A FAMILY SERVICE SYLLABUS

We started the Family Service a couple of years ago. It begins at 11 o'clock each Sunday and runs for three-quarters of an hour. Its aim is twofold: (i) to convey the Christian message to outsiders at a time judged to be convenient to them; and (ii) to provide a planned substitute for the traditional ministry after the Lord's Supper, which we celebrate from 10 to 10.45 in an adjoining hall.

The short service includes a five-minute children's talk and a message to the adults lasting a quarter of an hour or so. The theme of the latter is planned by a committee of seven, including one lady and a chairman elder. The committee has proved an invaluable source of stimulating and varied ideas and a practical check on the hobby horses and high-faluting notions of individuals. We aim to provide a balanced and wholesome diet, marked by both continuity and variety. The Bible is studied at the level of verse, paragraph, chapter, book and character study. The doctrines of the faith are presented. Ample room is made for personal testimony, to show the outworking of faith in individual lives (very popular). We exploit the traditional church calendar of Easter, Whitsun, etc. Remembrance Sunday in 1967 provided a theme for the whole month. But there is need to guard against stereotyped repetition: so in 1968 we thought it wise to break entirely away from the theme. For a fortnight in the summer we receive help from a CSSM team during their campaign in the district. One month in the year is left open and no subject is specified. This gives scope to those of our gifted brethren who prefer not to be committed to a subject they have not chosen. Generally there is a different speaker each week, appropriately 'primed', if need be, and frequently provided from resources within the assembly. In November 1968 it was deemed wise for one person to take responsibility for the whole month to preserve homogeneity in the treatment of a complex subject.

Advance publicity is achieved by the judicious distribution of attractively printed cards and folders. Much thought is therefore given to appealing titles, although one has to beware of false series in which ill-matched material is pushed together under related headings. In this and other respects we are learning as we go along in this rewarding venture.

R. MORRIS, Chairman, Family Service Committee

1967

JANUARY
1 New Year's Message
8 I am the Way
15 I am the Truth
22 I am the Life
29 Peace
FEBRUARY  FAMILY PROBLEMS
      5  The Delinquent Son
     12  The Troublesome Twins
     19  A Misguided Mother
     26  An Indulgent Father

MARCH  THE LORD JESUS CHRIST
       5  The Boyhood of Christ
      12  The Manhood of Christ
      19  The Death of Christ
      26  The Resurrection of Christ

APRIL  FOLLOWERS OF JESUS
       2  Peter the Impulsive
      09  Mary the Devoted
     16  Stephen the Martyr
     23  Lydia the Hostess
     30  Thomas the Doubter

MAY  MY FAITH AND MY JOB
     07  A Police Inspector
     14  A Bank Manager
     21  A Scientist
     28  A Company Accountant

JUNE  WALKS WITH JESUS
       04  By the Sea
      11  Through the Fields
      18  Up the Hill
     25  Along the Road

JULY  BIBLE WEATHER
       02  Morning Dew
      09  Mid-day Sun
     16  A Storm at Sea
     23  Red Sky at Night
     30  Service taken by CSSM team

AUGUST  CAN WE ASK GOD?
        06  Service taken by CSSM team
        13  For Help
        20  For Guidance
        27  For Forgiveness

SEPTEMBER  PARABLES OF THE FIELDS
           03  A Field Furrowed
           10  A Seed Sown
           17  A Plant Produced
           24  A Harvest Home
OCTOBER

STUDIES IN I TIMOTHY
1  A Faithful Saying
8  One God and One Mediator
15 The Mystery of Godliness
22 The Saviour of all Men
29 Godliness with Contentment

NOVEMBER

REMEMBRANCES
5  A Book of Remembrance
12 Remembrance Day Service
19 Have These Things always in Remembrance
26 This do in Remembrance of Me

DECEMBER

GUEST SPEAKERS
3
10
17
24
31

1968

JANUARY

ALL THINGS NEW
7  A New Birth
14 A New Life
21 A New Command
28 A New Purpose

FEBRUARY

4  For Doctrine
11 For Reproof
18 For Correction
25 For Righteousness

MARCH

A LIFETIME WITH THE SAVIOUR
3
10
17 Guest Speakers
24
31

APRIL

EASTERTIDE
7 The Triumphant Entry
14 The Empty Tomb
21 The Lord Revealed
28 The Emmaus Road
MAY
SONGS OF FAITH
5 Psalm 2      The King
12 Psalm 3     The Refugee
19 Psalm 23    The Shepherd
26 Psalm 121   The Pilgrim

JUNE
THE HOLY SPIRIT
2 The Gift of the Spirit
9 The Fruit of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace
16 Patience, Kindness
23 Goodness, Faithfulness
30 Gentleness, Self-control

JULY
HYMNS AND THEIR MESSAGE
7 Rock of Ages
14 When Peace like a River
21 Now thank we all our God
28 Service taken by CSSM Team

AUGUST
4 Service taken by CSSM Team
11 Guest Speaker
18 Guest Speaker
25 Guest Speaker

SEPTEMBER
SOLDIERS OF THE LORD
1 Joshua
8 King Saul
15 Naaman
22 Cornelius
29 Harvest Thanksgiving

OCTOBER
MY FAITH AND MY JOB
6 A Research Scientist
13 A Medical Practitioner
20 A Solicitor
27 A Bible College Lecturer

NOVEMBER
JESUS IS COMING AGAIN
3 The Promise
10 The Purpose
17 The Problem
24 The Preparation

DECEMBER
JESUS
1 Mary’s Secret
8 Joseph’s Care
15 Herod’s Rival
22 God’s Gift
29 My Saviour