

# Feltham Evangelical Church Newsletter: September 2008

Manor Lane, Feltham TW13 4JQ T:020 8844 0352 W:[www.felthamevangelicalchurch.org.uk](http://www.felthamevangelicalchurch.org.uk) E:[info@felthamevangelicalchurch.org.uk](mailto:info@felthamevangelicalchurch.org.uk)

**A Bible-based church making known the Christian Faith**

## Calendar

### w/c 31<sup>st</sup> August

31st 9.30.a.m Lord's Supper  
31st 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (Philip Venables)  
31st 6.30.p.m Prayer Meeting  
1st 7.30.p.m Prayer Meeting  
2nd 10.00.a.m. Prayer Meeting  
3rd 7.30.p.m Prayer / Bible Study  
4th 7.30.p.m Church Members Meeting  
5th 7.00.a.m Prayer Meeting  
5th 9.30.a.m "Open House"  
6th 9.00.a.m Prayer Meeting  
6th 10.30.a.m. Open Air

### w/c 7<sup>th</sup> September

7th 9.30.a.m Lord's Supper  
7th 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (Philip Venables)  
7th 11.20.a.m. Sunday School  
9th 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse  
10th 7.30.p.m Prayer / Bible Study  
12th 9.30.a.m "Open House"  
13th 7.00.p.m. Feltham Bible Focus; John Legg (Can I lose my salvation?)

### w/c 14<sup>th</sup> September

14th 9.30.a.m Lord's Supper (John Legg)

14th 11.00.a.m Morning Service (John Legg)  
14h 11.20.a.m. Sunday School  
14th 1.p.m. Fellowship Lunch  
14th 2.p.m. Afternoon Service (John Lodge)  
16th 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse  
17th 7.30.p.m Prayer / Bible Study  
19th 9.30.a.m "Open House"

### w/c 21<sup>st</sup> September

21st 9.30.a.m Prayer and Praise  
21st 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (Philip Venables) with Lord's Supper  
21st 11.20.a.m. Sunday School  
23rd 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse  
24th 7.30.p.m Prayer / Bible Study (Malcolm Evans)  
26th 9.30.a.m "Open House"

### w/c 28<sup>th</sup> September

28th 9.30.a.m Lord's Supper  
28th 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (David Legg)  
28th 11.20.a.m. Sunday School  
30th 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse  
1st (Oct) 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study  
3rd 9.30.a.m "Open House"  
4th 10.30.a.m. Open Air

## News

Daniella Lee has moved to a new flat on Hounslow Heath.

Nihuska, Daniel and Stephanie Villegas plan to return to Venezuela later in the year.

Michael Lossley is presently in Jersey Ward at Hillingdon Hospital.

Chinwe Onwuemana is now working as a doctor at Southend Hospital. Moreover, in late August Chuks, Chinwe and Ashlee are due to move and set up home in Southend. We trust God's blessing up them in their new circumstances.

Julio and Margaret Alverio have now moved to a bungalow on Clifton Avenue.

## Notes

Feltham Bible Focus On 13<sup>th</sup> September we welcome John Legg to come and preach the Word of Truth to us. The subject we have set for him to consider is "Can I lose my salvation?".

Fellowship Lunch. Coinciding with Mr Legg's visit on the following day, September 14<sup>th</sup>, we plan to have a bring and share fellowship lunch. Please come and join in if you can.

Middle East Reformed Fellowship After the Fellowship lunch on September 14<sup>th</sup> John Lodge from Hayes Town Chapel is due to speak about the work of the Middle East Reformed fellowship.

Sunday School re-commences after the summer holiday on September 7<sup>th</sup>. If your child is aged 4 or above, up to and including school year 6, then Sunday school is available for them. In the new term Sunday school is due to be split into two groups. Pray God's hand for good on this new arrangement. Please also pray for Sheila, Trish, Diana and Daphne as they are involved in this ministry for God to the children.

Lighthouse re-commences on September 9<sup>th</sup>. We trust God's blessing upon the children and teachers, Trish, Jean and Sheila, as a new term starts.

Week of prayer The summer holidays are now passing away and the new term is upon us. So it is good to have an opportunity to commit ourselves to God with a week of special prayer meetings in the week commencing on August 31<sup>st</sup>. Let us pray to see people converted and greater godliness among God's people.

Church Members Meeting The Church Members Meeting is due to take place on September 4<sup>th</sup>. We pray to the LORD for a special time of fellowship.

Gift Aid If you are giving to the church and are a taxpayer then you should consider giving through the Gift Aid scheme. This scheme is beneficial because it allows the church to claim back the tax upon the amount you give. If you would like to know more about this then please speak to Sheila.

## Spiritual Notes *Should a Christian drink?*

By such a question we mean, should a Christian drink alcohol? Christians have wrestled with this subject over the years. Godly people have reached differing conclusions. But what of ourselves; should we drink?

We must start with the very clear statements of scripture. We can therefore assert, without reservation, that drunkenness is wrong. It is sinful. The clearest statement here is in Eph. 5:18a: **Do not get drunk on wine.**

Being drunk is also listed as one of the works of the flesh (see Gal 5:21). This would indicate that it is not a condition for the godly to desire. Moreover it is a characteristic of our former life of ungodliness (see 1 Cor 6:10). Accordingly, drunkenness is something that should be shunned in our new life devoted to righteousness. Paul, emphasizes this when he says, **Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness** (Rom:13:13a).

It is observed, as well, that excessive alcohol consumption always has bad consequences. According to the British Crime Survey in 2007/8 in nearly half (45%) of all violent incidents, victims believed offenders to be under the influence of alcohol. Paul underlines this tendency when he states that getting drunk with wine **leads to debauchery** (Eph 5:18b). There is a wildness about someone who has been taken hold of by alcohol. The bad consequences of drunkenness are, interestingly, seen when drunkenness is first related in the Bible. In Genesis 9:21b we read of Noah that when he drank some **wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent**. Moreover, the drunkenness of Noah appears, in some unexplained way, to have led to a curse of his grandson, Canaan (see Gen 9: 22-25). Solomon summarizes the dangers of alcohol consumption when he says **Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise** (Proverbs 20:1).

This leads us to think about how drunkenness is an essentially de-humanising experience. We, as humans were created in the image of God. Drunkenness leads to a total denial of this. In Proverbs 23:29-35 there is a graphic portrayal of how drunkenness de-humanises. **Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaints? Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes? Those who linger over wine, who go to sample bowls of mixed wine. Do not gaze at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly! In the end it bites like a snake and poisons like a viper. Your eyes will see strange sights and your mind imagine confusing things. You will be like one sleeping on the high seas, lying on top of the rigging. "They hit me," you will say, "but I'm not hurt! They beat me, but I don't feel it! When will I wake up so I can find another drink?"**

But does this mean that the use of alcohol is wrong or just the abuse? The actions of our Saviour at the wedding in Canaan when He turned water into wine would clearly indicate that alcohol consumption is allowed in scripture. From the response of the master of the feast it appears that the wine was fully fermented and hence alcoholic (see John 2:8-10). Further there are clearly medicinal uses for alcoholic substances. Paul urged Timothy to not be so scrupulous and use some wine for the sake of his suffering stomach (see 1 Tim. 5:23). Lemuel also says **Give beer to those who are perishing, wine to those who are in anguish; let them drink and forget their poverty and remember their misery no more** (Prov. 31:6-7). This scripture only gives permission for the use of alcoholic drink in very limited circumstances; that is when someone is dying or has severe mental problems. Further, the alcohol is not for socializing, but for medicine. Let those who use this statement to justify their consumption of alcohol be very careful lest they overstep the mark and sin through becoming drunk.

Clearly though we, as Christians, need to be exceptionally careful in regard to how we use alcohol. If there is not rigorous discipline then one drink can lead to another can lead to the abomination of drunkenness. Moreover, we must be careful to be sensitive to the situations of our fellow believers. A converted alcoholic can still be vulnerable to the pull of alcohol. Accordingly, if we drink it may encourage them to drink themselves with possibly disastrous consequences. Paul accordingly exhorts us. **It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall.** (Rom 14:21).

We also need to be aware of the social environment in which we live. In the UK we live in a society which is being detrimentally affected by widespread binge drinking which causes associated drunkenness and leads to wild behavior. This is affecting both men and women. In other places, such as Mediterranean countries like Spain or Greece, the approach to alcohol consumption is much more sensible in society at large. However we, as disciples of the LORD in the UK need to be aware of the disastrous impact on society and public health which excessive alcohol consumption is having. Accordingly as we seek to be the **salt of the earth** and the **light of the world** (see Matt. 5:13-14) we are best to distance ourselves from alcohol consumption as much as we can. As someone has said: *Christians should determine not to be part of the problem, but rather part of the solution by choosing the safe path of abstinence from alcohol.*

Finally let us always remember two exhortations from Paul. Let us:

- **not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.** (Eph 5:18-20).
- whether we eat or drink or whatever we do, do it all for the glory of God (see 1 Cor 10:31).

So, whether we abstain or drink in moderation, let us make sure we do nothing to hinder our praising of our God. And let us do all for the glory of God.

