

Growing Leaders *Pauline Lovering – St John's*

In July 2009 a group of people from various Partnership churches met to explore the possibility of joining the CPAS (Church Pastoral Aid Society) course called Growing Leaders in East Bristol. The course consists of 3 parts-

- Firm foundations for Christian Leadership
- Key skills for Christian Leadership
- Keeping faithful in Christian Leadership

We have now completed the first part of the course with 11 participants (and a team of 5 sharing the planning and presentation of the sessions). This included a very successful away day at Wick Court in September. All the participants have a mentor and meet up with them to pray and discuss issues from the course on a monthly basis. Each session includes Bible study, worship and discussion groups. We have explored establishing identity and spiritual disciplines, discipleship, clarifying call and developing character in part 1 as foundations for leadership. Fellowship between participants is growing and there is evident change and growth happening.

We are excited about what God has already done and what He is yet to do over the coming months.

Members of the leadership group organising the course have also been enormously encouraged by the way participants have engaged with and reflected personally on the materials presented. Thanks must also go to all the mentors as well as the spouses, supporters (and babysitters) who have enabled participants to attend. Prayer has played an important part too. To have people across the Partnership praying for all involved in Growing Leaders (especially during the times we are meeting) has really helped.

In an article on the CPAS website Bishop Mike emphasises that “The quality of church leadership is critical for church development so the Church must make leadership development a priority. I prefer to talk about leadership development rather than purely leadership training”. He also talks about churches having “a willingness to try things, learn from things that don't work and to evolve”. This surely resonates for us in the East Bristol Partnership?

HELP!

As we start a new year with another away day on 23rd January and further sessions monthly until the end of June, we ask for your continued prayer support for the course. Evening sessions are held once a month on a Wednesday evening, 7.30pm-9.30pm in the church at St John's (on February 24th, March 24th, April 28th, May 26th and 30th June).

Help is always welcome on the evening sessions with hospitality - perhaps making tea/coffee on arrival and halfway through if you are able to stay and/or providing cakes or other goodies to keep energy levels up! It would be good to see you.

If you feel that you might be able to help with hospitality or want to know more about the course, please talk to any of the leadership group: Keith Thomasson, Nick Young (All Saints), Ian Webb (All Saints), Becky Taylor van de Griendt (All Saints) and Pauline Lovering (St John's). We are hoping to run the course again in 2010-2011. If you are interested in joining the course later next year please talk to one of the team. We would be happy to explore this further with you.

Our prayer for 2010 is that God will continue to work within the course to help participants to grow and to further leadership development in East Bristol.