

What Church is Like—the body of Christ

Jesus -Mission-Church

Churches can be very different <http://bit.ly/1sRfS3D> and all denominations and churches have ideas about how church should be. In fact these ideas are often so dominant that they control how we reach out and even affect the things about God that we concentrate on or choose to ignore. For instance, Dayspring is part of the New Churches that started in the 1970s in the UK and began to meet in homes and rejected the structure of evangelical and Pentecostal Sunday meetings with their hymn sandwiches and altar calls. This quickly affected the way we did evangelism; people would join church through small groups and meet Jesus in that setting. 'Where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them'. In fact the better way round is to let our ideas about Jesus affect the way we do mission and let the way we do mission shape church. We no doubt have further to go but as we have understood the incarnation of Jesus and his priority for lost people, the way we do mission and church has substantially changed.

Snapshots of Church

There are a host of powerful snapshots of church in the Bible that show us how the church is to be shaped by God's mission—pilgrim images; revolutionary images like kingdom; community images like family, household and flock; transformation images like salt, light and city. However we need to look at one of the snapshots that is often inward looking and self-centred in the way we apply it. It is the image of church as body of Christ and is explained in 1 Corinthians 12:12-31. <http://bit.ly/1xCcm1u>.

Cabaret—a proposal

One aspect of being a body is working together. Cabaret Connexion involves a huge workload. We knew that when we started out. David Sandberg has an action list with 160 items on it for each event and making it happen probably takes nearly six weeks of his time in any year but even more importantly, serious commitment from a high proportion of Dayspring people. We have always been pleased that we are a church where it is not true that 20% of the people do 80% of the work. But recently it has become clear that making Cabaret happen—dealing with the technical requirements, hosting and catering—has taken us very close to the edge. This has led to us proposing that 2015 becomes a fallow year for Cabaret, that we have no cabaret events.

Connexions—implications

There is an upside to that but there's a downside, too. If the idea of being fallow is helpful our response could be anything from consciously taking opportunity to look inwards, to build community and thus team; to finding a different mix of events; to focusing on identifying people who want to say a small 'Yes' to Jesus and explore discipleship; to being more intentionally incarnational and less attractational. We would like to hear from you if you think that we are making a bad decision and we want to invite those of you who want to help decide what we should do instead and how we should, together, be disciplined by Jesus in a fallow year—even if you haven't been involved in Connexions. It's a great opportunity, in a missionally operated church, to extend our leadership base. Let us know so that we can choose a date when you can be involved.

Together we achieve more

Among the many ways church is like a body, is the manner in which it works together as a mutually dependent team. <http://bit.ly/1jYK1df>. One of the most basic reasons why we need teams is because *Together We Achieve More*. In Dayspring because most people who can are involved in serving the body it is easy to focus on our specific jobs rather than our simply being a connected part. In fact there are a host of ways in which we can connect with one another, most of which don't appear to need any special qualification. <http://bit.ly/1vhcncV>.

Sundays an example of being team.

I can understand why people feel that they would like a Sunday morning off. But being a consumer is not an option. Hopefully, there won't be a need for you to be handling tasks every Sunday, but even then the more that everybody contributes, the easier it is for everyone. But even then, I don't think there is such a thing as being off duty. *From [Christ] the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.* Ephesians 4:16. What work can you do every time we meet that contributes to the body of Christ *grows and builds itself up in love*. How can we all *connect* and supply.