

Time to Celebrate

For some years now, as a church we have annually taken the opportunity to reaffirm our membership; the commitment we make to one another when we both become a member but also when we share in welcoming someone else into membership.

I believe it is an important element within our whole understanding of membership. When someone becomes a member, as has been our practice for many years here at Battle, we make a covenant with one another. This weekend we are taking the opportunity to celebrate this reaffirmation with one another.

It is not simply the noting of us all signing up for another 12 month period - otherwise it would be nothing more than a tick-box exercise. Membership is not something to be held that lightly, akin to an annual subscription or a magazine or club. We should not see it as something we sign up to for 12 months or so, with the option of whether we chose to stay on year after year. Reaffirmation is an opportunity to reaffirm the long-term commitment we made when we became a member, choosing to be a part of this family, this local expression of the church of Jesus Christ - here in Battle.

This Sunday members will be invited to collectively respond to the following questions that pick up on the promises they made when they became members, but also the specific vision and values we recognise as a church at this time:

- Do we declare our faith in the One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, having found new life in Him?
- Do we commit to seek God with all our hearts?
- Do we commit to finding rest in Jesus, in the midst of a hectic world?
- Do we commit to offering a welcome to all just as they are, as God welcomes us?
- Do we commit to demonstrating the love of God, seeking to be a community of people with generosity at our core?
- Do we commit to journey together, and through the help of the Holy Spirit to courageously follow Jesus wherever He leads us?

Then members will be invited to declare that:

'As Battle Baptist Church, young through old, we live to see lives transformed through the power of the gospel, as together our lives are transformed into the image of Christ, whom we love and serve.'

Finally, all who gather on Sunday, from across the age ranges, members or not, guests or regular attenders - everyone who is seeking to follow Jesus - will be invited to share some of the words from Paul's letter to the Philippians together.

This weekend is about celebrating the fact that God has called us to this place, for this time and to be a part of what He is doing here and now. It is about recognising His purposes and declaring that we want to see them come to pass: for His glory and His glory alone.

Be blessed

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