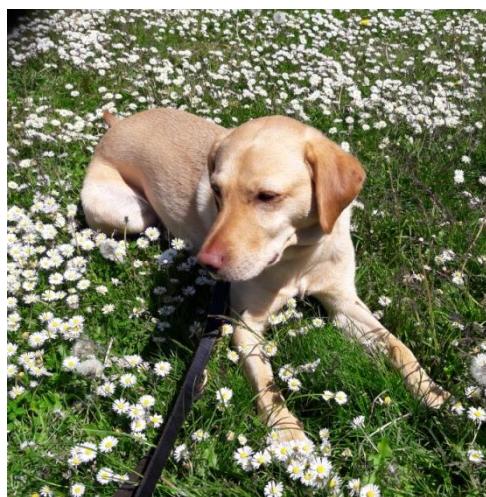


**Pastoral Letter 54 28.4.21**

Dear Friends,

Many of us are all too aware of the impact of Covid-19 over the last year on ourselves, those we know and love and even those we've never met around the world. We have done what we can to help and continue to plan for what we may be able to do in the future. All of the churches around our Circuit have been impacted too and so I'm sure that we are also thinking about how we can do our bit to lift ourselves out of where we are, to where God may seek to lead us, as well as relying on the Holy Spirit's energy, enthusiasm and wisdom – to discern what that might look like and how we might achieve it.

Some of you will know that I have a dog, Daisy – here she is, in all her glory:



As Trinity in Woking is looking to raise £20,000 to help ourselves recover from the impact of Covid and move forward - Daisy and I are about to embark on our '**20/20 challenge**'! During May, on 20 of the 31 days we aim to walk 20,000 steps each – which, as I've previously commented to folk, is actually 40,000 for Daisy, as she has an extra pair of legs!

It's going to be a quite challenge but it made me ponder how important it always is, whoever we are and however old we are, to find new challenges in life.

So, I want to ask you, what's your next challenge?

It might be something to do with helping your own church or neighbourhood groups get back on their feet as the restriction due to the pandemic start to loosen.

Maybe it's to have another, closer look at the Bible; finding a new way of reading it, or studying it, that bring it alive for you – perhaps using some new Bible notes, or concentrating on a book every few weeks (or months if it's a long one!) and reading that slowly, or prayerfully; or even sharing that with a friend and meeting up every now and again to share your thoughts – 'Bible Book Club'? Why not!

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It might be, if you have a garden, or even a window box or a plant pot, to try growing something you haven't tried before and rejoicing in the wonder of creation, with one small part of that under your care and keeping.

Or maybe, another idea (but not one I shall be trying due to my complete incompetence in this area – made manifest by my recent 'flapjack fiasco' – how can you get flapjack wrong?!?) would be to try baking something you haven't made before, or use that nice kitchen gadget, that you got when you thought it was a good idea and it's still languishing at the back of a kitchen cupboard somewhere – all alone and underappreciated! (Ahhh – poor thing!)

We can always learn new skills, we can always grow, develop, expand our horizons – that's how God made us to be and what God wants for us. We only have to look at the natural world all around us, of which we are a part – Spring is here and Summer isn't that far away; despite all the issues of Covid-19, the world is flourishing and we are called to flourish within that and help others to flourish too. We are a part of creation and our Creator wants us to develop in God's love and to show God's love.

So – are you up for the challenge? I hope so! Let's move forwards together, step by step.

God bless!

Sam.

#### A PRAYER FOR THE WEEK AHEAD:

One more step along the world I go,  
One more step along the world I go;  
From the old things to the new  
Keep me travelling along with you.

Round the corners of the world I turn,  
More and more about the world I learn;  
All the new things that I see  
You'll be looking at along with me.

You are older than the world can be,  
You are younger than the life in me;  
Ever old and ever new,  
Keep me travelling along with you:  
*And it's from the old I travel to the new;*  
*Keep me travelling along with you.*

(*StF 476 by Sydney Carter, verses 1, 2, 5 & chorus*)