

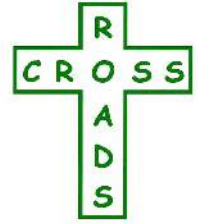
# ST JOHN'S, NEVILLE'S CROSS

From the Parochial Church Council

email [Groups@sjnx.org.uk](mailto:Groups@sjnx.org.uk)

THE CHURCH

at the



[www.sjnx.org.uk](http://www.sjnx.org.uk)

To all members of St John's

January 2011

With the New Year begun, we are embarking on our long-awaited plan of forming **Small Groups**, to encourage and enable the life, faith and growth of St John's Church. Initially we are proposing four (quite large!) groups, each based around a geographical area of the Parish to make it as easy as possible for people to meet together. (St John's members living beyond the parish boundaries are of course included, spread among the four groups).

How it will work:

- To begin with, we propose forming people into their Groups in the course of our Sunday morning worship in February.
- The hope is that each group will then begin meeting independently during Lent (at mutually convenient times).
- Groups will be provided with an initial convenor and a venue, but it will be up to each group to come to its own decision about leadership, times and frequency of meetings etc.
- We realise that not everyone listed overleaf will be able to attend regular meetings; but the hope is that there will be enough people in each Group to make regular meetings viable, and that as Groups grow they might divide and form new Groups.
- Everyone should be able to engage as much or as little as they wish; for those less actively engaged, it is hoped that membership of a Group will provide a stronger practical, pastoral and social link with St John's, together with the possibility of support through prayer.

The Small Groups idea came out of a 2010 PCC away-day, and was strongly supported in the congregational consultations that followed. Our vision is that these Small Groups will be able to transform the way we function as a Church, and live and grow as Christians. They will also help us develop our other priorities in the areas of worship and community engagement:

- We hope that the Groups will provide better opportunities for people to be involved in all aspects of Church life, and that they will help us listen to one another, and to God, much more effectively.

- An initial agenda will be provided with various possibilities for Groups to think about pursuing (one example being the question of whether and how St John's might have a role to play in the Hospice, now that there is no formal Chaplaincy provision there).
- After Easter, on one Sunday per month, each Group in turn will be invited to be involved in planning and co-ordinating the morning services – to a greater or lesser degree, however they may choose.
- Each Group will also be encouraged to develop its own sustaining pattern of prayer and study (or to help people be aware of opportunities for prayer etc elsewhere in & around St John's).

In order to provide a central forum for decision-making in the areas addressed by the groups, each group will be asked to provide a representative to what will become a new Shared Ministry Development Team (SMDT) – a team of people which will be empowered by the PCC (the governing body of the Parish) to co-ordinate thinking and decision-making in specific areas of the Church's ministry.

**We commend this idea to your personal prayer and consideration; please try to engage as much as possible with the process of getting the Groups started over the next couple of months. Many people are excited at the possibilities it offers us, as individuals and as a Church, for shared involvement, support and growth in the life of the Church in the name of Christ.**