

## **MISSION SUNDAY - 6<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2011**

The simplest definition of Mission in the dictionary is “a particular task given to a person or group to carry out” and it was great to have an opportunity to raise the profile of mission once again.

During the morning service we took a look at the past, present and future of mission at PBC, within the context of two key scriptures that reveal God’s heart for us to reach out to those in need:

### **Isaiah 61 v 1-3**

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—

to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes,

the oil of joy instead of mourning,

and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.

### **Matthew 25, v 35-40**

‘For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick, or in prison and go to visit you?’ The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

### **Missions Direct – The Past**

Our previous missions team, Mission Direct, functioned well at PBC for about 6 or 7 years, so it was important to acknowledge how God had both used and blessed this team of people and the work that they undertook. The service started with a brief overview of some of the work of Mission Direct, given by Christine Sayell. We were reminded of some of the projects that PBC undertook, including three trips to Mozambique where many individuals had their first taste of seeing God at work in a developing country, the “Welldiggers Appeal” in which we, together with Pembury School and other organisations, raised enough funds to provide a well for a small community in Mozambique and a project to provide a roof for a church in Uganda. We have continued to financially support a number of local, national and international charities throughout the last few years.

### **Missions Present**

We then took a “snapshot” look at some of the mission work that is currently happening at PBC, whilst acknowledging that there are many more people within the church who are involved in their own projects and have their own connections.

- David Chaput started by talking about his work with Prime. God has continued to amaze and bless him through the responses of individuals and teams to the teaching of holistic medicine in many Eastern European and ex-Soviet countries. He described some of the changes he has seen as like witnessing a resurrection.
- We then spoke with friends that are currently working in Northern Iraq, via a Skype connection.
- Colette Hicks then spoke of her own experience in Mozambique, which she has visited three times. Although she did not want to go initially, she knew that God was asking her to and that she needed to be obedient to His calling. She described many moving accounts of God's healing touch upon babies and children that had been orphaned or abandoned. The transformation that has resulted within her own life has enabled her and a friend to start a charity called "Project Moz", which aims to support children in Mozambique through sponsorship.
- Lyndsay Burgess and Matt Conroy finally spoke about their experiences in Mozambique, where Lyndsay has worked extensively in her role as a nurse. She has set up a health clinic and has established connections with a local church. Matt had the opportunity to join Lyndsay on a short-term trip last year, when God touched and inspired him to connect with mission. Matt and Lyndsay showed pictures of their trip and the difference that they were able to make through building a playground for a small community. They then introduced the possibility of taking a group of young people and leaders to Mozambique next year, in order to build a permanent health clinic and to give our young people a chance to connect with God's heart for international mission.

### **Mission Present and Future**

We rounded up the service with a challenge to us all to consider our own feelings about mission, which should encompass four different areas – personal, local, national and international.

- We are all individually responsible for personal mission – for continually asking God to use us within our own lives – at home, work, school or wherever it is that we spend our time, in order that He increases His Kingdom.
- PBC is already serving local mission well through areas such as Day Centre, Youth work, Little Rascals, Promiseland, and many more.

However, although we continue to give financially to both national and international mission, we seem to have lessened our connections and awareness as a church. This is our challenge – to form a new mission team that will seek to find out what it is that God wants from PBC from here on. It's time to re-assess where we are going, asking God to direct and guide us to the parts of His world and this nation that He now wants us to connect with. We must start looking outwards again, to the needs that are out there, but these needs will overwhelm us if we don't first seek God's heart and plan for where He wants us to connect.

We have already identified a small group of people who feel passionate about mission. Some are prepared to raise awareness and form new connections, some are keen to 'get out there' and organize new trips and some are confident that God is asking them to support mission at PBC through prayer. If you feel passionate about mission on a national and international level and would like the opportunity to chat about how you can respond to this, please do get in contact with Rebecca Melville through the Church Office by phone 01892825590 or by email [office@pemburybaptistchurch.org](mailto:office@pemburybaptistchurch.org).