

# Vision Night Report

## Introduction

Vision Night is our half-yearly church meeting. We met on Monday 9 Nov 2009 for a meal followed by worship and a discussion of a number of areas of church life that are on our minds at present. About 30 were present.

## Spotlight

Sam, Thea and Sarah shared with us their reason for being Confirmed this Sunday and we prayed for them. Jan also wanted to give thanks to the church family for their support during her successful course of treatment for breast cancer.

## Finance Report

Edward updated us on progress towards more accurate recording and evaluation of our income and expenditure and introduced our new expenses claim form that is kept in the vestry. We are also taking responsibility for more of the ongoing processes relating to our finances that All Saints have previously done for us.

In time, we hope to be able to make transactions to and from "The Ascension Church" rather than "All Saints Patcham PCC" to increase our identity. The parish budget group is meeting to review this year's progress and will report back on this shortly.

## Thursday Club

Jean Roberts reminded us of the history and the purpose of the club and the present challenge to support and evangelise the elderly. A new programme of events, outings and publicity is being developed to widen the appeal of the group, though transport, men, and able bodied support are always in short supply!

## Mission Action Plan

This summer we outlined a Mission Action Plan 2009-2010 to focus our priorities. At its heart was the idea to package up the work of the Focus Group and widen involvement in decision-making and action. At the meeting we heard reports from the six groups that were set up to further this.

### MINISTRY GROUP (deeper with God)

**Aim:** to oversee and encourage spiritual growth in the church. In 2009 to review Home Groups and develop an evening service. **Progress:** Andy Bousfield (chair) outlined the aims and noted the changes in home group this term and the new evening service. He also communicated our desire to be clearer in our notices, and spotlights, and outlined how we support Missions.

### EVENTS GROUP (doing things together)

**Aim:** responsible for organising specific events that support the vision of the church. **Progress:** Olive Ridge (chair) reminded us this includes such events as the BBQ, Harvest meal, Ascension Arts (which will have a break in 2010) and spoke of a possible New Year Party in January.

### FRESH EXPRESSIONS GROUP (reaching new people)

**Aim:** to consider new ways to reach people who don't come to church. **Progress:** Edward (chair) is looking for ways to do 'church' outside our buildings and the group is planning an evangelistic event in March (like our Wine Tasting event this year) to support the *Passion For Life* mission at which Roger Carswell will speak at Brighton locations on 25 March 2010.

# Vision Night Report continued...

## **FABRIC GROUP (safe and accessible)**

**Aim:** to maintain and improve our buildings, to design a new health and safety policy, and consider a reordering project.

**Progress:** Christine (chair) pointed out the newly painted stairwell and top corridor and fielded questions about what a reordering project might look like. Its aims would be modernisation and accessibility - some things just have to be done anyway. We are still at the stage of talking to architects and getting plans of the existing building. Christine welcomes extra help with the practical things around the building.

## **WEBSITE GROUP**

(clarifying communication)

**Aim:** to improve our communication and design a new website. **Progress:** we have appointed a web designer and in the Spring we will no longer share a webspace with All Saints who are also re-writing theirs.

## **CHILDREN & FAMILIES GROUP**

(focusing on families)

**Aim:** Seeking to serve and draw in families, exploring how church looks for families, looking into the possible employment of a worker. **Progress:** Katy (chair) outlined growth in Squibs, pressure at school on attendance at Bible lunch clubs, and a time of drawing back to reflect on the best way forward. A children and families worker would have a different role from Katy's but would be a big undertaking for us and needs to be something we are committed to as a church.

## **Feedback Session**

After a time of discussion there was a time of feedback and questions. **Events** such as beetle drive, quiz night, pub games, film & popcorn, glamorous meal, events for couples, men and women, and afternoon times were mentioned. Possibility of the Withdean hospitality suite as a **Community**

**Centre** was raised for Focus Group to consider action upon. If the **Malcolm Young Room** is the reason for the growth of Squibs because of its accessibility then is this the room to expand rather than the church? **Prayer** at all levels - is it happening, how do we have feedback on what is happening when we pray together.

## **Closing Thoughts**

Andy closed with a reading from Mark 10:45-52. Jesus' statement that he has come to be a servant by giving his life for many and the encounter with blind Bartimaeus.

**What did Barti know of Jesus?** - and yet he realised that Jesus had something valuable to offer him. How much do people realise this today? Why is this, what do they need to see in us to take note of Jesus?

**Why did the people try to suppress Barti?** Did they think Jesus was not for him? Or that Jesus would not be interested in him? I wonder if we ever do this and deny people the opportunity because we don't think Jesus could be for them?

**What do you want me to do for you?** asked Jesus. He has come to serve and give his life as a ransom for us. Would we be different people if we honestly asked Jesus to serve us in the way he has offered? How could we more effectively serve others by asking this question of them? The greatest gift is salvation that accompanies the giving of spiritual sight.

We have a great challenge ahead of us. Not only serving our community this Christmas (who are you inviting?) But to serve the different sectors of our community a) the elderly, b) our peers, c) younger families. And the financial challenge that comes with this. We need to pray for wisdom that we might serve effectively. We closed with a time of prayer. [end]