

HOME MISSION VIDEO – ST ANDREWS BLETCHLEY

CENTRAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

a **must see video for your congregation of St Andrews, Bletchley**. This is a situation where decline has been reversed thanks to a Home Mission grant, and now the church has reached the point where they are able to come off this support. This is a **Home Mission Good news story**. There are two versions of the video, the longer includes Esther's testimony, the shorter is without this.

You might like to show this video in the context of group discussion – some possible (obvious) questions that might be worth considering include:

- [Discover on a map where St Andrews, Bletchley is.](#)
- **How would you currently tell the story of your church?** Brian talks about a church where there were 25 members, loyal and committed, who had been on a long journey of decline.
- **Brian asked the church right at the beginning "What do they want?"** Their response of course was "We want to see more young people and families come into this church". **What do YOU want?**

Brian suggested they had 3 options: 1. Stay as you are hoping things will change ("which they won't") 2. Die Gracefully 3. Take a risk and reach out. Everyone of course said they wanted the third BUT he made it clear that this will "COST you" **YOU are going to have to CHANGE** meaning a change of approach to doing church "because nothing was changing because they were not changing".

- **In your situation, it is almost certain that you want to see growth,**
 - **BUT would you say you are prepared to face the cost of change in order to see that growth?**
 - **and what might that necessary change look like?** (try and be honest here)
- **What changed?**

(They worked on a three year **plan** - of services and outreach events including Café style services/ contemporary worship / Messy church; they engaged in providing services to the community + Made it a priority to become a Prodigal friendly church – reaching out intentionally to those who used to come).

- **What is the COST of becoming a welcoming family friendly church accessible to all?**
- **What place do you think the practical caring aspects of church life had on growth?**
- **The change issue of different styles of worship is keenly felt** – Brian said that the members *tolerated* different styles of worship, were committed to the process & welcomed all. How would your church respond to a change in this area of church life?
- **How do you FEEL as you see what the church has become?**
- **Walking together in ministry & mission is the strapline of the Central Baptist Association.** This church has discovered what that means. How well do you think your church walks together in those two aspects of church life? Does it have the balance right?
- **Esther's baptism story – perhaps Share some of your baptism stories.**

- **She said** *"a lovely peace overflowed. Once you experience that peace from God you just know that this is not something you just can't go to TESCO's to get. Only God can give it to you."* **Is that sort of peace a present reality for you or a distant memory?** Discuss what practices may help? Pray for one another that you might again experience a freshness and vitality in your faith.
- **Pray for St Andrews**
- **Pray for other situations similar to where St Andrews was a few years ago** – loyal and committed but declining and wondering what the future holds.
- **Home Mission has made this possible.** Are you aware that your church hopefully gives to Home Mission which helps churches like St Andrews in a number of situations across the Country; also supports Regional ministry and the National resources services at Didcot. Thank you for all you can give!!