

The Good Shepherd Fellowship

Flock News

Year 23

July

2025

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Special points of interest:

The Good Shepherd Fellowship meets regularly on the first Sunday of every month (unless otherwise announced) at 4.45pm in the Chapel, St Michael's Court, Paignton.

For a full list of services and Socials, see Page 4, or visit our website which is regularly updated.

Office Holders

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:

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"You Will Hear Rumours..."

Matthew 24 v 6

Even in Jesus' time, the disciples were concerned about the "last days". Matthew's Gospel account dedicates a whole chapter to Christ's homily in **Matthew 24 v 6 – 8** "...such things must happen, but the end is still to come." - What was to come, and what would be the signs?

More-so now as we see and hear the international news, we are inclined to take heed to Jesus' words in **Matthew 25 v 13** "So, therefore, keep watch, for you do not know the day or the hour!"

These words were not given to us to strike fear into our hearts. No, but rather, to give us Hope of the return of our Lord, and our ultimate salvation into His Kingdom. In **John 14 v 1 – 3** "Don't worry yourselves... I am going to

prepare a place for you... that you may be [with Me] also."

World leaders, climate action groups, religious activists, and education systems, are all in 'panic' mode, because our planet is in a mess – socially, morally, economically, and yes, even spiritually.

Are you fearful of the future, and how life seems to be getting worse and worse? Have you got more questions than answers? Do you have doubts about whether God has lost control?

The Psalmist lists 26 reasons to "Give thanks to the Lord, for His love endures [carries us through] forever." in **Psalm 136**.

This world in which we live, may well be broken, but we have Eternal Life with Jesus to look forward to!

James 1 v 12 "Blessed is the one who perseveres under trials [and circumstances], because when [s]he withstands the tests, [s]he will receive the Crown of Life that God has promised to those who love Him."

Graham

*The Good Shepherd Fellowship, Exeter
& The St Michael's Fellowship, Paignton*
A non-denominational Christian Fellowship
serving God in the community

Jesus' prayer to His heavenly Father in **John 17 v 24** "I want those You have given to Me to be with Me [forever], because of Your love, from the creation of the world." was Jesus Christ's desire to fulfil His promise of **John 14 v 3 & 6** "...there you shall be also... no-one comes to the Father, except through Me."

Pastoral Letter

These past twelve months have whizzed by, for me at least! I don't know about everyone else, but globally there have been lots of news stories and all kinds of changes to life generally.

Within our Fellowship, thank God, we have continued to meet regularly for our services in the St Michael's Chapel in

Paignton. Our numbers have slightly increased with a handful of new faces joining us, for which we give thanks to God. Not least, was the birth of my grandson, Xavier, last November! We held a Dedication Service for him in February.

We continue to support the "Haven of Hope" orphanage in Lipova, Romania, and also our

friend Mark Perkins of Outreach UK. Other events will be mentioned within this edition of Flock News, celebrating 23 years of the Good Shepherd Fellowship.

Thank you all for your continued support and prayers!





We are a New Creation!

It has been no coincidence that in these past months I have been drawn to the theme of "New Life". Becoming a grandfather for the first time is a wonderful experience, and one which has been special to my wife and I ever since the 'bump' in Loxley's (our daughter-in-law's) tummy developed into the child, Xavier, who was born on 22nd November 2024. I cannot express in words, the pride I felt in holding that newborn baby in my arms in the Hospital in Southampton.



The apostle Paul tells us, in the [2nd Letter to the Corinthians 5 v 17](#) "...anyone who is in Christ is now a new creation; the old is past [gone] and all things have become new. All this is from God!" Just as Jesus told Nicodemus, in [John's Gospel 3 v 3](#), "You must be born again!".

And so, as we have, as a Fellowship, enjoyed various services throughout the year, the same recurring theme has been emphasized; that God makes of us New Creations. Paul expresses, again, in his closing greetings in [Galatians 6 v 14 – 15](#) "...I can boast in nothing but the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ... for what counts [is that we are] a new creation in Him."

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

Unfortunately, we all live and have grown up into a sinful world, so as sweet and innocent as an infant child may be, their hearts are soiled by our natural birth which has a sinful nature. In [Romans 8 v 1–4](#) Paul explains that our sinful nature keeps us separate from God's righteousness, and so, "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Him, the Holy Spirit has set us free... for God sent His Son in sin's likeness, to be a sin-offering for us all." The rest of this chapter points to the renewing of our sinful [human] nature by the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, that we can rightly call God our Father (*Abba Father*) [v 17](#) "Now we are children, so we are heirs – heirs of God, and so co-heirs with Christ."

If we can recognize and accept that in Christ we are a New Creation, then we can also see that we are no longer of this painful world, but that God has a 'Home' prepared for us where sorrow, pain, and dying, will be no more! [John 3 v 15](#) "...whosoever who believes in Him will have eternal life."

Whether you are 1yr old or 101yrs old (or more!), Jesus loves the "whosoever". He will make you a New Creation, fit for Glory!



Passed Into Glory!

In the past twelve months we have seen two faithful servants for the Lord, pass into Glory. It is always tinged with sadness when we lose a loved one, but our knowledge that we will see them again in Heaven gives us joy in our hearts.

In March, our dear brother in Christ, Lewis Aplin, then residing in Totton with his wife Jean, passed away peacefully.

We, as a Fellowship, have

known the Aplin's from when they were living in Chagford.

More recently, our dear brother in Christ, and a former member on our Good Shepherd Fellowship's Pastoral Care Team, Rev Syd Gardner, passed into Glory just before Easter. Syd has served the Lord in various ministries for the past 40 years.

Our congregation members are increasingly reaching well into

the years of octogenarians, and we value each of them, and commit their health needs and age related concerns to the Lord in our prayers.

Too many to mention individually (and we would not want to disclose the ladies' ages!) but, nevertheless, we give thanks to God for each of them, until He calls them Home.

We pray for one another, and ask that you, the reader, would also hold us all in your prayers.



"Contributing to the Needs of Others"

Romans 12 v 8



This **eighth chapter of Romans** kicks off with the well-known verse, **v 1** "Therefore, I urge you, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as 'living sacrifices', holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship." This puts into context any other kind of act of duty or service we may perform in our Christian lives. We are reminded, once again, that we are all members of the one Body [the Church], and that 'giving' is not an in-house competition, because anything that we do is only because of His grace. With this in mind, we see our Fellowship as many parts of the same Body, the Church. Some of us are more able in certain areas, because of our abilities and capabilities: "I can't knit" - "I can't drive" - "I can't bake" - "I can't cook" - "I can't preach"; But what *can* I do to offer myself to His service? The passage concludes with the exhortation at the end of **v 8** "...let him [or her] do it cheerfully [with a cheerful heart]". We believe, as a small Fellowship, that we can be a blessing to others. In **v 13**, "Share with God's people who are in need." and **v 16**, "Live in harmony with one another."

A Giving Church is a Living Church!

A Living Church is a Giving Church!

Summary of The Good Shepherd Fellowship accounts for '24 - '25

Fund	b/f '24-'25	Income	Expenses	c/f '25-'26
Transport	£135.38	£332.50	-£280.00	£187.88
Holding	£2,885.75	£1,040.00	-£779.20	£3,146.55
GSF	£73.11	£1,091.19	-£1,124.13	£40.17
SMF	£423.76	£160.00	-£58.66	£525.10
Baptistry	£625.00	£0.00	-£625.00	(to be closed) £0.00
Savings	£0.00	£0.00	-£0.00	(closed) £0.00
Total	£4,143.00	£2,623.69	-£2,866.99	£3,899.70

Florica - Haven of Hope

We may not mention the "Haven of Hope" every-other week, but we are still very much involved in supporting the Lipova orphanage, especially Florica (9). The ministry has been spreading its operations all over the poorer areas of Romania, and into neighbouring Moldova. Our practical help, both financial and through our material goods, is continuing to be valued. Thank you for all of you who are busy with knitting-needles!



On January 16th, a few of us attended a Quiz Night fundraiser and awareness evening at the Waie Inn, in Zeal Monachorum. This effort was a great success, and it's hoped there'll be a future event next year.

STOP-PRESS: The St Michael's Chapel was vandalized and desecrated on 1st June by a lady with severe mental issues, causing damage to the Chapel, as well as nearby rooms. Our service had to be cancelled for that Sunday. We forgive her, and pray that she might receive the necessary help she clearly needs.

Pray for our World

World events have been changing thick and fast in the last few months. Religiously, financially, and socially, there has been increasing instability around the world, which in turn has caused mankind to question where the future is taking us.

God is in control, and He has His hand on each of us. Throughout all of life's uncertainties, we can rely on Him to be our Rock and our Salvation.

We are encouraged in the Lord's Prayer to pray that "God's will be done", in all situations.

Proverbs 3 v 6

"Trust in the Lord, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths."

Psalms 120 v 1 – 2 & 7 – 8

"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."

Amen!



Contacts

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The Good Shepherd
Fellowship

Serving God in the
Community

The St Michael's Fellowship
(St Michael's Court, Paignton)

The small Chapel at St Michael's Court, Paignton, continues to be our "home" for our Fellowship, and we all enjoy and look forward to our monthly trips down to the south coast. We thank God for our dear brother, Dave Hughes, for faithfully hosting us as we bring the GSF down each month. We continue to pray that we may see more St Michael's Court folk, and others, coming along in future months.



The Good Shepherd Fellowship

The Good Shepherd Fellowship is continuing to be blessed and to be a blessing to our folk and to ministries beyond. This includes the regular monthly Sunday evening services we enjoy together. So, the Good Shepherd Fellowship is still here for you!

The GSF & SMF are non-denominational Fellowships, which welcome those who seek to worship and praise God through singing, 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.

Please see our regular dates above for our services and social events, and do peruse our website! Contact us if you need a lift to any event.



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

Service of Traditional Even-Song

incorporating the GSF/SMF Annual Review

Sunday 7th September @ 4.45pm at St Michael's Chapel, Paignton

"Songs of Praise" service with Dave Worrall

Sunday 28th September @ 4.45pm at St Michael's Chapel, Paignton

Harvest Festival - bring items for the Haven of Hope

Sunday 9th November @ 4.30pm at Gittisham, Honiton

A Birthday Soiree around "Joan's Joanna"

N.B. Last December we tried having our Fellowship Lunch *and* our Carol Service on the same Sunday. It was a great success, so this year we will do the same. All transport will be provided:

Sunday 14th December @ 1pm at The Oceanic Restaurant,
Livermead Cliff Hotel, Torquay Sea Front, Torbay Road TQ2 6RQ

Fellowship Christmas Dinner - £16

Followed by @ 4.45pm at St Michael's Chapel, Paignton

"Carols by Candlelight" Service – plus Christmas raffle!

A Warm Welcome to All!

It is with great joy and thanks to God, that as each year passes, we can look back over the months and see how the Lord's hand has guided us forward in this niche ministry. We have so many reasons to be grateful to Him – for our numbers, for our health, for our finances, and for our St Michael's Chapel "home". We move on into our 24th year with continued zeal and anticipation for what God has in store for us.

James 5 v 7 & 8 "Be patient and look forward to the Lord's coming... stand firm with patience, for the Lord's coming is near."

Philippians 4 v 19 "My God will supply all your needs, according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

Psalms 107 v 21 – 22 (paraphrased)

*"Give thanks to the Lord for His unfailing love,
and His wonderful deeds for mankind.*

*Sacrifice your "thank offerings",
and tell of His great and mighty works,
with songs of joy!"*

"This, my Friends, is The Church!"