

Rector's Ramblings

September 2006 - No 1

Evening Service Changes Home Groups Autumn Plans Prayer Opportunities



You see the strangest things at Summer conferences...

Dear Friends,

One of the important messages to come out of New Wine this summer was the need to communicate clearly, and by as many means as possible, all that is happening in the Church. Hence Rector's Ramblings, the first in a regular flood of messages from me to you! In this edition, you will find details of changes to our evening service, information about what is happening in our Home Groups, and some important dates for the period up to the end of the year. I hope that Rector's Ramblings will become an important channel of information, along with our weekly notice sheet, the church website, weekly e-mails, a new e-mail discussion group (more details of this later!), and of course not forgetting the notices in the services! I know this seems obvious, but please do take note of these things - they are there to help you know what's happening at All Saints - you could miss something really good if you don't!!

I hope you have enjoyed the summer, and managed to find time for

Contact details

I would be glad to receive your comments or suggestions about any aspect of the life of All Saints!

rest and relaxation, and perhaps some time away on holiday. Several of us from All Saints camped together at New Wine - everyone I have spoken to thoroughly enjoyed the conference, and were blessed by God in various different ways. There are many photos around, some of which may well appear on screen in church - but not too many of the Rector snoozing, I hope! Other people have been to Gannah Camp, Living Water, to the Spring Harvest Holidays site in France, Soul Survivor, and I'm sure there are others I don't know about. The Summer break is a great time to get some good teaching and ministry, and to meet with Jesus to be 're-charged' for the year ahead. If you've never been to anything like it, do consider booking for next year - we'll be going to New Wine again, and I'm sure that others will be only too pleased to tell you about their experiences of the various other events as well.

With every blessing,

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Home Group News

A new series of Home Group Studies, based on The Screwtape Letters by C S Lewis, has been prepared by Mike and Kathy English. An introduction to the series will be given on Tuesday 19th September in the Church Hall as part of the Prayer and Praise evening. The course looks really good - this would be an excellent time to join a Home Group if you're not in one already. Contact the Church Office for details of how to join!

Prayer and Praise returns!

I am please to announce the return of the monthly Prayer and Praise meetings, after a long absence. No-one is quite sure where they have been, but I hope you'll agree that it's good to have them back. The first meeting is, as mentioned above, on Tuesday 19th September at 8.00pm in the Church Hall. Each meeting will be a bit different, but will include praise and prayer (as you might reasonably expect!) and some other content as well. One thing especially to emphasise - this is not a central home group meeting! It is for anyone and everyone to come to, whether or not you are in a home group. (Over the months, the evenings will be on different days of the week, so that no-one's home group will be disadvantaged. It is therefore expected that home groups falling on the evening of Prayer and Praise will cancel their meeting that week.) I hope that many of you will come to the Prayer and Praise evenings, to praise our Lord and Saviour, to pray together for what matters, and to enjoy fellowship together.

Evening Service Changes

As many of you will know, for some time now, All Saints @ 7 has been struggling. Numbers have fallen, but, more importantly, it has become clear that AS@7 has had its season, and it is time to move on to something new. I am sure that the original vision for AS@7 was right, and many people have been significantly impacted and blessed by the Lord through it over the years, however, time and people move on, and I believe that the Lord is leading us in a different direction. I have spoken to many people over recent weeks, and all have been enthusiastic about a new start for our evening service. In the short term, there will be no service at all at 7.00pm on Sundays. This is to give a clear break between AS@7 and the new service.

On Sunday 1st October, we will launch the new service. It will be called, simply, the Evening Celebration. The service will consist of Worship, Word and Ministry.

Refreshments will be available from 6.30pm in the foyer - the famous hot chocolate and donuts will still be on the menu! The service will start promptly at 7.00pm, with a brief welcome and any necessary announcements, followed by an extended time of sung worship, with a celebratory emphasis. The Word element (beginning at 7.30pm) will give an opportunity for extended, in-depth, Biblical teaching. Initially, this will consist of a series of sermons exploring current issues, the first of which will be 'Christian Consumers?'. I hope to be able to publish a full list of topics and speakers soon. Future series may focus on particular books of the Bible, lessons from Christian history, and so on. This will give us the opportunity for 'meatier' sermons than are possible within the constraints of the morning service, within the overall objective: 'to prepare God's people for works of service' (Ephesians 4.12). Following the Word comes Ministry from approximately 8.00pm, when prayer ministry will be available as part of the service.

From the same time, further refreshments will be on offer in the foyer. So, even if you have received ministry *and* enjoyed a second hot chocolate, the latest you will be going home will be about 8.30pm, so it won't be a late night before Monday morning!

The Evening Celebration is **for all**: the teaching will be at an adult level, but anyone who wants to is very welcome to come, young or old. Sermons will be taped, so if one half of a couple comes, the other half can still benefit. (On the first Sunday of each month, there will be a separate Get Real evening session for young people aged 13+ - Carolyn Tiller has further details of this.)

The 5.30pm Evening Prayer will not be affected by this change, and will continue as at present.

I hope you will give the Evening Celebration a try - I believe it is part of God's way forward for All Saints Milton. See you there on October 1st!

Autumn 2006 - What's On (so far!!)		Prayer	
19 Sep	8.00pm Prayer and Praise - Home Group course launch	13 Nov	8.00pm Prayer and Praise with Adrian and Jane Shutt, CMS mission partners in Uganda
24 Sept	10.30am Morning Worship with Junior Church leaders and helpers commissioning, and welcome to Chris Farmer, our new Children's and Youth Worker.	3 Dec	3.00pm Christingle Service
30 Sep	Harvest Supper	17 Dec	10.30am Junior Church Nativity
1 Oct	10.30am Harvest Service 7.00pm Launch of Evening Celebration	19 Dec	8.00pm Carols by Candlelight
18 Oct	8.00pm Prayer and Praise	24 Dec	9.00am Holy Communion (said - replaces both 8.00am and 10.30am services today) 3.00pm Crib Service 11.30pm Midnight Holy Communion
29 Oct	10.30am All Saints Service	25 Dec	8.00am Holy Communion 10.30am Christmas Morning Worship, followed by short Holy Communion at 11.20
31 Oct	Light Party	31 Dec	10.30am Morning Worship, followed by short Holy Communion at 11.20 (No other services today)
5 Nov	3.00pm 'Service of Remembering' for those bereaved during the past year.		
12 Nov	10.30am Remembrance Service		

One of our core values as a church is this: *Prayer is central to everything we are and do*. I believe that to be true, but also believe that we could be doing a lot more of it together! At present, our only opportunity for corporate prayer outside services and home groups is Saturday prayer at 9.00am. This is a very dedicated but very small group, which does not usually include me as Saturday is normally my day off. I would like to canvass your views on a change to this arrangement. My suggestion is that we have a weekly prayer time on a Friday morning at 7.00am (yes, really!), so that those who go out to work could come, and to make it a real 'sacrifice of praise' for us all! This would replace Saturday prayer, except that once a month we have a Prayer Breakfast on a Saturday, with a light breakfast (e.g. tea cereal and toast) at 8.45am, and an hour of prayer from 9.00am to 10.00am. What do you think? Would you come to either or both? Would you miss Saturday prayer? Please let me know by the middle of September.