

ST. BARNABAS CHURCH, SWANLAND

'Sharing Christ through friendship' - SMALL GROUPS NOTES

Week beginning 15th February 2015. **Bible passages: Phil 2:19-30 (also John 15:9-17)**

based on **Nicky Gumbel's *A Life Worth Living* – New Friendships (ch.5)**

Welcome/ icebreaker	What do you value most in a friend? Can you share one thing a friend has done for you that you have really appreciated – a) recently and b) ever?
Worship	<p>Suggestions: Songs that thank God for the constant friendship we have in Jesus. Eg. SOF 27 As the deer; 400 My song is love unknown; 593 What a friend we have in Jesus; 865 Jesus Christ I think upon; 1188 Befriended.</p> <p>Or in twos or threes, share for 1 minute each one thing to thank God for and one thing to pray for each other for, then pray together for a few minutes each.</p>
Word (refs.↓)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NB Sermon available to listen to on www.stbchurch.org.uk (click on the 'downloads' tab). • For further study, why not watch Nicky Gumbel's talk on this passage as part of the 'Life worth Living' Alpha follow-up course (on video from the Office)
Philippians 2:19-30	<p>If you are able, review the characters and situations of Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus from a study Bible or commentary (these verse might help: 1 Cor. 4:17, 16:10; Col. 1:1; Acts 16:1-5, 18:5, 20:4; 1 Thess. 3:6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'A Life Worth Living' lists four aspects of Christian friendship /partnership: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Taking a genuine interest in others (v.20) How does Paul say Timothy exemplifies this? In what practical ways can we follow his example? 2) Sharing a common focus (v.21) – i.e. the interests of Jesus Christ In what way can we put God at the centre of our friendships? Should we aim for all our close friendships to be with Christians only? Jesus accepted everyone, but chose his friends (John 15:14-15). How we decide whom to be close friends with? 3) Serving together (v.22) – literally 'we slaved together' How can serving with fellow Christians build good friendships? What team(s) are a you a part of in the church family – or what teams could you be part of? What can we do to prevent Christian friendship and fellowship become too inward-looking? What can you do as a group to put this into practice? 4) Taking risks and battling together (v.25) – <i>Epaphroditus (whose name is linked with the Greek word for gambling) 'risked his life' for the gospel.</i> Is it good to be a risk-taker for Christ, putting Jesus and others before yourself? Or is it best to 'play safe', concentrating on your own spiritual walk?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For further study, why not watch Nicky Gumbel's talk on this passage as part of the 'Life worth Living' Alpha follow-up course (on video from the Office or via http://youtu.be/1L4IMPLZKCg)
Prayer and Witness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for your link mission partner or project • Share and pray about ways of developing friendships – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) within the church family – e.g. on the various serving 'teams', and b) with people who are not yet Christians. • Could your group contribute to the Mothers' Day Cupcake service (4pm March 15) – or some other aspect of the church's outreach?