



## 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

**15<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

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By my reckoning this is the 31<sup>st</sup> newsletter since the start of lockdown. We've had a good response to Eirwen's news about church members – there are two more birthdays to celebrate this week. This week one of our members has written a letter calling expressing his frustration at the current state of church life. Do let us know what you think and how you are getting on. **George Faris**

### Duncan's Thought for the Day

John 15:16-17 [New International Version]:

<sup>16</sup>You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.

<sup>17</sup>This is my command: Love each other.

To be chosen or not chosen seems to be a part of life from a fairly early age. In a group of children organising themselves into two teams to play a game of football, two captains will be chosen and they will then take turns to pick who they wish to play on their teams. Its great if you are one of the first picked, not so good if you are one of the last. It's something that carries on into professional or elite sport, where players are selected and offered the chance to play for teams or squads or their national team. In the past few weeks there has been a lot of talk about who has been selected to be a apart of the squads to play football for their country in the qualifiers for the European Championship next summer. There are those who have been chosen but have ruled themselves out through not behaving in the way required of them in the midst of a Covid 19 pandemic.

It is not just sports where we are selected, for young people trying to gain entry to a university there is a selection made by the university from its applicants and for all of us there is the job interview when we are seeking employment.

In the life of faith there is that same selection where we have been chosen by God to a part of the body of Christ. God has an advantage that there is no limit on who or how many God can choose, and there is even a transfer fee, the death and resurrection of God's Son, that has been paid so that we can transfer into God's family. It is a selection that requires us to love each other.

Hymn: *Songs of Fellowship* 607: Who is on the Lord's side ([click for a lively Salvation Army version](#))

### 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 Sheila Green and her family, particularly with the recent death of John's sister, Doreen McManus; John Hunt and his family; Carol Hooper and her family; Janet Baker; Martin Heal; 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

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Readings: Psalm 99, Exodus 33:12-23, 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10, Matthew 22:15-22.

In the past week we have had in America various politicians claiming that they believe God is on their side. It is a message that is designed to appeal to a certain part of the American voting electorate. But it is flawed as it has got things the wrong way round, the real question should be: *are we on God's side?* Psalm 99 very much puts this way round with its emphasis on our need to worship and respond to the power and majesty of God.

Moses in the reading from Exodus is concerned that if he leads the people away from their current place towards the promised land that they may depart from God and if that is so they will fail to reach the end of their journey. It is important that the people of Israel are and remain on God's side and if they are not they are not going anywhere.

In the challenge to Jesus, which is recorded in our reading in Matthew's Gospel, about who you should pay taxes to is the underlying question of whose side are you on, the Roman overlord's or God's? Jesus sees through the challenge; it is possible to pay taxes to Caesar and be on God's side, which Jesus highlights with his asking for them to produce a coin they use to pay taxes and to say whose head is on it. God is still place above Caesar and what is due to both should be given.

In the opening of Paul's letter to the Thessalonians there is both giving thanks for their actions that show them being on God's side and an encouragement for them to remain on God's side. It is important that in our lives we walk with God through prayer life, through the way we live our lives and treat others and where possible and safe to do so through our coming together in Worship.

Hymn *Singing the Faith* 645. Will your anchor hold in the storms of life ([click for a Songs of Praise version](#))

### Prayers for the persecuted church

India

On 28<sup>th</sup> September, the Indian government passed the Foreign Contribution Regulations Act, regulating how non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can work in the country. The *Voluntary Action Network India* has said the bill will make it virtually impossible for NGOs to function. An *Open Doors* local partner, shared, "Considering that most of the Christian organisations and churches are registered as NGOs, this new bill is targeted especially at Christian mission organisations which had been operating for a long time in coalition with international churches and organisations, and often get its funding from outside India."

*Open Doors* works through local church partners in India and is therefore not directly affected. However, their partners continue to need our prayers given the new level of scrutiny this bill creates. Let us pray that mission organisations and churches registered as NGOs in India will continue to flourish despite the challenges presented by the new bill; for a change in perception where Christian activity and giving are viewed with suspicion, and for continued strength, protection and wisdom for *Open Doors* partners serving in India. Amen.

### Church Secretary's Comments

The Church Council met again on 13<sup>th</sup> October and we now have a number of items that need to be approved by **Church Meeting**. It seems best to organise this through Zoom, which can be accessed even if there should be additional Covid restrictions. The meeting will be on **Thursday November 12<sup>th</sup> at 7.00 pm** and the agenda and accessing codes will be given nearer the time. We are really sorry that not everyone will be able to take part but, in the present circumstances, this is the best we can manage to do.

It is good to have **Sunday services** back in the church and, as I said last week, you just need to sign in when you come, rather than book in beforehand. If you are fit enough, you would be very welcome. **Janet Le Moignan**

### Thanks

Brian and Margaret Walker would like to thank everyone from Cheap Street Church who sent them cards and good wishes on the occasion of their Diamond wedding anniversary. It was wonderful!

## Celebrations

Happy Birthday to Judith Hayward on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> and special 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday Greetings to Peter Kett on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup>. **Eirwen Cox**

Brian and Moreen Webber have been making homemade cards and along with other bits have been selling them from their garden gate in Lenthay. They have raised over £450 for the Yeatman Hospital! **Margaret Beard**

## An open letter to Cheap Street Church

In our present circumstances it's been difficult to find out what people think. I have heard from about a dozen members of our congregation that they are not happy with the present situation. I must emphasise that these thoughts are mine alone, but we need to get a conversation going - to talk and listen to each other.

I thought when we reopen the church it should be like the second coming. Singing, dancing, lyres drums, cymbals and trumpets (Psalm 150) to let Sherborne know that we are back in the business of doing God's work. What have we done? We've opened up with a whimper. No band, no singing, masks and social distancing. Is this what we want?

I think (and I repeat these are my thoughts) that what we really need first is to meet with each other in fellowship. To have a service just for the sake of it seems almost pointless and feels like a backward step. We could do worse than all meet in Pageant Gardens to talk and see each other in person.

I must admit that I don't miss church *per se*, but I do miss you - the people - friends and members.

We have a gospel to proclaim and we can't really do it as we are at the moment.

My vision? (in response to Martin Heal's question a few weeks ago) is a leadership team made up of our minister, worship leaders and councillors meeting on a regular basis ( could now be weekly by zoom) to pray together and discuss the spirit and mission of our church (not the maintenance of status quo or the buildings) together with our pastoral groups, house groups and then finish the week with a 'proper' worship service fit for the Lord.

The church buildings to become a community facility for the town and not just us.

If this upsets anybody I apologise but I feel as though we have been cut adrift in a boat without a sail or a rudder.

Comments please to the newsletter or the Cheapstreeter. The old BT advert told us "It's good to talk" Let's get the conversation going. **Geoff Gardner**

## Other ways of worshipping on Sunday

Radio 4: 8.10 am – *The one who heals* - a celebration of the eucharist, live from Croydon Minster, on the Feast of St Luke, patron saint of physicians. The preacher is Bishop Precious Omuku.

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

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

## Contributions to future newsletters

Please send contributions by midday Wednesday to:

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