

St. Paul's Dorking Small Groups. Oct. 2nd 2005
Whose Church is it anyway ?- For this generation and the
next.



Read Luke 1:46-56; Acts 13:13-15; 32-36 Deuteronomy 6.

1. God's promises are given to one generation and passed to another. They may not be fulfilled to the generation to whom they are given, but that generation speaks of and proclaims God's faithfulness until the time it is fulfilled. Mary speaks of promises given to Abraham, fulfilled in her generation which will in turn be told to future generations.

2. Speaking to and teaching the next generation is vital to God's purposes being worked out. Paul speaks of Jesus being the fulfilment of God's promise to all generations, many come to follow Jesus as a result. King David fulfilled God's purpose for his generation. This is our call.

Our Call - Deut 6. Two parts : A. to love God with all our heart, strength mind and souls. B. To impress his law of love on our children and children's children: to write in on our hands, foreheads and doorposts :

3. We corporately have responsibility for our children,, God is their father and he has entrusted them to us. We are to show his love your actions (hands) : to bless our children allow them to flourish by engaging with them at their level, treating them as equal. To live our lives around them honouring them, accepting them completely for who they are.. talking to them at coffee time, learning from them. We are to engage with youth culture of post modernism to understand the complexities of their lives and to support them in forming healthy relationships, giving them a voice on e.g. PCC, future planning, TO protect them and create a safe place (doorposts) for them to roam and explore, with safe boundaries, so they can grow in the confidence of unconditional love.. sound like a tall order !? we need to know the grace of God, that every time we fail he will step in to strengthen and help. See children and young people as equals. much planning going onto to develop the current work, but what can we do on the ground : spend time with those we know, support families and work, be willing to change to accommodate them...are we willing to build our church with them, may be with them taking some of the lead ?



Witness: Questions to discuss :

1. Read psalm 145 what is passed on to the next generation ? How can we do this in the light of the above notes ?
2. What simple ways are there of fostering real relationships with children of all ages ? What would you like to do ? What do you know of youth culture ?
3. What picture of the church family do you have ? How are we to be like children according to Jesus ?
4. What difficulties might we face integrating the children more into services and decision making processes ?