

'Eyes Wide Open' - Community Prayer Focus 'beyond our 4 walls'

We go out to pray for our community this morning with 3 main aims:

OBSERVING, PRAYING, LISTENING

A key question we are asking as we go is: *What is God doing in our community, and how is he calling us to be involved?*

► Observing

As you observe, try to see people & our community 'through God's eyes', as he sees them.

Things you may look out for:

- the **people** - ages, gender, race, language
- events or **activities** - especially the unexpected
- **impressions** or 'feel' of the place
- any particular **needs** you can identify
- type of **housing** - age, size, style, are people renovating?, is it well-cared for?
- **workplaces** - businesses, industries, shops
- **meeting places** - shops, schools, RSL clubs, social clubs, pubs, community centre, churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, sports clubs, local parks
- signs of **transience** - houses for sale, new building - if you have lived in the area for a number of years, what has changed?
- **sounds** - how quiet or noisy is it?, what sounds of life do you hear?
- the **natural environment** - trees, parks, open space, well used?, well cared for?
- where do you see **life**, hope, beauty or community in this neighbourhood?
- what evidence of **struggle**, despair, neglect and alienation do you see?
- what sense of **connection** do you feel to your neighbourhood as you walk through it?
- in what ways do you sense **God's presence** in the community?

► Praying

- with our 'eyes wide open' in response to what we see
- we seek to bless our neighbours, by praying intentionally for those we see as we go
- out loud (when possible) - so those with you can hear and agree with you
- sometimes in silence
- usually our prayer will be low profile, praying as we go, usually unnoticed
- with Jesus! Talk with him about what you see & feel. Be sensitive to his guidance.

► Listening

Remember our key question: *What is God doing in our community, and how is he calling us to be involved?*

Many are surprised at how God speaks to them as they go out and seek to pray with God's heart, with 'eyes wide open' to the realities and needs of our neighbours.

Practical Matters

- Sometime this week we encourage you to take some time, perhaps an hour, to pray with your 'eyes wide open' as you walk through our local streets.
- Today we will spend 30min praying from 5 'outposts'. That probably translates to 5min or so at each 'outpost'.
- We encourage families to do this together!
- Return to the church, ready to share something of what you 'saw' or 'heard' by [time].

Please note your reflections below...

What is God doing in our community, and how is he calling us to be involved?

What did you see? What might God be saying to you / us?

References

Simon Carey Holt, *God Next Door: Spirituality and Mission in the Neighbourhood*. Brunswick: Acorn Press, 2007, 103-104

GiA ,*Global Exposure: Leader's Manual*, 2013, 105-106.