

Healing and Community

On Thursday evening the 25th of June some of us came together with Ros Wilson the diocesan adviser for healing ministry to talk about healing: what it means for us and how we can be a healing community at All Saints.

We began by looking at 1 Cor. 12: 12-31, this is the passage where Paul explains that the faith community is the body of Christ and that like a normal body it has different members who all have their place and their ministry. We explored how healing and wholeness is something individual - somebody is ill and gets better, and something of the community - if there is disagreement reconciliation can be healing. Also if one member of the community is suffering: all suffer. If one member of the community is made whole all rejoice in Paul's vision of the church. We also acknowledged how healing it can be for an individual and for the community if somebody truly finds their place in a community and knows what their gifts and their ministry are. Ros Wilson explored with us that the ministry of healing is very broad. Giving out food to the hungry can be a ministry of healing in a certain context. St. Mary's Saturday Lunches being a very poignant example, Chris Evans explained that they would welcome help from across the partnership. Welcoming outsiders who want to get married in a church can be a ministry of healing. Pastoral care and prayer are intrinsic to healing. In the sharing that followed we talked about the symbolic connection between the Eucharist and healing. How the broken body of Christ is a source of our wholeness and the poured out blood a source of our cleansing. We talked of the importance of forgiveness and inner healing.

The word 'healing' and therefore 'healing service' might be misunderstood. Some people might be really put off by ideas of wacky miracles while others might come expecting those. We believe that prayer makes a true difference in any situation but also know that healing does not always come in the way we expect it. Even in Jesus' time not everybody got healed. Healing (like grieving) can be a slow process that changes who we are. We agreed that good teaching on Sunday morning on this subject would not go amiss.

At the end of the meeting we prayed together, lighting candles, remembering all those situations in our community that need healing. We agreed that it would be good to meet again and talk further about the practicalities of healing at All Saints. At this meeting we will continue our exploration of what healing means to us. We will talk about the liturgy of the healing service and the ministry of laying on of hands. Like in this meeting we will start with a bible study, end with prayer

Anne Claar Thomasson

We invite anybody who is interested in the subject to come. **All are welcome!**

The meeting will be held on **Thursday 1st October 2009 at 11 Vicars Close.**