



An Update from the Elders

As the Elders of the church we recognise that good communication is vital for health and life of the church. We want to keep the church family informed of our thoughts, prayers and priorities for BEC. The primary way that we seek to do this is through our regular Fellowship Meetings.

Our next Fellowship Meeting is on Sunday 8th July when we are looking forward to Joy Robinson being with us. We would encourage everyone (especially church members) to come along. In addition to Fellowship Meetings we will also be writing occasional updates so that together we can all be playing our part in the ministry of the church.

Telling the next generation

During Home Groups Together at the start of 2018, we were reminded of the core convictions of BEC, not only to be 'growing up' (maturing as Christians) but also 'growing out' and reaching the community in which God has placed us with the good news of Jesus, whether that be via the Men's Ministry, WOW, Wednesday fellowship, T&C, Christianity Explored etc.

The Bible speaks of our responsibility to pass on the gospel to the next generation, like a runner in a relay race passes on the baton to the next runner. When the people of Israel crossed the river Jordan, they were told to take 12 stones from the river and make a pillar. The reason is given twice...

In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord...

... He said to the Israelites, "In the future when your descendants ask their parents, 'What do these stones mean?' tell them, 'Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.' Joshua 4:6, 21.

The Psalmist writes:

*He decreed statutes for Jacob
and established the law in Israel,
which he commanded our ancestors
to teach their children,
so the next generation would know them,
even the children yet to be born,
and they in turn would tell their children.
Then they would put their trust in God
and would not forget his deeds
but would keep his commands. (Psalm 78)*

The need is great. A recent survey states that 70% of young adults in the UK now consider themselves as non-religious, with only 9 out of 100 young people having any contact with a protestant church. (Source: Europe Young Adults (16-29) and Religion Survey (2014-2016) St Marks University, Twickenham).

BEC continues to be committed to sharing the Gospel with the next generation, as seen in the work that goes on week after week: Bumps & Babies, Little Builders, Tea-Time church, Xcite, Ignite, Crossover, Open the Book, Hall Cross lunchtimes, Creche, Searchers, Adventurers, Axis....

As was recently announced we are really pleased that Mike Stark will be joining the staff team to help lead and support the children's and young people's work. But we recognise that this is the responsibility of all of us at BEC (not just a few) in the following ways:

Involvement - We would like to say a **MASSIVE THANK YOU** to all those who give their time and energy to this work. However, there continues to be a need for additional helpers in all areas.

Welcome - We want to ensure that children, young people and families have a warm welcome, both on Sundays and at all the activities at the

church, and a safe welcome, by means of our child safeguarding policy.

Prayer – We are more convinced than ever of our need of God’s help. Please pray for:

- All the different activities that go on week after week
- Special events – Tea Time Church
- Leaders and helpers for each groups
- Children and young people (and their families)
- Mike Stark (Helen, Nathan and Caleb)
- Practical needs - housing and schooling
- Mike as he takes up this ministry in the coming months

Evangelism and Mission

In Revelation 7, the Apostle John receives from God a mind blowing vision of eternity,

“After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.”

The vision is of all God’s people, those who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. The vast crowd is incredibly diverse and consists of those from every continent, country, region and every single people group. These verses depict the triumph of global mission - the gospel going out to the ends of the earth – the fulfilment of the great commission to make disciples of all nations.

As a church we are hugely concerned about the spiritual state of our nation and our town and when we look at the huge gospel needs around us, it’s very easy to become insular and inward looking. However, the great vision that Rev.7 provides of those from ‘every nation, tribe, people and language’ challenges our somewhat limited mind-set.

At BEC we want to continue to work hard to support, partner and pray for those who are endeavouring to make the Lord Jesus known to the millions of people around the globe. To those from every nation, tribe, people and language, who are presently in darkness, without Christ and without hope.

Future dates for the diary; ***Tuesday 26th June (Mission Focus) Denis Stewart from Mission Aviation Fellowship, Sunday 8th July Joy speaking at the church fellowship lunch and Sunday 22nd July the Byrnes updating us at the morning service.***

Prayer

This last year in the life of BEC has strengthened our conviction that we as a church are completely dependent on God. BEC's rich history and the blessing we have enjoyed over many years is no guarantee of a healthy future. We labour in vain if God does not build the house and so must be a church of prayer. We therefore want to encourage the whole church to be devoted to prayer, both privately and corporately. It is no exaggeration to say that our weekly prayer meetings are the most important things that we do as a church! They may look small and insignificant but because we are utterly dependent upon God these times of prayer are vital!

We have four regular prayer meetings; ***Monday 8pm, Wednesday 12:30pm, Friday 7:30am and Sunday 6pm.*** We have so many regular prayer meetings because we want to make it as easy as possible for as many of the church family to gather together to pray.

We know that many of us live very busy lives. You may not feel able to attend a prayer meeting every week but we would love to encourage every church member to commit to attend one of these prayer meetings at least once a month as we cry out together to our God and Father for our church, our town, our nation and the world.