



## CHEAP STREET CHURCH

To know the love of God through the power of the Holy Spirit and with Jesus as our teacher to show and share our faith.

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## NEWSLETTER

**3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020**

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This week's newsletter will get to most people a day later than usual because Church Council met on Wednesday evening to discuss using the hall for Sunday worship. This newsletter includes a section on Cheap Street Sunday worship, reflecting decisions made by the council. **George Faris**

### Martin Heal's Thought for the Day

Back in January, before she jetted off Down Under, Colleen asked what I thought about the previous Sunday's sermon. It had been about God's promise that *He is making all things new*. She felt there should be a discussion as to how this might be applied to Cheap Street Church. I agreed and said that on her return we should get together and press for an open forum, a debate in which ALL of us should be involved.

Things have happened to both of us which have prevented us from taking this action but the thought has never left my mind. I am a self-confessed Luddite and I don't much like change. I like my comfort zone but I know God wants more from me. Change has now been forced upon us.

We are about to enter a new era in the life of our fellowship and I feel we should ALL take stock of what we do and how we do it both as individuals and as a congregation.

So what is our vision for our Church post lockdown?

It is an important question because the Bible tells us in Proverbs that where there is no vision, the people perish. I have come to realise that a vision comes with obstacles as well as opportunities which the following true story illustrates.

Raymond Dawson is an American with a British ancestry and inherited his grandparents' estate but on arriving to inspect the property he found an almost derelict farmhouse and barns on land covered with rocks. Disappointed and about to return home he decided to have a final look around his worthless inheritance when in a remote corner of a field he discovered a stream coming from beneath some rocks. He investigated and uncovered some hot springs and guess what . . . today he is owner of a lucrative leisure resort on the site of his former disappointment!

When we ask God for a vision we could find ourselves in a field of opportunity concealed under acres of obstacles, a place of possibilities hidden beneath piles of problems.

Thank God we have a Heavenly Father whose "love is as great as His power and neither knows measure nor end". We must trust Him and seek His guidance.

What is your vision for our Church? Please share it!

### Prayers for the Persecuted Church

Qatar

Escalating violence against Christians has seen Qatar leap up 11 places on the World Watch List, to no. 27. Qatar is an absolute monarchy and Christians face persecution from the government, their families and communities. Sharing the gospel with Muslims is strictly forbidden and can lead to prosecution or banishment from the country. Let us pray for protection for Qatari believers facing increasing violence. That Christians will find ways to share their faith despite the risks, and that the gospel will continue to spread among Christian migrant workers. Amen.

## Fellowship of Prayer

Whenever and wherever we pray in the silence of our hearts, we are part of a rich and powerful fellowship, which serves to sustain everyone in our Church Family. Anyone can join the prayer group by just praying.

We continue to pray for all those who are in special need: John Hunt and his family; Carol Hooper and her family; John Green; Janet Baker; Paul Wilkins; Martin Heal; Helen Winkworth and her family; Phyllis Batchelor; Duncan's mother; Kathy Crew; Clive and Jill Turner, Ellie and Sophie; Janet Dolling and her family; Judith Hayward and her family; Eileen Higgins; Alex Palmer; Peter and Marjorie Kett; Christina Le Moignan.

*The Prayer Ring is available for an urgent need or situation.*

*Call any of these numbers and the circle of prayer will begin:*

*Eirwen Cox 01935 815960, Penny Gardner 01935 389153, Janet Le Moignan 01935 389662.*

## Duncan's Message

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Psalm 149, Exodus 12:1-14, Romans 13:8-14, Matthew 18:15-20.

The bible often has a conditional approach to civil authorities, depending whether the authorities act in accordance with God's will, something that is present in Psalm 149. In our reading from Exodus we have the people of Israel's instruction for the first passover, where they are preparing to leave Egypt in defiance of the Pharaoh and the Egyptian civil authorities, who are in opposition to God's will. It is ultimately an unequal contest as it is God's will that will win out and the Israelites will be given their freedom. What God objects to is not the civil organisation and the authority that it will exercise over people but how they are wrongly exercising that authority in the case of the people of Israel.

Paul, in his letter to the Church in Rome, is addressing a question of whether or not the Christians need to pay their taxes and obey the civil authorities and do the duties the state requires of them; a state that was not Christian in its religious beliefs at this point, but not yet hostile towards Christians. Paul's answer is that they should do what is right, pay their tax, and do what is required of them by the state. That some form of civil authority and order was necessary for the well being of all, and the protection of people.

In our own time we have that same conditional approach to the civil and political authorities. Doing our civic duty is not conditional on whether or not it is the people or government we voted for. One of the ways we serve God is through our doing of civil duties, as good order is essential for the wellbeing of all of us, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. But in doing what is required of us, we also need to speak out and seek to change any injustices in our society.

Hymn *Singing The Faith* 255: The kingdom of God is justice and joy ([click for YouTube version](#)).

## Sophie and Ellie's Life in Lockdown

During lockdown I have experienced many different feelings and emotions, mostly due to my GCSE's. It was an agonising time because we all thought that we would be able to take the exams, but after many people debated whether or not that the exams take place, the students were finally told that the exams were cancelled. However, I got nervous again as we began August because it meant results day, and thankfully I got good grades which were 6 C's, 3 B's and I am still waiting for my BTEC results.

I have missed my friends a lot, even though we talk on the internet and I have met a couple of them when restrictions weakened. I'm just so glad that I will be able to see some of them in Gryphon Sixth Form in September.

Other than that, my time in lockdown has been relaxed, especially when we go to the holiday home in Blue Anchor, which was also in lockdown. **Sophie**

Lockdown has affected my learning in a positive way because I find it easier to complete my work in an environment I feel happy in. Since lockdown started, I have achieved a Commendation from my Head of Year for working hard in all my subjects, but especially Geography.

However, I do miss seeing my friends, but we talk on the internet. **Ellie**

*Congratulations to Sophie and Ellie on your successes and for letting us know how you're getting on. Contributions from others on life in lockdown are welcome.*

## Hope in Africa

I spoke to Matthew Barrow this week who told me that in Uganda the Ray of Hope Primary School, which we support, is in need of both a school hall and a kitchen (they currently cook outside on an open fire). When he visited in February he took along a long-standing supporter who lives in Scotland who was very impressed by what he saw and had resolved to try to raise £10,000 through contacting a number of companies he knows. This has been thwarted by the Coronavirus, but he hopes to make progress in due course. Meanwhile, the Government have not announced when schools will be able to re-open.

At Hope Christian High School, where they have triple-bunk beds in both the boys' and girls' dormitories, the Government have announced that under Covid 19 restrictions only single beds will be allowed. This presents a huge challenge for Edward, who is desperate to find a way to accommodate the students when they are allowed to return.

In Malawi, Gloria, the headmistress, submitted all the necessary paperwork required to get the school registered, and the inspection took place a few days ago. Happily, the school was passed by the authorities, who required £350 for the certificate. Matthew was able to immediately send this amount to them, which was a real blessing. So we need to give thanks for the great work that is being achieved through Hope in Africa, and pray that they will be able to overcome all the difficulties which are being caused by Covid 19. **Jackie Bullen**

### "Where is God in a Coronavirus World?"

I now have the books and have put a few in the entrance to the church so that you can pick one up. Alternatively, you can get them from me at 2 Raleigh Court, Long Street (the first house on the right, just inside the gates), giving me a ring to check that I'm at home - 01935 813112. If that's a problem for you, do let me know, and I'll drop one in to you. **Jackie Bullen**

### Cheap Street Sunday Worship

Church Council has been meeting regularly by Zoom since mid-July, most recently on Wednesday. The church opened for private prayer on Saturday mornings last month. It is planned to start Sunday worship in the hall from Sunday week, the 13<sup>th</sup>, at 10.30 am. This is subject to Church Council agreeing the risk assessment. Duncan will lead a short service lasting around 30 minutes. There will be recorded music but at present there can be no singing.

#### Guidance on who should **not** attend

The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If you have ANY of the above symptoms you MUST NOT attend worship. Stay at home and arrange to be tested.

Those over the age of 70 or with underlying health conditions are particularly at risk from COVID-19. Everyone must weigh up the risks for them and their family when deciding to return to worship.

You may find the URC document *Emerging into the 'new normal'* helpful, [click here](#), particularly pages 25 to 27. Contact George Faris for a printed copy.

#### Guidance to those planning to attend

At present we are limited to 34 people attending and a record must be kept of their names. Masks must be worn at all times. Pastoral visitors are asked to check who in their group wishes to attend worship and advise Sue Way (details at top of newsletter) by 5 pm each Friday. Anyone not approached by their pastoral visitor can email or phone George Faris (details at bottom of newsletter). Time in the hall should be minimized so please arrive just before 10.30 am. Please observe social distancing, particularly after the service.

#### Request for help

We need:

- 1 councillor and 1 or 2 stewards each Sunday
- Pianists

Please contact Sue Way if you can help.

#### Rehearsal

Those volunteering as councillors and stewards are asked to attend a rehearsal on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> at 10.30 am.

## Entry to Hall

Please do not enter the hall during the week to reduce the risk of infection. Geoff Gardner should be consulted if you feel you have an essential need.

## Forbearance

The church officers and councillors are having to consider a considerable quantity of instructions and guidance from the Government and the Methodist Church to enable the mission of the church in unprecedented times.

### **Other ways of worshipping on Sunday**

Radio 4: 8.10 am – *Heaven is a noisy place* - after months of Covid and confinement, Neil MacGregor and the Revd Lucy Winkett consider how community has traditionally been fostered by close contact with the saints.

Methodist resources: [click here](#). URC resources: [click here](#).

URC: [daily devotions and a Sunday service \(click here to subscribe\)](#).

### **Sherborne Abbey**

The Abbey has parish worship at 9.30 am on Sunday and is open for private prayer on Thursday between 11 am and 1 pm.

### **Contributions to Future Newsletters**

Please send contributions by midday Wednesday to:

Penny Gardner [pennylgardner@gmail.com](mailto:pennylgardner@gmail.com) 01935 389153 and

George Faris [gfaris48@gmail.com](mailto:gfaris48@gmail.com) 01935 420258.