

Parish Profile: Beth Osment

Beth is a member of the St James' Brass quartet, which provides music for events and

important services both at St lames' Church and elsewhere. She grew up in a musical family and has played the French horn in various orchestras since an early age. Beth also performs three concerts annually with the Philharmonic Devon Orchestra, formerly EMG Symphony Orchestra, and she has played in a wind quintet for about six years.

Originally from Suffolk, Beth went to Leeds Metropolitan University to study Landscape

Architecture. She worked for ten years as a landscape architect in Peterborough, Oxford and finally Exeter, where she specialised in urban regeneration and worked on projects such as Millbay Docks in Plymouth, Newquay town centre and Hayle Harbour. She met her husband, Frazer, through work and they now have two daughters: Amélie who is 11 and Isabelle who is 9.

Beth comes from a church-going family and regular attendance at the United Reformed / Baptist Church in Ipswich played a big part in her childhood. She felt very strongly that her own children should enjoy a similar experience as part of a Church community, feeling comfortable in Church services. Beth chose St James' both because it is her local Church and because she found it friendly and welcoming. As an added benefit, her children enjoy the activities available for young people.

In a voluntary capacity, Beth is very involved in the community, especially as the chairperson of her local residents' association and as a Director of Exeter St James Community Trust. The Trust is a spin-off from Exeter St James Forum and was created to undertake projects proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan of the Forum. This plan

sets out a vision for St James' ward and defines priorities for the future. It also helps

the community to secure funding for projects improve the area. In one project, Beth involved with currently developing Oueen's Crescent Garden as community space and she is pleased that planning permission has now been granted for this. Potential features envisaged include a play area, seating, a pop-up café and events an programme.

A full-time mum, Beth enjoys

weekly Pilates, gardening and crafts. She can also be found walking the family dog, Monty, a springer-labrador cross.

Joanna Mimmack

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From the Rectory Recently I visited the open air museum at Beamish in County Durham (the Living Museum of the North). It includes the home of a tenant farmer from the 1820s, a town, a colliery and pit village from the



1900s, and a farm from the 1940s. A 1950s town is currently being created and when I looked in at a welfare hall that was opened this year, I realised that I was starting to recognise the furnishings of this era as part of my own childhood. The trams and old buses were great fun and helped with getting around the 350-acre site.

My trip north continued to Edinburgh and included a tour of the Royal Yacht Britannia, berthed at Leith and on which it is said that HM The Queen felt most at home. On my travels, I had a glimpse of homes from the past, in Beamish and on the Royal Yacht, as well as a chance to meet up with friends in their current homes.

As we celebrate the seasons of Advent. Christmas and Epiphany, many of us will experience comings and goings, and comings together. Whilst we enjoy hospitality and company in our visits during this busy season, we remember the Holy Family, who received shelter and protection in adverse circumstances. Their experience echoes that of many around us - in its uncertainty and precariousness. Particularly at this time of year, may our hearts remain open and generous, alert to possibilities and opportunities to offer comfort, support and encouragement in whatever way we can to those both near and far.

Fr Henry

A Good Book to Enjoy

If you are looking for a really good read or perhaps a gift for a friend or family member, why not try a novel by Barbara Kingsolver this winter?

I'm a fan of this contemporary, phenomenally successful American novelist and scientist. I love her books and await with anticipation the new Kingsolver on the bookshop shelves. The characters and stories remain with me even years later and three in particular are my favourites: The Poisonwood Bible, Flight Behaviour and Unsheltered.

In *The Poisonwood Bible*, first published in 1998, we hear only the voices of the wife and four daughters of a fiercely evangelical Baptist missionary, Nathan Price, who takes his family to the Belgian Congo in 1959. The consequences of this decision are both farreaching and disastrous. Through the women's stories, told in their highly distinctive voices, we are drawn into their personal loves and losses, their adventures and calamities, set against the backdrop of the postcolonial problems of the Congo over three decades.

It is the ability to invent credible, warm, intensely human characters and to weave a compelling narrative within an exploration of important themes that keeps me reading Kingsolver. She is a scientist with a superb ability to educate her readers as she entertains. In Flight Behaviour, published in 2012, she explores the effect of climate change on the migration patterns of monarch butterflies through the moving story of a young woman stuck in an unhappy marriage on a remote farm in the Appalachian Mountains. Dellarobia's life is changed as, contemplating flight from poverty and family, she encounters the devastating consequences of climate change on her own doorstep.

In her most recent book, *Unsheltered*, published in 2018, Kingsolver intertwines two stories. One is the tale of a 21st-century American family only just surviving in a crumbling house that barely affords them

shelter, made worse by recent hurricane damage; Willa Knox's family is battling poverty, the struggle to pay for healthcare and job insecurity. The parallel story follows the residents of the same town, Vineland in New Jersey, in the 19th century, also feeling unsheltered as they struggle to come to terms with the challenges to their faith posed by Darwin's new scientific ideas.

Barbara Kingsolver has said: "The writing of fiction is a dance between truth and invention." It is this choreography of the weaving of fact and fiction in her stories that has me reaching for the next book, ready to live alongside another set of warm, witty, intensely human characters facing the challenges of their situation.

For more information about Barbara Kingsolver, visit her website at www.kingsolver.com.

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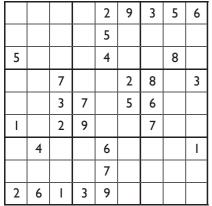
Puzzle Page Word Search

Find these biscuits in the grid on the right.

Bourbon Iced/Gems
Chocolate/Finger Jaffa/Cake
Custard/Cream Jammie/Dodger

Digestive Nice
Fig/Roll Oreo
Garibaldi Rich/Tea
Gingerbread Wafer

Hobnob Wagon/Wheel



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Sudoku: Medium

Fill in the blanks so that each row, each column, and each of the nine 3x3 grids contains the numbers 1 to 9.

Solutions on pages 14 (Sudoku) and 15 (Word Search)

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Friends of Mount Pleasant Health Centre

It seems only a matter of weeks since I wrote my last article. How quickly this year seems to have passed!

Fundraising ventures continue to keep us busy. Flu vaccination clinics were held on two Saturday mornings five weeks apart, and patients were invited to drop in for their jabs during the intervening weeks. We were able to hold our Flu Draw on both of the Saturday mornings as well as in one of the intervening weeks. A table-top sale also took place on the final Saturday. Thanks to the dedication of the volunteers and the generosity of patients, we raised over £600. The sale of children's items. which I mentioned in the spring, was not as well supported as the clothing sale held in June, although some very useful items were generously donated and a sum over £90 was raised. Ongoing fundraising work is essential to support the services at the health centre. as there are no more NHS forthcoming. It is very enlightening to read on

the NHS website what services are available at Mount Pleasant Health Centre.

David Holdcroft, Chairman of the Friends of Mount Pleasant Health Centre for over six years, has now stepped down from this role and will undoubtedly be missed. However, we were delighted to welcome John Phillips to the role. John brings a great deal of experience; he has been a volunteer driver for some time and is known to a number of patients who use this service.

The next fundraising event will be a cake and produce sale on Tuesday 17th December. An ever-popular feature, the book trolley remains well used and any donations of books are very welcome. Do you want a new challenge in 2020? Are you looking for a way to make new friends and contribute more to your community? As always, new volunteers are very welcome! Please contact Debbie on 01392 499291.

Nesta Scales

Charity Focus: Sons & Daughters

Chaotic working hours that lead to early-morning drug and alcohol abuse, financial burdens that include feeding multiple family members, and many physical dangers lingering around every corner: a 'job' that demands all but spits out only torment and stress. These are just a few of the challenges faced on a daily basis by the women we meet.

Awakened to the devastating reality of sexual exploitation in Hong Kong, a group of women began to reach out to the people in one of the most popular red-light districts. Their purpose was to befriend and care for people trapped in the sex industry. Equipped with baked goods and the love of Jesus, their strategy was simple: pray, worship and be faithful, consistently reaching out.

Since then, the ministry has expanded to four different outreach locations. It established a drop-in centre (called Promise House) in 2015, opened a safe house (called Family Home) in 2016 and now operates a holistic aftercare and exit program for those who have decided to leave the commercial sex industry. The mission of Sons & Daughters: to help those trapped in sexual exploitation to reclaim a life of love, family and freedom.

A few years ago, we met Exodus, who was desperate to leave the sex industry and find another way to support her family but did not know how or where to begin. As we built a friendship with her, she decided to give her life to Jesus. Soon after that, she made the brave choice to move into Family Home.

Surrounded by a community who worshipped God daily, Exodus' hope and relationship with the Lord began to flourish. She has now been back in her home country and reunited with her children for almost two years. She became a leader in the women's ministry of her local Church and her eyes have been opened to the awful possibility that many of the less fortunate children in her village are heading towards a story that is the same as she had to endure. Using all the resources and skills developed during her time with us, Exodus accomplished the immense feat of starting a school. This has now been approved by the government and provides free education to over 40 children.

There are still many more people looking for a way out. We believe it is with the power of the Holy Spirit and the partnership of many willing hearts that our women can truly be transformed. To learn more about Sons & Daughters and find ways to support the



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From St James' in Exeter to Santiago in Spain: A Modern Pilgrimage Judith Wedgwood is a central figure in the life of St James' Church. As sacristan, she is responsible for many of the preparations for the range of services that are held throughout the week. From time to time she likes to take a break from her duties and uses the opportunity to travel; her most recent expedition was to Portugal and Northern Spain, where she spent nine days following the Camino Portugués to the cathedral city of Santiago de Compostela.

Compostela has been a pilgrimage centre for many centuries, based around the belief that the apostle St James, patron saint of our own parish church, is buried there. The best known pilgrimage route (camino) leads from France, over the Pyrenees and via a network of hostels that cater for pilgrims of all nationalities. However, there are also several lesser-known routes, which offer a different experience in terms of scenery and difficulty of terrain.

After a previous visit to Compostela in 2014, to undertake her own Judith decided pilgrimage this year. She selected the northern part of the Camino Portugués, which leads through the extensive forests skirting the wild western coast of Portugal and Spain. She and a friend began their journey in May at Canterbury, the point from which traditional English pilgrims depart for Compostela. They travelled on to Oia, 91 km south of Compostela, from where they set out on foot to cover the route in sections of varying length according to steepness of the path and heat of the sun. Judith describes a



unique experience as negotiated she forest, which mostly consists of bamboo and eucalyptus trees, where the silence is broken only and birdsong the crashing of waves on the seashore.

The culmination of ludith's iourney would been have arrival at the city cathedral. where generations o f pilgrims attended celebratory services in honour of St lames. The these highlight of



services is the famous botafumeiro, a massive swinging incense burner that is handled by a team of eight men. Sadly, this experience was not available at the time of Judith's visit, as the building was in the course of restoration and services had been transferred to the nearby parish church of San Francisco.

After two days' recuperation in Compostela, Judith followed the path onward to Finisterre, the extreme western tip of Spain, which is a popular pilgrimage site in its own right and was regarded in bygone times as literally the end of the earth.

Overall on her journey, Judith was impressed by the sense of fellowship among all those on the pilgrimage, religious or not, alone or as part of an organised group. As a committed Christian, she also has no doubt that she was supported and guided on her journey.

Would she recommend the experience to others? Clearly a pilgrimage is not something that should be undertaken lightly. The television programmes, which usually involve groups of celebrities, suggest that there is plenty of time and opportunity to break the journey and explore local beauty spots. Judith reports that this is far from the truth, as most pilgrims have only the energy to fall into bed at the end of an exhausting day. Yet, for anyone who is prepared to commit to the experience and make the appropriate preparations, there is no doubt that the rewards are immense and never to be forgotten.

Andrew Mimmack

Dates A		
December Sun Ist		Advant assistantial trial that I lavitage Cingana fallowed by materials was
	6.00 pm	Advent service with the Heritage Singers followed by refreshments
Wed 4 th	3.30 pm	Messy Church in the hall
Thu 5 th	7.30 pm	Fellowship: Little Valley Animal Shelter talk by the RSPCA
Fri 6 th	2.00 pm	Craft group in the committee room
Sun 8 th	4.00 pm 5.30 pm	Christingle service Mencap carol service at South Street Baptist Church
Sun 15 th	10.00 am 2.00 pm	Parish Eucharist followed by young people's Nativity in the hall The Exeter Nativity at Exeter Cathedral
Thu 19 th	7.30 pm	Fellowship: Poems, readings and mince pies (members' contributions)
Sun 22 nd	6.00 pm	Carol service followed by mulled wine and mince pies
Tue 24 th	4.00 pm 11.00 pm	Crib service Midnight Mass
Wed 25 th	11.00 pm	Bank holiday: Parish office closed
	10.00 am	Parish Eucharist for Christmas Day
Thu 26 th		Bank holiday: Parish office closed
	11.00 am	Solemn Eucharist for St Stephen at Exeter Cathedral
Fri 27 th	12.00 noon	Eucharist for St John the Evangelist
January		Deals halfdow Death affice along d
Wed Ist	2.00	Bank holiday: Parish office closed
Fri 3 rd	2.00 pm	Craft group in the committee room
	10.00 am	Parish Eucharist for Epiphany
Tue 7 th	7.45 pm	Book group discussing Unsheltered by Barbara Kingsolver
Wed 8 th	3.30 pm	Messy Church in the hall
Thu 9 th	7.30 pm	Fellowship: Quiz and nibbles
Sun 12 th	10.00 am	Parish Eucharist for the Baptism of Christ
Thu 23 rd	7.30 pm	Fellowship: Travels in Northern India talk by Normal Maudsley
February		
Sun 2 nd	10.00 am 4.30 pm	Parish Eucharist for the Presentation of Christ in the Temple Celebrate Together at St Thomas Church Hall
Wed 5 th	3.30 pm	Messy Church in the hall
Thu 6 th	7.30 pm	Fellowship: Still Small Voice talk by Fr Steve Turner
Fri 7 th	2.00 pm	Craft group in the committee room
Mon 10 th	7.30 pm	PCC meets
Thu 20 th	7.30 pm	Fellowship: My Time as Mayor talk by Norman Shiel
Wed 26 th	7.00 pm	Parish Eucharist for Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent, with imposition of ashes



Fellowship

The season for Fellowship began with a Clavinova recital in the church by Christa McKittrick, who had compiled a programme of light classical music by Beethoven, Chopin, Haydn, Mozart and Schumann. Later in September, a Beetle drive was great fun and an ideal opportunity to get to know new members.

On 3rd October, much to the delight of members, Chris Wightman returned to continue his series of

talks on Desert Island Paintings. His choice comprised paintings, mostly from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and included old favourites by Cézanne and Van Gogh, who are well known for their beautiful landscapes. Both artists lived for a time in Aix-en-Provence and painted the same countryside. They were inspired by different aspects of nature, which they sought to express in their own individual and very different styles.

A painting captures a special moment in time and can be the vehicle of a political or moral statement. Chris explained some of the symbolism used in Holman Hunt's works 'The Awakening of Conscience' and 'The Light of the World'. In the latter, Christ is portrayed bearing a lantern and standing before a closed door overgrown with brambles in a forest



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clearing. It is a statement of the simple and profound, asking the viewer: 'is the door of our soul closed to Christ and his Good News? Is there a moment when we will be willing to open our hearts to him?'

One of the most interesting scenes depicted in Chris's selection was by artist Stanley Spencer. Painted in 1916, 'Travoys Arriving with Wounded at a Dressing Station' is a scene from the First World War. The wounded, attended by medical orderlies, wait in lines before the bright glow of an operating theatre where surgery is taking place. The whole composition speaks of sacrifice, compassion, sanctuary and healing.

Fellowship evenings have a very broad appeal with talks, games and always the opportunity for a good chat. Come and join us!

Carole Parsons

Dates Ahead Continued

March		
Sun Ist	4.30 pm	Celebrate Together at St James' Church
Wed 4 th	3.30 pm	Messy Church in the hall
Thu 5 th	7.30 pm	Fellowship: I Bet This Never Happened to You talk by Alex Leger
Fri 6 th	2.00 pm	Craft group in the committee room
Sun 15 th	10.00 am	Parish Eucharist followed by annual Church meetings and refreshments
Thu 19 th	1.00 pm	Fellowship: Annual meal
Sun 22 nd	10.00 am	Parish Eucharist for Mothering Sunday with distribution of posies

Carols and Christmas Through the Ages

The word 'carol' comes from an old French word that denotes a dance. At one time, this was seen as something that did not fit with the solemnity of Christian worship. However, in the early 13th century, St Francis of Assisi gave a new impetus to the story of the birth of Jesus by introducing dramatised versions of the event. Through his jovial singing and with the invention of the crib, St Francis brought music and drama back into worship and the 'carol' became respectable.

By the 17th century, however, puritanism had become popular. In 1644, Christmas Day even fell on a day that had been designated as a fast day, so the unfortunate people of England were not allowed to celebrate Christmas Day. Later, the puritan parliament decided to do away with Christmas altogether, claiming that it was a heathen feast day in honour of Saturn. The act that abolished Christmas read: 'No observation shall be had of the five-andtwentieth day of December, commonly called Christmas Day, nor any solemnity used or exercised in churches open that day.' For several years after this, at least in public, no Masses or festivities of any sort were held to celebrate Christmas. Fortunately, when the monarchy was restored in 1660, the people were once again able to celebrate Christmas openly.

In the 19th century, many of the old carols had been lost and there was a growing sense of the widening gap between rich and poor, especially in large cities. Charles Dickens is said to have rediscovered Christmas, as his writings brought charitable giving to the public consciousness. Giving, especially to those in need, therefore became and remains an intrinsic part of our tradition.

Although many of the old songs had been lost, carols were still sung as folk songs in some corners of the UK in the early part of 19th century. It was not until the latter part of the Victorian era that the singing of carols returned Church services. This was also the period when many of today's favourite carols

were written: Once in Royal David's City, O Little Town of Bethlehem, In the Bleak Midwinter and numerous others.

Not only in churches but also outdoors and at many Christmas celebrations, carol singing is now alive and well. In many Yorkshire villages, for example, the annual 'pub carol sing' is a popular event in December. Most of the carols that are sung originate from the late 18th and early 19th century. At that time, they were unapproved by the Church but people continued to sing them in public houses and in their homes, and this festive tradition continues today. There are still places in Yorkshire where the words 'While shepherds watched their flocks by night' are sung to the folk tune 'On Ilkley Moor Baht'at'.

Although it may sometimes seem to us that Christmas has become too commercialised, the joy of singing carols can still fill us with a sense of awe. Time and again, whether in a candlelit church or by a roaring fire in a local alehouse, the old favourites bring our imagination back to the events in Bethlehem.

Hark! The herald angels sing, 'Glory to the new-born King; Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!' Joyful, all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies, With the angelic host proclaim, 'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'

Over the coming weeks, if you would like to make carol singing in church part of your Christmas celebrations, you will be assured of a warm welcome at St James'.

The words of one former Archbishop of Canterbury offer an insight into Christmas from a different perspective, an additional dimension to consider in our celebrations: 'Christmas is just a sign and can only be understood in the light of later events, where we see Christ as the human face of God.'

Enjoy your Christmas!

Liz Howell

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A Christmas Angel

- A clean plastic bottle and lid
- Marbles, beads, pebbles or sand
- 2 paper plates
- Card
- A white cloth, serviette or tissue
- Tinsel and/or ribbon
- Feathers
- Shiny paper or stickers
- Felt pens or paints
- Scissors

Fold

- Glue, Blu Tack or adhesive tape
- LED tea lights

Fill the bottle with marbles, beads, pebbles and/or sand for stability.

Fold one of the paper plates or a piece of card in half. Against the fold, draw a wing shape and then cut this out to form a pair of wings joined along the fold.

Decorate the wings with tissue, feathers, shiny paper, stickers, felt pens or paint. Use glue, Blu Tack or adhesive tape to stick the wings to the bottle just below the neck.

Cut a slit in the cloth, serviette or tissue from the middle of one edge to the centre. Next, cut a small circle at this central point, so that the robe will fit around the neck of the bottle.

Drape the robe around the bottle, securing it with tinsel or ribbon at the neck and waist. Now make a face from card and attach it to the neck of the bottle with glue, Blu Tack or adhesive tape.

Attach a small piece of cloth, serviette or tissue over the top of the bottle to form a headdress. To create a halo effect, secure a tea light on the top of the headdress using glue, Blu Tack or adhesive tape.

Place the angel on a paper plate and illuminate the figure with tea lights around the base.

Anne Killingback



Weekly Pattern of Services Holy Communion (said) Sunday 8.00 am **Parish Eucharist** 10.00 am 6.00 pm Monday - Friday 8.30 am

Evening Prayer (Ist in the month with Benediction)

Morning Prayer

Monday 12.00 noon Eucharist

Eucharist with Healing (3rd in the month) 10.30 am Tuesday

> **Evening Prayer** 6.00 pm 6.30 pm **Eucharist**

12.00 noon Eucharist

Feasts and Saints' days as advertised

Organisations

Friday

IAM (4-11) / 11-Ups 9.45 am Sundays except 1st in the month

Beavers, Cubs & Scouts Monday evenings

Luncheon Club **Tuesdays** 12.30 pm

Outreach 2.00 pm **Tuesdays Brownies & Guides** Tuesday evenings

Ist Wednesday in the month (2nd Wednesday in January) Messy Church 3.30 pm

Alternate Thursdays **Fellowship** 7.30 pm Thursday evenings Rainbows

Craft Group Ist Friday in the month 2.00 pm

Please contact the parish office for more information about any of these organisations.

Parish Office

Tuesday

St James' Parish Office, Mount Pleasant Road, Exeter. EX4 7AH. www.stjamesexeter.org Parish Administrator: Sue Pinn – stjamesparishexeter@gmail.com – 01392 420407

11.00 am -12.00 noon Monday The office is situated at the north end of the

12.45 pm - 2.00 pm 11.00 am - 1.00 pm

church hall and is the first point of contact for baptisms, weddings, hall bookings and any other

2.00 pm - 4.00 pm Wednesday Church-related matters

11.00 am - 1.00 pm Thursday Friday 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

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Parish Register

Baptisms

08/08/19 Ralphy Tedd Baker

21/09/19 Katherine Anne Schotel-East

05/10/19 Harry Gerry Clarke

Harry Pegg 03/11/19

Wedding

05/10/19 Julian Robert Easton & Katie Rose Withey

Funerals

16/08/19 Thanksgiving service for the Rev Alan Simmonds

06/09/19 Martyn Gillingham

Puzzle Page Solutions

Sudoku 7 8 4 | 1 2 9 3 5 6

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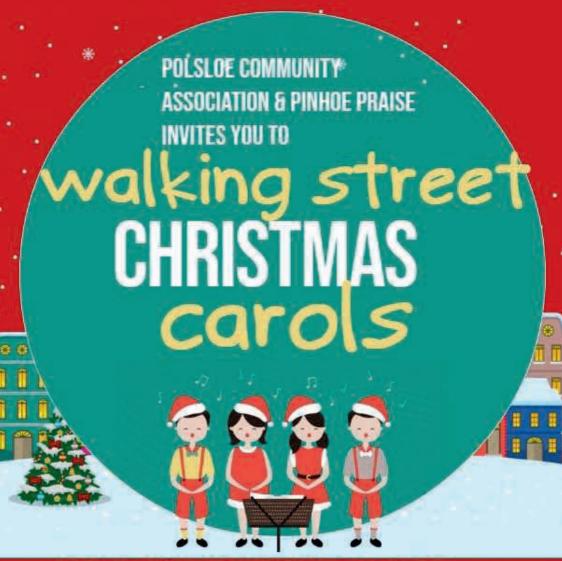
Copy deadline for next issue:

Sunday 3

Puzzle Page Solutions
Word Search

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MONDAY 9TH DECEMBER 6-30PM MEET AT PINHOE ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH

RETURN FOR MINCEPIES & REFRESHMENTS AFTERWARDS
JOIN NEIGHBOURS, ALL WELCOME

RAISING MONIES FOR EXETER FOOD BANK