



# Link Up!

**‘My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.’ John 10:27**

## For the rest of March:

On Sunday 22nd March our Contact Group will be celebrating their anniversary.

And on Sunday 29th March which is Palm Sunday we will be joined by our friends from Parkstone Baptist Church.

Also, on 22nd March we will hold our Annual General Church Members’ Meeting after the service. As usual please bring your lunch with you and we will provide drinks. Nominations for the diaconate have been received for Kim Chaloner and Stephen Chaloner and their profiles were sent out with the agenda and other correspondence. Apologies for absence can be given to Janet or any of the other deacons before the meeting.

## I can’t hear what you’re saying!

Many of you will know that I have been having some difficulties with my hearing in my left ear since I had a nasty cold and cough at Christmas which blocked my sinuses including the ones just behind the ear drum. It’s given me a new appreciation of the problems those of you with more permanent hearing loss face. The continual having to ask people to repeat what they have said gets to the stage when you give up trying and just nod along hoping you’re doing that in the right places! It’s frustrating for the hearer and frustrating for their nearest and dearest who keep having to repeat themselves! Hopefully I have now started to get the situation resolved and will get back to normal.

But the experience has started me thinking about how well we hear what God is saying to us as individual believers and as a church. So let me ask you, ‘What is God saying to you at the moment?’ If your answer is ‘I’m not sure’ or maybe ‘I don’t think he’s saying anything to me’, then how can we improve our ability to hear God’s voice?

I can almost hear most people saying ‘Well of course we hear what God is saying through the Bible. We listen to what Ken preaches on a Sunday and what we read in our own Bible readings during the week. That’s how we hear what God is saying’. I absolutely agree with you. The more you read and study the Bible the better you understand God’s will for you. The Bible gives us plenty of general advice and guidance for living the Christian life. But the emphasis is on General. It’s good for giving a framework for the Christian life and nothing anyone thinks God is saying to them specifically will ever contradict the Bible.

## Looking forward to April:

Good Friday is on 3rd April and those of us who are able to will be joining with the other churches in Churches Together in Poole for the annual Open-Air service at 10.00am outside Sainsbury's. We will be making our way there with a March of Witness together with our local friends from St George's C of E and St Mary's RC Churches. This will leave St Mary's at around 9.00 – 9.15am.

Following this, at 11.15am, we will hold our own Good Friday reflective service.

On Easter Sunday, 5th April we will have our Easter Sunday All Age service to once again celebrate Jesus' resurrection and all this means for us. Do invite family and friends to join us for this service.

Details of what we will be looking at on Sundays after Easter will be in our next newsletter.

## Other Notices:

Alissa Ford is starting her own cake-making business and her price list and a selection of cakes she can offer are on the noticeboard in the lobby at church. Please complete the Order Form next to her list of cakes on the board including when you want your cakes by.

Do remember to listen back to our services if you've missed them. The recordings are on the church website. Also check our YouTube channel for the 'Diving Deeper' podcast with Ken and guests each week.

But that only takes us so far. What about how I make more specific decisions about situations in my daily life? How do I decide what God wants me to do to serve him at this stage in my life? How do I make decisions about my future, my housing, my job, spending my money, spending my time?

In my experience God often speaks to me quite specifically during my prayer times by putting a particular situation into my mind then. Sometimes it's when I'm just sitting quietly and meditating on something I've read in the Bible. The other week I was in church and a line from a song 'O Lord, dark powers are poised to flood our streets with hate and fear' spoke to me about the protests outside the RNLI headquarters about them rescuing migrants from boats in the channel. I felt God saying to me 'I want you to pray about that situation now'. So, while the prayer time was going on I specifically prayed for that.

If you are thinking God never seems to speak to me that clearly then there are a few things you can do to help you hear God more clearly:

- Get to know the Bible well
- Expect God to speak to you. Don't think He can't have anything to say to you.
- When you are praying make sure that you spend some time quietly listening for God rather than just speaking to Him.
- Take those day-to-day situations and decisions to Him in prayer instead of just struggling your way through them. Ask Him to show you what you should do.
- Be willing to do what God tells you to do even if it's something you aren't keen to do or are a bit nervous of trying. God will always be with you if he's telling you to do something.

Every blessing

*Janet Matterface*