

Sunday Focus Meeting 30th September 2012 - Serving

The meeting was chaired by Rev. Glyn Oliver and 48 people were present.

Opening Devotions:

Mark Craig read from 1 Timothy 6 v6 onwards.

Brian Mitchell read a letter from a book by John Gillespie entitled 'God doesn't do downloads.'

Glyn addressed us on the subject of 'service'.

- Service can have negative connotations; those serving can be discouraged or frustrated if they feel that other people are not doing their part; but in turn those not involved are missing out on the blessings received through service.
- Timothy talks of things to flee from (things that occupy/distract us) and things to pursue (faith, righteousness, servitude.)
- The letter talks of us needing to be pro-active. Jesus called his disciples friends and not servants, indeed Jesus became a servant alongside his disciples. Jesus is always alongside us in our Christian service.
- A growing church needs to be a serving church. We need effort, prayer and service to evangelise successfully with the help of the spirit.
- Glyn challenged everyone in the Fellowship to either volunteer to do something that they have never done before or have stopped doing OR tell someone about their faith/bring someone along to an event, by our next Focus meeting when there will be a time of sharing our experiences.
- Glyn emphasised that ours is a church where people serve and he is blessed to be surrounded by amazing servants, but God calls us to be even more involved in service so that together we can achieve great things for Him.

Diary

- Events that had taken place since June were briefly reviewed.
- 98 children attended the 'Torch Bearers' holiday club.
- Mark showed a video clip from the BMS 'undefeated' material and spoke about BMS helping the first ever Haitian Team enter the Paralympics.

October

5th Glyn speaking at Harvest Assembly at Fitzwarren School

Sun 7th Harvest Service

20th Ladies Breakfast - Jane Fucella speaking

Sun 28th Brian preaching

November

3rd Grove Free Church Away Day – Glyn Speaking

Sun 4th Edwin preaching

10th Street Pastors MVC Concert

24th L.I.F.E. Group Trip to Matt Redman Event

December

16th Shush Kidz Club Event

Sun 23rd Candle-lit Carols

25th Christmas Day Service 10:45am

Sun 30th Communion Service – Time TBC

31st New Year's Ceilidh at Old Mill Hall

January 13th 10:30am – Sunday Focus

Finance

- Brian gave an update on finances.
- For 2012 there was a projected gap between the Fellowship's income and expenditure.
- As of August 2012 the income/expenditure are now in line with one another.
- We should now finish the year with 4k in reserve, so there has been an improvement, however this is not much to hold in reserve and more needs to be done.
- The average giving per family has improved since the last meeting but is still considerably down compared with 2002 when the Fellowship started out.
- We were challenged to think about where we are putting our money.

Several questions were raised concerning finance:

Q. What percentage increase do we need to see in our giving to be in a good position financially?

A. If everyone gave 10% of their income, the church would be doing well. We also shouldn't be aiming to balance the books but should be looking beyond that to what we could be doing. If you 'gift aid' your donations as a tax payer the fellowship can claim back 25% of your gift from the government.

Q. People don't always know when the offering is going to be in the service and occasionally it is not taken, should we make this a set time in the service?

A. It shouldn't make a difference when the offering is taken or whether it is not taken one week. Giving is an act of worship to God and is treated as such in the service.

WCF Children's Work

Annette gave a short presentation summarised as follows:

The request from the Elders was:

- To create a leadership team for Children's Ministry
- To bring up to date our safeguarding policy
- To establish a registration procedure

The new Children's Team is:

Mark Craig – Elder Responsible

Annette Oliver – Children's Work Director

Carrie White – Assistant Director

Nikkii Ormston – CRB Officer

Elisabeth Atkin – Safeguarding Officer

Jane Pepler – Registration Officer

The carrying out of CRB checks is currently suspended as the system is changing. All parents should collect a registration form from Jane for each of their children.

WCF Children's Work, The Vision:

- To give the children a thorough understanding of what God's Word has to say to them and how it connects to every aspect of their lives.
- To give them the information that will enable them to follow Christ if they choose to.
- If they choose to follow Christ, to equip them for full Christian service but regardless of this, to also be useful members of society.

The Future:

- Young Leaders Ministry Preparation – This will be for 14-17 year olds, they will need to apply for the scheme and awards will be available for service completed.
- Children's Events – No events have been run this year as the budget has been tight but we hope to run events next year which will require about £500 and extra help from the congregation.
- Staff Training Seminars – On safeguarding and to help inspire teaching.

Please pray for the work of the Children's Team.

Discussion

Glyn asked 3 questions:

- 1. Do you feel the Elders have a realistic view of service in the church?**
- 2. What are your expectations?**
- 3. How should the load of service be spread?**

Comment: The fellowship is good at getting people involved in things but everyone needs to know that they *can* get involved if they want to.

Response from Elders: It is important for leaders to take what people are able to give in terms of service and it is generally better for all if everyone is doing a little. Doing a small service can be a good way for someone to enter into church life and feel that they have a place. Everyone is now allocated to a homegroup, so has the opportunity to serve when their homegroup leads the Sunday service.

C: Anyone can organise an event for the church if they want to and it can be empowering.

C: We can all feel empowered by helping out and knowing that we are doing it for God.

C: There are people who won't volunteer first but need to be asked to help in some way.

R: If you have an idea of something that you would like to do then seek out like-minded people and ask them to help you. If you want to do something there will always be people who will help you.

C: The more 'outreach' activities that we run or are involved with the more this is appreciated in the community.

R: Yes, it is just as important as Christians to be involved in our local communities as in our church. Christians need to take a stand in bodies in the community and can make a significant difference.

Question from Glyn: What could the church do to get more people involved in things?

C: Homegroups should be used as a good source of information as to what is going on and what help is needed.

C: Anyone unsure of how they could help out can always speak to the Elders.

C: The notices and website are always a good source of information.

C: Do we want to have a form for people new to the church, telling them about different things that they could get involved with? This could maybe be added to the 'welcome pack' which is in the making.

C: It is the responsibility of the Elders and homegroup leaders to look for potential and invite people to get involved in activities.

C: The rambling group has been organising walks for the past 2 years and these have not always been attended by others in the church but they continue to arrange dates, it is important not to be disillusioned but to continue in what you're doing.

C: Glyn will be doing an assembly at Fitzwarren School and the Charlton Centre is already 'disabled friendly'. Looking at what we could do as a church to invite disabled people into church is a potential area to investigate.