

**The  
Good Shepherd  
Fellowship**

# Flock News

## Easter Special!

Year 18

Easter 2021



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### Pastoral Care Team (PCT)

#### **Pastor:**

**Rev Graham Charters**

**Rev Syd Gardner**

**Joan Charters**

#### **Secretary:**

**Margaret Gardner**

#### **Treasurer:**

**Brenda Thomas**

#### **Elder Emeritus:**

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A few weeks ago, I was embroiled in a major R.T.A. on the A37, just south of Shepton Mallett. At the time I thought, 'God, why have you allowed this awful thing to happen to me? We could have been killed!'

**Ecclesiastes 7 v 14** "When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider: God has made the one as well as the other."

A couple of years ago I was with our friend, Mark Perkins, taking an R.E. lesson for teenagers at a school in Sidmouth. Their most asked question was, 'Why does God let 'bad stuff' happen?', so we responded with another question: 'What 'bad stuff' would you like God to eliminate from your lives, then?'. During a heated discussion,

they nominated the following - 'famine', 'war', 'diseases', 'terrorism', & 'premature death', among other things.

How then, can we say, God cares for us? We

develops **perseverance.** **James 1 v 2 -3.** After all, who needs God if we can deal with 'stuff' on our own. It is in those occasions of strife that we appreciate God's love and His care for us.

I love the verses in **Isaiah chapter 53**; in **verse 6** it says, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way...". I own a T-shirt with this quote, and a cartoon picture of a sports-car loaded with crazy sheep heading off on the road to Herodism. On the back it depicts one lonesome sheep riding a scooter up a lane through a narrow gate towards the sunset. I treasure that T-shirt, because it tells the Gospel message so clearly.

*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*

could equally ask: what happens to sheep with no shepherd?

God's loving care is revealed to us so much more when he shows our dependence upon Him in life's difficulties.

"Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials and difficulties, because you know that the testing of your faith

## "...and I Lay Down My Life for My Sheep"

The wonderful message of Easter is encapsulated in this **verse 14**. God loves us so much that He doesn't just stop at caring about us, but He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, as described prophetically in

**Isaiah 53 v 4 - 7** "...He was pierced for our sins...our punishment was upon Him...by His wounds we are

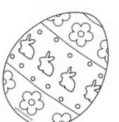
healed...for the Lord God laid on Him (Jesus Christ) the sin of all of us."

On Good Friday, the Lord Jesus Christ, was crucified on the rugged cross at Calvary, for me and for you, to save us from our sin.

And, praise God, on that first Easter Day, He arose from death and the grave, victori-

ous. And so we rejoice in the God of our Salvation.

**Psalms 95 v 1** "Come! Let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our Salvation!"





# COVID-19

## Is there Light at the End of the Tunnel?



It was on Mothering Sunday 2019 that the Good Shepherd Fellowship (along with many other Churches) was told to suspend Services until further notice. Just over a year later, and we are still awaiting hopeful news of a lifting of lockdown rules to allow the safe gatherings of people in Places of Worship. However, while many of us can join "virtually" with other Church Groups on-line, many of us cannot.

After various national false-starts throughout last year, it seems that there is now a tentative "road-map" for England to get back to some kind of normality (whatever that may look like!). With this in mind, we, as a Fellowship which has our home in The Hotel du Vin, are always under the legislation relating to Hospitality; and within that sec-

tor, we are ruled by the "Events & Conferences" guidelines of the Hotel.

I am in regular communication

I have had to have a COVID test in Cullompton Service Station every Wednesday on my way to France for work, but now, thanks to the expertise of bio-chemists, we can all be vaccinated against this awful virus. Many of us have now received our first jab, and some even their second one. If you are pondering the issue please be assured it is good for you, and it's good for the safety of others - and it doesn't hurt much either! - just ask the Queen!

So, continue to stay safe, and only go out if you really need to.

*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!**

with Agne Seikyte (E. & C. Co-ordinator), and as soon as her assessment is positive we can look into returning to The Potting Shed safely. Tentatively, we may be looking at early Summer.

So until that time, let us strive to "encourage one another, and build each other up - just as, in fact, you are already doing." **1st Thessalonians 5 v 11.**



## Gospel of John, chapter 3 verse 16

"For God so loved  
 the world, that  
 He gave His only  
 Son, that whoever  
 believes in Him  
 should not  
 perish, but have  
 Everlasting life"



Love it or loathe it (or simply ignore it), this period of lockdown during the Coronavirus Pandemic has caused Church communities to find alternative ways to communicate with their congregations. Such mediums as 'Zoom', 'Facebook', 'Twitter', 'YouTube', and 'Teams', have been introduced into interactive online Bible Study and Prayer Groups. Complete Sunday services are available to view on tablets and TVs (either live, or at any convenient time).

A lot of this "cyber technology" flies over many of our heads; my mum Joan is 88, and regularly joins in Zoom sessions with other Christian groups. But for some of us mastering the mobile phone, and possibly the art of texting, is a challenge! It seems that life is changing and evolving quickly to serve the "new normal" of the 21st Century. Church, as we have known it, may never be quite the same again. I loved the personal fellowship which we enjoyed with one another on a Sunday morning. I long for the time when once again we can meet together in The Potting Shed, and we can sing hymns and pray and fellowship and embrace, and share a cuppa! But until then, we must use whatever methods of technology we can to keep in touch. Of course—we can always revert to talking on the telephone!

Unlike many Churches, The Good Shepherd Fellowship does not have access to many of these media options. However I do "religiously"(!) every Sunday morning send out a text to all of our GSF Folk (and associated friends), to encourage us all to grow more Christ-like in our daily walk with Him. I do appreciate that not everyone has easy access to texts, and so I do try to phone or doorstep-visit some of you when I can. I trust that many of you are doing this as well.

One of the things I really miss is those special times of celebration which are so much more fun when we are all gathered together: our Harvest Festival and Ploughman's Lunch would have kicked off our **20/20 Vision – "Love Thy Neighbour"** campaign. (It'll happen soon!), then there's all our advent and Christmas celebrations with the Carol Service and the Christmas Dinner, and our shared joy for the occasion, not forgetting being with our families and friends. And now we are celebrating Easter – the greatest of Christian festivals. How we would love to be singing: "Up from the grave He arose!" and "He's alive! He's alive! He's alive for evermore!", and "Thine be the glory! Risen, conquering King!".



*For the benefit of those of you who have not been able to read my Sunday morning texts, Here is a summary of our 4 Lenten thoughts. They are all taken from:*

## **Romans chapter 6 verses 5—11**

### **Lent 1 - Freed from Self (v 5)**

Burying me and my desires

### **Lent 2 - Freed from Sin (v 6 - 7)**

Burying my old life and my old nature

### **Lent 3 - Freed from Death (v 8 - 9)**

Burying myself in Christ's death

### **Mothering Sunday (March 14th)**

### **Lent 5 - Freed to Live [in fellowship with God] (v 10 - 11)**

Burying my love of the World

**N.B.** *If you haven't received the Sunday morning text but would like to be included in it, please ask another GSF member who does, and read it together. That way we shall all be meditating on the same Scripture each week.*

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





## Contacts

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## THE GOOD SHEPHERD FELLOWSHIP

**Serving God in the  
Community**



# Future Dates!

• *As I write this special Easter Edition of Flock News, I am aware that we would usually be celebrating at our Easter Day Service on Sunday the 4th April 2021.*

*(by happy coincidence, Adam's 21st birthday!).*

• *We would be singing our favourite Easter hymns celebrating Christ's Resurrection, and we would be reading the wonderful Easter stories from the Gospels.*

• *We would be tucking into Sunday lunches, possibly surrounded by family and friends, and exchanging Easter Eggs.*

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

• *Make use of your telephones, letter writing, and other social media, to keep in touch, and "...strengthening one another and encouraging each other to remain true to the Faith."*  
**Acts 14 v 22**

• Please continue to remember in your prayers, those in our Fellowship who are not well. Pray for our dear friend, Kay, in Paignton who has recently been diagnosed with bone cancer. And keep Tom in your prayers as his cancer is causing him pain. And give thanks to God that Syd & Margaret are moving down to a groundfloor flat—at last.



## 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 we hope the Hotel may re-open after May 17th, with conferences from mid-June.

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: SOLUTIONS:

IVY TITAN  
NATIVITY

PREHEAT OCEAN  
PEACE ON EARTH

AIMING FACT  
MAGNIFICAT

### NOW TRY THESE EASTER CONUNDRUMS:

**LEGENDARY MAMA - NEIGHBORLY TEETH - HORSE ENGAGEMENT FAD**