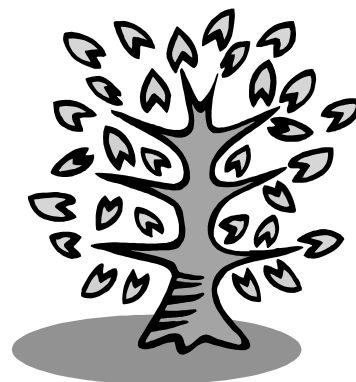


How to grow our church

Is our church growing? In what ways would you like to see our church develop?

Sadly, about 1500 people are leaving British churches every week (excluding those who die or transfer to other ones). Of course, God's purpose for his church is growth; as Jesus said, 'Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations.' (Matt 28:19). With 7 out of 10 people claiming to be Christians in this country, according to the latest census figures, our church faces a real challenge today!



The aim of this series is to see what we, as ordinary church members, can do to help our church to grow. In Ephesians 4:1-16, Paul presents us with a vision of a growing church, which will help us to identify those areas in which we need to work and pray for growth.

As you think about the following areas, where do you see growth currently, and which areas need our attention as a church?

- * Context of growth: unity (1-6)
 - character that builds unity (humility, gentleness, patience, forbearance) and seeks to maintain it.
- * Essentials for growth: gifts (7-11)
 - dependence on the Holy Spirit for his gifting in our ministry.
- * Means of growth: discipleship (12)
 - prepared for works of service and using God's gifts within the church and outside.
- * Goal of growth: maturity (12-14)
 - steady and focused, taking responsibility to work with others in the building up the body.
- * Medium of growth: truth (15,16)
 - transparent, honest, loving speech and lives.

There is a poster showing a beautiful tree with the caption: 'Growth is the only sign of life'. While this is certainly true for the world-wide church of Jesus Christ, is it also true of our church?

*From a new series, 'Principles of Growing Churches for All',
Written by the Rev Paul Hardingham, a vicar in Ipswich.*

Beckenham Chorale Concert - St George's Church, High Street, Beckenham.
Saturday 31 January 2004 at 7.30 pm (doors open 6.50pm)

Dona Nobis Pacem by Vaughan Williams

Fantasia on a theme by Thomas Tallis by Vaughan Williams

Little Organ Mass by Haydn

Albemarle Strings

Soloists: Elizabeth Atherton (soprano), Julian Empett (baritone) Conductor: James Blair

Tickets priced £8.50, £7 (reserved) and £5 (unreserved) in advance from:

Tel: 020 8778 6519 or from choir members, and at the door (subject to availability)