

CITY Church News

PASTORS BLOGS AND LEADERSHIP UPDATES

I am really excited that as a Church we are now moving forward with a new expanded Leadership team, with our first meeting being last Monday. I think part of the excitement is that all these changes required a lot of behind the scenes time and energy from me, and now this can be transferred back to ministry and leadership functions, so it's good to have made a start for more reasons than one!

What else have I been up to? Well some things I was expecting and a few other things came along too!

In the autumn, Ian and Lucy Ferguson moved on from City to pursue their sense of calling to ministry in a 'traditional' church setting. This meant I inherited (hopefully on a temporary basis) the North Cluster leadership, which has given me more "hands on" experience with things in the north, as well as working with the Cluster leaders in the other areas. It has also been a privilege to get to know a lot more of our "20-somethings" working with Lynne Stevens and Dave McNaught's cell, as I have met and supported them as they stepped out (without much experience) to lead our current Alpha course. They are doing a great job and we are just about to go on a joint weekend away with the folks who are doing Alpha at Newtonhill.

A fair proportion of my time this term is taken up with helping to integrate new folks and students - an initial meeting with most new folks, sharing about the church and finding them calls to go to (where possible). That is settling down a bit now, and we are blessed to have a number of new folks joining us who will be a real asset to the ministry here (we are also thinking about how to better let everyone know who is joining in at City). We will be announcing two new city centre cells shortly so don't despair if you still want to join in the "real" life of city church!

The rest of my time is being spent on preparing teaching, school chaplaincy, ministry planning, and quite a substantial amount of pastoral input to various situations. It perhaps all sounds a bit mundane, but in the end of the day it's inputting to people lives that matters - so in my book its time very well spent - and probably what you think I should be doing!

Lastly I was supposed to be in India in November, but this has been postponed till early 2008. Even though visiting India is always the most amazing experience, I am truly thankful for the delay! (as were Gillian and the boys!) Roll on Christmas...

Blessings,

Paul Davie

Sit down. Make yourself at home. Take the weight off your feet and welcome to my blog. Here's a rundown of what's current with me right now...

Maybe Baby

As I write this there's still a member of the Freeland family that we haven't met yet. I sincerely hope that by the time you read it that will all have changed because poor Taryn is feeling really tired and suffering with all kinds of aches and pains. We're so excited about the new baby - the room's painted, the carpet cleaner's been round and the cot's been assembled. I know that you don't pay me to have babies (that would be weird) and I was in two minds about mentioning it in my blog, but a birth is always a big event...

It's led me to think a lot about spiritual birth, particularly the idea that God puts tiny seeds of dreams in our hearts that grow and develop within us until, when the time is right, He calls them into birth. I wonder what kind of crazy God-dreams are already in gestation around City Church?

Integrate

I've talked before in my blog about the new charity that we're setting up to work with ex-offenders and their families in Aberdeen. It all started with a desire to build on the amazing work of our very own Caroline Crombie, who has been visiting people in prison and supporting them on their release for years. It's been so exciting to see doors open up with so many of the statutory bodies who work with these folk. There is definitely a huge need to try to help these guys break free of the cycle of crime and imprisonment that can hold them captive for their whole lives.

I must admit I had thought that we'd be up and running by now, but we're always one form or signature away from being 'there'. We have set up a charitable company and are now awaiting the official charitable status that would mean the green-light for fundraising, publicity and... well, employing our first member of staff.

Please do pray for the 4 directors- Me (chairman), Kevin Russell, Mark Whittington and Jonathan Revell - as we try to

press ahead and get this show on the road. Also pray, please, for Caroline who is already doing the job, working with some real "rough diamonds" and waiting patiently for the charity to be established. We'll tell you all about it as soon as the time is right.

Community Opportunities

I'm so excited that the ministry to the Elderly that we've talked about for so long is now off the ground. Tony Treasure and his merry band of passionate facilitators are serving "lunch and chat" to a growing handful of people from the flats immediately around the church building. They open the doors to the church each Saturday lunchtime for 2 hours of banter, food and friendship.

Obviously, I know that we're supposed to bear witness to Jesus wherever we are, at work, at the gym, at school. And I know that people travel to City Church from all over Aberdeen and shire. But it just feels really important to me that if you live immediately next to our building and you could spit on its roof from your bedroom window that it should be good news. We want to be a church who not only have good news to share, but also are good news to those around us.

That's also the reason why we're doing the Christmas hampers again this year. The idea's simple - give someone a Christmas hamper, with no strings attached with a little note attached saying "Have a great Christmas on us, with love from City Church." It's not rocket science, but I know it'll make a big difference to some folks lives.

If you'd like to get involved with Lunch and Chat, please see Tony Treasure. To find out more about the Christmas hampers, please take a sheet from the welcome desk.

Anyway, that's the phone ringing, perhaps I'm about to meet my 3rd child...

Chuck

Can you believe it is nearly Christmas already? Down at Mezzo quarters we are already planning our Christmas extravaganza - a posh dinner with posh clothes and posh games (whatever they are ... it sounds like fun anyway!).

We kicked off our term back in September with great plans for running our 4 cell groups alongside a new Youth Alpha course. Unfortunately things didn't quite go to plan - we didn't have the guests we anticipated, and we ended up postponing Alpha and instead have been concentrating on hanging out with each other at cell. We're still running between 3 and 4 cell groups each Tuesday (depending on numbers) which is great fun and keeps the team on their toes! We are trying to grow young leaders as well, and so it's been exciting to watch certain people taking on responsibility, stepping out in faith, and growing in their gifts.

Early in November we took a group away for a weekend to Glenshee. It was a brilliant time! Amongst the rock climbing and team building challenges, we spent some of our sessions looking at people in the Bible who had 'encounters with Jesus' and ways in which that changed them. We also spent looked at prophecy and hearing from God, and then decided to put some of that into practise! As we prayed for every single person in the room, God really spoke into our lives. What an awesome time it was - not only did we all feel excited that we were able to hear God, but we all received words of affirmation and encouragement too.

This term has also seen the launch of our new look evening services. These have largely (but not entirely) been led by young people and young adults in City Church. Together we've been looking at the 'I Am' sayings of Jesus, and really breaking down what Jesus was on about! We've made quite a big deal of having coffee afterwards, and tried to create a space for hanging out after the service. In our trendy dim lit cafe (!) we've been selling drinks and cakes, sometimes had some live acoustic music, and been trying to create opportunity for relationship building. We really value 'people' and 'community' and want to make that just as much time as the worship, word and ministry. It's been great - people haven't been rushing away, but rather we have to kick them out at the end!

And so we hit the end of 2007! Already our young folk are looking forward to Imagine (and yes, that's an unashamed plug ... put it in your diaries for 29 July - 2 Aug 08) and all that God has in store for us throughout the year. Please continue to pray for our young people, and also for the team who work really hard to keep things going (Isaac Black, Mhairi Crawford, Abi Foster, David McNaught, Ed Merchant, Thomas Urquhart and myself).

That's all for now, happy winter!

Hazel

CITY LEADERSHIP TEAM - DEVELOPMENTS AND NEW MEMBERS

The current City Leadership Team has asked several new members to join our team, and the congregation has given us great feedback, and raised no objections on the grounds of character or conduct (as is our normal process). We have just had our first new team meeting last Monday, which went really well. There were a few questions from members about other issues, which we will address as a new team in due course.

The new members of the City Leadership Team are Simon Glazier, Mike and Alison Elder, Mike & Emma Woolldridge, and Hazel Ryan (our Youth Pastor). Stanton (local UCCF director and Bible Teacher extraordinaire!) and Caroline Crombie (Integrate/Caring for Ex-offenders) will also be part of in the Leadership team but on a slightly different basis. They are active members of our congregation who have substantial wider ministries, so we really want them to input to the team but without the burden of eldership responsibility for the congregation (which the rest us carry).

We are blessed to have such a gifted, experienced and diverse team to take us forward into continued growth - both spiritual and numerical! We also want to recognise the huge investment made in leadership at City by Steve Swindell, who wants to take this opportunity to have (we think!) a well earned break from both leadership and being Chairman of the trustees. Much of this is unsung but important voluntary work which benefits us all, and like many is done on top of family life and running a business.

Paul & Priscilla Reid (from CFC Belfast) who bring us wider accountability and 'connectedness' will join us to pray in the new members of the team as leaders in early 2008. We let you know when a date is set so folks from near and far can join us to mark the occasion. We will try and make this into a BIG church weekend "at home" to make up for not having one "away" this year.

SUMMARY:

City Leadership Team are:
Paul Davie (ministry staff)
Chuck Freeland (ministry staff)
David Chirnside
James Duce
Henry Irvine-Fortescue
Charles Gordon
Steve Swindell

The additions are:
Hazel Ryan
Mike & Alison Elder
Mike & Emma Woolldridge
Simon Glazier
Caroline Crombie
Stanton