

CONNECT

Connecting and Communicating in Changing Times

CHURCH DAY

Our 'Church Day' is the first of what we hope will be an annual event celebrating what it means to belong to the church community at Woodgreen. It is a chance for us to reaffirm our purpose, mission and vision as a church. This year we also have a Gift Fair, featuring many of Woodgreen's ministries. Please take the time to visit each stall, talk with those involved in each ministry area, and find out how you can pray for them or get involved.

Why do we exist as a church? What is our PURPOSE?

**Our PURPOSE in all we do is to
glorify God and enjoy him
together.**

The Westminster Shorter Catechism, which is regarded by many theologians as the greatest summary of evangelical belief, starts by asking and then answering a basic question:

'Q: What is the chief end of man?'

A: Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.'

It's a Q&A that picks up one of the central themes of the Bible: that we were created to glorify God and that we most glorify him as we find our greatest satisfaction and enjoyment in him. The Apostle Paul told the Christians in Corinth: *'So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.'* (1 Corinthians 10:31)



What are we called to do? What is our MISSION?

Our MISSION is to make disciples who understand our culture and know, sow and show Jesus in Warndon Villages, Worcester and the World.

Jesus gave his disciples a very clear 'co-mission statement':

'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.' (Matthew 28:18-20)

According to Jesus making disciples is the core job of the Church. We may be engaged in many other worthy activities, but we must never lose sight of our central calling: to make mature disciples of Jesus who can disciple others.

What does this sort of disciple look like in our day and age?

- They must KNOW God's incarnate Word intimately: Jesus. And to do that they must also know God's written Word intimately: the Bible.
- They must be equipped to confidently SOW the good news about Jesus into the lives of those around him.
- They must live in such a way as to SHOW Jesus to others.

And they must be able to do so in the day and age in which we find ourselves, with all its challenges and pressures!

What do we want to see happen? What is our VISION?

Our VISION is to see God's Kingdom grow as families, friends and communities are transformed by the gospel.

If we could sum-up what we want to see happen more than anything else, surely this would be it! We want to see God's Kingdom grow as our family members, friends and communities - both local and global - are made new and transformed into confident followers of Jesus.

Is God able to do this? Of course he is! We are called to be faithful, but the Apostle Paul reminded the Corinthians that growth is God's job:

'I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. (1 Corinthians 3:6-7)

This is therefore a vision that should ultimately drive us to PRAYER!

WE cannot realise this vision – but HE can! And he has given us all the tools we need to do the job: his Spirit and his Word.

OUR 2011 'MOTTO BOOK': ROMANS

This is why we will be preaching through the book of **ROMANS** on Sunday mornings for the first half of 2011. The series *'Transformed by the Gospel'* will help us see what God has done for us in Christ and what the gospel has the power to do in the lives of our families, friends and local community.

We have therefore adopted two motto texts this year. They are effectively 'bookends' summing up the message of Romans:

***'I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.'* (Romans 1:16)**

***'May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.'* (Romans 15:5-6)**

Introducing ...Tom Davenport

Hi Tom, don't mean to be rude but... who are you? I'm 23 and currently living with my parents, John and Ann, Sam (19), Esther (14) and Holly (a big Labrador-Rottweiler cross that communicates in friendly growls!) After studying Sport Science at the University of Gloucestershire, I completed a Masters, and have since been working for the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) as a Development Officer for sailing and windsurfing. I was also a Senior Instructor at an outdoor centre in Redditch, providing outdoor activities for disabled and disadvantaged kids.



You are going to start the FIEC prepared for service course in February. What is the course and what does it help you to do? It lasts two years and covers a variety of topics, going through the whole of the bible, systematic theology, practical and pastoral theology and a placement. My placement is at Woodgreen, with Paul Hughes as my mentor. This will help me develop and apply my gifts, particularly in youth work, and see where God is leading for the future.

How did you come to realise that Pfs was what God wanted you to do? The last few years have been a bit up and down for me as a Christian, but over the past 12 months I've realised that God must come first, rather than trying to fit him in around all my plans and aspirations. Getting more involved at Woodgreen, particularly leading Impact and getting involved in youth work (Soccer Squad, the Hub), I've realised that I need to develop my bible knowledge in order to teach it to others properly. Pfs is a great opportunity to give me the tools to handle the bible in a way which helps those I work with (and myself) to understand and apply it.

How much work will Pfs give you, and how will you fit it in? I'll go down to Reading, once a month for 16 lectures over 3 days, and be set an assignment to complete alongside my placement at Woodgreen. Through the placement with Paul I'll learn more about the theology behind biblical youth work, and how my studies fit in with the youth work at Woodgreen, putting this into practice, particularly at the Hub and Soccer Squad. I'll also carry on with half of my previous job! The RYA has offered me a part-time contract to continue with the development work I have been doing for approx 2.5-3 days a week, I'm really grateful this is extremely flexible, which hopefully helps me fit it in!

What are your hopes for this next year? Over the next year I hope to glorify God by developing a greater understanding of his word, through Pfs and my work with Paul, and the practicalities at Woodgreen. I hope to teach more young people about Jesus so they can experience a personal relationship with Him.

How can we pray for you? That I will keep God as my focus, that everything I do glorifies him and centres around his purposes, not mine. For the practicalities of combining the course with work, For the youth work in the church, that my involvement will be positive and that it will thrive and glorify God.

Follow Tom's progress on his Blog soon appearing on the church website

PLEASE TALK TO US WITH YOUR VIEWS...

The purpose of CONNECT is to communicate better, raise ideas for your feedback, explain the thinking behind any new initiatives, cast vision for the future and follow up issues raised during Sunday ministry. It is also available for download from our website. If you have any comments as a result of what you've read in this edition please get in contact, always including your name. You can do this either by speaking directly to one of us as Elders or by emailing us at: connect@woodareenchurch.co.uk