



Family Friendly Churches

Committed to making churches places where all are welcome

The Newsletter of the Family Friendly Churches Trust

April 2005

Check out our website: www.FamilyFriendlyChurches.org.uk

PowerPoint Training for 30!



Mike recently ran a Multimedia Weekend in the Bognor Regis and Chichester Circuit. On the Saturday afternoon he was asked to run PowerPoint training for 30 people (photo above).

Mike was at first very cautious about this. He has, up to now, put a maximum of 12 people for such courses, believing that is the most people he can cope with at once. The trust can also bring 4 laptops for people to use on such courses and has always believed that the most people you can have using one PC is 3. This is where the limit of 12 has come from in the past.

However a few major changes have occurred in the 5 years that Mike has been running the IT courses for churches.

Firstly the skill level of people coming on the courses has radically increased. Mike can remember in the early days having to show people how to operate a mouse! Now people come on courses with a good working knowledge of Windows style software. Most people are also familiar with Word and other Office products.

This means that, these days, Mike is starting at a much higher level and can progress rapidly to the actual PowerPoint training.

In addition to this many circuits now have a number of people with good PowerPoint skills. If they are willing to work alongside Mike helping sort out those who get stuck or have questions, then this also increases the number of people who can be taught on a course.

Finally, Mike was amazed to see the people coming to the course bringing their own laptops - 11 in total! Laptop ownership has dramatically increased and Mike is now frequently asked if people can bring their own laptops to the course.

All these factors came together at Bognor Regis and the weekend was a great success. This experience has led Mike to relax the rules about the number of people who can attend an IT course.

If there are people who can assist Mike in the training and there are extra laptops available then he is prepared to increase the numbers that can attend.

As a rough guide you will need a laptop loaded with Windows XP and Microsoft Office XP (please, no PowerPoint 97, this really is very different to the later versions). For each laptop that meets this spec you can increase the numbers by 2 people.

For each person who can help Mike you can add another 12 people, providing the laptop rule above is met.

Mike believes that this will be really helpful to circuits, parishes, dioceses and districts who wish to host courses.

Seminars and Synods

The next few weeks are quite busy for Mike as he publicizes the issue of Family Friendly Worship and the work of trust around the country.

This Newsletter is being written while Mike is at Easter People in Scarborough. He has already led one seminar on the decline in the number of children and young people in our churches. You never can tell how many people will come to a seminar, but Mike was pleasantly surprised by the number of people there and the quality of the debate afterwards.

He has another on Friday, this time looking at the different ways that churches can start to address the issue and start to work towards having models of worship that can be truly called family friendly - by the way the trust always uses the word family in its broadest meaning.

He is also visiting a number of Methodist synods and again talking about the issues concerned. If you would like Mike to lead something at your synod do ask your Chair or Bishop to invite him, Mike is always willing to talk to such gatherings.

Mike has also been invited to lead a seminar at the CRE exhibition. Mike spoke to a full house at CRE Midlands and this prompted them to ask him to come to the main exhibition at Sandown Park.

All of this will lead to more interest in the trust and its work - and no doubt the fall out from these will keep Mike busy over the next few months.

Pray for Mike

Most of you will know that Mike works 60% of his time for the Cambridge Circuit where he ministers as a Methodist Minister and 40% for the trust.

This arrangement will last at least to September 2006, yet over the next couple of months Mike has decide whether that arrangement will continue or whether he should give all his time to the trust.

This is not an easy decision, so Mike would be very grateful for your prayers and any thoughts you may have on the topic.

10,000th Hit

During the month of March the web site achieved its 10,000th hit. Currently we are running at around 1,000 hits a month and we get some excellent feedback from the site.

We get comments from folk who enjoy downloading and using the MIDI files. We know of preachers who use it to check out tunes, churches that use them for worship and people who just enjoy playing them.

We know that they are very different in style and as a result they are not to everyone's taste. However when listening to them please remember that they are designed and created to be played on a keyboard and do not always sound as they should when played just on a PC.

We also get feedback from around the world and in particular receive encouraging feedback from churches in the United States. We are also aware that Mike's book; *Building Family Friendly Churches*, is being sold in New Zealand.

Mike's Diary

Below is a list of Mike's commitments for the next couple of months. Please do pray for him..

April

1st-3rd - Seminars at Easter People
4th/8th - SPIES Holiday Club at Cropredy near Banbury
16th - Darlington and York and Hull Synods
23rd - Plymouth and Exeter Synod
24th - Family Friendly Service at Chard.

May

8th - Worship at Attleborough Methodist Church
11th - Seminar at CRE Exhibition, Sandown Park
14th - Local Preacher's Day, Sheffield West Circuit
16th-27th - Visiting Ralph (Mike's son) in Illinois.
30th-3rd - Jerusalem TV Holiday Club at Haslingfield

Published by 'The Family Friendly Churches Trust', Wesley Manse, Town St., Upwell, Nr. Wisbech, Cambs. PE14 9AD.

The Family Friendly Churches Trust is a company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales no. 5222088 and a registered charity no. 1106193. Registered Office: The Old Forge, Corner St., Cromer, Norfolk.

To receive a regular copy by email simply contact us and ask. Back issues can be found on the website.

Website: www.FamilyFriendlyChurches.org.uk

Email: Mail@FamilyFriendlyChurches.org

Tel: 01945 77246