

# Feltham Evangelical Church Newsletter: November 2009

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

## Calendar

### w/c 25<sup>th</sup> October

25th 9.30.a.m. Lord's Supper(Micky Mollalegn)  
25th 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (Philip Venables)  
25th 11.15.a.m. Sunday School  
28th 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study  
30th 9.30.a.m. Open House

### w/c 1<sup>st</sup> November

1st 9:30.a.m. Lord's Supper  
1st 11:00.a.m. Morning Service (Philip Venables);  
refreshments afterwards  
1st 11.15.a.m. Sunday School  
3rd 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse  
4th 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study  
6th 9.30.a.m. Open House  
7th 10.30.p.m. Open Air

### w/c 8<sup>th</sup> November

8th 9.30.a.m. Lord's Supper (David Mead)  
8th 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (David Mead)  
8th 11.15.a.m. Sunday School  
8th 1.00.p.m. Fellowship Lunch  
8th 2.00.p.m. Afternoon Service (David Mead)  
10th 9.30.a.m. Prayer Meeting  
10th 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse  
11th 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study  
13th 9.30.a.m. Open House  
14th 8.30.a.m. Autumn Clear-up

14th 7.00.p.m. Feltham Bible Focus (Norman Wells;  
*Does the family matter?*)

### w/c 15<sup>th</sup> November

15th 9.30.a.m. Prayer and Praise  
15th 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (Philip Venables)  
including Lord's Supper  
15th 11.15.a.m. Sunday School  
17th 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse  
18th 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study (Malcolm Evans)  
20th 9.30.a.m. "Open House"

### w/c 22<sup>nd</sup> November

22nd 9.30.a.m. Lord's Supper (Tim Whitton)  
22nd 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (Tim Whitton)  
22nd 11.15.a.m. Sunday School  
24th 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse  
25th 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study (Phil Symes)  
27th 9.30.a.m. Open House

### w/c 29<sup>th</sup> November

29th 9.30.a.m. Lord's Supper (Phil Symes)  
29th 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (Phil Symes)  
29th 11.15.a.m. Sunday School  
1st (Dec) 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse  
2nd 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study (Graham King)  
4th 9.30.a.m. Open House  
5th 10.30.a.m. Open Air

## News

Philip, May Lin, Michael, Joshua, Daniel and Zechariah Venables plan to be away in Malaysia from November 17<sup>th</sup> until December 7<sup>th</sup>.

Maria de Campos has started a course in office skills at West Thames College.

James Phillips finished his airport warehouse job in late September. Pray for him as he looks for further work.

## Notes

Feltham Bible Focus focuses this month upon the family. Norman Wells, Director of Family Education Trust, is due to be the preacher. This takes place on November 14<sup>th</sup> at 7.00.p.m. Come along if you can.

Review of Activities Our present arrangement for our services has been operational for nearly three years. It is a good time then to take time to consider how the LORD wants us to be organising our affairs. If you have any suggestions / observations please mention these to Philip before December 14<sup>th</sup>. The review includes all our activities. The big question to ask is what does the LORD want us to do now. Remember that we need to pray to God to reveal His way to us. Also if you have any suggestions / observations then make sure that they are in line with biblical teaching.

Autumn Clear-up On November 14<sup>th</sup> we intend to spend the morning clearing up the grounds of the church building. Come and help if you can.

Fellowship Lunch On November 8<sup>th</sup> we welcome David Mead for his annual visit. On that day we are due to have a fellowship lunch together which is due to be on a bring-and-share basis. In the afternoon David will give an update on the work he is involved in in Italy.

## Spiritual Notes      **Good manners**

Surely none of us can doubt that we live in a discourteous age. But why has this come about? Today everybody has rights, but few seem to think about fulfilling responsibilities. Accordingly, we live in a very selfish society with little thought for respecting and honouring others. Hence there is an absence of good manners in dealing with one another. In fact, the anti-social behaviour and "job" culture which causes such significant problems is simply bad manners demonstrated in a big way.

The concept of rights makes everyone feel very self-important. It leads to pride. "I deserve to have so many things and therefore I must be someone special" is how people reason things out. This kind of self-importance is at the root of all sin. It is "me", not God, who is the king of the universe and therefore

I do what I want to do. With this mindset there is no tendency to say "please", "thank you" or "sorry". Why say please when I have a right to have it?! Why say thank you when I deserved it anyway?! Why say sorry when it was your fault for getting in my way?! With this kind of thinking it is not surprising that, in the society around us, we find there to be such bad manners.

This lack of courtesy manifests in other directions as well. Inappropriate dress, refusal to follow instructions, failing to keep appointments, shunning people when it is personally advantageous to do so, barging in front of others, refusing to give up your seat to those in need. The list could go on. And why does all this happen? When self-importance pre-dominates "I" am the centre of reference for everything, then these things emerge. So we do not think in a situation about whether we have unnecessarily hurt someone. Rather we think about ourselves. If someone got hurt in me getting what I want then so be it; I am not bothered. This is all very reminiscent of the society in the time of the Judges when **Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit** (Judges 21:25)

There is an even sadder thing, though, and that is that among Christians good manners are so often absent. This should surely not be. The reason why it should be so very different with ourselves is that we have a completely different centre of reference. We are not taken up with ourselves, but with God. This tendency to put God first and give Him priority in everything is at the heart of our Christian experience. The pattern prayer taught by our LORD Jesus gives this emphasis when it commences with bringing us to look towards God. **'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven** (Matt. 6:9b-10). We start (and continue) the Christian life through repenting and believing the gospel. In doing this the Christian is acknowledging how great God is and how poor he/she is. This attitude is at the heart of all genuine repentance. We only really confess and turn from our sin when we appreciate how great God is.

The consequences of all this, in respect of our manners, are substantial. The Christian realizes he deserves only eternal punishment and yet he has received eternal blessing through Jesus Christ. This is grace! Knowing how much God has done for us then how can a Christian be anything but courteous to others. So "please" and "thank you" are a natural part of our vocabulary. We are also always ready to say "sorry" to anyone who has been unnecessarily hurt by our behaviour. All this is because, as people blessed by God, we are no longer obsessed with our rights, but with blessing others. Good manners should ooze from our beings as naturally as breathing. Christianity is an others first religion. Let us ponder these words: **Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves** (Rom. 12:10).

The total inappropriateness of bad manners among Christians is seen in Paul's words to the Ephesians: **But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving** (Eph. 5:3-4). The opening statements here seem to embrace all that bad manners could involve. Whereas good manners revolve around thankfulness

Every kindness that the Christian receives should then lead to thankfulness. In fact we should be seeking opportunities to be thankful. Has someone shown you hospitality? Then why not send a thank you note. Has someone blessed you through their prayers? Then thank them. Has a workman been efficient and helpful in doing something for you? Then thank him. In all this we are **remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'** " (Acts 20:35).

The same inclination should be found when we need to request something from someone. In such instances we should always be ready to say "please". And when we offend someone, and there is need of repentance, we are ever ready to say sorry and seek to bind up the wounds of the offense.

In the light of all this why is it that Christians are so bad-mannered. Surely it is that we have so little appreciation of how gracious God has been to us. The more we appreciate how poor we are and how kind God has been then the more good manners will be seen in our lives. It is only the proud and those pre-occupied with themselves who refuse to exercise the common courtesies of life.

To conclude then let us heed the words of Paul who said: **Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves** (Phil. 2:3). And when we remember that surely we will be well mannered.

