

The Good Shepherd Fellowship

Flock News

A dozen up!

Year 12

July 2014

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Special points of interest:

THE GOOD SHEPHERD FELLOWSHIP "HOME GROUP" CONTINUES TO MEET EVERY THURSDAY AFTERNOON @ 2PM IN THE GOOD SHEPHERD DRIVE COMMUNAL LOUNGE. ALL ARE WELCOME TO COME ALONG. REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED.

THE SOCIAL PROGRAM FOR THE FELLOWSHIP STILL CONTINUES TO INCLUDE OUR FAVOURITE ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR—SEE THE DIARY ON PAGE 4.

WE ARE INTRODUCING A "READ & RETURN" LIBRARY OF LITERATURE AND AUDIO. TOM HAYDON WILL BE OUR "LIBRARIAN".

Leadership Support Team:

Rev Syd Gardner

Frances Steele & Joan Charters

Pastoral Care Team:

Pastor: Rev Graham Charters

Secretary: Margaret Gardner

Treasurer: Brenda Thomas

St Michael's Fellowship, Paignton:

Dave & Jackie Hughes

GSF Auditor: Kevin Cook

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Have I missed anything?

Do you ever find yourself travelling along an open road, either as a passenger, or, more worryingly, as the driver, and you suddenly realize that you have gone a long way along the road without even recalling that you have past many familiar landmarks and junctions which you would normally have noticed?

For a brief moment, as it sinks in what has happened, it is a bit scary; and then it is a bit confusing because you've lost your bearings as to where you actually are, and how much of the journey you may have inadvertently missed out on!

Sometimes in our lives, it can feel like we're just "going through the mo-

tions", and achieving very little. The Apostle Paul seemed to sense this longing that we sometimes experience, when life just passes us by, and we miss out on the joys He has for us: in **Romans 8 v 18-25** he uses the phrase, "wait in eager expectation", but then goes on to speak of

what he has already?".

Okay, so we may have missed out on a few landmarks and some of the lovely scenery along the way, but God has something far more wonderful in store for us.

There is still more journeying yet, so, as we're told in **Titus 2 v 13** "Awaiting the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us, as our Redeemer from all sin; God is making a people that are His very own, eager to do what is good and holy".

Try not to miss out on any of the journey ahead - the best is yet to come!

*The Good Shepherd Fellowship, Exeter
Meeting at "Cornerstone"
A non-denominational Christian
Fellowship in the heart of Exeter*

The St Michael's Fellowship, Paignton

our "frustration" as we await His fulfillment in our lives. He mentions our "inward groaning" as we look forward to our redemption. He concludes, in **verse 24**, "Who hopes for

From the Secretary's Minutes

I can't believe another year has passed and I am writing another report, but here we are!....

It has been a busy year and in some ways a sad year too. We have said "goodbye" to some, and "welcome" to others. Sadly we said "goodbye" to our dear friends Audrey Masters and Doris Selmon, and "au revoir" to Barry & Betty as they are unable to join us on Sundays any more, due to poor health. However, we have been able to welcome Tom into the Fellowship, and also Frank & Brenda.

As you know, Syd & I lost our daughter, Jenny in April this year, and I would like to

take this opportunity to thank you all for your love and support through a difficult year.

Food plays a big part in our Fellowship activities, from mince pies at Christmas, to wonderful suppers at Stoke Canon, amazing food at Brunel Manor, Christmas Dinner fayre, and a lovely tea at the "Vicar's Tea Party". We all love to eat! But just as important is how we are fed spiritually, and we have been blessed with many speakers who have encouraged and taught us from God's Word. The Home Group also provides teaching and fellowship, and I would encourage any of you to think about coming along to the GSD Lounge on a Thursday after-

noon — we do have biscuits!

So, in many ways, a year of highs and lows, joy and sadness, but we also know that God is with us in all circumstances, and will be with us as we look forward to another year, because He knows us and He knows what the future holds for the Good Shepherd Fellowship.

"We know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose."
Romans 8 v 28

Margaret Gardner—Secretary

NAMAAN'S SEVEN STEPS

Over the past year (and more), we have, as a Fellowship, embarked on a long series of talks in relation to how we are instructed to testify and witness to what God has done in our lives. We have acknowledged that, as a denominationally mixed group, we have each received individual experiences varying in forms of rituals and practices, which have all been equally important in our Christian growth and development.

We have stressed, continually, that in God's eyes there are no Second Class Christians. Jesus Christ's death on the cross was for the sin of the world, and if I accept Him as my own personal Saviour, believing that His blood was shed for the forgiveness of my sin, and, in repentance, desire to follow Him, and make Him Lord of my life, then I am, in Jesus' words (**Gospel of John chapter 3 v 1—21**) "born again".

However, as God's children, we are commanded in the Bible to obey Him in various aspects of our lives. Jesus' last instructions to His disciples are recorded in **Matthew 28 v 16—20**. These words are known as the Great Commission: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have taught you."

So, we have looked into the subject of Baptism, and observed what it is, what it signifies, who it is for, and what it represents. In doing so, we have taken time to remember our own experiences, many of which were many, many years ago. In fact, for some, the memories were not our own, but rather, of those

who shared in that experience, because we ourselves were too young at the time. The Church has always had an emphasis on welcoming young children into the Family of God, and we rejoice in that, because Jesus, too, blessed the children who were brought to Him.

We learned that, "By grace (God's Redemption At Christ's Expense) you have been saved, through faith, and not by yourself, or by anything you have done. It is the gift of God." **Ephesians**

Sickness to Salvation:

SICKNESS

SEARCHING

SOLUTION

SADNESS

STIGMA

SEVEN (Perfection)

SALVATION

We discovered that baptism is a beautiful "Picture Language" act which enables us to show outwardly to others what Christ has done for us inwardly in our lives. **Romans 6 v 4** explains what baptism (being immersed in water) is expressing: "...we are buried with Him through baptism, in order that, as He was raised from the dead, so we are raised in the fullness of New Life."

As Namaan was healed of leprosy by being obedient to God and washing himself seven times in the Jordan river, so we profess our faith in Him by symbolically dying to self and coming up out of the water in Newness of Life in Christ.

Jesus Christ has done so much for me, becoming the ultimate sacrifice to save me from my sin. Is obedience too much for Him to ask of me? **Galatians 2 v 20—21** "Having been crucified with Him, it is no

Our web-site is on line at:
www.thegoodshepherd-cornerstone.co.uk
Contact us by Email at:
exeterchristianfellows@gmail.com
Recommend it to your friends!

2 v 8. Each one of us is responsible, individually before God, for our own salvation.

Throughout the whole study we have paralleled the story of Namaan in **2 Kings 5 v 1—15a**, who had suffered with the dreadful disease of leprosy, alongside the Apostle Paul's teaching on Baptism, as explained in **Romans 6 v 1—11**. The seven steps are outlined through the letter "S". Taking us from

Romans chapter 6 verses 1 - 11

"What shall we presume, then? Should we carry on sinning so that God's grace will increase? Surely not! We died to the sinful nature, so there's no way we can continue in it, is there? Didn't you understand that if we're baptized into the life of Jesus Christ, then we're baptized into His death? That means we're therefore buried with Him, too, through baptism. So, just as Christ was raised from the dead, through God's power, so we also may live a New Life in Him.

So, if we've been united with Him in death, we're now definitely united with Him in His resurrection. We

know that our old, sinful self was crucified with Him, to do away with our sinful bodies—therefore we're no longer enslaved by sin, because through His death we've been set free!



Right, so if we died with Christ, we should believe that we'll also live with Him. Since He was raised from the dead, He has no need to die again. Death is defeated. His death was once-and-for-all! And now He lives to God glory.

Then you too, must consider yourselves dead to sin, and therefore, be alive unto God in Christ Jesus." (Paraphrased)

AN APPEAL TO POOL OUR RESOURCES

We are planning on launching a "Read & Return" Fellowship Library. Tom will be our librarian, and we have a book-case being readied for after-Church access.



Many of us have good Christian literature (books and daily readings), videos & DVDs, CDs & Cassettes, etc. sitting in our homes,

and doing no-one any good! Bring them along and Tom will catalogue them all so that we can all borrow, read/listen/watch, and return.

Syd's Soap-Box!

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COLD CALLING!

When I was a City Missioner for the London City Mission, I worked in three areas of that great city. The first place that I worked was in Brixton at the Lothian Road Christian Centre. When I went "cold calling" from there it was mainly in blocks of brick built flats; these were occupied mainly by immigrant families. They came from the West Indies and Africa; there were also a number of Asian Muslims and Hindus.

Cold calling is never easy as we go to a door and knock, we then introduce ourselves, sometimes being received with a kindness or a smile, but others would swear at us and behave threateningly. Two of the areas I remember well from Brixton were, firstly, Angel Town (the place where angels fear to tread). It was built in the sixties, but over the years it has become a terrible place to live with drug taking rife in the area.

We met a single-mum who had two young lads (who grew up into Rugby forwards); she came to know the Lord through our visitation, and she became a great help at the local Mission Hall.

The second place I worked was at Downham, in South East London; there I worked at the Church Down Christian Centre. Downham Estate had been built

in the nineteen thirties, between the wars, and at the time it was the largest local authority housing project in the world. It spread from Catford through to Eltham.

One person I visited on the doors was an elderly lady. Her father had been on a Fire Boat in WW2. Some of the pictures that she had, showed the boats putting out fires during the Blitz.

Another person I visited asked if I could "push"! I said I could. So she then asked me to push her lawn mower across her lawn! I gladly did it every week through the summer - I also led her to the Lord.

Then the Mission relocated me to Enfield, there we started a Mum and Toddler Group on two mornings a week. We welcomed mothers and their little ones from Turkey, from Ireland, from India and Pakistan. We had over thirty languages spoken on the housing estate, so we were only able to make personal contact with a few of them.

We had two sisters who came; they were Jaines, a rather exclusive Hindu sect. Another was a Muslim lady from Goa (a Portuguese enclave, on the East coast of India). She would bring her grand-daughter to the group. Another was a Chinese girl with her son; she told me that her parents had been in Chairman Mao's Red Guard.

She watched the "Jesus" video in Mandarin, and became a Christian.

Well "cold calling" is never easy, but it is part of the job of a City Missioner. I see from their latest magazine that the church-based evangelists are training their own church-folk to go out with the Gospel "cold calling". As a Church we have a commission from Jesus himself, to "go into the whole world and preach the Gospel", so, if we know the Lord, let us go out and get on with it.

Syd Gardner

The Combined Fellowship.....continued

Our weekend House-Party last October at Brunel Manor was a great success, with over 30 folk joining us from our own Good Shepherd Fellowship, the Honiton Family (Baptist) Church, Chagford Gospel Church, and Stoke Canon Chapel, plus some other individual friends. Danny Chipps shared with us on "Who is God?", and we also incorporated some mini-Workshops on the

Saturday afternoon, dealing with were a positive addition to the Week-

Combined Fellowship House-Party Brunel Manor Friday 9th - Sunday 11th October '15

Only £125/person

end, and will be included in next years programme. We also hope to include some children's sessions throughout the week-end. Cost will be £125/person.

On Sunday 29th June, Honiton Family Church hosted our bi-annual Away-Day. We were treated to a day of fellowship, relaxation and Bible teaching from

Prayer, Reading the Bible, and Sharing our Faith. These sessions

were treated to a day of fellowship, relaxation and Bible teaching from

CELEBRATIONS!

It has often been the case, especially in a Fellowship such as ours, that has a specific outreach and ministry towards the more senior age-group, that most of our special occasions are related to the passing away of one of our dear friends, and the Thanksgiving Service which enables us to remember and celebrate their life.

And so, it is with much pleasure that we have cause to celebrate a few happy occasions within our flock recently.

Back in December '13, on Bible Sunday (the second Sunday in Advent), at the end of our service, John Thirkettle came up to the front of the Church, called

Joan Charters to join him, and proposed to her, much to the surprise of all present!



We pray God's blessing upon them as they look forward to life together. As of yet, there has been no date set.

Last October we celebrated a land-mark birthday with our dear sister, Joyce Pearcy. However, even though she has stepped gracefully into her 90's, this has in no way slowed down her globe-trotting adventures, although she does keep telling us that, "that was the last one"!

Over the past few months, Adam Charters has, at his own choice, been embarking on his spiritual journey of faith, by attending

a course on Confirmation. It has been a time for him to examine aspects of his faith, and to be challenged as to his commitment to the Lord. This has culminated in a Confirmation service at the Blessed Sacrament Church in Heavitree, where, along with other young people, Adam confessed before his family and friends, his desire to follow Jesus Christ.

As a Fellowship, our prayers are with Adam, as he grows in his faith. May we all be a source of encouragement to him as we stand with him in this important stepping-stone.



Confirmation

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THE GOOD SHEPHERD FELLOWSHIP

Serving God in the Community

The St Michael's Fellowship (St Michael's Ct., Paignton)

We once again thank God for the faithfulness of Dave & Jackie to the St Michael's Fellowship. It is always a joy to join with them for an evening service in the lovely Chapel. As a couple, they have persevered as a witness to God, and He is blessing them for their faithfulness and service. Thanks also to those from the Good Shepherd Fellowship who come down with us every month to support the Sunday services. It is a source of encouragement to them.



We have been encouraged with the regular numbers over the past year. Dave & Jackie's grand-daughter, Jess, is still a regular contributor; Su Cann, from China has been away visiting her family for a few months, but is now back with us; Clive, has continued to be committed to the Fellowship, and has recently made a beautiful mahogany book stand for the organ, although, at present is in hospital for tests; and Rhoda always enjoys the lovely hymn-singing.

Last Christmas the organ packed up (the lights were on but no-one was home!). We prayed for a replacement, and within a fortnight we received three offers. We now have a lovely organ from the local Organ Club. God is good!



The Cornerstone, Bull Meadow Rd (just across the road from Good Shepherd Drive).

The Good Shepherd Fellowship continues to meet every Sunday from 11am—11.45am with refreshments to follow. We meet at our adopted home,

Important DATE!



12th Anniversary Celebration - Sunday 6th July @ 10.45am
Singer: Pam Osman with Ian Finch (followed by Buffet Lunch)

GSF AGM - Sunday 20th July (following the Morning Service)

"Songs of Praise" at Stoke Canon - Friday 18th July @ 7.15pm

GSF Harvest Festival - Sunday 22nd September @ 10.45am Followed by a Harvest Lunch @ 12noon. All items to go to the "Haven of Hope" Orphanage, in Lipova, Romania.

SMF Harvest Festival - Sunday 5th October

Fellowship Christmas Dinner - Saturday 20th December
The Otter Inn, Weston (nr. Honiton) - 1pm - £12 max

GSF Carol Service - Sunday 21st December @ 10.45am

SMF Candle-Light Carols - Sunday 14th December @ 4.45pm

Future Date for your Diary:

Combined Fellowship House-Party Weekend at Brunel Manor Friday 9th—Sunday 11th October 2015

NB: GSF - Good Shepherd Fellowship, Exeter SMF - St Michael's Fellowship, Paignton

A Warm Welcome to All!

The 1st Sunday of every month we invite a guest speaker to come and share. On the 2nd Sunday of each month we celebrate Holy Communion together.

The GSF & SMF, are non-denominational Fellowships, which welcome those who seek to worship God through praise, prayer and the reading and study of His Word – the Holy Bible. Our service formats include forms of worship from all aspects of the Christian traditions. All who love the Lord Jesus are welcome to participate in our Holy Communion service.

If you need a lift in, just ask and we'll arrange it for you.

Adolescence! A 12 year old doesn't want to be treated like a kid any more, but yet, in so many ways, they are still a child—a growing one, but still a child. They may well take on more responsibilities around the house, and they may start to engage in activities which give them more independence; but they always know where their home is, and they know, from experience, that if (or when) they mess up, that parents won't be far away to help mop up!

At times, we may think, as a Church, that we're "all grown up", but yet, we still need to continue returning to the roots of our Faith, and oftentimes, confessing to God that we've messed up. Our loving heavenly Father never leaves us, though. And, because for so long we have experienced God's graciousness and loving kindness toward us, so we have that confidence that he will not forsake us, even if we are prone to disappoint Him, sometimes.

We've come a long way as a Fellowship. We've been through lots. We've lost dear friends along the way, and we've made new friends, also. We've made mistakes, and we've experienced victories. There have been highs, and there have been lows. But God changes not.

James 1 v 17—18 "Every good and perfect gift is from our heavenly Father above. Unlike the shifting shadows, He does not change. He chose to give us birth through the Word of Truth, that we might be the first-fruits of all He has created."

This, my friends, is The Church!