

Littlehampton United Church

Mini Newsletter 4



Keeping
our church
together

With one day very much like the day before, it is a little ironic that the Government decided to move the Bank Holiday from Monday to Friday. The reason, of course, was to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE Day Friday 8th May 1945. Corona Virus has added a grim relevance to the celebrations with the inevitable comparisons to the days of World War II. None of the celebrations will be happening as originally planned, although the BBC has programmes scheduled including Churchill's announcement that the war with Germany was over. The jubilation and thanksgiving were fuelled by the sense of relief that the war was over, even if slightly premature—it was two months and two atomic bombs before the Japanese surrendered, the horror of Nazi concentration camps was just emerging, rationing continued until 1953 and the war loan not fully repaid until 2006.

We still have a long way to go before we win the war with corona virus and our faith and our determination will be tested in the weeks to come but as the Daily Sketch reminded us (The rectangle on the bottom right of the page)

“...Thanks to the Father..... who has delivered us from the power of darkness.” The full quotation, from 1 Corinthians verses 12 to 14, uses the metaphor, common in the New Testament, of light and dark. “He has rescued us from the power of darkness and has transferred us into the kingdom of His beloved Son.”



This newsletter was written and edited by Chris Azzaro, who can be contacted on 01903 718070 or by email: christopher.azzaro@sky.com

There is also information about our church on the website:

Littlehamptonunitedchurch.org.uk

From the Minister's desk

This week I want to share with you about the birth of the New Church and the work the *chief shepherd* being Jesus Christ ~ the Good Shepherd. This is based on the Gospel of (John 10:1—10 and Acts 2:40-47). Luke is given to us the author of Acts of the Apostle, because of the way both, the Gospel Luke and Acts are introduced in the introductory verses of both books. In Acts 2:40-47 we are introduced to the quality of the church that, they were 3120 people who gathered as new church.

Luke introduces to us the miracle power of the Holy Spirit that came upon the first church. What is interesting is what happened there after the 3120 people came together as a church. This is what I call the marks or signs and attributes of the first church. But before I explain what happened, there after let me draw your attention to the follow synopsis. The new church came together from premise of confusion, fear, anxiety and it was unprecedented time after the departure of their leader and the disciples couldn't take it in that they were now without Jesus in flesh anymore in real life. It was like this, our time we are going through now in the world with COVID19. This is a difficult time for both young and old. The disciples had to isolate themselves from the rest of the people because of fear, confusion and anxiety. We are lockdown, isolated and no touch of each, a special attributed of the presence of the Holy Spirit of the first church. People are in limbo for fear of this menacing virus called COVID19.

Peter preaching on the miracle power of the Holy Spirit reminds of the attributes that characterises the new church, that they devoted to the apostles' doctrine, fellowship (Koinonia) and the breaking of bread and prayer, signs and wonders, having all things in common, sharing of possessions and goods, a united church under the miracle power of the Holy Spirit. What will today's church do when we come out of the lockdown and when the virus is contained?

John 10:1-10 is a call to a passage -way into a new dawn, a new church, the church (flock of my sheep): Jesus Christ, the good Shepherd. Jesus said. "I am the door, If any one enters by me he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture." "This is the new church that is defined by the attributes of the miracle power of the Holy Spirit. "This is a time, if ever there was one, for vulnerability, honesty, and a tentative humility in theological reflection." We are that church that needs the miracle power of the Holy Spirit to overcome and be delivered from the pandemic menace of coronavirus. The Good Shepherd is with us, the miracle power of the Holy Spirit is with the church and we shall overcome and be delivered by the God, whose Son is the chief Shepherd of the flock. We are the flock of His pastures. I strongly believe that Our God will see us through this time of crisis, but "doing church" will be different.

The same miracle power of the Holy Spirit, needs to renew the church, because Jesus Christ came that we may have life and have it more abundantly.

Peace and Grace!

28.4.2020.

News of the Family

Sent by John Stevens: I have just heard from June Caffyn (Mary Robinson's daughter and manager of Shopmobility) that her mother died this morning at the goodly age of 90. I understand the cause was Coronavirus but she had been suffering from other conditions for a while. You may recall Mary used to worship with us some years ago when she lived at Alinora Court (I think) before she went into a home at Goring a few years ago. Mary was a church member when she lived in Littlehampton..

Please include Jill Luff in your prayers. Jill was taken to The Royal Sussex Hospital in Brighton following a fall at home. We understand that she is still in hospital.

Nigel Stapley will be leading the Zoom Bible Study on Wednesday evening. If you wish to join in, either use the link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2545745519?pwd=NnVKNIJoeGtsaCtmY1N0UVZhNzVDdz09>

Or, if you already have Zoom, then just enter the Meeting ID and password when prompted.

Meeting ID: 254 574 5519

Password: 349515

If you don't have the internet you can phone in using one of these numbers:

United Kingdom

01203 481 5240

01131 460 1196

01203 051 2874

01203 481 5237

Most sessions start with a certain amount of confusion as people try to log in- a bit of fun to relax everyone!

Also from Nigel, wearing his Church Treasurer's hat:

A good afternoon to all church members.

In case you had been worrying about church finances I thought I would give you a couple of ways of continuing your financial support.

Firstly, thank you to all those who pay by standing order and haven't cancelled them!

Those who are part of the envelope system who would like to keep up to date can send or deliver a cheque to me with one of your envelopes and I will make sure its recorded. Or you can use internet banking and use your envelope number as the reference.

If you normally make your offering in cash then you can also use a cheque (I can bank cheques by post) or pay in online banking;

The Church Account is CAF Bank S.C. 40-52-40 Ac. No. 00032867

My address is 8 Howard's Way, Littlehampton BN16 2LT

Thank you for your continued support.

Peace

Keeping busy during the lock down?

I have a confession to make. Last weekend I received an e-mail asking if I would like to share in a meeting of Local Preachers (via the computer). I have not replied yet, mainly because I have discovered that I enjoy not having to go to meetings! The exception is the Wednesday Bible Study but this week I had to send my apologies since I have another meeting at the same time.

Having no sermons to prepare has left me with deal of spare time. One result of which is shown below—my first attempt at painting in oils.

What have you been getting up to—assuming you are at home? Please send details, pictures etc and we can all share in your creative skills. We also remember in our prayers those who are going out to work.

Street Parties

Following on from page 1 of this newsletter, I realise that several of our church members have recollections of the VE Day in 1945. Were you at a street party? What do you remember?

For myself, of course, I have no recollections of street parties. I was 5 when I should have been at street party to celebrate the coronation in 1953—but I caught chicken pox and missed it! However, I know that some of our congregation do remember that day in 1945. Please send your memories and I will try and publish them next week. (Or phone and I will take down a few notes)



Stavanger, Norway, painted from a photograph taken in 2019, with artistic license to include features from a print purchased in Norway by Val's father in 1945 (while ending the Nazi occupation)