

The Good Shepherd Fellowship

Flock News

Year 21

July

2023

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Special points of interest:

The Good Shepherd Fellowship is still very much alive and active. We do not meet as a "congregation", but we continue to minister to those who need God's love in practical ways.

Our regular social program is now up and running with services and socials monthly.

Please note, those of you whom are tech savvy, our new email address and revamped website are up and running.

Pastor: Rev Graham Charters

Elder Emeritus: Frances Steele

Website: Adam Charters

St Michael's Fellowship, Paignton: Dave Hughes

GSF Auditor: Frank Bye

New Registered Address:

5, Good Shepherd Dr, Exeter, EX2 4JE

Our Email Address:

gsf.exeter@gmail.com



For folk of a certain age, the institution of the monarchy in the United Kingdom, has always been HM Queen Elizabeth II. Few of us can remember any previous monarch, and the wonderful coronation ceremony in 1953. Times have changed incredibly over the past 60 years. Technology has brought us into an age of instantaneous communication, and the ability to access events immediately around the world. We like to refer to these innovations as "progress", and those of us who find it difficult to keep up, as "dinosaurs".

However, there is something to be said for stability, for assurance, and for an unchanging certainty. We cannot escape the fact that, in our lifetime, things have changed - some for the better, and some for the worse.

We see new governments, new fashions, new mobile phones, and new home technologies. Eventually, we embrace these changes. We now have a new King (for which we need to remember to sing "God save the KING!"); we pray for Charles III, that his reign may be a peaceful and prosperous one, guided by the Christian faith which his mother brought

the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness..." The passage goes on to describe how that although "He [Jesus] humbled Himself"..., "God exalted Him."

Jesus has often referred to servant-hood as the attitude for his followers to adopt. In Matthew 20 v 26, He exhorts

His squabbling disciples, saying "Whoever wants to become great among you must become as a servant... as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve."

to the role. As he responded in his coronation: "I have come to serve, not to be served."

The verses from Paul's letter to the Philippians come to mind, especially in 2 v 5-7, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking

From kings and queens and rulers, to the lowliest subjects, God has no favourites, and gives no preferential treatment. For we are all sinners, saved by grace, through the sacrifice of Christ's death on the cross. So, God save the king, and God save all of us!

Graham

God Save ... Us!

The Good Shepherd Fellowship, Exeter
A non-denominational Christian Fellowship
in the heart of Exeter

The St Michael's Fellowship, Paignton

Pastoral Letter

As we discussed at our final AGM last July '22, (held in St Mark's Church Hall), we have decided to disband our official PCT, as we are no longer a "Church" in the traditional sense. We have, however, decided to continue our evolving ministry which calls on us all to be hands-on when the need

arises. This arrangement is working well, as each of us is using our individual talents and skills to enhance the Body.

It is with great sadness, that we have seen the passing of our dear sister in Christ, our Treasurer, Brenda Thomas, in May. She will be missed. However, as we move on into our

new year, we trust God that He will continue to be faithful to us.

Our regular monthly services are an ongoing activity which we enjoy at St Michael's Court, Paignton, and for which we thank the faithfulness of our brother, Dave Hughes.



THE "HAVEN OF HOPE"

For many years, the Good Shepherd Fellowship has been supporting the ministry of "The Haven of Hope" orphanage, in Lipova, Romania. At our Harvest Festivals we would bring items to the Table such as clothing, colouring books, stationery, dried foods (cereals, rice and pasta), and toiletries. These were transported to the orphanage by vehicle. In more recent times, however, it has been more economically viable to send money electronically, direct to Pastor Moise & his wife, Nutsi.

"Jesus took the children in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them"
Mark 10 v 16.

As a family, we visited the "Haven of Hope, in 2008, and saw, first hand, the wonderful work being done for the children, in a safe, Christian environment. Since that time, we, as a Fellowship, have supported them, financially, with £20/month, which we have been sending bi-annually (now increased to £30/month).

"The true Christian is he/she who takes care of widows and orphans in distress, and remain faithful to the Lord." **James 1 v 17.**



Our website is on line at:
www.goodshepherdfellowship.co.uk
Contact us by our Email at:
gshf.exeter@gmail.com
Recommend it to your friends!



This year, on 5th February we invited Matthew Jackson from Okehampton, to come to St Michael's Fellowship to give us an up-to-date presentation of the work in Romania. He showed us new pictures of the Home and the children, plus various other projects they are now undertaking.

Our Fellowship has been inspired to become more proactive in our relationship with the ministry. Matthew has given us a young girl, "Florica", to take under our wing as our 'adopted' child. She is 9yrs old, and the youngest orphan at the Home. We have taken it upon ourselves to pray for her and make efforts to help her in her growing-up, in practical ways. A

few of our folk have been getting busy with their knitting needles to make some lovely blankets, scarves, bobble-hats, etc., some of which have already gone to Florica and the other children, and some will go after our Harvest Festival in October. (see pictures left & right)

If you would like to become more involved in this project, just ask. You can see the Haven of Hope website via our own website.

Mark & Caroline Perkins

Sometimes life throws us 'curve-balls' - events that knock us off our pathway. It is at those times that we need God's assurance that, *"He will never leave you, or forsake you"* **Deuteronomy 31 v 6.**

Our dear brother in Christ, Mark Perkins, has been faithfully serving the Lord for many years, working alongside local Churches in Devon, to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ in neighbourhoods, homes and Church groups. The

Good Shepherd Fellowship has stood with Mark in prayer and

financial support. We have seen him through dark times as well as the better times. We praise God that Mark has found a lovely life-partner in Caroline, from Lapford Congregational Church, which is where they celebrated their wedding day, on Saturday 25th May.

We shall continue to support Mark as he seeks out new Churches in north Devon, as they settle into married life in Lapford. You can visit his website, via ours, on the page which lists the



ministries we support. He has more (and better) photos there.



"Be Generous in Helping Others"

Romans 12 v. 8



Within this passage in **Romans 12**, there are a list of various acts of stewardship which we, as Christians should adopt and practice within our Church Fellowships. The Apostle Paul makes it very clear that in all these things, we should act with generosity. He is not referring to the "Quantity", but to the "Quality" of our giving: **v 3** "...in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.". We should be "serving one another", exhorting one another", and "encouraging one another" **v 8** - all with a spirit of generosity [liberality of nature]. And finally, "Let 's do it cheerfully."

Churches in general, don't like to discuss the subject of "Giving", so as not to offend or embarrass anyone. However, the Bible talks a lot about the blessing we receive from giving—giving of ourselves, our time, our talents, and our possessions. A verse which is often quoted in the secular world is, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." **Acts 20 v 25**, referring to Jesus' words to His disciples in **Matthew 10 v 8** "Freely you have received, so freely give." It's all about the joy of helping others. In whatever we give, and in whatever we do, let's do it unto our Lord God, for He is our great Provider, by His grace. **1 Peter 4 v 10** "Serve others, as faithful servants of God's grace in its various forms."

A Giving Church is a Living Church!

A Living Church is a Giving Church!

Summary of The Good Shepherd Fellowship accounts for '22 - '23



Fund	b/f '22-'23	Income	Expenses	c/f '23-'24
Transport	£685.38	£0.00	-£260.00	£425.38
Holding	£2,415.55	£1,015.50	-£825.80	£2,605.25
GSF	£561.06	£914.36	-£1,222.81	£252.61
SMF	£258.73	£180.00	-£103.98	£334.75
Baptistry	£625.00	£0.00	-£0.00	£625.00
Savings	£0.00	£0.00	-£0.00	£0.00
Total	£4,545.72	£2,109.86	-£2,412.59	£4,242.99

In Remembrance

Once again, this past 12 months, we have said "farewell" to four more of our dear ladies.

Last Autumn we lost our dear sister, Tina Hunt, who never really recovered from a nasty fall outside her flat at Good Shepherd Drive. She has been a faithful member of our Fellowship since we started in 2002.

This wintertime we lost Brenda Bye, wife of Frank (our faithful Auditor of the Accounts). They have lived near Worcester in a lovely bungalow in the countryside. Our prayers are with Frank.

Then, this Spring, we lost our faithful Treasurer and friend, Brenda Thomas, She had been suffering mobility problems for a while, with fluid on her lungs and in her joints. She was a dear friend and Church officer.

And now we have lost our dear sister, Pam Wilson, who, with her late husband, Frank, are sorely missed around the GSD compound, and within our GSF.



Every one of our dearly departed is greatly missed for many personal reasons, but we give thanks to God for all that they brought to the Fellowship.

Pray for our World

We continue to remember in our prayers all our more "mature" members and friends at this time, as, with age, comes various other health and mobility issues.

In these difficult times, the more vulnerable are always the first to suffer. The emotional and psychological issues, can remain a factor; and often the loneliness and isolation that comes with it.

Pray for our world, for governments, for relief from natural disasters, and the aggression of tyrants who would want to dominate their neighbours; then there are the knock-on effects which bring economic hardship and enforced personal financial

stress within our homes, families, and our Churches.

We oftentimes run out of words to pray, as we sense a never-ending torrent of "bad stuff". It is at these times that:

"I lift up my eyes to the hills - where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth....."

The Lord will keep you from harm - He will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your comings and goings, both now and forevermore."

Psalms 120 v 1 - 2 & 7 - 8



Contacts

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The Good Shepherd
Fellowship

Serving God in the
Community

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

We thank God that we planted our 'sister' Church in St Michael's Court, Paignton, many years ago. And we thank God for our dear brother, Dave Hughes, for faithfully



hosting us as we bring the GSF down to Paignton each month. We do value this venue that we can all meet together. As this Flock News goes to print, we are facing an Asbestos problem which is keeping us from meeting in the Chapel. We pray that this problem may be resolved soon.

The Good Shepherd Fellowship,

The Good Shepherd Fellowship is now in a new chapter of its ministry. This does not include the regular Sunday morning services we have enjoyed over the years, but it involves much more hands-on and home-to-home emphasis. So, the Good Shepherd Fellowship is still here for you!

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. We exclude no-one, and welcome all who need Christ's love, in both a practical and spiritual way.

See our regular dates for our services and social events. Contact us if you need a lift to any of them.

Important DATE!



The last thing we want to do at this time is to ostracise those who are not computer savvy. We will do all we can to communicate with everyone through a medium that you can access.

Sunday 6th August @ 4.45pm at St Michael's Chapel, Paignton

Service of Traditional Even-Song

followed by a GSF/SMF "Annual Review"

Sunday 3rd September @ 4.45pm at St Michael's Chapel, Paignton

Olde-Tyme Gospel Service

Sunday 1st October @ 4.45pm at St Michael's Chapel, Paignton

Harvest Festival - items for the "Haven of Hope"

Saturday 21st October we celebrate with Joyce Pearcy

Open-House 3 - 5-30pm at 8, Good Shepherd Drive.

Just pop in and share a cuppa and cake.

A 100th Birthday Celebration!

Friday 10th November @ 4.30pm at Gittisham, Honiton

A birthday soiree around "Joan's Joanna"

Saturday 9th December @ 1pm at The New Inn, Alphington

Fellowship Christmas Dinner - £12

Sunday 17th December @ 4.45pm at St Michael's Chapel, Paignton

Carols by Candle-Light Service

A Warm Welcome to All!

Over the years, I have been comparing our Fellowship's growth to that of a youngster. We have grown through childhood, adolescence, and into adulthood. Although much has changed since the days pre-COVID, we continue to grow together and continue to trust God for our way into the future. We don't know what lies ahead for us, but we know our Lord does, and we'll keep on trusting him.

1 Corinthians 3 v 22 - 23 "...whether life or death, or the present or the future - all are yours, given by God, for you [my brothers and sisters] belong to Christ and Christ is God's Son."

Proverbs 23 v 17 - 18 "...so always be zealous for the fear of the Lord. for in this there is definitely a future hope for you."

2 Samuel 22 v 31 - 32 "As for God, His ways are perfect;

The word of the Lord is flawless.

He is a shield for all who would take refuge in Him.

Who is God besides the Lord God almighty?

And who is the Rock, except our God?"

"This, my friends, is The Church!"