

The Xplore team (or most of it) met last night. It was, I thought, an excellent meeting. As we explored the details of what he hope to do we became very aware of how scary this is (we are stepping into unknown territory) as well as how exciting (we are stepping into unknown territory)!

Richard S said that he felt that all Xplore leaders should keep two 'A's in mind: Authenticity and Accessibility. Everything we do should be as authentic to the good news of the kingdom as we can make it; we should never attempt to water down the core message of salvation. We should also work as hard as we can (and be as open to the Spirit's creativity as possible) so that what we present and lead will be as accessible as possible to those who have no experience of 'church'.

After some discussion we decided to adopt the 'Preparation', 'Word', 'Prayer', Praise' format for the four sessions - but to hold them very loosely. Most importantly, people signed up to take responsibility for the different slots. So the timetable for 2nd December looks like this:

10:00 - Quiet time.

10:10 - 'Preparation': Shirleyanne Seel & Val Fryer, focusing on waiting.

10:30 - Quiet time.

10:40 - 'Word': Richard Ball, who is going to ask Chris Barry to work with him.

11:00 - Quiet time.

11:10 - 'Prayer': Margaret McPhee & Daphne Gibson.

11:30 - Quiet time.

11:40 - 'Praise': Richard McPhee & Barry Gibson.

12:00 - Close.

We acknowledged that people might come and go during the sessions and that we needed to build a readiness for that into the way we do things. This means being prepared to accommodate those who wander in, perhaps by acknowledging and welcoming them or by adopting a 'liquid' approach where a number of possibilities are presented and moving around becomes the norm.

(Richard S pointed out that this can be done with discussion groups as well as with prayer or worship zones. The law of two feet ("when you are neither learning nor contributing, move to another group") can be useful here.)

We also talked about the ten minute slots which I've called 'Quiet Time'. We didn't come to any decisions and I suspect that we will learn from experience how best to use them. Some suggestions were to use them as times for silent prayer or contemplation, perhaps having some meditative music and/or images running.

It was also suggested that this time might be useful for prayer ministry or discussion as a follow-up to the preceding session. We also acknowledged the probability that they will be needed for some sort of set up time by the following session. Richard B suggested that session leaders take responsibility for the Quiet Time following their session.

We also agreed that it would be to meet for a brief informal communion so that we start the day in prayer and worship. There is normally an 08:00 communion at Chedgrave on the first Sunday. This would be rescheduled to 09:00 and would be for everybody involved in Xpressions Cafe, not just Xplore (as well as anyone who wished to attend, of course).

We also decided to stay on to have a bring-and-share lunch together and to have time for fellowship and debriefing. (So by enfolding our outreach in Xpressions Cafe in worship and community we will be demonstrating and enacting the three dimensions of church: UP, IN, OUT.)

The clergy will be available to support, resource and participate as appropriate. Nigel pointed out that we each have a lot of resources which could be useful. Richard S pointed people in the direction of Jonny Baker's 'Worship Tricks' (<http://jonnybaker.blogs.com/>).

Finally, a word on newspapers. At the staff meeting on Tuesday afternoon it was agreed that for the first Xpressions Cafe we would have a selection of papers. Our current thinking is that we will have the Observer, Independent on Sunday, Sunday Mail, Sunday Mirror, The Week (which is a digest of the preceding week's news from different papers) and Angling Mail. We will try this and see how it goes. We can make any changes in the light of experience and feedback.

I'm very excited by what we are undertaking. I really feel that there is a movement of the Spirit in this benefice at present. I know that there are many outside the benefice who are being encouraged and excited by what they are hearing of what we are engaged in. We will make mistakes, of course, but I truly believe that we are moving forward in God's will and that the fruits we are already seeing are but a foretaste of what is to come.