

‘Amazing!’ I always enjoy showing people the inside of the church but was quite surprised by the genuine enthusiasm of Ed, who was helping Turtle Dove move into the hall office. It turns out that he was a bricklayer by trade and he enjoyed pointing out details in the brickwork that I had not seen before. That’s why I like Jack’s drawings of the church, in the same way another faithful member of the church, Horace Giles used to draw, Jack takes time to draw the lines and the detail in the building, often making me see things I’ve overlooked. [see page 10]

I started Lent in a different place this year. It began when I noticed a detail that I had overlooked in all the time of having sought to follow Christ. Normally I look forward to the season of Lent when, according to the Christianity website:

“During the weeks leading up to Easter Christians prepare for it by taking their spirituality particularly seriously. Christians mark Lent by praying, confessing their failings and making decisions about how to live in a more godly way. Traditionally this has been made special by fasting. This discipline makes prayer seem to have a sharper focus.”

I’ve always taken my spirituality particularly seriously’ but this year I noticed a detail about the start of Lent that I had overlooked. Despite attending at least 40 Ash Wednesday services in my time as a Christian I noticed the Psalm for the day, for the first time. The same Psalm every Ash Wednesday - Psalm 51. It is the Psalm that is attributed to David when the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba (you can find the story in 2

Samuel 12). It is a Psalm of repentance after you have committed the most grievous of sins, and David, in this one episode of his life, had committed many:

“For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.

Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are right in your verdict
and justified when you judge.”

Psalm 51: 3-4

The Psalmist reflects on his sin, so far so Lent, he goes on to recognise the need to turn to God and repent. I know that I am a sinner and I do recognise the need to turn away from sinning and allow God to “create in me a pure heart...and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” (Psalm 51:10). But what I saw for the first time this Ash Wednesday, the detail which I overlooked, was the assurance of the Psalmist that God would forgive and restore. He knew that there will be consequences to his actions but he was also certain that a sacrifice of a “broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart -God you will not despise”. (Psalm 51:17) The psalmist is certain of two things, he’s a sinner who has messed up and certain that God’s grace and love will not turn him away.

So this Lent I noticed that we do begin in the Ash of repentance, but the 40 days of Lent are not 40 days of Ash. They are 40 days of searching for God, and finding him. I don’t need to be reminded that I am a sinner (I’m good at remembering that) but I do need to remember that despite this, I am loved.

Dave

PARISH DIRECTORY

Vicar	Rev. David Maher	351844
Associate Priest	Rev. Judith Gretton-Dann	750013
Assistant Curate	Rev. Mark Osborne	560494
Honorary Curate	Rev. John Polkinghorne	360743
Honorary Curate	Rev. Harry Rose	01954 211553
Licensed Lay Minister	Linda Dean	328658
Licensed Lay Minister	Terry Barringer	424584
Authorised Lay Minister (Admin & Music)	Ruth Banger	07764 613862
Authorised Lay Minister (Pastoral Care)	Lilas Davison	354300
Authorised Lay Minister (Social Awareness)	Liz Collinson	01954 251377
Community Chaplain	Anastasia Sanders	07467 056296
Churchwarden	Guido Barzini	300497
PCC Chairman	Rev. David Maher	351844
PCC Vice Chairman	Guido Barzini	300497
PCC Secretary	Ruth Banger	07764 613862
PCC Treasurer	Jinty Keir	572303
PCC Electoral Roll Officer	Terry Barringer	424584
Administrator	Ruth Banger	07764 613862
Convenor PCC Buildings and Grounds Team	David Wilson	07899 917831
Convenor PCC Children and Families Team	Judith Gretton-Dann	750013
Convenor PCC Discipleship and Teaching Team	David Maher	351844
Convenor PCC Pastoral Team	Linda Dean	328658
Convenor PCC Social Awareness Team	Liz Collinson	01954 251377
Convenor PCC Worship and Music Team	Ruth Banger	07764 613862
Altar Linen	Margaret Handley	357970
Children's Society	Ruby Leyshon	352151
Church Hall Bookings	Ruby Leyshon	352151
Coffee Makers	John Phillips	502969
Fund Raising Events Co-ordinator	Ruby Leyshon	352151
Fund Raising Events Co-ordinator	Evelyn Walker	364067
Fund Raising Events Co-ordinator	Paula Carter	07952 919701
Intercessors	John Lamont	565559
Jimmy's Night Shelter	Paula Carter	07952919701
Food Bank	Liz Collinson	01954 251377
Lesson Readers	Rhodri James	357607
Good Shepherd News Editor	Ruth Banger	07764 613862
North Cambridge Area Deanery Synod	Ruth Banger	07764 613862
North Cambridge Area Deanery Synod	Guido Barzini	300497
North Cambridge Council of Churches	David Maher	351844
Rural Development Movement	Henry Disney	359396
Sacristan	Stuart Keir	572303
Safeguarding Officer	Paula Carter	07952 919701
Sound System	David Wilson	07899 917831
Sunday Lunch Club	Jinty Keir	572303
Sunday Lunch Club	Ruth Banger	07764 613862
Welcomers	Fiona Blows	329822

READINGS FOR APRIL

Sundays and holy days

- 7 LENT 5
Isaiah 43: 16-22
Psalm 126
Philippians 3: 4b-14
John 12: 1-8
- 14 PALM SUNDAY
Luke 19: 28-40
Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-end
- 18 MAUNDY THURSDAY
Exodus 12: 1-4, 11-14
Psalm 116: 1, 10 - end
1 Corinthians 11: 23-26
John 13: 1-17, 31b-35
- 19 GOOD FRIDAY (2PM)
- 21 EASTER VIGIL (5AM)
Romans 6: 3-11
Exodus 14; 10-end, 15: 20-21
Luke 24: 1-12
- 21 EASTER DAY
Acts 10: 34-43
Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24
1 Corinthians 15: 19-26
Luke 24: 1-12
- 28 EASTER 2
Acts 5: 27-32
Psalm 150
Revelation 1: 4-8
John 20: 19 - end

Weekdays at 9.30am

- 3 MORNING PRAYER
Isaiah 49: 8-15
John 5: 17-30
- 10 HOLY COMMUNION
Daniel 3: 14-20, 24-25, 28
John 8: 31-42
- 17 HOLY COMMUNION
Isaiah 50: 4-9
Hebrews 12: 1-3
John 13: 21-32
- 24 NO SERVICE

REGULAR SERVICES IN APRIL

- Sundays 8.30am Holy Communion
10am Parish Communion
- Wednesdays 9.30am Holy Communion
or Morning Prayer
- Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays
Morning Prayer, when said in church, will
be at 9.15.
Second Monday of each month will be set
aside for Staff Prayer.

CHURCH CLOSURE

The Church will close after the 10am service on Easter Day and re-open for the midweek service on 1 May. During the closure period there will be no midweek services and only a 10am service on April 29

SPECIAL SERVICES IN APRIL

- Sunday April 7** Passover (and Bring and Share Lunch) at 12 noon.
- Thursday April 18** at 7pm Holy Communion for Maundy Thursday including Foot Washing and followed by a Vigil.
- Friday April 19 (Good Friday)** at 10.30am Joint act of witness at 10.30 in Arbury Court.
- Friday April 19 (Good Friday)** at 2pm Service of Quiet Meditation
- Sunday April 21 (Easter Day)** at 5am Easter Vigil
- Sunday April 21 (Easter Day)** at 10am All Age Service for Mothering Sunday

EVENTS IN APRIL

- Sunday April 28** at 12 noon Sunday Lunch Club in Church Hall



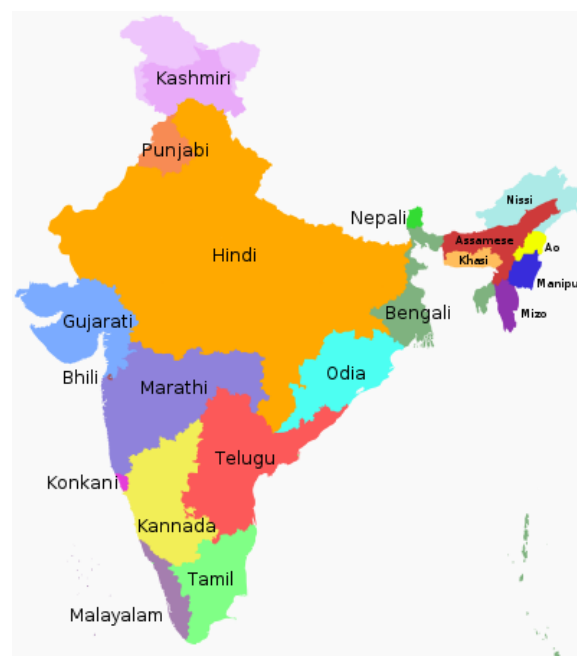
RURAL DEVELOPMENT MOVEMENT

Israel S's latest report about the RDM arrived in March too late for the CoGS Annual Report. So I summarise below the key points for CoGS News. Henry Disney

Leela and I guided 10 persons from England on a South India Study Tour In January, 7-22, The visits included Parakkanvilai, both the church and RDM Centre. On the whole, the group had great appreciation for what RDM has been doing. Some of them may attend the RDM Friends meeting on 18 May. On 26 Jan we had a thanksgiving service in the Parakkanvilai church to commemorate the 50th year of my entry into full time ministry. There was a sizable congregation including friends and representatives of the churches and institutions I have served. Bebin, a former coordinator of the RDM, shared her experience and the contribution of RDM to the development of Parakkanvilai and surrounding villages. Lunch was arranged in the RDM centre and that gave a chance for outsiders to hear about it. Afterwards, I spent a considerable time in observation in the RDM centre. I could not use the computer in the day time as the office was invariably crowded by those who wanted to pay their electricity bill on line and download the application for getting cash awards announced by the central and state governments - Election is coming in the summer! All the units are very active as usual except the fibre due to lack of workers coming in. The palm leaves section is busiest in the recent times. The health centre is preferred by people even when there is a free government community health centre, a quarter of a mile away. However, we were approached for the cost of cleaning and dressing a poor dying cancer patient and we sanctioned a sum, but he died later in a hospital. The tailoring section operates in shifts and therefore I could not see all the users together. The present officers were re-elected by the Management Committee. That means I continue to be the President though it is not a good sign as we have failed to groom young leaders. Some refurbishment work in the dining hall, mainly steel surfacing of the desks, has been done. While a good number use the facilities, the blockade of the fence of encroachment by Hindu extremists has hampered access and there is a proposal to make a passage within the campus by replacing the tiled building (oldest and fragile) with a pentagon style communal shed with grass/thatch roof and sloping for vehicular passage up to the dining hall.

We had a flag hoisting ceremony on the Republic Day on 26 Jan in the RDM campus. It was a pleasant experience for me to hand over a free sewing machine to a lady from the caste Hindu community who have given much trouble in encroaching the public land before the RDM centre. The court case is prolonging. Their building of a community hall in the occupied (the other side of the canal) area was halted by us. The RDM Treasurer, being a lawyer, is a great advantage for us. Using a strict order from the High Court we managed to bring down the loud speaker horns from the tree tops near the Hindu shrine. They menaced us for years by 3 hr broadcasting every day even after police complaints. After

total calm for a few days they are fixed at the bottom of a tree and now the volume of the 'music' is just enough to the hearing of the deity. We need to be vigilant! Then the Hindutva groups resumed their martial exercises very close to our house in the occupied area and it stopped after at least 3 visits to the police station. It is hoped the authorities will be more effective when the national election later in the year is out of the way. Now the other menace is the thundering noise of the electronic clocks with automatic broadcast of scriptural verses, once every hour. The local church started this in the name of Christian witness and respect for the donor and has been followed by four or five Hindu shrines in the surrounding, all keeping us awake from 5 am to 10 pm with few differences of the timing! My anger was expressed when I preached in the church on 17 Feb. I have been approached by a group from a large 'district church' (10 miles away from Parakkanvilai) to speak for them to the present Moderator's Commissary' (the bishop in Cochin diocese) who was my former student in lay theological education and later ministerial training in TTS Madurai. The story was that a senior pastor (member) from this church gave a large sum to establish a memorial fund for his parents. The committee took it to the building fund without consulting him and, even after asking for the account for many times, there has been no response. His joining a group to stop the loudspeaker menace of the church (taking the model from the RDM campaign), with the help of the police. This infuriated the committee and some congregation members. In our diocese, the numerical strength of congregations and enthusiasm is not matched by living outreach and concrete action. Social action is construed as simple charity, like buying notebooks for poor children beginning at school and saris for widows at Christmas. It is to be hoped that the example of the RDM in serving all, whatever their cultural and religious differences, will serve to create better relations between the different traditions.



PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

A young lady named Sally, relates an experience she had in a seminary class taught by her teacher, Dr. Smith. She says Dr. Smith was known for his elaborate object lessons. One particular day, Sally walked into the seminary and knew they were in for a fun day. On the wall was a big target and on a nearby table were many darts

Dr. Smith told the students to draw a picture of someone they disliked or someone who had made them angry in the past. Then he would allow them to throw darts at the person's picture.

Sally's friend drew a picture of a girl who had stolen her boyfriend. Another friend drew a picture of his little brother. Sally drew a picture of a former friend, putting a great deal of detail into her drawing, even drawing pimples on the face. Sally was pleased at the overall effect she had achieved.

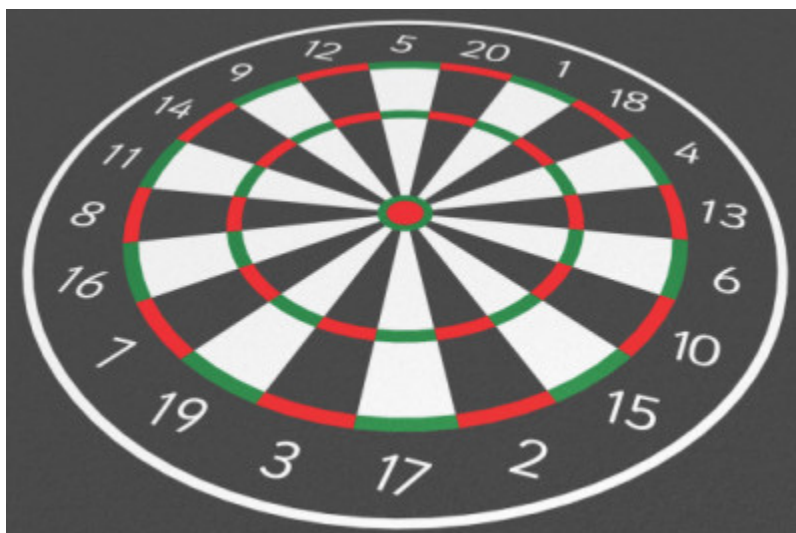
The class lined up and began throwing darts. Some of the students threw their darts with such force that their targets were ripping apart. Sally looked forward to her turn, but was filled with disappointment when Dr. Smith, because of time limits, asked the students to return to their seats.

As Sally sat down, thinking about how angry she was because she didn't have a chance to throw any darts at her target, Dr. Smith began removing the target from the wall. Underneath the target was a picture of Jesus.

A complete hush fell over the room as each student viewed the mangled picture of Jesus; holes and jagged marks covered His face and His eyes were pierced.

Dr. Smith said only these words, "I assure you, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!" (Matthew 25:40)

No other words were necessary...the tear-filled eyes of each student focused only on the picture of Christ



Sermon preached by Jonny Torrance on March 21

Luke 13.1-9

It's a pretty safe bet, when Jesus asks a question in the gospels, that he knows people around him are asking the question already, and that probably means that there are still people asking that question today. And in today's reading he asks the same question twice. He points at a recent disaster, the kind of tragedy everyone is talking about, and asks simply: *The people who died. Did they deserve it? Did it happen to them because they were worse than everyone around them?*

Now, at first glance, I think we all think "Of course not, Jesus.". Obviously. No one would think that. It would be horrible to say those people died because they were worse than the others.

Yet I don't think that Jesus' question entirely misses the mark with us. I think that often, behind our quick (and correct) theological response, there remains a deeper way of viewing the world that Jesus challenges. You see I think that, as humans, and here I definitely speak for myself, we actually desperately want the world to work like the view Jesus rejects. We want "karma"; we want bad things to happen to bad people and good things to happen to good people. **Because that way of thinking gives us the hope of control**

There's a part of me that wants to know that the bad thing that happened to that person, was their fault. Because they made bad choices. Because they had poor character. Because they were just a bad person. Because that way, if I'm good, if I just make good choices, or at least if I don't make bad choices, then it won't happen to me. I won't be the one who is unemployed. I won't be the one who gets really sick. I won't be the one whose family falls apart. I won't be the one who is lost, and lonely, and in despair.

And into that temptation - to believe that the events of our lives are basically under our control, that we can avoid bad things by being good people - Jesus speaks very clearly:

He asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did"

No, you can't point at a victim and say it is their fault.

Now, this is not to say that actions or choices do not have consequences. We have the book of Proverbs in the Bible, dedicated to exactly the kind of counsel which says "do good and basically good will happen". And of course, the opposite is true - bad choices often do have direct bad outcomes: The Bible does affirm that sort of logic (the law of karma) but it is not the whole story, and we have Job, and Ecclesiastes, and lots of Psalms to prove it. That way of thinking has some truth, but it is not RELIABLE. It is not always true. Evil events happen for deeply complex reasons, and often to good people. And the Psalms are full of the reality that the people we think are "bad" often seem to get off scot free. And in our own lives, things sometimes just fall apart, and we can't tell why.

So what of what Jesus says? Because he doesn't just say "No, they weren't worse sinners", he adds the really uncomfortable comment: "Unless you repent, you also will perish." Well I think in his answer Jesus

gets at a really thorny bit of the problem: part of my desire for reliability, part of the temptation to think that bad things happen only to bad people, is that I think I'm a good person. I think I'm the kind of person bad things shouldn't happen to.

I **want** to judge your bad choices, because if I can make myself feel better than you, then I have hope that the tower isn't going to land on my head.

And Jesus responds quite harshly: *Unless you repent, you also will perish.*

You're not the good person, Jonny. We're all sinners. We're all in the "bad people" category. We're all on a bad trajectory.

This may seem a bit gloomy: there's no control in your life, living well doesn't guarantee that good things will happen to you, we're all sinners, we're all destined for destruction. You've no hope and neither have I.

Where's the good news? Well, I think there are two things.

The first is that there is a massive relief in admitting that we can't control the world.

If you think that your actions have a direct and irreducible effect on what happens in your life, then the world we live in is

- a) exhausting and confusing. Exhausting because we can never do enough to feel we are good enough. The desperate attempt to be good is totally exhausting. And it's confusing, because the world just doesn't function in that way. And if we think it does we end up, when things go wrong, blaming ourselves, or blaming others, for things we have no power over. No, there's a definite relief in saying "I actually can't hold my life together. I'm a mess. Things happen for reasons I don't understand. I don't get it."

And, and this is the main piece of good news, when we say that we run smack bang into the incredible, unbelievable God of grace.

When we give up our illusion of control, when we accept that we are not the good people, when we let all of it go – when we "repent" to use Jesus' language, we discover that God is enormous, and loving and gracious.

That he is the one who says:

*Everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.*

You have nothing to pay, nothing to give, nothing to bring. I give it all, I pay it all, I bring it all. And yes, there is no guarantee bad things won't happen. There is no promise that life will be easy or smooth or as we planned it. Yet there is the promise that we are his. That he holds us. And there is the enormous relief that our lives are out of our hands, but are in his hands. And he is trustworthy, and faithful, and good.

3 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3:1-4 (ESV)

NO ONE IS
MORE SECURE
THAN THE ONE
WHO IS HELD
IN GOD'S
HAND.

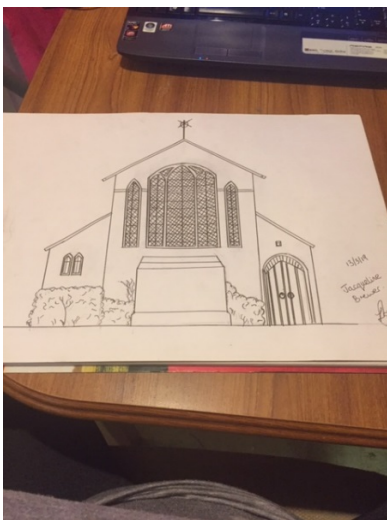


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INTRUSION

First published in 2012. in
Henry Disney's *'Teach us of Love'*,
(Pneuma Springs Publishing)

No twig is stirred as lazy wind
Remains asleep. A sunlit bird
Atop the tallest tree proclaims
It's spring and garden down below
Is his alone, reserved for mate
Who's building nest in privet hedge.
The world of men may be defaced
By strife and crime, but thrush declines
To give it heed. For him this plot
Is paradise providing all
His needs. The daffodil's assent
By nodding heads as faintest breeze
Begins to stir and dawn gives way
To morning crisp with hint of frost.
While blackbird's hunting worms on lawn,
A robin visits place I'll put
My bacon rinds when I have joined
The newborn day. But now I stretch
And bend behind the window pane,
Intent on early rite and rote
Of exercise designed to ease
The aches of age. I almost feel
I'm part of secret life below,
Where rest of world does not exist.
But being human means I can't
Escape concern for those abroad
Deprived of means to live by wars,
Or floods, or tyrant's rule. So when
I put the wireless on it kills
The peace with dose of sombre news.

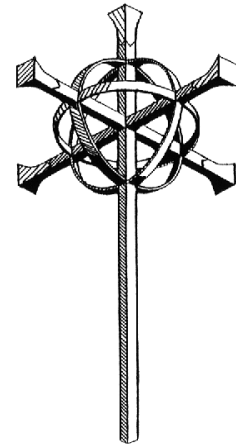


Drawn by Jacqueline Brewer (see page 1)_

IN THE CHURCH HALL (to book call 352151 (evenings))

THE SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB 1 st Sunday of the month noon – 1.30pm	Jinty Keir	572303
RED HEN Monday 8.15 – 11am	Christine O'Reilly	0781 6444439
SANG Monday 10– 11.30 (meets in Haven in Church)	Anastasia Sanders	07467 956296
THE MONDAY CLUB Monday 2.00 – 3.30pm	Ruby Leyshon	352151
THE GOOD SHEPHERD CUBS Monday 6.30 - 8pm	Charles Brown	07720 441123
DOG TRAINING CLASSES Monday 8.15 - 9.15pm	Susannah O'Hanlon	235281
LINE DANCING Tuesday 10am-12 noon	Deborah Walker	01954 231382
KEEP FIT 50+ GROUP Tuesday 2.30 - 4pm	Margaret Briggs	01954 250870
THE GOOD SHEPHERD RAINBOWS Tuesday 6.15 – 7.15pm	Miss Rachel Marsh	574520
DOG TRAINING CLASSES Tuesday 7.30 - 9.30pm	Susannah O'Hanlon	235281
THE 18th & 25th GOOD SHEPHERD BROWNIES Wednesday 6 - 7.15pm	Mrs Pat Marsh	574520
PILATES Thursday 12.40-1.40	Lexi	367639
TAI CHI Thursday 1.40-2.40	Lexi	367639
THE GOOD SHEPHERD BEAVERS Thursday 6.15 - 7.30pm	Emma Roberts	426043
THE GOOD SHEPHERD SCOUTS Thursday 7.30 – 9.00pm	Chris White	0700 891511
CHURCH TODDLERS' CLUB Friday 9.15 – 11.30am	Claire Duell	0787 4850867
TAI CHI Friday 2 – 3pm	Mike Tabrett	503390
DOG TRAINING CLASSES Friday 3.13-4.15pm	Arbury Road Vet. Surgery	361911

**Submission date for
May Newsletter:
April 14
(Publication date April 28)**



Vicarage 01223 351844

Church Hall bookings
(evenings) 01223 352151

Newsletter Ruth Banger 07764 613862
OR ruthbanger51@gmail.com

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Here at the Good Shepherd we like to help you to celebrate and commemorate many of the milestones on the journey through life; these include weddings, anniversaries, funerals, and baptism services.

If you wish to find out more about these, the first step is to contact the Vicar, the Reverend David Maher. He will be able to tell you what is involved and arrange for a meeting with you if you then wish to take things further.

He can be contacted on 01223 351844

Church website: www.churchofthegoodshepherd.co.uk

