

**Exeter Christian Fellowship
"Umbrella Ministries"**

Flock News

Year 5

July 2007

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Special points of interest:

- The Good Shepherd Fellowship, Exeter, & The St Michael's Fellowship, Paignton, are both under the Umbrella Ministries of the Exeter Christian Fellowship.
- Minibus outside bookings continue to raise much needed income

Chairman

Rev Adrian Magor

Secretary

Miss Frances Steele

Treasurer

Mr Graham Charters

♪ Just Like a Tree... ♪

"...that's planted by the water-side, we shall not be moved."

The Psalmist, David wrote in Psalm 1 v 3 **"Like a tree planted by streams of water...it shall not wither, but will prosper in due time."**

It was a joyous occasion, on Sunday the 7th January to inaugurate our Sister Fellowship down in Paignton, at St Michael's Court sheltered housing complex. Within the site there is a lovely little Chapel, preserved from the era when the structure was St Michael & All Angels Church. The room has served as a box room for many years.

The St Michael's Fellowship now meets on the 1st Sunday of every month, at 5pm. Jenny, the resident Scheme Manager, is really encouraged by the excellent response of her tenants. The

Chapel is regularly packed with anything up to 20 folk.

On Sunday 1st April we celebrated Holy Communion at Paignton and planted a Cherry blossom tree outside in the garden to mark the planting of this new Fellowship.

The Good Shepherd Fellowship, in Exeter, continues to be blessed by God as we meet regularly together to worship and pray and encourage one another.

Over the past 12 months we have enjoyed high points and endured low points. As you read this year's

Flock News, bear in mind that we are all one year older and although the spirit is always willing, unfortunately the flesh is,

more often than not, weak. At a recent "Songs of Praise" evening, we presented the old Hymn, "Showers of Blessing". We'll never settle for meagre "mercy drops", while we are trusting God for the full pouring-out of His blessings upon us.

Exeter Christian Fellowship
"Umbrella Ministries"
Incorporating
The Good Shepherd Fellowship, Exeter
&
The St Michael's Fellowship, Paignton

Therefore, from now on, the umbrella title of our work shall be known as **Exeter Christian Fellowship "Umbrella Ministries"**. As we have now spread the boarders of our work

What have we been doing?

Last AGM we decided to cease our monthly ECF house meetings, in favour of quarterly, after-service, Fellowship Lunch sessions, as it was felt that the few who participated were finding winter months more difficult to attend. However, in practice, these quarterlies have not materialised (something we will try to address in this coming year, hopefully).

Nevertheless, our calendar of events—both spiritual and social—have been fruitful and well attended, nearly always with a spread of refreshments. So, the following, although not necessarily minuted, are high-lights of Fellowship life, through the eyes of our Secretary, Frances.....

Yet again, another 12 months has flown by—and we, as a Fellowship, have experienced joys and sadness in our

Christian family: with the passing into God's presence of Frances Blakey, George Cook (husband of Mary), and Alf Percy (the husband of our dear sister Joyce). We trust that their dear ones have been upheld by the visits and prayers of the Fellowship.

On a happier theme, we have welcomed and enjoyed the ministry of some inspiring visiting speakers—and our Easter Service (presented by musician, Pam Osman) gave new meaning to the Resurrection.

As always, the "Songs of Praise" evening at Crediton went splendidly, as did the "eats" afterwards!

A tree planting ceremony took place to celebrate the joining with us of St Michael's Fellowship, Paignton, and we look forward to spending time with

them in the days to come.

The trip to Beaulieu (although downsized to the minibus) was a success and the weather was kind.

Our dear friends, Terry & June paid a visit from their new home in Scotland—how nice it was to see them again, and hear good news of their son.

As we go together into the future, let us bear in mind the Apostle Paul's words in **Philippians 4 v 13—14** **"Leave behind the past, and press forward"**

Frances Steele—Secretary

Nearly Paid For!

Thanks to an anonymous loan when we first acquired our minibus from the Exmouth Disability Fellowship, a couple of years ago, we have been able to enjoy the benefits of a comfortable, reliable, and lendable vehicle. As you read this, the loan should just about be paid off and, thanks to the sacrificial giving of those in our Fellowship, all ours!

Each month we have had to put aside £100 from the Minibus Fund to cover the repayments, and, thank God, we have not defaulted once on issuing our cheques. We would never have been able to buy the bus outright and would probably have forfeited the opportunity without this financial benefactor. However, by the Autumn we will have cleared our debt of £3,000 in 30

months.

Apart from this amount, the bus does not run itself, and the increases in

Recommend to your friends,
neighbours, and any Social Groups.
MINIBUS FOR "HIRE"
Contact: - 07786 846044

diesel prices have not helped; so we are pleased that word has gotten around the Christian community in Exeter and beyond, that our minibus is

available to their organisations at very reasonable and competitive cost. Throughout the past year various Church groups, social organisations, family parties, school trips, etc. have made use of it, and have helped to fill the coffers to pay for maintenance expenses, MOT costs, fuel, and the big one—the insurance. This year, because of our improving No Claims Bonus, it has reduced to a premium of £750/annum.

Please make a note of the mobile number in the blue box, and pass it on to anyone who, you think, might be able to utilise it. It is fully equipped with fitted seat-belts (certificated) on all 17 seats, and an electric powered tail-gate wheelchair lift at the rear. A driver can be supplied for the borrowers or they may designate their own (over

It never gets any easier

I was asked recently, if I found that taking, or being involved in, funerals became a bit blazé after a while. I had to stop and think for a while; do I just go through the motions, through the set service format, put on my black suit and play the mourner.

There is something about saying "Good-bye" to one of God's family which eases the pain, the finality of death. It is the setting off on a journey which will bring our friend to eternal life with Jesus. Yet still we are sorrowful, and still we need to comfort those who are mourning their loss. We are all human, and have the feelings and desires of any who have bid a loved one fare-well. Jesus, Himself, wept at the tomb of His dear friend, Lazarus. When a loved one passes from this world, be he or she a close friend, a family member, a colleague, or a neighbour, we all need consolation and space to grieve.

As a Fellowship, we bade our dear sister in Christ, Frances Blakey, God's speed, as she passed into Glory in January this year after a deteriorating illness of cancer; and we gave thanks

to God for her life at a Thanks-giving service in February. Sometimes it is not for the departed, so much as for those who are left, that the Fellowship really needs to bind together in support. And this was the case in April, as we rallied around our dear friend, Joyce Percy at the passing of her husband Alf (aged 86). They were married for 64 years.

George & Mary Cook from Gainsborough house have, from our formation, been with us, if not in body, then in spirit. Both have suffered with various afflictions over the years. Sadly, we said good-bye to George in May, celebrating his life at a special Thanks-giving service on Sunday 10th June. Our love is with Mary and the family. We all know and love her grandson, Ben, and look forward in the coming months to seeing more of Ben's dad, Kevin, and his new wife, Pauline, from Jamaica.

So, no, it never gets any easier, but, at such times, **"The joy of the Lord is my strength" Nehemiah 8 v 10.**



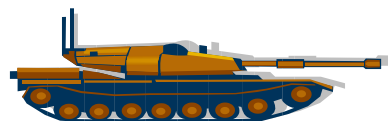
A CHANGING WORLD

We often talk with fondness about the days gone by when things were so very different. The older we grow, the less we feel comfortable in this world in which we now live. Yes, there were wars, and there was crime, and inflation and unemployment have always been with us, but there is a sense of apathy and derision where once there was concern and respect both for authority, and for one another.

Our natural desire is to feel safe and secure in our lives. We want our children to grow up in safety, and to have the best

moral upbringing that we can instill in their youth.

The media has bombarded us, this past year, with many heart-wrenching stories of families suffering through the wickedness of others. Sometimes we view orphans of war-torn communities. Sometimes we're shown the aftermath of natural tragedies. And sometimes we watch tearful parents mourning the loss of their sons or daughters through violence and hate.



Does the repetitive message sear our hearts over time? Or does it cause us to cry out to God for this godless society in which we live? For, we must never forget this—that God hates the **sinner**, but loves the **sinner**. God will forgive those who seek repentance.

"The Lord hates the wicked, and the lovers of violence...they will receive His wrath, but upright men will see His loving face"
Psalm 11 v 5—7

Message from the Chairman

Steady as she goes!! And, meet the new neighbours!!

I'm sure Graham has already dealt with the comings and goings of the Fellowship. However, from my side of things, I express my many thanks to all, and especially to Graham in the successful venture into deepest and darkest Paignton, where we now have a flourishing flock!

This, therefore, leads me to reflect on our neighbours—**Matthew 23 v 37.....**

There may be many miles between Exeter and Paignton but, in Christ, we are still neighbours!

In its simplest form, loving God means putting Him first all the time, offering up every word and action to Him.

If we put God first, even all the time, merely out of a sense of duty, we have missed the point. God is love, and He asks not only for obedience and formal recognition, but for love. It is a cold and calculating heart that would put duty before love.

Of course it is our duty, as Christians, to do God's will; but duty should be motivated by love, and not the other way around. Jesus did not come to earth out of duty, He came driven by love from the heart of God. He did not die on the cross from a sense of duty but, rather, from sheer love.

God works on the premise that, if we love Him, then love for our neighbours should follow. Yet, often

it seems easier to love the "unseen" God—the one who doesn't let his bonfire smoke drift onto our garden, or park his car halfway across our gate, or forget that he's left a tap running in the flat above, or subject us to a myriad of other little neighbourly annoyances.

"Yes Lord, I do love my neighbour—but I'd love him more if he was someone else's neighbour!" is often our thought, if not vocalised.

Can we love with the unconditional consistency of God? No, not all the time; but let's try and do our best. And with our new-found St Michael's Fellowship as neighbours, with God's help, we will.

Rev Adrian Magor (Chairman)

Fellowship House—Party

Last September we enjoyed a luxury weekend away at the beautiful Sidholme Christian Hotel on the edge of Sidmouth. From Friday evening 15th through to the Sunday afternoon the 17th September, we fellowshipped together with our guest speakers, our friends Revs Basil & Marion Parkes from Broadclyst. They are working with the New Life Church in Okehampton.

Between them, with the aid of a Power-Point projector, they presented some spiritual insights on the theme—**"Putting Old on Hold!"** We learned how God's promises are just as important in our latter years as to the youth. Abraham was given a

promise as an old man, but even then he had to wait until he was even older to see its fulfillment. We must all be open to God's plan for our lives.

This Autumn we are going on our last ever House-Party, so don't miss out!

**Spiritual Stimulation
&
Physical Relaxation**

On the weekend of **Friday 19th - Sunday 21st October** we are returning to our favourite venue, **Brunel Manor, near Torquay**. Our good friends, **Mark & Sharon Perkins (& family)** will be sharing with us some basic issues surrounding communication with God, in, **"Talking to a Brick Wall!"** Book early and pay on a monthly basis—full, subsidised cost is **£99 full board/en-suite**.

Our Unsung Heroes

Behind the scenes, many dedicated folk are keeping the wheels of the Fellowship running smoothly. We often take for granted all the little jobs which go to enhancing the atmosphere of our worship to God. I know these folk don't wish for any recognition, because it is their service unto the Lord, but, as a Fellowship, we say "Thank you".

Have you received a Birthday card, or a Get Well card, from the Fellowship? Who knows, and who sends these cards? **Thank you, Pam.**

Don't the fresh flowers on the front table always look so lovely, and the silk displays? They seem to change "automatically" with the seasons, and we're never flowerless. **Thank you, Wgn.**

Have you ever driven to South Molten? It's a long way! But, that journey is made

regularly to add music to our hymn singing. **Thank you, Peter.** And thanks too, to **Joan (mum)** and to **Frances**, for your musical accompaniments.

Do columns of numbers drive you barmy? Then add lots of colour codes to pages and pages of it. Before these are fit to present to the Fellowship, they have to be scrutinized for accuracy—a mind-numbing task! **Thank you, Gordon.**

Many have commented on how you look forward to receiving Holy Communion each month. Although increasingly involved with the ministry around Winkleigh, the 2nd Sunday of each month is reserved for us. **Thank you, Adrian—and Janet, of course.**

You can't beat a nice cuppa after the service. And it doesn't make itself, does it? **Thank you, Flora Marina.**

Not forgetting our youngest member. If it wasn't for him, we wouldn't know the hymn numbers; and we wouldn't be brought to silence before we start our service without his clear recitation at the lighting of the candle. **Thank you, Adam.**

And thanks to everyone for making the Good Shepherd Fellowship a great place to worship God. May He bless every little act of service in his name.

In the book of **Acts 6 v 1–7**, the Apostles appointed workers like **St Stephen**, "full of the Spirit" to ease the practical load for the preaching of the Gospel.



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EXETER CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP "UMBRELLA MINISTRIES"

Serving God in the Community

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

Formed in January this year, the SMF held its inaugural service on Sunday evening the 7th January at 5pm. The small Chapel can accommodate, at a squeeze, 18 folk. Each 1st Sunday of the month, Graham plus a car-load from the GSF, drive down to Paignton to conduct the service.

Each month the service theme varies according to the season. In February we had a liturgical even-song; in March was a Lenten service; in April we planted a tree, and Rev Adrian celebrated Holy Communion with us; in May we enjoyed a "Songs of Praise" service with Doug Walters from Exeter Salvation Army; in June was Trinity Sunday worship; and in July we had our liturgical even-song service.



Our program of monthly services will develop throughout the year, when we will celebrate Harvest Festival, welcome The Gideon's, and have Carols by Candle-light. We always retire to the Communal Lounge at 5-45pm for refreshments.

The feedback from Jenny (Scheme Manager) from the St Michael's folk has been very positive in these first 6 months. They all look forward each time to the next month's service.



Don't Forget!

*ECF "Umbrella Ministries" AGM—Sunday 8th July 11-45am following
 G S Fellowship service. Of Holy Communion*

Vicar's Tea Party—Saturday 11th August at Winkleigh 3pm

St Michael's Fellowship Harvest Festival—Sunday 2nd September 5pm

Harvest Supper—Saturday 29th September at Winkleigh 1pm

G S Fellowship Harvest Festival—Sunday 30th September 11am

*E. C. Fellowship House-Party—Brunel Manor, Nr Torquay
 Friday 19th—Sunday 21st October*

St Michael's Fellowship Candle-light Carols—Sunday 2nd December at 5pm

*E.C. Fellowship Christmas Dinner—Saturday 15th December
 The Pen Inn, Newton Abbot 1pm — £18*

G S Fellowship Candlelight Carols—Sunday 23rd December at 10-45am

*St Michael's Fellowship 1st Anniversary- Service of Holy Communion
 Sunday 6th January at 5pm*

A Warm Welcome to All!

The Good Shepherd Fellowship continues to meet every Sunday from 11am—11-45am with refreshments to follow.

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 Rev Adrian Magor serves us for these services.

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.

Transport can be arranged for any who need help. We have our Minibus, and some of our members drive in with spare seats in their cars.

At the age of five a child is ready to face the world (often needing the discipline and love of its parents). It develops relationships and discovers abilities, and fits into the social community. The time for just "taking" has moved into an interactive phase of support for, and by, friends.

Spiritually, we grow and develop as our individual gifts and talents are shared for the benefit of one another. We can spread our boarders and care for yet younger and less mature believers, while still strengthening in our own faith. Our faith grows as our "stepping out" in obedience is tested.

"Remember your creator God while your spiritual life is in its youth, for then, when troubles come, you will cling to that remembrance— fear God, and keep His commandments" Ecclesiastes 12 v 1 & 13 (Paraphrased by Graham)

This, my friends, is The Church!