

**The  
Good Shepherd  
Fellowship**

# Flock News

Year **16**  
**July 2018**

## Playing "Church"!

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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 CONTINUES TO INCLUDE OUR FAVOURITE ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR—SEE THE DIARY ON PAGE 4.

COME ALONG EARLY ON SUNDAY MORNINGS (FROM 10.30AM) AND YOU WILL BE SERVED WITH A WELCOMING CUPPA!

#### **Pastoral Care Team (PCT)**

**Pastor:** *Rev Graham Charters*

*Rev Syd Gardner*

*Joan Charters*

**Secretary:** *Margaret Gardner*

**Treasurer:** *Brenda Thomas*

**Elder Emeritus:** *Frances Steele*

**St Michael's Fellowship, Paignton:**

*Dave Hughes*

**GSF Auditor:** *Kevin Cook*

**Regd. Address:**

6, Good Shepherd Dr, Exeter, EX2 4JE

I remember as a youngster, my older brother and I would often play in imaginary scenarios. We would create a version of a reality and "play" within that realm. It may be a battlefield, or a hospital, a race-course, or an outer-space mission. But, whatever, or where-ever, it would become a "real" experience, with all the rules and etiquette of the drama.

There are many people in life who "play" Church. They settle in to a virtual reality of what Church means, what rules they must abide by (and some that they choose to delete); and how often they might choose to dip in and out of it—at their convenience. We've all heard the expression: "Hatch, Match & Dispatch!" Well, actually, that is about the whole of it, for many folk; christenings, weddings and funerals, with the odd

Christmas and Easter thrown in!

"Church" is a Body, that is, a living, moving, breathing, and active entity. "The body is a unit, made up of many parts, and although many in number, they all form one body: so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body." **1 Corinthians 12 v 12 & 13**. And in **v 27** Paul explains

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

that, "Now, you are the Body of Christ, each one of you is a part of it."

Over the years, The Good Shepherd Fellowship has celebrated many special occasions; there have been Marriage Blessings, New Home Blessings, new Child Dedications,

Special "landmark" Birthdays, Engagements, and Thanksgiving Services.

Jesus Christ, Himself, instructed the Church with two important ceremonies in obedience to Him; the first of them was in **Luke's Gospel 22 v 19 & 20**, "Do this in remembrance of Me." At the Last Supper, as he broke bread and poured out wine, for the disciples to share. And the second command was given to, "Go into all the world, making disciples and baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit..." **Matthew's Gospel 28 v 19**.

We celebrate Holy Communion together regularly. As for baptism, we had a wonderful celebration of three adults in our Fellowship, being obedient in passing through the waters of baptism. Read all about it on page 2. For more details, check out the features inside this issue.

## From the Secretary's Minutes

So here we are at the end of another year in the life of The Good Shepherd Fellowship. So you may be thinking, is anything new or have we spent the last 8,736 hours (see last year's Flock News!) doing the same things. In some ways "yes" and in some ways "no". We have continued to be blessed by various speakers, and also in worship and in prayer. We have got used to the new sound system and organ. We have also been blessed by having Adam play the keyboard and sometimes the glockenspiel to enhance our worship to the Lord.

In the summer we hosted the Exeter Street Pastors at a BBQ on the sea front at Paignton, where some of them shared about their work on the streets of Exeter.

We had a traditional Harvest Festival with fresh produce, which then went to the Salvation Army, and our Easter Envelopes enabled us to support 5 different outreach ministries (see page 3). We also had the great encouragement of seeing the portable Baptistry used for the first time at GSF when 3 of our members witnessed to their faith through the waters of baptism.

So while many of those hours have been the same, many have been new and exciting. While we try to reach out to the community with the love of Jesus, we also build our Fellowship in the knowledge of His love, guiding and teaching us. As we are at the start of another year, may we continue to grow in love for one another and for our Lord Jesus Christ, in the

"Blessed assurance" that he is coming again, and the knowledge that we need to be ready! The best is yet to be!

"Behold I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End." **Revelation Ch 22 v 12,13**.

Margaret Gardner

# IT'S A TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION



What a wonderful invention was that tool we can now all slip into our pockets. In fact, for many, we are lost without it. The TELEPHONE! They come in all shapes and sizes, and they seem to be able to do more and more for us. But, the primary purpose for these “must have” gadgets, is to communicate with one another. Who thought of this radical idea? A mode of both *talking to* and *listening to* somebody else.

Ever since mankind was separated from God, and communication between them broke down through sin, the ability to communicate directly with God has been a problem.

God re-opened the lines of communication when He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for our sin, and to bring us back into communication with our Heavenly Father. Jesus explained in **John's Gospel 8 v 47**, “He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason some of you fail to hear is because you don't actually belong to God.”

Sounds simple? You would think so, wouldn't you? Many of us have a father, or are ourselves fathers. Talking to our dads, or listening to them, is a fairly normal thing to do (unless you're a grumpy teenager!) And when we do chat together, it is a natural back-and-forth conversation. No special words are necessary, no formal introductions, no magical format of sentences, and no fear of chastisement for not adhering to ritual codes. WE JUST CHAT!

This past year we've been looking at the ways in which we approach this mystical “Christian” ritual we call PRAYER. This form of spiritual communication with God is not exclusive to Christians. Mankind, worldwide, has been striving to get back in communication with their Maker.

Fortunately we have that special Key to our loving Heavenly Father; it's in **John's Gospel 14 v 6** “Jesus said, ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No-one comes to the Father, except through Me’.” Contrary to popular opinion, Jesus Christ is the only way by which we may truly know God and communicate with Him.

however desperate we may be, “In everything, we should give thanks, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.” **1Thessalonians 5 v 18**. So we discovered that God is not a Father Christmas, or a Fairy Godmother figure. And He is certainly not a “yes-man” in answering everything in the positive. Just as our human dads would care for us, so God, our heavenly Father knows what is good for us, too.

We need not fear to ask God for anything, because, in His great wisdom, “In times when we don't even know how to pray or for what to pray, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us in accordance with God's perfect will.” **Romans 8 v 26**

We have also been learning the joy of praising God, and the pleasure of quietly waiting on Him. When the experience is God-centred, rather than me-centred, then the lines of communication open up to a two-way conversation.

Sure, we still don't have all the answers. We are still learning. But, “We do know that Jesus, the Son of God, has come and has given us understanding, so that we may grasp the will of Him, Who is Truth.” **1 John 5 v 20**.

*Our website is on line at:*  
**[www.thegoodshepherdcornerstone.com](http://www.thegoodshepherdcornerstone.com)**  
*Contact us by Email at:*  
**[exeterchristianfellows@gmail.com](mailto:exeterchristianfellows@gmail.com)**  
**Recommend it to your friends!**

We considered different reasons that we might want to resort to praying to God. Some were more appropriate than others, but all were used by us at one time or another. As we assessed our motives for speaking to Him, we recognised and realised that, whatever the reason, and

## Psalm 130 verses 5—6

*“I wait for the Lord, expectantly, for my complete hope is based upon His Word. I am looking and waiting for my Lord even more than a night-watchman waits for the morning sunrise to appear.”*  
(Paraphrased)

Let's challenge ourselves, every morning — can I afford not to take some time out, before my daily activities commence, to commit this day, and all it's unknowns, to my Heavenly Father.

If our expectations are already set so low, then how can we still be disappointed in what God will do for us, today?

## PASSING THROUGH THE WATERS OF BAPTISM

Sunday morning the 20th May 2018 at 10.45am was to be the first Service of Adult Baptism for The Good Shepherd Fellowship. On a Friday in late March, and then again in late April, we gathered in Beacon Heath (Steph's home) For Bible studies explaining the significance of Baptism for Christians.

Steph and her son, Shane, had requested to be baptized. Adam also joined us for these sessions, and after the second evening, he also made a decision to be

baptized.

Many years ago, after the passing of my father, Alan Charters, mum (Joan Charters) had purchased a mobile baptistry in his memory. It has been used by other Churches, but as yet, not within our Fellowship. It was with a great sense of joy that the Unit was retrieved from storage, assembled in Cornerstone, and, at 4am Sunday morning, commenced the 5hr task of filling it with water.

By 10.30am the Hall was packed with friends and family of the three Candidates, plus a video camera to record the occasion. A joyful service was enjoyed by all. Then, first Adam, then Steph, and finally Shane, passed through the waters in obedience to the Lord's command “Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” **Matthew 28 v 19**. Hallelujah!

# Syd's Soap-Box!



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## The Homeless Shelter

When we work for the Lord, we have to learn to deal with difficulty. One of these difficulties is working with homeless people, my first time working with homeless began in Chester when I began serving God there as an Evangelist.

Starting on the Monday my superintendent took me to the homeless shelter that the Mission ran in Cuppin Street in Chester. The shelter had been an old Bus Garage that the Crossville Bus Company had owned for years, where they garaged the coaches and single-decker buses.

About two years previously they had moved out of the garage and it had stood empty for some time, when a voluntary organisation approached the Mission to use it as a Night Shelter for the homeless men in Chester. When I joined the Mission it had run the Night Shelter for about three years, so I knew when I joined the mission that I would be going to the Night Shelter, and I already knew the difficulties that we had in running it.

My first visit was an introduction to Ron and to Ted, both of these men were homeless but

they had stopped drinking so they looked after the Shelter. They swept up and cleaned the toilets, they lived in what had been the old office on the first floor of the building. On the ground floor were twelve bed-spaces that each had an old hospital bed in, with a mattress on each bed-frame. We changed the mattresses every month as the men who slept on them didn't always take off their boots! They also had a habit of wetting the bed. So you can see a difficulty straight away – wet beds smell and create a foul odour which, if the mattress is left on the bed, can create a fowl smell in the whole of the Shelter. This in turn attracts mice and rats that would eat anything the men dropped on the floor. When you entered the Shelter for the first time, the smell could be quite overpowering, but you eventually get used to it.



Some of the men had good education; one man

was a civil engineer who had worked in Abadan in the Persian Gulf; another was an aircraft technician who had done twenty years in the RAF. Generally, though, the majority of the men were ex-servicemen who had a drink problem.

One of these was Paddy who had been in the Irish Guards; one day I had a phone-call from the local police because he had assaulted a female model outside a chip-shop. We had two brothers, their names were James and Michael Dooly, both big lads, who, when I stopped them lighting fires in the Shelter, put a curse on me!

Whilst the work had its unpleasant side – clearing wet beds and blankets, it also had its good side, and that was when one of the men would stop drinking, and ask Jesus into their lives. It didn't happen often, but when it did, and you had the privilege of baptising the man, it was wonderful to know that we had guided them to new life in Christ and a home in heaven with our Lord and Saviour.

by Syd Gardner

## I Ate All The Smarties!

Over the years, we have used the period of Lent to consider the needs of other ministries, both through prayer and through practical giving. We distribute envelopes which are then filled with our loose change and brought as a "Love Offering" on Easter Sunday.

This year I prepared 5 empty, large Smarties Tubes in a dish. Each one represented a ministry we would support through our Giving:

i) **Mark Perkins** and his family in his work for local Churches. As a Fellowship we

support Mark to the tune of £30/mth, but this was an extra gift for him.

ii) The **Haven of Hope Orphanage**, in Lipova, Romania was our second tube.

Western Union at various times in the year.

iii) Last summer we hosted a special BBQ supper for the **Exeter Street Pastors**. We are thankful to God for the work they do on the streets of Exeter. Theirs was the third tube.

iv) Our Bible reading notes from "**Our Daily Bread**" are of great help to many as a way in to a habitual Quiet Time each day with the Lord. We gave a Smarties tube gift towards their provision.

**A Giving Church is a Living Church!  
&  
A Living Church is a Giving Church**

We also support these children to the tune of £20/mth. We send £100 via

## A Life of Service

So often this column in the annual Flock News is dedicated to the remembrance of our loved ones departed in the last 12 months.

We always give thanks to God for all our Folk as age creeps up on us. At this time, we do remember our dear friend Danny Chipps in Chagford as we miss his wife, our dear friend, Pat, whom the Lord took home earlier this year.



Our dear brother, Ray Woodland, went Home to be with the Lord, just a month ago. Ray's health had been deteriorating in the last year, and we thank God that he will now be rejoicing in heaven. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Barbara.

## More Musings from Margaret.....

### Why do we sing?

We are a singing people because it is how God has created us. It's what we do. When we sing we are joining in with what the rest of creation is doing.

Everyone can sing, everyone can praise God. If you can speak, you can sing. Our voices are all different, but God designed us to sing. We all have the same vocal apparatus: breath from our lungs, vocal cords in our throat and tongues to articulate the words. But singing is more than just using our vocal box, we engage our mind and our intellect, imagination and memory. It moves our hearts with a range of emotions as we sing the truths of who God is and to whom we belong.

"What is the chief end of man?" asks the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

Answer: "To glorify God and enjoy Him forever." To praise God is an integral part of our God-designed humanity and our God-designed world.

God's love for us inspires our response of love for Him and brings songs of joy to our lips. Our motivation to sing is not about our likes or dislikes, or our musical tastes, it comes from our love for the One who died for us, and was raised to life.

People say you are what you eat. Songs are the food for the soul, what you sing changes you. The songs we sing on Sunday provide the soundtrack for our week, it files away messages in our hearts and takes our Sunday into Monday. Our singing should impact our life, strengthening, training encouraging and comforting us. Singing reminds us of what God has done for us, and keeps our mind on eternity. One day we will sing our last song in this life, and the reality of life beyond death will be our present experience.

So whatever your daily life brings, keep on singing to the Lord!

"The ransomed of the Lord will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away. **Isaiah Ch 51 v 11**



## Contacts

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## THE GOOD SHEPHERD FELLOWSHIP

## Serving God in the Community

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

These last twelve months have been rather difficult due to personal circumstances affecting Dave and Jackie Hughes. As a couple they have committed themselves to keeping the small Chapel in the St Michael's Court complex open and available for the Fellowship to meet on the first Sunday evening of each month.

Throughout these testing times, Dave has continued to welcome us from Exeter to share in fellowship and a lovely evening service together. And always, with Su Cang's able assistance, have amply fed us with a hearty supper after the service.

Prayers have been answered in the successful moving of Kay, from her big house, down to a lovely apartment overlooking the Paignton bay. We celebrated a lovely "Bless this Home" house-warming get-together, there.

Our dear friend, John, is still going through some dark times in his life, but we are so pleased that he is a regular attendee at our services. We continue to pray for him.

It is always a joy to see new faces, on occasions, and the Carol Service in the Communal Lounge is a great witness to the residents of St Michael's Court.

After a recent open-meeting with the Landlords of the sheltered housing, we are pleased to hear that the St Michael's Fellowship will continue to be a beacon in the future.

The Good Shepherd Fellowship continues to meet every Sunday from 10.45am—12noon with refreshments on arrival. We meet at our adopted home, **The Corner-**



**16th Anniversary Celebration Sunday 15th July @ 10.45am**  
(followed by GSF AGM & a Ploughman's Lunch)

**BBQ in aid of the Exeter Street Pastors on Sunday 5th August**  
to be held at Kay's Cabin by the seaside nr. Goodrington @ 5pm

**GSF Harvest Festival - Sunday 7th October @ 10-45am**  
Followed by a Harvest Lunch @ 12noon.  
All items to go to local Christian Community projects

**SMF Harvest Festival - Sunday 7th October @ 4.45pm**

**Fellowship Christmas Dinner - Saturday 22nd December**  
The Star Inn, Liverton - 1pm - £12 max

**GSF Carol Service - Sunday 23rd December @ 10-45am**

**SMF Candle-Light Carols - Sunday 23rd December @ 4.45pm**

**An Autumn "Songs of Praise" at Stoke Canon (TBA)**

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

## A Warm Welcome to All!

**stone**, Bull Meadow Rd (just across the road from Good Shepherd Drive).

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.

As most teenagers tend to do, we keep a lot of our personal life to ourselves, and anything we may have revealed to our parents, teachers, or other elders, would have been limited. Oftentimes our withheld information was not necessarily secret, but nevertheless it was personal, and it was not for general knowledge or discussion. It might have been regarding a sweetheart; it may have been our exam results; or it may have been a "party" at a friends house.

A 16 year old realises that life is set at a level of mutual understanding and respect. Things that used to be secret are now permissible information, open for discussion and dialogue. Opinions are now seen to be relevant. Apart from voting in elections, there's not much that a 16 year old can not participate in.

Issues of personal beliefs and faith are now forming, and being worked through in the young mind. Thought processes and life values are argued within peer-groups. And so, this teenager exudes this freedom in expressing publicly what had before remained private.

This year we have seen three individuals professing their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ before relatives and friends. They have boldly declared their intention to follow Christ. Do we have that same boldness and desire to be ambassadors for Christ, and witnesses to His love?

**1 Timothy 6 v 12** "Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your public confession before the assembly of witnesses, and in the sight of God."

**This, my friends, is The Church!**