



THE DOVERCOURT DISCLOSURE

A regular update from the Elders of Dovercourt Baptist Church

Issue # 2
December 2005

Bible Insights Fellowship

Since the change to the start time of our Sunday morning service, we have been encouraging the church family to gather in the Heritage Lounge before the service for a time of welcoming newcomers and encouraging other church family members. In the New Year, beginning January 8th, we would like to take the next step in this process and add some structure to this fellowship time by encouraging discussion around God's Word. To this end, we will be introducing the *Bible Insights Fellowship*. *Bible Insights Fellowship* will begin at 9:45 AM and end around 10:15 AM each Sunday morning, and will be open to all age groups. Please be aware that this is the only "class" that will be available during this time slot. No children's ministry (Sunday School) will be provided and the Nursery will not be staffed. But if you are a parent and would like to attend, you are welcome to bring your children along. During this casual gathering, the facilitator (Elder Rob Lavery) will lead in some thought-provoking discussions on various teachings of the Bible. So bring your Bible and your thinking cap, and come prepared to be challenged by the truth of God's Word.

Michael Noble

From November 2 to 21, Michael Noble had the privilege of joining a group of men on a work-related mission to the Belgium town of Lombardsijde (near Brussels). This FEB International team completed a church building (dry walling, painting, etc.). Michael's required funds (\$1800) were raised by the generous givings of our congregation. We would like to thank Michael for representing us in Belgium. You were Dovercourt's "ambassador in work boots" to the people of that wonderful country. Thank you also for keeping us up-to-date via your emails. We rejoice with you in answers to prayer as we saw the Lord provide for your needs and for the completion of the mission project you (and we) were a part of. The prayers of the church continue to be lifted up on behalf of Michael and our Youth, that the Lord Jesus may be glorified in the lives of each one. May we all be ambassadors for Christ wherever He leads us: a "noble" task!

Love Offering

Pastor Emmanuel E. Morvan (father of Elder Amstrong Morvan) has been visiting Toronto and will be with us until December 20th. He is involved in overseeing some 16 churches in Haiti, many of which also operate schools. Of the churches represented, the total church attendance is around 2120 and the total students around 1020. Pastor Emmanuel wishes that churches like ours could help support the mission work in Haiti. Present needs include financial support, mission trips, work projects, youth camps, speakers, and providing for the needs of children so that they will be able to attend school.

The Elders would like to propose the following:

1. During the December 11th morning service, Pastor Emmanuel will share with the church some of the needs for the work in Haiti.
2. On December 18th, DBC will take up a "love offering" for Pastor Emmanuel.
3. In 2006, we would include Haiti in our Missions budget.

Church Administrator

The Elders believe that in order to properly care for church members and adherents, the position of Church Administrator is critical. Without someone to take care of the details of maintaining church records and performing secretarial duties, it is very difficult to properly organize and run the day-to-day functions of our church. Pastor Arc's wife, Brigitte, has kindly volunteered her time to perform some of these tasks this past year, and we would like to thank her for serving so willingly, but we see the need for a permanent, paid position. If you think that you or someone you know has the required organizational, computer, and English skills to fill this position, we would like to hear from you. Obviously, we would prefer someone that currently attends Dovercourt and is familiar with its membership.

Fellowship Groups

For many years now, Dovercourt has encouraged small groups to gather under many different names: CARES Groups, Growth Groups, Small Groups, Cell Groups, etc. Each attempt seems to last for a while, serve a temporary purpose, and then fizzle out. Yet there are some groups, such as the Ladies' Fellowship and Faithwalkers, that continue to meet regularly. The Elders see the value of small groups, but we would like to see them be something more permanent. With this in mind we would like to propose the following:

1. Fellowship Groups would function as Growth Groups.
2. New Fellowship Groups would be created as people see the need and take the initiative to form them.
3. The Elders' Board would try its best to support and encourage each group in whatever ways are helpful, but would not be involved in structuring, managing or organizing the groups.
4. Fellowship Groups could not be associated with the church unless a member of the church is willing to organize and lead them. Leaders would then need to report back to the Board simply to provide updates regarding their groups and to seek assistance from the church wherever necessary.
5. Groups and group leaders should know that these groups are expected to be involved in Bible study, outreach, and discipleship, not just fellowship and fun. They should also be willing to accept new people into the group so that people from the church are able to confidently direct newcomers to their appropriate Fellowship Groups, knowing that they will be properly cared for.
6. Each group would make their own arrangements as to how often they meet, where they meet, and what topics or subject matter will be studied.
7. Fellowship Groups would meet on the week day of their choosing, but we would ask that none of the groups schedule meetings during times of corporate gathering.

If you have any questions about how this would work or would like to recommend the creation of a specific Fellowship Group, please speak to Elder Amstrong Morvan or any of the other Elders at your earliest convenience.

Evening Services

The Elders have decided to begin having Sunday evening services again. It has been a long time since our church has had regular Sunday evening services, but we believe this is just one example of how we as a church have grown spiritually cold and lazy. We envision these new evening services as being more devoted to in-depth Bible teaching, and yet as also being more casual than the morning services. Current plans would see us spend this time studying and teaching through the entire Bible. The evening services would run from 6:30 to 7:30 PM.

The Board has recognized that we have not been as faithful as we should have in the study and teaching of God's Word. Our goal as a church is to glorify our Lord, and we do that by being obedient. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) states that our duty as Christians is to make disciples and teach God's Word. It is God's Word that works in the hearts of unbelievers to draw them to the Saviour, and it is God's Word that works in the hearts of believers to bring about growth and maturity. Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." If we as a church want to please our Lord, we need to be more committed to the teaching and sharing of God's Word. God is the one who changes lives, but it happens as we are faithful in proclaiming His truth.

Wednesday Prayer Meeting

The Elders also recognize that true spiritual growth happens as people are willing to spend time on their knees. If our plans proceed to reinstate the Sunday evening services, then we will also be making some minor changes to the Wednesday night Prayer Meetings, with a short devotional and more time for prayer. If you are serious about seeing God's hand at work in our church and seeing loved ones come to Christ, then we encourage you to attend Wednesday Night Prayer Meetings every Wednesday starting at 7:00 PM. If you would like the Elders to pray for you regarding a specific issue, Wednesday night Prayer Meeting is also the best time to arrange for this to occur.

KICK-Start

The Dovercourt children's program that resulted from the merging of Sunday School and Junior Church finally has a name: it will be called **KICK-Start**. The "KICK" in "KICK-Start" stands for "Kids In Christ's Kingdom." The idea behind the name is that the children who attend this program will be provided with an early "kick-start" on their life's journey with God. It will also be an opportunity to prepare them for the time when they will eventually graduate to attending the adult worship services in the auditorium.

The Elders would love to see this program develop and flourish, but it will not happen unless people who love children and want to see them grow in the Lord are willing to volunteer their time to teach and encourage these kids. If you would like to become involved in shaping these young lives for Christ, we encourage you to speak to Pastor Arc, the Elders, or any of the teachers who currently serve in this ministry. We would especially ask that you pray for God to raise up someone to lead this program as the *KICK-Start* Coordinator.

Preparation for Worship

If you are observant, you may have noticed that during the month of November we began each service with the playing of a doxology. The purpose of this doxology is to serve as a call to worship. That means that when you hear this specific song playing, you will know that it is time to stop talking with others, find a seat in the auditorium, and prepare yourself for the worship service. In the near future, there will also be a special slide projected on the screen during the doxology as an additional queue that the service is about to begin.

We have also noticed that during the service there are often people milling about in the lobby or in the Heritage Lounge while they snack or talk with others. We would just like to remind everyone that this time should be devoted to worshipping or serving our Lord in either the church service or the children's program. Opportunities are available before and after the services to have a snack and fellowship with one another. We would also like to encourage those who attend services to try and arrive on time. Our Sunday morning service begins at 10:30 AM.

Newcomers Luncheon

Recently, we held a Newcomers Luncheon in the Lounge after a morning service. This event was well-attended and seemed to be enjoyed by all. We would like to see it become a regular event. Specifically, we are thinking it would be nice to have one every two months. The first Newcomers Luncheon of 2006 will occur on January 15th.

Church Family Gatherings

We also believe it is important to get together as a church family on a regular basis just to have fun and get to know one another. So we would also like to have some kind of church family social every two months in the months that we don't have a Newcomers Luncheon. These gatherings would not necessarily be on Sundays, and would include such traditions as the Christmas Banquet and the Church Picnic. Getting volunteers who are willing to organize and help with these events will be important. Some of you already faithfully serve in the Social Conveners Ministry, but we need more to share the load. Please let us know if you would like to serve the Lord in this ministry.

Special Events Planning Committee

We would also like to see the formation of a new committee called the Special Events Planning Committee. This committee would plan and delegate for many of the special events that occur at Dovercourt each year. This should help to reduce some of the poor and last-minute planning that often occurs, and allow plenty of forethought and preparation to go into these special events. Once again, we ask you to consider what role you may be able to play in this area. Without volunteers like you, it will be difficult to implement most of these new endeavors.

Christmas & New Years

This year, both Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on a Sunday. This created some unique problems when trying to plan for services around these events. So this year, Dovercourt has decided to have our special Christmas service on Christmas Day. People are usually more open to attending church at Christmas time, so we encourage everyone to use the available postcard invitations to invite friends and family to the special Christmas Day service at 10:30 AM on December 25th, 2005. Unfortunately, we will not be having our traditional Christmas Eve service this year, but our "Christmas Around The World" banquet is still on and scheduled for 6:00 PM, Saturday, December 17th, 2005. No special meeting is planned for New Year's Eve, but we will be holding a special Sunday Communion service, featuring a message from Elder Rob Lavery, on New Year's Day at 10:30 AM, January 1st, 2006. Although we understand that these are traditionally days spent at home with family, we encourage everyone to come and spend some time in *God's house* with your *Dovercourt Family* as we worship our Lord on these two special days of the year.