

## **The Good Shepherd Mission.**

### **Notes of the Question and Answer Session following the formal business of the Annual General Meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2009.**

**Q1)** Edward Moody said he was concerned that the leadership team should remain fresh and vital, and that long periods of service on the team might make this less likely. He suggested that regular changes in the team's membership would help reduce this risk.

Lyndon Drake replied that the leadership team had discussed this question and concluded that for now no compulsory limit to length of service in addition to what the constitution required would be introduced. There would be some natural movement in membership, and Lyndon mentioned that he planned to go to Bible College in autumn 2010 and so would be likely to step down during the year ahead. He saw an individual's gifting and availability as key considerations, and didn't see a Biblical mandate for rotation of leadership. It was stated that the leadership team would keep the matter under review.

**Note:** On 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008 the leadership team discussed the question of length of service of trustees, and views both in favour and against rotation were expressed, with the majority being in favour of continuity of service. The following is an extract of the minutes of that meeting giving the conclusion that was reached:

'It was then agreed to continue with the existing arrangements, and not enforce retirement after a specified number of years. It was right for team members to be accountable to each other, and to be prepared to step down if they fell short of the agreed standards expected of them.'

**Q2)** Dorothy Davies asked if there was opportunity to consider new people who had the required gifting to join the leadership.

The reply was that the leadership team would be willing to consider this.

**Q3)** Meg Mitchell asked if consideration had ever been given to making known the Mission's church services through the local press and other media.

Mike Gough replied that this hadn't been done, and that it was a good idea.

**Q4)** Andy Wright asked if the present shift from structured youth club work to detached work indicated a deliberate change in strategy.

Joshua Bolaji replied that detached work had been considered for about a year now, and so this was a deliberate step rather than simply a response to present circumstances such as a lack of volunteers.

**Q5)** Audrey Aymer asked how the leadership team intended to build up church members in their faith.

Julia Moody replied that overall they wanted to encourage more people to study and pray together and challenge each other to grow in their faith, and a start had been made in this through the discipleship groups.

**Q6)** Paul Jacob pointed out that most staff resources are focussed on outreach, and only the pastor was primarily focussed on the life of the church fellowship.

Simon Martin replied that outreach activities tended to be more personnel intensive. Julia Moody said that the leadership was actively considering this area and monitoring the demands on Vincent Buchanan as pastor of the church. Vincent added that there was considerable overlap between outreach and church life, and we needed to work at developing these. There were examples of children and young people crossing over from the clubs to Sunday groups, and once vulnerable adults contacted through outreach start to attend church activities, the church should assume some responsibility for teaching and caring for them.

**Q7)** Denise Buchanan observed that we are not actively recruiting volunteers from St Helen's and other local churches at the present time.

Simon Martin replied that St Helen's Bishopsgate had been contacted over a year ago about making an appeal for volunteers, but the request had not been taken up, and so this door was shut at the present time. Lyndon Drake added that the emphasis of St Helen's was currently church planting, and people were being directed into this area.

Joshua Bolaji said a difficulty was also that other local churches naturally wanted to hold onto their volunteers.

**Q8)** Catherine Clayden asked about the potential for recruiting volunteers through local Christian Unions.

Joshua Bolaji replied that he was currently meeting up with U.C.C.F. staff, and making contact with college chaplains.

Vincent Buchanan said the London Hospital and Barts C.U. was now very small, and that we needed to find new ways of recruiting young volunteers. We also needed to pray about this.

Dorothy Davies said there were other opportunities that could be explored, and mentioned the XLP gap year scheme, and Moorlands College and All Nations Christian College student placements.

**Q9)** Gary McIlwaine asked if the aim of recruiting students was evangelistic or to see them serving in outreach. He also asked if student work was an area of work the Mission was well equipped for.

Joshua Bolaji replied that he saw both aims as legitimate. This area would require resources to be allocated to it now, but if a group of students became involved in the life of the church, this could then attract others so that the work became self resourcing.

Gary asked how the effectiveness of work in this area would be measured. Joshua said that student outreach was the main area of outreach he was focussing on at present and so he did have the time to give to it. Andy Wright was also meeting with him to consider how to pursue this area of work.

The question and answer session was followed by a time of prayer in small groups, and the evening concluded with a rousing rendition of the song 'The Steadfast Love of The Lord Never Ceases'.