

# Diocesan Fellowship of Evangelists

Easter 09

This Lent two pictures have taken on a new perspective for me in terms of what Christ came to this earth to do. I have been looking at the 'I am' sayings in John's gospel where they lay down for us so clearly, not just a way of understanding what Jesus does, but who he is. The use of 'I am' is so close to the word Yahweh used for God that we cannot be left in any kind of doubt that what Jesus is really saying is "I am Good Shepherd" = Jesus saying – God, good shepherd is in your midst. Those seven major 'I am' sayings telling us again and again that God is among his people.



So my first picture is of this Good Shepherd. It places God very clearly among those who need rescuing, guiding, leading and feeding. Indeed we might say those who will respond to the voice of the one who knows them, by name. As we approach this Easter celebration in what ways are you able to hear afresh the voice of the Good Shepherd calling you by name and leading you to rich pastures of feeding?

"Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world have mercy on us. Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, grant us peace".

We say these words at the regular celebration of communion in our churches week by week.

My second picture is called Agnus Dei - Lamb of God, showing the lamb trust up ready for sacrifice. He who is the Good Shepherd now takes on the very being of those he came to save - the lambs. The rescuer becomes the sacrifice. God laying himself on the sacrificial altar so that the sins of the world may be redeemed. I do not think I have seen the incarnation and the atonement so clearly expressed as they are in these two pictures. There can be no doubt about the cost to the shepherd now.



This Easter time why not take a moment or two to savour the power of this truth for yourself. Rejoice that your sin has been conquered in Christ and that new life is for you and for all who you meet. Let's rejoice!

*Jean*

## Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali

It was a great surprise to all of us to hear of Bishop Michael's intended change of direction in ministry. He has been a faithful voice for gospel values and at time this has been at great personal cost. We wish him well. I will be wanting to mark his leaving by way of some small gift from the Evangelists. Perhaps you can send your ideas to me about what this might be.

### Re-commissioning

This is one of those years when evangelists need to be re-commissioned. For this to happen you **MUST** a) return your annual report; b) return your certificate. Please do this now as Bishops Court will be very busy in the coming months. If there are any difficulties in doing this please tell me know. Thanks.

### Residential weekend – 16-18 October

A reminder to you all that this is the one event that we encourage everyone to attend. Parishes should be paying for this as a part of their working agreement with you. Should there be difficulties in this area let me know now. The weekend is being led by Jacqui Frost and myself. It promises to be a weekend of great fun, creativity and experiencing the presence of God. Please come.

### Back to Church Sunday – 27 September

Orders for packs need to be received by 8 May.



### Help wanted

We are still looking for a replacement as an area co-ordinator for Veronica Rees. Any Evangelist living in the Gravesend - Rochester area who would be willing to do this please give me a ring.

### For your diary/information

A meeting for all evangelists at Christ Church, Southborough on Wed 27 May with Rev Canon Dr Philip Hesketh – Canon Pastor from Rochester Cathedral. Contact Geoff Baker for more details.

Enclosed:

Residential Booking Form  
Order form for Back to Church Sunday  
Seven Studies in Evangelism  
Letter from Jean Tither

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