

# **Feltham Evangelical Church** *Newsletter: December 2009*

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

## **Calendar**

### **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 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse  
2nd 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study (Phil Symes)  
4th 9.30.a.m. Open House  
5th 10.30.a.m. Open Air

### **w/c 6<sup>th</sup> December**

6th 9.30.a.m. Lord's Supper (Graham King)  
6th 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (Graham King);  
refreshments afterwards  
6th 11.15.a.m. Sunday School  
8th 9.30.a.m. Prayer Meeting  
8th 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse  
9th 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study  
11th 9.30.a.m. Open House  
12th 7.00.p.m. Feltham Bible Focus (Jeremy Brooks):  
*Reconciliation! Why, How and Who?*

### **w/c 13<sup>th</sup> December**

13th 9.30.a.m. Lord's Supper (Jeremy Brooks)

13th 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (Jeremy Brooks)

13th 11.15.a.m. Sunday School

13th 1.00.p.m. Fellowship Lunch

13th 2.00.p.m. Afternoon Service (Jeremy Brooks)

15th 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse (Parent's Evening)

16th 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study

18th 9.30.a.m. Open House

### **w/c 20<sup>th</sup> December**

20th 9.30.a.m. Prayer and Praise

20th 11.00.a.m. Christmas Carol Service (Philip Venables)

20th 4.30.p.m. Lord's Supper (at home of Michael Loosley in  
Harmondsworth)

23rd 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study

25th 10.00.a.m. Christmas Day Service

### **w/c 27<sup>th</sup> December**

27th 9.30.a.m. Lord's Supper

27th 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (George Verwer)

30th 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study

2nd (Jan) 10.30.a.m. Open Air

## **Spiritual Notes      *Be Reasonable!***

It is a reasonable thing to have faith in God through Jesus Christ. Everything about the biblical gospel which focuses on how the Saviour came to rescue sinners is coherent, sensible and logical. To receive this message by faith is the only sensible thing to do. When we believe, our faith is not blind, it is not "a leap in the dark"; it is reasonable.

To have faith is to bring ourselves in line with the eternal purposes of God. Sin always puts "self" on the throne, but faith puts God on the throne. This **God is not a God of disorder but of peace** (1 Cor. 14:33a). When we have faith we plunge into the flow of God's purposes. That way is the way of order and peace. This is the sensible thing to do.

God's universe was perfectly orderly and harmonious when originally created. Sin marred this and created chaos. Sin puts mankind out of sync with their Creator. Through Jesus Christ and His dealing with sin at the cross of Calvary God has performed the great act of restoration. For all who believe, chaotic, empty, meaningless, lives are retrieved by God's grace and made to be for the glory of God. An example of this process is seen in Luke 8:42b-48 in the healing of the woman who had had severe bleeding for twelve years. When she touched the Saviour she was instantly healed. As a result the LORD said to her **"Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace"** (48b). This woman, on account of her illness, was excluded from normal life, but now she was in God's family; she was a daughter. Her trust in Jesus expressed in her touch changed it all. Was this reasonable? Of course it was! Peace now filled her life rather than rejection and turmoil.

When by faith we have stepped into God's favour and experienced the blessings of being in His way of peace we start to live reasonable lives. These lives are governed by the knowledge that faith always gives God the priority. Accordingly, our lives should be devoted to honouring God. Paul puts it like this. **Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God— this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is— his good, pleasing and perfect will** (Rom. 12:1-2). The word "spiritual" refers to our reasonable response to all that God has done for us. There is every good reason for devoting ourselves to God.

Moreover, Peter refers to how we should **always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect** (1 Pet. 3:15b). The implication here is that we do not have hope in our hearts just because we have warm feelings. Rather there are solid reasons for us looking forward to heaven to be with our Saviour forever. Accordingly, whenever asked we can bring forth these reasons.

In contrast to what we have so far considered is the fact that unbelief is always illogical. Reasons abound why we should believe. Nature around declares that there is a Creator who made all things. Conscience speaks within us to declare the reality of right and wrong. History testifies to the reality of Jesus Christ living and dying in this world. These are all reasons to point to belief. Yet beyond all these there is the abiding testimony of the Word of God which declares God's purpose to glorify His Name through the salvation from sin obtained by Jesus Christ.

As a result of all of these things the overall thrust of scripture in summed up in the words of Paul **men are without excuse** (Rom. 1:20b). Moreover, if unbelief was reasonable then surely hell will be filled with people justifying their position. And yet scripture declares that this is not so. As an instance the condemned man in Luke 16:25-31 did not want to argue his case with God. Rather he asked God to **send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment** (vv. 27b-28).

The unreasonableness of unbelief is also seen in how people respond when people are challenged to give reason for their unbelieving actions. After the people had demanded that Barabbas be spared instead of Jesus, the following happened: **"What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?" Pilate asked them. "Crucify him!" they shouted. "Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"** (Mark 15:12b-14). Their unbelieving actions were utterly without genuine reasons. Their raising of their voices camouflaged the fact that they could give no reasonable reasons for their actions.

In contrast we as Christians should always be willing to say why we take a certain position on an issue. To say "I want it this way" or "I do not want it that way" is just not good enough. Our faith is a reasonable faith; let us make sure we are those give reason for the position we take on issues. This is particularly pertinent for us as a church at the present time as we seek to review our activities. If we have desires in a certain direction we should be able to back these up with appropriate reasonings.

## News

<u>Comfort, Keleche and Samson Kalu</u> are due to be in Nigeria until December 9 <sup>th</sup> .
<u>Lilian Kerr</u> passed away on October 31 <sup>st</sup> . The funeral took place on 12 <sup>th</sup> November. She attended the church services during recent years. We will miss her warm interest in the church.
<u>Margaret Lee and Daniella Lee</u> are both due to be away over Christmas. Margaret in Israel and Daniella in Prague.
<u>Miranda Matthews</u> is due to be away until the New year visiting family in Grenada.
<u>Philip, May Lin, Michael, Joshua, Daniel and Zechariah Venables</u> are due back from Malaysia on December 7 <sup>th</sup> .

## Notes

<u>Lighthouse</u> draws to the end of a further term this month. We thank God for His mercies upon the two groups. It has been good to see an average of about twenty children coming during this term. The term finishes with a Parent's Evening on December 15 <sup>th</sup> .
<u>Christmas Cards</u> This year why not consider reducing your Christmas Card list (and save on cardboard and paper) by <b>not</b> sending to others in the church? Instead, put the money you save towards a good cause. Put your saved money in an envelope, mark it Christmas Cards and put it in the collection box. Any monies collected this way will be passed to London City Mission.
<u>Review of Activities</u> Further to the note in last month's newsletter if anyone has any observations regarding our services / activities or suggestions for any changes please tell Philip by December 14 <sup>th</sup> . Please also note comments in the Spiritual Notes above.
<u>Protestant Truth Society (PTS)</u> Over the weekend of December 12 <sup>th</sup> / 13 <sup>th</sup> we have a visit from Jeremy Brooks who is Director of PTS. He is due to preach four times for us. On Saturday evening (7.00.p.m.) his subject is "Reconciliation! Why, How and Who?" And on Sunday afternoon (2.00.p.m.) his subject is: "Should we join up with the Catholics?"
<u>Fellowship Lunch</u> On December 13 <sup>th</sup> , to co-incide with the visit of Mr Brooks, we plan to have our monthly fellowship lunch. This is on a bring-and-share basis. Please come if you can.
<u>Christmas Day</u> After the service on Christmas Day there is an invitation to share a Christmas lunch together. All connected with the church are welcome to join in this. If you intend to stay you <u>must</u> inform May Lin by December 22nd so that the relevant catering can be set in place.
<u>Open House</u> On December 19 <sup>th</sup> we intend to have a festive flavour to Open House. Besides seasonal refreshments we intend to sing some carols etc. starting at 10.45.a.m. (approximately).

