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Pastor Connect

16th July, 2009

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

Greetings to you all. I apologise for the lack of this column over the last few weeks but I hope to get back to doing this once a week again. I do enjoy writing it and I hope that you enjoy reading it.



This week my attention has been captured by the decision of the Episcopal Church in the US (a part of the worldwide Anglican Church) to approve a resolution to ordain gay and lesbian clergy. For those who have followed the Anglican Church over the last 6 years or so, this is a major decision and one that could actually split the Church. There has already been splits from the Anglican church already following the consecration of Bishop Gene Robinson, the first openly gay bishop in the US, who was elected bishop by the New Hampshire diocese on June 7, 2003. I remember hearing Gene speak at a breakfast at the MCC 2005 General Conference, and hearing some of the hate and vilification that he had suffered in the lead up to his election made me sad that people in the Church are capable of such talk and action. But it seems like the church and Christians can tear themselves apart so well. Even in the last week there has been violence between Protestants and Catholics in Belfast.

Sometimes I get people asking me "how does MCC do it?" How does the denomination manage to not tear itself apart? I believe the answer lies in two parts.

*The first is that we all acknowledge that we come together around the communion table as God's creations, equal in the sight of God.

*The second is that there is respect for others and their past history and church background.

So many in MCC come from different denominational backgrounds but as an inclusive church we accept everyone and work to make sure that we can all work together.

"Respect"

It sounds easy but it can get so very very hard. Being able to respect someone else's opinions and views, and disagreeing with someone while not getting angry or nasty is so hard to do. But it is essential that we be able to do this so we can grow as a church. It's hard and we need the help of Christ and the blessing of the Holy Spirit to do it. We need to be in constant prayer for the church and for one another so we can grow to accept, love and respect all those around us. For the world at its worst needs the church at its best! So as we come together, remember those famous words of Aretha Franklin:

*R-E-S-P-E-C-T
Find out what it means to me*

Blessings to you all this week.

Gavin

SERVICES THIS WEEK

10am Service - Traditional

All are welcome at our 10am traditional service where we will be looking at the will of God and what the calling of the Church is.

6:30pm Service - Crave

This week Crave is having its Christmas in July service. So come along to sing some carols and get into the Christmas spirit and to think about the question "What would the world be like if Jesus had not existed?"

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