

The Good Shepherd Fellowship

2020 VISION

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Special points of interest:

The Good Shepherd Fellowship (when we resume services) will meet regularly, every Sunday morning from 10.45am—12.15pm at our new "home", THE POTTING SHED @ Hotel du Vin.

We hope that our regular Social programme will also kick-in by Christmas-time, God willing.

Read the article on page 2 to learn about our Autumn Campaign—20/20 VISION—Love Thy Neighbour!

Pastoral Care Team (PCT)

Pastor: Rev Graham Charters

Rev Syd Gardner

Joan Charters

Secretary: Margaret Gardner

Treasurer: Brenda Thomas

Elder Emeritus: Frances Steele

St Michael's Fellowship, Paignton: Dave Hughes

GSEF Auditor: Frank Bye

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Flock News

Year 18

July

2020

Isolation!

During these recent months it has occurred to me that I have been very fortunate to have not been so affected by the rulings on the Coronavirus "lock-down" as many of our Fellowship have been. Apparently, the eucalyptus I deliver to Koalas in various zoos around Europe, is a necessary commodity, and has special customs clearance.

However, I do appreciate that, for many, this period of isolation from normal society has caused great stress, sadness, loneliness and boredom. Imagination and creativity have had to work over-time to bring an air of sanity to the lives of many folk. DIY projects, deep-clean spring-cleaning, home and garden make-overs, and the taking-up of new hobbies & crafts, have been in abundance.

Hopefully, we have also found more time for spiritual pursuits, too. Perhaps we

have been reading our Bibles more; and setting aside more time to pray for one another; and we can all encourage one another through telephone calls, texts and Emails—these are all ways in which we have been keeping all The Good Shepherd Fellowship flock both informed and encouraged.. This is just how it was in the early Church. Read

encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any brotherly compassion... then in humility, consider the needs of others."

Thanks to his computer savvy, Adam has prepared for us a special insert-page of quizzes to keep our minds active, and test our Biblical knowledge. So, enjoy this year's "in isolation" Flock News, and test your mental agility. Inside this issue I have also included some of your personal testimonies to God's grace in your lives during these difficult times. I hope they will be an encouragement to all of us.

1 Peter 5 v 12 "I am writing to you, to encourage you to testify that this is the true grace of God—so, stand firm in it!"

Stay safe! Stay alert!

Graham

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

the Apostle Paul's exhortation to us in

1 Thessalonians 5 v 11 "Therefore, encourage one another, and build each other up in the Lord, actually as you already have just been doing."

Then, as an example to us of Christ's humility, he tells us in

Philippians 2 v 1 "If you have any

From the Secretary's Minutes

This past year has been a year of two halves for the Fellowship.

First half, July – December 2019 went more or less as always: 17th Anniversary, Paignton BBQ for Exeter Street Pastors, Songs of Praise, Harvest Festival, Remembrance Service, and our busy Christmas program, visits to SMF Paignton, and various visiting speakers. Most of these, invariably, included food! Sadly, in November, our dear brother, Frank Wilson went home to be with the Lord, and we celebrated his life with a Thanksgiving Service which his family were able to attend before returning to Australia and Zimbabwe.

Second half, January – July this year, not quite so normal: in January we were told that, sadly, we would have to leave the Cornerstone building by end of the month;

After a 2 week break we started our meetings in "The Potting Shed" at the back of the Hotel du Vin, behind Good Shepherd Drive on February 16th; so far so good! Then Covid-19 arrived! We had our last meeting on March 15th and on 23rd the country went into lock-down, and for most of us that brought about some big changes in our lives.



So, a very different year to reflect on, but through

it all we know that God is still in control, he watches over us, and as things start to get back to "normal" we know that we can trust Him because, "He knows the plans He has for us, and He has planned something better, so that only together with us would they be made perfect." Hebrews 11 v 40. Both as a Fellowship and as His children, He knows our way to go. So we thank Him for all that is past and trust him for all that is to come.

God Bless you all, stay safe, trust God.

"Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." 1 Peter 5 v 7

Margaret - Secretary



2020 VISION

LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR

This year has unfortunately been cut short as far as our Fellowship activities are concerned. Many of our usual events have had to be cancelled in light of social distancing rules. However, we are really hopeful, God willing, that by the end of August we might be able to resume meeting together on a regular basis in The Potting Shed (in the gardens of Hotel du Vin).

The month of July is special to the Good Shepherd Fellowship because in 2002 we held our inaugural service (in the Communal Lounge of Good Shepherd Drive). God has blessed us over the years. We have seen many folk pass through our doors, and, sadly, some have passed on, but others have joined us. There have been highs and lows, times of joy and celebration, and times of mourning and struggles. God has been faithful, throughout.

As we moved into 2020, we wanted to mark the occasion with a special campaign with the emphasis on

20/20 VISION. Our dear friend, Mark Perkins (Home Evangelism), who we support as a Fellowship financially, has agreed to work with us for the month of October in an initiative called **"LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR"**.

All the following ideas are, of course, dependent on the lingering effects of the Coronavirus. So, we say "God

be in need of basic toiletries and provisions.

The following Sundays in October we will arrange informal events ranging from Games afternoons, High Teas, Curry evening, Quizzes, Film shows, etc., all to be discussed nearer the time. All

these events will be designed to be open-house to all our friends, family, and neighbours. Mark will clearly share the Gospel message on each occasion in a relaxed atmosphere. On Sunday 1st November will end the campaign with a "Songs of Praise".

The Bible tells us to **LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR** 7 times.

It's got to be relevant, hasn't it?

Hold on to your Easter Gift day envelopes. Bring them along when we next meet, so we can make The Potting Shed live up to its name, and produce good fruit!

Our website is on line at:
www.thegoodshepherdcornerstone.com
Contact us by Email at:
exeterchristianfellows@gmail.com
Recommend it to your friends!

willing" to our plans.

We aim to celebrate Harvest Festival on Sunday 27th September. This year we will bring gifts to the Festival which we would consider essential shopping-basket items. The following Sunday we will box up small packages to be given out personally to friends and neighbours who might

Bible Verses - Chapter & Verse, to "Love Thy Neighbour"

Leviticus 19 v 18, Matthew's Gospel 19 v 19, Mark's Gospel 12 v 31, Luke's gospel 10 v 37, Book of Romans 13 v 9, Letter to the Galatians 5 v 14, and Letter of James 2 v 8

Just how many times do we need to be encouraged to **"LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR"**? Not only for a month, but to set our eyes on **20/20 VISION**, every day!

THE POTTING SHED

On any other year, this story would be the Headliner for this issue of Flock News. *"Good Shepherd Fellowship has moved from "Cornerstone" to "The Potting Shed"*.

However, the awful COVID-19 has disrupted all other activities, and our move to the garden of Hotel du Vin, although important, is not the major story, at this time.

Our landlords at "Cornerstone", decided to put the building up for sale in December, thus potentially making us homeless in the New Year. After much prayer (and worrying), the answer was staring us in the face. A stones throw from "Cornerstone" is the Hotel du Vin (the old Eye Infirmary). A quick negotiation sealed the use of The Potting Shed, a small conference room in the gardens of the hotel.

We have needed to down-size, somewhat, but thanks to the Exeter Missionary Home, we have storage in their garage in Heavitree. God is good, **Hebrews 13 v 5** "Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you.", and so we say in confidence, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?"

Syd's Soap-Box!

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Unfortunately, due to the recent effects of "Lock-down", Our dear brother, Syd Gardner, has been unable to climb onto his SOAP-BOX and share with us one of his anecdotes of God's faithfulness. We wish Syd well at this time, and pray for him and Margaret as they face the future together. We thank God for there ministry within our Fellowship. These difficult times have stretched the physical and mental boundaries of what we are able to cope with. For some it has been more taxing than others. We all need special prayer support and encouragement one to another as we are bound in His love. May God grant us all His grace as we persevere, looking forward to the time when we can, once again, be in physical communion with one another.

Because of the obvious delay of our GSF AGM, certain official activities have had to be carried out behind the scenes; not least of which is our Financial Report. With thanks to Brenda Thomas (Treasurer) and especially our new Auditor, Frank Bye, now living near Malvern with his wife, Brenda Bye, the columns of numbers have been checked and double-checked. Frank has returned the sheets, and signed off our 2019/2020 spreadsheets as a true record of our financial activity. Here below is a very brief summary of those results:

It probably looks a bit like a weird Sudoku puzzle. After all, the horizontals and the verticals all add up! (but not the diagonals!). But behind each number is a story of God's faithfulness and provision. How just a small Fellowship has been able to regularly support Mark Perkins and his family; the Haven of Hope orphanage in Romania; the Exeter Street Pastors; and many other organizations. These £- signs, in themselves, are just sums, but every single penny is God-given, and is testimony to God's continued provision. Even during these last months, we have continued to give out, and are blessed as we give. Within these figures is a growing total (in the Holding Fund) which will help us finance our Autumn **20/20 VISION—"LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR"** campaign—plus, of course, all our belated Easter Gift Day envelopes.

GSF Financial over-view of Accounts at End-of-Year 30/06/20:

Transport Fund	b/f 30/06/19	£519.01	INCOME + £56.00	EXPENSES - £179.63	c/f 01/07/20 = £395.38
Holding Fund	b/f	£869.54	+ £1,825.50	- £1,048.94	c/f " = £1,646.10
GSF general Fund	b/f	£1,835.93	+ £1,992.92	- £3,118.78	c/f " = £710.07
St Michael's Fellowship	b/f	£208.66	+ £127.78	- £177.71	c/f " = £158.73
Baptistry Fund	b/f	£625.00	+ £0.00	- £0.00	c/f " = £625.00
Savings Fund	b/f	£550.00	+ £0.00	- £0.00	c/f " = £550.00
TOTAL	b/f	£4,608.14	+ £4,608.14	- £4,085.28	c/f " = £4,085.28

Your Personal "Lock-Down" Testimonies : -

"I want to thank God for His protection and lifting me up when I have felt down. I sing hymns to myself while I knit."

"I've read bits from the Bible which I didn't know were there, before!"

"It's the small things—like bird-song, and sunsets. I thank God

for all these experiences."

"You can't beat a good Psalm to cheer

**A Giving Church is a Living Church!
A Living Church is a Giving Church!**

you up. God's blessed me!"

My neighbour asked me how I coped. I told her that God is always there when I pray to Him."

"My health has been all over the place, recently, but God's grace is sufficient for me. I thank the Lord Jesus."

"Being away from everybody makes me realize just how much I miss the

COVID-19

When we read in our newspapers, and hear items on the TV, of all the thousands who have been infected with the Coronavirus, and we see statistics of those who have succumbed to COVID-19 and sadly have passed away, then our thoughts and prayers are with those who mourn loved ones.

We also thank God for those who daily risk their own health looking after the sick in hospitals, care homes, and the community. Our thanks and applause is heartfelt. Acts of kindness and charity have been evident during this time.

WE THANK YOU!

My life feels like a living Bible - my sister-in-law from Zambia is called Charity; my South African doctor is called Faith, and my favourite perfume is called "Hope". As 1 Corinthians 13 v 13 says, "...and now these three remain: faith, hope and charity. But the greatest of these is Charity" - BERYL

My childhood memories come from visiting, with my mother and baby brother, lonely ladies whose husbands were away serving their country. Some, sadly, had even received that dreaded Telegram

While mum shared a cuppa and words of comfort with them David slept, and I was seated at the old piano to perform my "party piece".

Helping people of all ages, later became a part of married life. Our home was open to many young people who were studying and away from their families

...more Testimonials

Now, in isolation, I have learnt the lesson to accept help, and I thank God every day for the help received from my family and friends given to this vulnerable, old lady, mum/grandma - JOAN

1 Corinthians 12 v 28 "...those able to help others..."

Dear Lord, thank you for so many blessings you have given to me over the past years. Being a member of Your family I have grown in faith, hope and kindness. I have learnt how to overcome grief and hard times through prayer. I have become stronger and more confident. In times of trouble I feel blessed that You are guiding me. I thank You. Also, thank You for showing me how to cope—I am humbled, yet truly thankful. Amen. Best wishes - LIZ

Contacts

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Other Enquires

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The Good Shepherd
Fellowship

Serving God in the
Community

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

The monthly services held in the Chapel at St Michael's Court, sheltered housing, have continued up until Christmas, with much thanks to the loyal efforts of our dear brother, Dave Hughes. He has made the chapel ready month after month and provided a lovely table of refreshments for after the service.



In normal circumstances, we would meet from 4.45pm on the first Sunday of each month, however, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, we have been unable to gather this year. We look forward to the time when we can, once again, hold our St Michael's Fellowship, in Paignton.

The Good Shepherd Fellowship, (The Potting Shed, Hotel du Vin, Exeter)

The Good Shepherd Fellowship continues to meet every Sunday from 10.45am—12noon with refreshments on arrival. We now meet at our new home, **The Potting Shed**, in the gardens of Hotel du Vin (just around the corner from Good Shepherd Drive).

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 to which all who love the Lord Jesus are welcome to participate.

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

Important DATE!



- **18th Anniversary Celebration on a Sunday TBC in the Autumn**
- **@ 10.45am (followed by GSF AGM & a Ploughman's Lunch)**
- **GSF Harvest Festival - Sunday 27th September @ 10-45am**
- **Followed by a Harvest Lunch @ 12noon.**
- **All items to go towards 20/20 Vision "Love Thy Neighbour"**
- **SMF Harvest Festival - Sunday 27th September @ 4.45pm**
- **Fellowship Christmas Dinner - Saturday 19th December**
- **The Devonshire Dumpling - 1pm - £12 max**
- **GSF Carol Service - Sunday 20th December @ 10-45am**
- **SMF Candle-Light Carols - Sunday 20th December @ 4.45pm**
- **ALL THESE DATES ARE, OF COURSE, GOD WILLING**
- **NB: GSF - Good Shepherd Fellowship, Exeter SMF - St Michael's Fellowship, Paignton**

A Warm Welcome to All!

- The child becomes an adult as he or she celebrates passing through childhood and adolescence, and entering grown-up life. However, very quickly, the realisation of the full significance of the 18th birthday weighs heavy on the teenager's mind. There will be bills; there will be contracts; there will be hard financial decisions; there may be moves. It's like the guider-wheels have been taken off the bicycle.

With this new freedom comes more responsibility, and more wisdom to know from experience, the right way to go, and the best route to take. What was once decided for you is now up to you!

So, how do we know what is right, and what is God's will for our life decisions? It's all to do with "growing in our faith". We have seen and appreciated God's guidance over so many of life's challenges, in all of our growing up. Therefore, with that sure grounding, we can now step forward, trusting His guidance and protection, to help us to make the correct choices in our lives as we grow spiritually, and trust God to hold us upright as we start "riding our bikes" without the guider-wheels!

As a Fellowship we have had to make some major decisions recently. We know God has been faithful in the past, so we know we can trust His never-failing grace as we move forward into a new chapter in our Church's life.

Colossians 1 v 9—10 "We ask that God will fill you with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding, in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord, and that you may please Him in every way; bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in the knowledge of God."

This, my friends, is The Church!

from all aspects of the Christian traditions. If you need a lift in, just ask and we'll arrange it for you.

P.S. As a final word, this year, so as not to leave you in a state of worry or concern, we want you all to be encouraged as we enter our 19th year. God has brought us through some trials and difficulties, and He has always been faithful to us. We can only trust Him more and more, as we look forward to what is now called, "the New Normal". Some things may never return to how they were, but, **Hebrews 13 v 5** "Never will I leave you, and never will I forsake you." and in **v 8**, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, and forever." Amen!"