

SOLIHULL United Reformed Church BULLETIN

OCTOBER 2014

CELL GROUPS

www.solihullurc.org.uk

New groups have been formed. Below are the days/times along with a contact for each, so if you wish to join one, please get in touch.

DISCUSSION MATERIAL

We have so much going on at present and Cell Groups are a good place for discussion and prayer, so there is no obligation to follow any particular material. Below are key suggestions. Please can groups let Mark know what it is you are doing, when you have got underway?

'Mission Not Impossible' - the outline plan for our mission as a church, based on the hexagon diagram. It would be helpful if groups could give some time to discussing this. I am very willing to offer time to groups to share discussion and answer questions.

'Resourcing our Mission' - this is Mark's personal view on how we move forward to a decision about premises, amongst other resources. Again, if groups can offer some time to this, it would help our process along.

'Another story must begin' is the book based on Les Miserables which some have got. Several themes that run within it are very relevant to our situation. Please let me know if you will be following this and need more books. It is available for Kindle at a cheaper price, for those who have one.

THEMES - groups may wish to dip into one or two of the themes that feature in the Mission Plan as a way of helping us link everyday-life themes with our Christian faith.

Resource sheets will be made available on the website. Take a look.

Loneliness already has a resource sheet that some have discussed, as it relates to our thinking about the communities we serve.

Sacrifice was introduced to the Worship Group to begin preparations for Remembrance Sunday, but many other possibilities were recognised.

Birth will be an appropriate theme as we approach Christmas, exploring through our human experience what God was about in the Incarnation.

GROUPS with contacts (not necessarily the leaders)

Monday morning - Rosalind Smart 0121 743 5358 rosalindsmart@gmail.com

Monday afternoon - Judith Kembery 0121 705 3482 atkembery@waitrose.com

Tuesday afternoon - Ron Webb 0121 707 0571 iwebb73@hotmail.com

Thursday evening - Trixie Harman 01675 442859 ctharman@btinternet.com

We will be seeking ways in which some of the insights from Cell Groups discussions can be fed into wider church reflections, without breaking the confidence of the groups.

As we work towards a new shape for our Pastoral Care, Cell Groups will be a key element for those who are members.

CHURCH CHAT - Saturday 18th October 10.30am - 12 noon @ Hobs Moat

An informal opportunity to air views, offer suggestions and listen to others on matters relating to the Mission Strategy presentation made on Sunday 28th September.

All welcome. Coffee Morning £1.50 inc. raffle for the church charity



CHURCH MEETING - 26th October following Sunday Worship

This will be for one hour and will focus on commitments to our mission. As we considered who it is we are 'called to love' in obedience to Christ, is it right that we concentrate on the isolated and lonely, building relationships and community. Are life-themes, such as those on the Mission Not Impossible plan, seen as an effective way to enable people engage with Christ and Christian faith?

Please make this a matter for your prayers leading up to 26th.

MEETING PLACE

The idea of creating a more neutral space where non-church folk might find a welcome is a key idea in our mission plans. It would enable us to offer practical support for those who are isolated and lonely, along with hospitality for some support groups. It would offer a space for sharing discussion, activity and display around some of the 'life themes' that have been identified. A date for an exploratory group will be publicised soon so that we can be clearer what needs to be done to make this idea a reality. If you would like to be a part of this group then please let Mark know. We can then ensure a meeting is timed to suit.

RESOURCING OUR MISSION

When some commitments regarding our mission are made we can consider how best to resource them. This is people, finance and premises. So making mission decisions is a real priority for conversation and prayer.

TENANTS IN THE VINEYARD

Our Gospel reading on Sunday 5th October - Matthew 21.33-46 - gave us the story of the tenants who failed to understand that what they had was in trust and their obligations towards the landowner. As we explore our future as a church, it highlighted the fact that as society has changed over the years the Christian Church has not kept up, ensuring that people are enabled to encounter Christ and bear the fruits of faith. Rather, we have desired to preserve what seems precious to us on the assumption that others will easily recognise its worth and find faith in Jesus Christ. The end of the parable is when the landowner's son is killed so that the tenants can take over his inheritance. While the accusation of 'crucifying Christ again' is a very strong one, we might admit to the fact that in keeping Jesus confined mostly to the four walls, the language and customs of the church we do not allow him to live in the life of the community and the everyday.

As we move towards decisions about our life and mission we need to be clear that what we have in terms of faith and Christian tradition are not 'ours', but are God's gifts for the life of the world. Our calling is to do our utmost to lead others to accept God's gifts for themselves.

It may be hard for us to let go of things that are precious to us, but to witness the life of Christ in the community as a whole is surely much more enriching - and getting there more exciting!