

**The
Good Shepherd
Fellowship**

Flock News

Christmas Special!

Year 18
Christmas 2020

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

20/20 Vision	2
Kids Say the Funniest Things	2
What is a Secretary?	3
Diary Dates	4
Hotel Du Vin—Statement	4

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Many decades ago the ship on which I was working was docked in the port of Punta Arenas, on the southern tip of Chile in South America. It was Christmas Day — mid-summer, yet a cold blustery morning, just a few hundred miles north of Antarctica. At breakfast-time a few of us, looking out at the awful weather, decided we would take a trip to a poor community and deliver them a special Festive Treat. We wanted to take God's Christmas message to the folk of the remote Chilean village of Porvenir, next to the Tierra del Fuego/Argentine border.

That December 25th 1980, will always stay in my memory as one of the most special of Christmas Days. The joy of giving simple gifts, clothes, snacks, and Bibles, to the chil-

dren and their parents on that freezing, windy, and desolate day, was so rewarding.

We gathered the villagers together and held an im-

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

promptu Carol Service, where we shared, through songs and Bible stories, the true meaning of Christmas.

There were no commercial trimmings, apart from a decorated Fir tree



"Glory to God in the highest, and peace to everyone on earth!"

**For unto us a child
is born, to us a
Son is given; and
the government
shall be upon his
shoulders.**

**And He will be
called Wonderful
Counsellor, Mighty
God, Everlasting
Father, Prince of
Peace.**

Isaiah 9 v 6

in the central plaza. Beneath the tree was a hand-carved Nativity scene. It was in front of this that we shared the Gospel of the babe in the manger, Who would "save his people from their sins." **Matthew 1 v 21.**

The Christmas message is that we were like sheep without a shepherd. God sent His only Son, Jesus, into the world to be for us the Good Shepherd of His sheep, and to gather us unto Himself.

It was a privilege to lead many of those villagers of Porvenir to salvation in Jesus Christ — to put the CHRIST back into their CHRISTmas!

In this City of ours, may we see people seeking the truth of Immanuel — God with us. Merry Christmas!



2020 VISION

I had an eye test recently, and, like many of us, it wasn't perfect, or 20/20. Over time our eyesight diminishes, and we either become short-sighted or long-sighted. Sometimes there are other factors, like glaucoma, cataracts, etc. so spectacles may be required as an aid for better vision.

The Bible speaks a lot about vision, and it is usually in conjunction with light — *Matthew 4 v 16* "Those living in darkness have seen the dawning of a great light." , which is a prophecy from *Isaiah 9 v 1—2* that when Jesus Christ comes, He will bring (or be) that light.

The psalmist wrote in *Psalms 119 v 105*, "Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light for my path." Read the *Gospel of John 1—14*. "In Him was life, and that life was the light of men. The

light shines in the darkness." v 5

So, what is **20/20 Vision** all about, and what's the point if it's not the year 2020 anymore? Like I mentioned in July's Flock News, if Japan's Olympic games can still

is truly "*the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*" *John 8 v 12.*

Whenever we can eventually get back to meeting together in 'The Potting Shed', and we pray it won't be too long, then once again we can centre our efforts on what is important; and that is to share the Good News of the Gospel of Salvation! Be it 2020, 2021 or whenever, we will always be ready to

Our website is on line at:
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Recommend it to your friends!

be "Tokyo 2020", then our Good Shepherd Fellowship campaign next year can still be **20/20 Vision!** The date doesn't matter; what does matter is that we bring Christ's light to those around us as we "**Love Thy Neighbour**". Because, if the Church has no vision, then we are spiritually blind. We want to show that Jesus

witness God's saving grace. Jesus tells us in the Sermon on the Mount, *Matthew 5 v 14*, "*You are the light of the world...*" v 16 , "*...so let your light shine...*"

Our **20/20 Vision**—"Love Thy Neighbour" campaign will happen. So, be ready for it!

Kids Say the Funniest Things!

Daddy explained to little Johnny, "Mummy has had to go into hospital, but, don't worry, when she comes home, she'll be bringing you a special present in time for Christmas."

The days passed by, then one morning, just before Christmas, Daddy brought Mummy home from the hospital. And what a lovely surprise—she showed little Johnny the tiny bundle in her arms. "You have a new baby sister!" she exclaimed.

Johnny was not so impressed, and took his Daddy to one side. "It's very nice, Daddy, but next year, can I have a bike?!"

What is a Secretary?

Unfortunately, over the years, the term “Secretary” has referred to a young lady with spectacles on the end of her nose, typing at least 60 words to the minute for a middle-aged boss, sat in his office, doing very little.



Move on from the 50's, 60's and 70's; nowadays a secretary is of the highest order. In fact, our government is practically led by two secretaries (and the Chancellor of the Exchequer [Chief of the Treasury]) — namely, the Home Secretary, and the Foreign Secretary. The secretary, for little or no thanks, carries out the tasks needed to “keep the ship afloat and on an even keel” to use the parlance of the sea. It is an Office respected in most organisations, and without which, most would quickly become very disorganised.

The Good Shepherd Fellowship has been blessed to have had, over the years, two wonderful officers to work alongside your Pastor and within the PCT (Pastoral Care Team). We have Brenda Thomas, our loyal and faithful sister who, as Treasurer, has kept her hands on the purse strings of the Fellowship's activities; and we have Margaret Gardner, not a bespectacled typist by any stretch, but an efficient and organised Secretary of our ministry.

Both of these dear sisters have given of their time and efforts over many years; both having made my life so much easier, and allowed me to concentrate on pastoring our Flock. It has probably not passed your notice that over the last decade we have all added on a good few years to our lives. With the passing of time, also comes illnesses, aches-and-pains, mobility difficulties, and other related ailments — not to mention families and all the worries they can bring. Believe it or not, Margaret and Brenda are only human! We do give them a vote of thanks at each AGM, as we re-nominate them into their roles, but I would like to give them a special vote of thanks at this time.

Syd and Margaret are going through health issues which are taking up more of their time and efforts, recently. And so Margaret is now feeling that she needs to step back from her Office of Secretary at the next AGM in August '21. This will be a big pair of shoes to fill, so please give this situation some prayerful thought. May be you have the special gifts that such a role entails? Maybe you've not even considered before that God is calling you to commit to this role. Because, believe me, and just ask Margaret, it definitely is a commitment! If you want to know more about the office of Secretary, Margaret will be more than happy to chat with you and answer any questions you may have. Don't rush into a decision — there is still at least 6 months before the next AGM, god-willing!

This is the Bible text which has sustained Margaret over the years. May it encourage all of us:

Jeremiah 29 v 11—14 “For I know the plans I have for you”, declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you, and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon Me, and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me, when you seek Me with all your heart. And I

A Praying Church is a Living Church!
&
A Living Church is a Praying Church



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THE GOOD SHEPHERD FELLOWSHIP

Serving God in the Community



Future Dates!

As I write this special Christmas Edition of Flock News, I am also conscious of the fact that we would usually by now be well into our Festive program of activities.

We would be singing our favourite carols together; and we would be reading the wonderful Christmas stories from the Gospels. There would be exchanging of cards and gifts.

And we would be tucking into a banquet of Christmas food at some fine restaurant!

In spirit, we are one in Christ Jesus; greet one another with the joy of Christ's birth, and may we meet together again very soon.

Make use of your telephones, letter writing, and other social media, to keep in touch, and "...therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact, you are already doing." 1 Thessalonians 5 v 11

This, my friends, is The Church!



The Hotel Du Vin are in regular contact, reviewing our situation for re-convening in The Potting Shed, whenever it may be possible. We come under the legislation for "conferences and events", and as such, are unable to meet with more than 6 persons, at present.

When I have more news, I will let everyone know.

Thank you for your continued patience.

With Christian love from

Graham & Aura Marina Charters

& Adam

CHRISTMAS CONUNDRUMS:

IVY TITAN

PREHEAT OCEAN

AIMING FACT