other dates for your diaries

Prayer meeting: 15th December and 13th January, both 7.30pm on Zoom.

Christmas party: 10th December from 11am.

Bible study group under review. It would be lovely to have a fortnightly in person time for coffee and chat perhaps with a short devotion and prayer.

Any contributions for the next "Network" need to be with Camille by 22nd January; email at mrs.camille.harrison@gmail.com or pass them on at Church on Sunday.