**Small Group Material - I am sending you, 3**

**A Culture of Invitation**

**Luke 14.15-21**

*Allow plenty of time for the Witness section this week*

**Welcome**

What was one of the best parties you ever went to? What made it so memorable?

**Worship**

Sing (or listen to) the song, One shall tell another. Divine Hymns has got a U-tube.

**Word**

*Jesus compared the kingdom of heaven to a great big banquet or party to which all can be invited. So our gatherings need to feel like ‘good news’ parties.*

**Read Luke 14.15-21**

1. In the parable who are the invited guests?

Why don’t they come (cf v19-20)? What happens to them (v21)? Who eventually comes?

2. From your experience, what excuses do people make to avoid God’s banquet? (eg work, family, financial needs or whatever…)

3. What can we say or do to help people overcome their hesitations?

**Witness**

*A culture of invitation starts with God’s people having*

* *both a confidence in what they are doing*
* *and an outgoing love for people on the edge*

*When we put the two together, we begin to ‘go out and build relationships and invite people to the banquet’.*

Discuss together as a group where we struggle with those two factors.

When we invite people to an event we need to:

* Think first of the people you want to invite, then plan an appropriate event
* Don’t be disappointed if only 25% of those you invite turn up (think of the parable of the Sower!). Focus on those who *do come* - not on those who don’t.
* Make your invitation personal with a phone call as well as a printed invitation. You could say, ‘I’m going. It’s going to be really good. Would you like to come with me?’

In the North Cotswolds Mission (June 11-14), there are three events at St Mary’s that we can invite people to:

1. Thurs 12th July **A Healing Seminar** followed by a Service of Healing with John Woolmer (gifted and anointed to teach and pray for healing). St Mary’s 6.00pm.
2. Sat 14th July **Chippy Fun Day** with The Gladiator and lots of all age activities. Probably on the recreation ground.
3. Sun 15th **Guest Service**, 10.45 at St Mary’s with The Gladiator.

On Post-it Notes, write names of 5, 6 or more people (one name per note) who you could invite to an event.

In 3 baskets or plates labelled, Healing Service, Fun Day, Guest Service. Invite people to put their Post-it Notes in appropriate baskets, praying for each person as they do.