

# Minutes of Church Members' Meeting

31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

## Welcome by Roy Bawden

**Attendance: 58 Connections; 80 members on the call**

### 1. Prayer and Worship

Roy Bawden read Matthew 28: 19-20 reflecting on the sureness of God's presence accompanying us as we go and tell followed by the worship song, 'What a Beautiful Name It Is,' and prayer.

### 2. Approval of minutes of Meeting 27th January, 2021

Roy asked if there were any queries on the minutes of the last meeting. None were received. Approval of the Minutes was put to the vote and received **87% Approval; 13% Abstained**.

### 3. Youth and Children update

At our last meeting we reported the creation of a Search and Recruitment Committee that comprises Karen Ingram, Marianne Jeanes, Nikki Latham, Derek Page, Helen Smith and Helen Yarrow. Their first task resulted in temporary part-time appointments, including division of job responsibilities for both Youth and Children's workers, which were also reported and we were advised that their work is moving on to determine the needs of our Youth and Children and producing job descriptions on the back of this. Roy passed over to Marianne Jeanes, who chairs this Committee to bring us up to date.

It has been fantastic to see both Youth and Children involved with the activities on offer that have included: family packs, videos, Zoom meetings, competitions, Google teams and mentoring. Nikki and her family have undertaken a wonderful refurbishment of the Sidewalk. Once this team was in place, launched and stable, the search team turned its attention to recruitment of a permanent team.

The Deacons had prayerfully considered the needs and financial position of the church wanting the best for our children and youth. Within this framework, the Search Team looked at the best possible way to proceed. As part of this, they canvassed opinion of the youth, children and parents, they looked at job descriptions that came from the Deacons and asked volunteers to complete a survey. They researched market competition, took feedback from the temporary team, completed a SWOT analysis and a process-mapping exercise and thought carefully about key skills needed for each post. As part of this work, they identified that Vision statements for the youth and children's ministries could benefit from being re-visited, so that they summarised what we wanted to say about these ministries to applicants and therefore to the new leaders when they took on the roles. Feedback and suggestions were taken from leaders, volunteers, the MSG, the Deacons and the youth. These revised statements were improved and included in the adverts. This allowed the team to see how the individual responsibilities could be collated most effectively into clear job roles. It also allowed the estimated number of hours required to fulfil the job description. It became clear that there was a substantial amount of administration required and that employing someone, for whom this was a strength, would be a benefit for all. The Youth Worker role could suit someone that related to young people, could organise socials, lead teaching and worship and weekends away. This would only need a part-time commitment. The Children's Youth and Families role has more of a focus on leading volunteer teams, providing support for families inside and outside the church community and organising activities for children from the very youngest, up to age 11. In consideration of the weekly requirements for each role and potential line management structure, the team came to the final job descriptions that are in line with the Deacons' paper on Youth Strategy.

In that, they talked about Five Aspects. We want to support volunteers: the temporary roles have emphasised the skills and dedication of our volunteer teams and they wanted to place an emphasis on building and encouraging spiritual leadership for volunteers. This will be a large part of the Children's Youth and Family Worker role. Planning the Youth programme: it was thought that it would be good for the Youth Leader to take on mid-week leadership and the planning of those and to keep our Sunday volunteers running Sunday groups but there needs to be strategic overview of that by the Youth Leader. We want to balance using the skills of a paid role with all the brilliant leaders and emerging leaders that we have within

the church. The team want to make sure there is someone from the staff team who could look at the overview of the direction of the Youth team and it was felt that this leadership would be a different skill to the practical organisation of children and youth. If we want to see our numbers, commitment and faith of children grow, we need to provide a high level of administration support. It is very important to integrate the youth into church and the transition points for our children and young people are really key in retaining our young people. We wanted to put responsibility for these points in the job descriptions. Co-ordinating resources moved to an admin based role because this is an area where experience and specific and organisational skills could have a huge impact. People who are skilled in this area could do these things quickly and efficiently and we want someone to keep in touch, nudging volunteers, reminding people 'we haven't seen so and so for a while, etc.' making sure we kept in contact with those children and young people. Finally, the team discussed empowering others to lead: the more holistic our programme is and involved our whole church is in youth ministry, the more our young people will feel loved and valued. The team believes that leaders leading a diverse volunteer team, will be the best support to retain and disciple our children and young people and also our families.

Once this decision was reached and the job descriptions agreed, the team looked at the advertising, interviewing and the recruitment process. Everyone is encouraged to re-tweet, share via Facebook or post on LinkedIn so that we can reach as wide an audience as possible. We have also advertised on Christian recruitment websites and with Christian colleges. The closing date is 16<sup>th</sup> April and we will be short-listing and interviewing shortly after that. A member of the team is interested in applying for a role and has therefore withdrawn from the interviewing process. We are very excited about the next stage in this and are aiming to recruit people who have a real heart for children and youth and to be able to build on all the great work that has been done over the past few years with our children and youth.

There were no questions. Derek thanked Nikki, Tim and family on the phenomenal job they have done on the Sidewalk. It is absolutely spectacular! Derek encouraged members to go and look.

#### 4. COVID-19 Report

Helen Yarrow shared key items. The Covid team has been meeting every Tuesday evening and never expected to still be having these meetings a year on. The Church is open, albeit with restrictions and it is lovely to see folk returning to church. As a church, all is being done to ensure safety. It will not be overnight before everyone is allowed back in. Part of the planning is to be as reactive as we can be to Government guidelines. It is thrilling that in April our children and youth will be able to return to church, meeting most weeks. The plan is for Xtreme, Sparks and Phase to meet up on Sundays from April 18<sup>th</sup>, although exact plans and how to book children in will be shared after Easter; and for Refine and Roots to begin meeting at church from April 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> respectively.

It is understood how desperate families are, particularly those with children under age 5, to meet up and under 5's returning on Sundays and midweek is being looked at. Please remember young mums, particularly those who have had babies this year - it has been very difficult for them; a real struggle. Please pray for planning, staffing and risk assessments, etc as more people are allowed back into church and as we pray that things will get back to normal.

The timing of Sunday services is being reviewed. Our on-line services have been taking place at 10.30. When we do meet again, it is wondered whether the members would like services to revert to 11 am although this would be dependent upon volunteer availability. A poll was taken on preference: **10.30 67%; 11:00 33%**.

Those that attended the Prayer course were blessed by Pete Grieg and had the opportunity to share and pray together. There will be future opportunities to meet on Sunday evenings and it is planned plan to have two prayer evenings on April 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> - more details to follow. A lot of businesses have been struggling over the last year but not the Post Office! Ruislip Manor's has been very busy with major mailings from RBC to church members and the wider community. This included 80 pampering packs. The pampering evening was a great success and lovely feedback has been received. Monthly packs were sent to Café Connect, with quizzes and an Easter message from Derek and all our children and youth received Easter packs, lots of them containing chocolate, that they were thrilled to receive. Tuesday Fellowship is starting up again on 13<sup>th</sup> April and we pray for all those attending as they meet to worship and enjoy fellowship together. Helen thanked

the Safe Space team who not only have been manning the church on Mondays and Fridays but have been really helpful in preparing packs ready to send out.

A massive thanks to Barbara Avery, who continues to share the gospel in our local and not so local, care homes. It is planned subject to Government guidance to run a live Holiday Club between 26<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> July. members will be contacted if involved previously but there will be other ways to help if uncomfortable being present. Pastoral Care across the fellowship has been incredibly busy behind the scenes and as a church we have come alongside and supported people through challenging times: doorstep calls, taking things round, shopping - a myriad of things going on. We have had some feedback and it is so gratefully received. The church relies on everyone playing a part in encouraging support and caring for each other and it's great to see God at work through His people.

We would love to hear from you if you lead a group and want to think about when you might start again. It is exciting to think we may be in a position by September so let's continue to pray for this vaccine and a huge drop in infection rates. Listing people is disliked but some notable exceptions: Derek has mentioned the work in the Sidewalk; Dave Connolly has been painting and breaking down furniture; Mark & Marie Dendy enabling new office furniture provided via Gary Steward and Tim Yarrow for regular trips to the dump.

It has been a very difficult year for Sharon Rose not being able to go to Dancu Moldova. A lot of building and re-building work has been going on there and Sharon reached out to the fellowship for professional support for Pastor Slavic and his team. Huge thanks to Gary Steward and Roy Treadaway. The depth of support and detail from Gary and Roy to the church in Moldova has been phenomenal. It is such a blessing and an opportunity to develop the relationship with the church in Dancu, Moldova.

Another person to thank is Brian Wills. When the church office had to pack up to be able to work from home, Brian set everyone up on Office 365, he purchased laptops and set them up. He has responded graciously to queries and issues that occurred at all hours and dealt with them promptly. A huge thanks to Brian as it made such a difference to the office team.

This time last year, the Office was packing up desks to work from home never thinking it would go on for so long. At that time, the team was working out how to keep in touch with the fellowship and have been working tirelessly over the last year to do so. It has been a privilege to be on the team and thanks to the fellowship for all the support they have given the team also. It has been a very stressful year but it has been great to know that we are serving God and our community.

## **5. Membership Matters**

Alison Dennis announced the death of three of our members. Firstly, apologies for omitting to report the death of Griff Brooks who died in December 2020, having been a member of RBC since 1954; Miriam Hammond, member since 1988 and Pat Holmes, member since 2005. Our love and prayers go to their families. Membership now stands at 292.

## **6. Senior Minister sabbatical**

Derek is overdue a sabbatical and will be taking it this year between May and July. Derek explained that Ministers are allowed a sabbatical every 7 years, for a period of 3 months. Ministers work a 6 day week, with one day per week off. Derek didn't take his 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> sabbaticals and only 1 month during his third. His 4<sup>th</sup> sabbatical he took the full 3 months. This will be Derek's final sabbatical and he intends to take the full 3 months. Derek would encourage any future ministers to take their full entitlement as during his ministry there was a period when he was ill and had to take 5 months off due to stress. Looking back, he wonders if he had taken his full entitlement, whether that might not have been the case. The church will be in the capable hands of Barry Dore and the phenomenal diaconate. We have a diaconate made up of Godly men and women, whose overwhelming desire is for the best for RBC and the outreach to our local community. It has been a joy to serve with them. Barry and the Leadership team will cover whilst Derek is away. Derek has sorted out the preaching during his absence. Barry will take some of that and others will be covering as well. For Derek's other responsibilities, he has been making sure they will be covered in his absence. If significant things happen during this period, Derek would want to be informed and possibly involved. A sabbatical is not a master, it is a means to an end and if necessary, he would come off his sabbatical.

Derek plans to have a break. The last year has been very frustrating: he hates working at home and at times has felt very low. Equally, the build-up of the last 7 years, for such a large church, there is on-going a lot of responsibility. He will use the time for reflection; it will be his last sabbatical. On his return, he will have just over 2 years before he retires and he would like those two years to be his best years. He plans to return fired up! Derek will use the time to think about his and Carrie's future. It is not retirement, it is 're-firement.' They are moving to Lymington where they plan to retire. A number of small churches in the New Forest don't have a regular minister. Derek intends writing to the superintendent and offering to take some services for them as he does not feel ready to retire from preaching entirely. Derek plans to do some studying; the songs of ascent. Psalms 120 – 134. 15 Psalms. There could be an autumn service on this.

More importantly, Sarah Yarrow has been very poorly in hospital. Sarah is one of Derek's super-duper heroes! Our thoughts and prayers should also be directed to Peter Holmes who lost his wife Pat and John Warner, whose brother-in-law has died of COVID. Please pray for these folk. Derek felt his sabbatical paled into insignificance in relation to these things. It has been a blessing to be at Ruislip all these years but it could be difficult for folk to get used to Derek not being there. This will be an opportunity for folk to get used to Derek not being around.

Roy thanked Derek, wished him well for his sabbatical and that we look forward to welcoming him back.

## **7. Report from Church Treasurer**

Craig Rowland brought the report. The first slide shows the 12 month rolling income. It is a year since the church closed and we are missing the 'blue bag' offerings on a Sunday. The budget was set at just under £27,000 and we are averaging £23,000 a month so a downward turn that will flatten out. Overall, we were £8,000 off against budget in the first 3 months of the year. The variance column shows this. There is a cut-off date and as the month end was at the weekend, some of the offerings received slipped over into March. In addition to the shortfall in the 'blue bag' revenue, there has been a drop in standing orders of £2,000, due to redundancies and people finding things difficult. We had a generous one-off donation of £5,000, that brought total income very close to budget.

As regards expenditure, total expenditure to date is £9,000 under budget, due to less work being done at the church, furlough payments coming in, significant savings on the repair and maintenance of the church building, lower running costs of the church and savings due to general inactivity driven by the restrictions of COVID. There is an overspend of £3,000 on manses due to a new boiler at Oxford Drive. In terms of budget overall, we are £5,000 better off.

This is the first year there has not been a building loan that would have been £3,400 per month. Good news that we were able to pay that loan off early. God's timing is everything. We have been blessed with Legacies received from June Liddiard and Eileen Thomson of £30,000. Craig invited questions but none were forthcoming.

John Reynolds was successful at interview and will be moving to Blackburn with his family and this frees up the manse at Oxford Drive. Following discussions by the finance committee and the diaconate, there are no plans to sell the manse, at present. There is building work that may be required on the church around the sidewalk and the church offices and if there was a big call on expenditure, that might be the time to think about selling the manse, or if there was a big call on mission work, planting a church for example, we might consider selling it but at this moment in time, there is no point selling it and have capital sitting there. It is therefore suggested to let it as was done with Melton Close. The Constitution requires church members' approval. Before a vote, the following questions were received.

Trevor Bradshaw asked if any incumbents for the new roles would require accommodation. New Contracts won't include accommodation but assistance might be given towards accommodation costs, if required. Derek asked Craig to remind the church of the situation as to how long John and Jade would remain in the house. Craig responded that it was originally agreed that John would stay in the property until the end of March but he had requested to remain until June which had been agreed by the trustees. Kim Hatton asked whether there a cost implication in making the property viable to rent due to the reversal of adaptations that had been made for Jade. Craig advised that an amount of work will be required to get the property up to a rental position. All the manses have a person that looks after them: Gary Steward looks

after College Drive, Mark Dendy looks after Melton Close and Gus Jones looks after Oxford Drive. The sums are not known yet but it is expected the return on the rental should cover the expense. The vote was taken: **Agreement to rent out Oxford Drive: Agreed 96%; Not Agreed 2%; Abstained 2%.**

## **8. Report from the Church Secretary**

The 2020 annual report has been produced and was emailed out or posted. Thanks was given to Stephanie Van Zyl for putting it together - a great job. If a copy has not been received please let the church office know. The report will be formally received alongside the accounts when available at a later members' meeting.

The Baptist Assembly will take place on-line between 13-16 May and an individual can register to attend. Details how to do so will be in the April newsletter with the programme outline. Roy attended the London Baptist Union AGM on-line in February. It was very well attended.

Feedback from Deacon's Away Day that was held on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March. Slides shown to go into the website members' area with the minutes. Not exactly an away day as Deacons zoomed in for 3 hours from home. Thank you to the other trustees for the time given up for that and time spent on the other things they do for the church. Also thanks to members for praying for your leadership team, just as valuable a part of the meeting.

Roy shared again the strategic priorities. Some subjects overlap. We have already heard about children and youth with actions well advanced and that will also capture the succession of our uniformed organisations but most likely to follow the permanent appointments. The priorities marked in bold received focus on the away day. Regarding our future evangelism strategy, the leaders had the benefit of feedback provided at the last members' meeting and armed with this, they developed some broad brushstrokes to provide a framework for implementation. To drive that forward, we want to have an Outreach sub-group of around 6 persons, representing our church demographic, including youth and at least two trustees who will use this framework and the suggestions made in January. Volunteers can be chosen but preferable if members are excited, if they can step forward. Invited to email Roy or to recommend or nominate anyone thought perfect for this task. This group is about finalising our strategy and related action plan. It is not about delivering activities, that is for all of us.

Regarding the transition of Senior Minister, Derek is due to retire towards the end of 2023. A team will be formed by invitation and key points for future action were shared.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> strategic priority is about leadership structures within our fellowship and how we organise and manage ourselves and how we manage the information that flows around us. An Organigram previously posted to the website was shared to show the outcome of that work. Members appoint ministers and elect deacons who together form the Charity Trustees that are referred to in our Constitution, whose working name is The Leadership Team. They appoint two officers, the Treasurer and the Secretary. Other roles in the church are shown on the diagram.

Attention was drawn to the proposed role of Operations Manager, shown on the diagram, that would be 25 hours per week. This will be accommodated within our existing budget, including the future rental income from Oxford Drive, so this role does not require any increase in net cash outlay. The creation of the new role is a response to the increasing demands of the management of our physical infrastructure, statutory obligations and liability that we have for things like Health and Safety, Data Protection and Safeguarding. The role also takes on reporting responsibilities for some employees, aiming to free up ministers to concentrate their time on their primary role. The role centres on ensuring that our vision and strategies are delivered operationally and that we are making the most effective use of our resources: premises, people, paid or volunteers and in liaison with our Treasurer, our funds, i.e. what God has entrusted to us. That person is also contributing to how we best achieve our aims going forward. The five primary features are planning, change, management, co-ordination and releasing the resources that God has given the church. The appointment will certainly help our organisation and management going forward and the way we manage the risk associated with running a church.

The chart also highlighted sub-groups reporting to the trustees. The idea is members and others working alongside those elected to lead, as we ensure that we use the skills, gifts and abilities that God has given the fellowship to serve its members and community as we Go and Tell. The COVID Working Group is an example, trustees working alongside folk such as David Rose and Alistair Moore with terrific technical skills or the Global Partnership Group, a similar mix of trustees and members. The re-invigorated Outreach Sub-Group would be similar. One exception is the Pastoral and Strategy Sub-Group. This has previously been called MSG but its new titling tells more of its purpose. This is trustees only as it's a place where the Senior Minister can confide sensitive issues and particular confidences apply. Roy then referred to the notes. All these things are to drive and energise the church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Members were then invited to break-out into small groups with a trustee in each to raise any questions but also begin discussion on another strategic priority about to come under review: intergenerational church. The latter was guided by 3 questions: a) what do we mean by it, b) how do we practice it now and c) what if anything should change and why? A member of each group was asked to feedback to Roy by email.

## 9. AOB

Maggy Gardner - Prema Gnanakan has had a stroke in India. Please pray for Prema and the family. A happy occasion was the inauguration of new Acts in Bangalore but Prema would have missed it. Roy Treadaway - One in four people in Papua New Guinea may have COVID. It is an isolated and difficult place to get care support to. Email Shiv to encourage her and let her know we are thinking of her. It will make a big difference to her. The email Roy sent to Shiv was very well received. Lesley Ferguson requested 15 seconds for the voting as people that are dyslexic need more time. Roy thanked Lesley for bringing this to attention. Derek commended Lesley for her disclosure.

Barry closed the meeting in prayer.

### Subsequent summarised group and individual feedback on intergenerational church (item 8)

- Suggested article reference with statement that RBC is 'multigenerational' as people attend of all ages but often silo'd into age categories.
- <https://www.youthandchildrens.work/Past-Issues/2019/July-2019/The-theory-of-everyone>
- Intergenerational doesn't mean always being together but striving to find a balance of all ages being together and activities that are age specific, to ensure the passing on of faith to the next generations.

- Things such as the young people taking part in leading church services, e.g. preaching, reading Scripture, leading worship, etc.
- Events to encourage fellowship between different generations, e.g. specific prayer meetings/groups.
- Children/youth leading/participating in events, such as kids' concerts.
- Having a church mentorship programme for young people, & running a discipleship course for the fellowship.
- More involvement of 'older' people in children's/young people's work, i.e. passing on their valuable life experiences to the young people.
- Good support for church meeting held in main hall around tables for lunch with families present, thus fostering fellowship & integration of all ages.
- The RBC Holiday Club is an excellent example of how the different age-groups interact well with each other, working & praying together.

- Intergenerational church felt a bit like a sliding scale ranging between no intergenerational activities at all to every activity being fully intergenerational. We thought it would be good to establish where we think we fit on this scale and where we think we ought to be.

### 1. What do we mean by 'intergenerational church'?

- a little unknown/confused, a few comments wondering what 'intergenerational church' actually means;
- does it mean how we relate to one another inside church (i.e. internally), or how we relate to individuals outside church? We concluded the former, though shouldn't lose sight of the latter;
- some concerns were raised that this might just be the latest Christian 'fad', and that we ought to be careful not to get caught up in it too much and change the way we currently do things unnecessarily;
- we broadly concluded that 'intergenerational church' means being together as a whole church, rather than having separate provisions for different generations / demographics.

### 2. How do we do 'intergenerational church' now?

- we touched on the use of technology, which enables everyone to access certain provisions (though can exclude older generations (and some very young generations too) that don't have access to it);
- it was commented that the children's talk (and by extension family services) are a good example of where we see 'intergenerational church' working (though another contributor pointed out that this isn't really 'intergenerational church' at all, as it's just a children's element of the service i.e. it isn't what the adults do - i.e. when the children leave, we go back to 'normal');
- other examples of where we might be successfully achieving 'intergenerational church' would be Holiday Club, where the whole church comes together to serve a specific ministry (again, some individuals indicated this wasn't really 'intergenerational church').

### 3. What, if anything, should we change at RBC to be more intergenerational?

- there was a general feeling that we weren't especially intergenerational, though this was far from widely agreed;
- it was pointed out that we have lots of separate provisions, but don't do many things together (and when we do, it's aimed at a specific group i.e. children / families), rather than everyone as a whole;
- one contributor (with young children) explained that they watch the whole of the church service together (online) now, and it's been great as their children have experienced what church 'is really like';
- There was a sense from across the group that an opportunity to do more things as a whole would be appreciated.

1. *What do we mean by it?* The different generations in church interacting with other to get to know each other, learn from each other, enjoy fellowship with each other and encouraging each other.

2. *How do we practice it?* At present activities like Holiday Club, Senior Citizens' Christmas party etc do have all ages helping. The alternative evening service was attended by all ages. Formerly the prayer triplets consisted of three people of different ages. Mentors for university students.

3. *How should we change?*

- a. We could re-visit some of the past activities referred to above.
- b. We should encourage young people to get involved with the work of the church e.g young leadership mentoring, encouraging young people to take part in music, tech, catering, etc.
- c. Encourage intergenerational small groups.
- d. Encourage young people to come to the evening service by re-starting quash-ins after the service.
- e. Create opportunities for older people to share their life stories with younger folks and vice versa. (Most adults over the age of 50 do not understand how much social media and tech that can dominate young people's lives.)

- The point was made that each generation needs its own space and ministry geared to its needs. The point was also made that sometimes families with very young children do not come to family services because there is no crèche so we need to think how each activities impacts on different age groups.

- I disagree with comments that seemed to imply that we are segregated from a worship/teaching perspective (I think RBC strikes a really good balance on a Sunday morning in terms of integrating all ages at the beginning, whilst also enabling the opportunity for children/youth to connect with God in an age appropriate way through their individual groups).
- I do however agree with the point made that it would be good to have more opportunities for fellowship and therefore relationships to be built across all ages.
- I love that, back in the day when we were all able to attend church in person, [an old member] used to go out of his way to find [a young child] every week and give him a high five and have a brief chat to him. However, other than that, pre-lockdown I felt there were very limited opportunities for the kids (and even for us) to interact and build relationships with the older generation, which I think is so important.
- We have talked before about how RBC are great at outreach and discipleship events, but we would value more organised social events to allow opportunities to build relationships with others in the church outside of our usual circle, and across all generations (rather than just after church when the kids are tired/hungry, and so conversations are sadly often quite rushed/superficial!
- I know obviously we can have people round for meals but you need to be able to form those initial relationships first to then feel comfortable enough asking them round for a meal (and for them to feel comfortable accepting).
- We felt the trial Sunday church members meeting (which included sharing lunch together) was good because you got the opportunity to chat with people in the fellowship that you otherwise wouldn't necessarily have opportunities to talk to/get to know. Having the opportunity to build those initial relationships within the four walls of church then hopefully also leads to opportunities to show love to each other 'outside' of church (as you become aware of each other's needs and how you may be able to serve/support/build each other up).
- Personally I would like to see more social events and even things like church weekends away (although I appreciate they involve A LOT of planning/work!!), as I think it is these kind of opportunities that enable deep and genuine relationships to be built across the generations, and this is 'so' important, as it our love for each other that will serve as a witness to those outside the church.
- Also a slightly wacky idea, but I love the idea of a combined group for toddlers and the older generation. I know it's a relatively new concept but has been shown to work, with both the children and the older people benefitting from the interactions. Obviously it's not a sensible idea in the current climate (in fact far from it! ) but might be something worth considering in the future!! (Depending on how radical people are feeling!!).
- Finally, I think it's really important for the youth to be encouraged to share their gifts (e.g. sing in the music group, sound/tech etc), not just as part of a youth service for example but actually properly integrated. I think this helps them feel valued and develops a sense of belonging, which is so important to help them engage with church and not drift away. I think this is happening more, which is great, but it should be an area of ongoing focus. I think it's really important that they still have age appropriate groups so they can get age-appropriate teaching/discipleship, but that they are also made to feel a valuable part of the church now, rather than being seen as 'the \*future\* church'.
- Hope that's helpful. I think there are lots of things we do well in terms of intergenerational church but the above are just a few additional ideas of how we might be able to expand on what we're already doing.