

# Parish of Ferndown

## Study sheet for week commencing 14<sup>th</sup> September 2008 St Mary's Core Values (2) "CALLED TO MAKE DISCIPLES" Matt 28:16-20 & Acts 2:42-47

### VERY IMPORTANT PRACTICAL THINGS ABOUT SMALL GROUPS!

Would group leaders kindly read the following from Martin....

*"Small groups are meant to help the process of discipleship. But we are all painfully aware that other ways of discipling need to be explored. That is why we are placing an emphasis on the development of this for the new Associate Minister. BUT in the meantime...we must all take practical steps to disciple one another using the small group as the basic starting place."*

About six months ago, Martin completed a number of sessions with group leaders, explaining what should be included in a typical session. Please think carefully about this, as we really want all groups to have these core elements, and values.

1. Read Acts 2:42-47. What were some of the basic commitments people made when becoming disciples?
2. In what ways is your group following the teaching Martin gave to the small group leaders over a number of months, and if so why not?!

### CORE ELEMENTS OF GROUP LIFE

**W**elcome (could be an ice-breaker game, and these are brilliant at getting everyone's voice heard early on in the session, and helping people discover more about each other. For those who find games a bit strange, keep it simple – ask an opener like, "what is your favourite holiday destination and why?" or "if you were a car, what make would you be?!" These are intended to help us let our guard down in a fun way, but actually help us get to know each other! Of course welcome should include good drinks and biscuits at least!)

**W**orship (could include prayer time – doesn't have to be someone leading with a guitar, but it could be – see who you will get to lead some worship each week. Some groups create their own Psalms, others light a candle and reflect on God's love in some silence etc.

**W**ord (taking time to work out how the bible passage applies to ordinary life. This is not the time to listen to your leader give a talk or deep teaching – the sermon is on Sunday!)

**W**itness (what is your group doing to pray for others, or doing to reach out to others? You could include a prayer time at this point.) (CONTINUED)

### CORE VALUES – "ALL INVOLVED AND ALL ARE DISCIPLES!"

#### PRACTICAL STUFF..

1. Do you know each other's telephone numbers and birthdays? It's so nice to feel loved!
2. How many people are you getting involved to lead the worship, or to lead the discussion time, or prayer time etc? At the very least, alternate who leads each week.
3. How many people help bring biscuits and help serve teas and coffees? It's really good for hosts to let go on this sometimes, and be willing to receive.
4. Do you organise termly socials to either celebrate as a group, or invite others along to an event which is purely social?
5. Do you need a group organiser, who will help you remember to start implementing some of these things?!

#### BIBLE APPLICATION

1. FACT - By definition, a disciple is a student, or a learner. A disciple has a teacher (someone who disciplines them). Who has encouraged, and who has challenged you most in the practical ways of living out your Christian faith? (parents, friends, leaders etc.)
2. Read Matt 28:16-20. These verses are incredibly powerful. In what specific ways do they encourage you as a group, and in what ways do they challenge your very existence?!
3. Read Mark 12:30-31. What are the two greatest commandments?
4. We may come up with all manner of ways of discipling, but the test of effectiveness in discipleship is, "are we more becoming more loving towards God and neighbour?" Why are we so easily taken in, thinking that ministry skills and a few charismatic personalities are more important than all of God's people loving God and loving one another? Is it that we fall in love with the notion of being successful, but in a way that Jesus would be appalled at?
5. What three ways can you learn to be more loving? Answer personally, and for your group.

#### PRAYER TIME

- Pray for the spiritual development of your group – every member!
- Pray that you will constantly spur one another along to greater commitment.
- Pray that your love of God, and your love for each other will grow.