

CRCK Service Leader Guidelines Re: Personal Announcements

Background and rationale

- CRCK has a culture of service leaders making personal announcements up the front (e.g. engagements, welcoming visitors from overseas etc.). There are two competing, positive values at play here:
 - The desire to be a close church family and to express that publicly. Since the church meets together as a family, not as a business, it is proper that personal announcements be made from up the front to express that fact, both to each other but also as a model to visitors.
 - The desires to not alienate people in our public services, especially visitors, and also not to clog it up with multiple announcements. The flip-side of this is that it can alienate people: members, if one of their important dates is forgotten while others' are remembered; visitors, as they can get the impression that we are a clique in which everyone knows everyone, except them!
- It should also be noted that the general principle is, the bigger the church, the less personal its public meetings can and should be. This is for the following reasons:
 - The effectiveness of the Sunday service announcement. In a church of 50, everyone knows who 'Barry' is when it's his birthday, but in a church of 300, a much smaller percentage of people will. If the aim of public announcements is to make them as relevant as possible to as many people as possible, the list of acceptable public announcements will get smaller as the church gets bigger.
 - The bigger the church, the greater the chance we'll miss someone's personal announcement, hence causing hurt.
 - The bigger the church, the more of these announcements you need to make, making the service increasingly unwieldy.
- We actually do need a policy on this, to ensure that there is consistency in the messages we're communicating from up the front, but also so that service leaders who get bailed up at the beginning of services with requests to make personal announcements (and it happens a lot!) have a consistent policy they can respond with, rather than being put on the spot and having to make a call themselves, which could be seen as personal rather than them simply doing what they're told. Sometimes, it is good to have a policy to hide behind when politely refusing someone's request!
- I think the right balance is struck if service leaders can announce 'big life events' but nothing else. Those events would be:
 - Births,
 - Engagements,
 - Deaths,
 - Significant wedding anniversaries,
 - Significant birthdays
 - Permanent farewells (i.e. people leaving the church for good)
- This would rule out anything else, e.g. people coming back from a long holiday, family members coming from overseas, birthdays, etc.

- Of course, we would need to publicise this in advance to people (not from up the front, but in writing in a bulletin notice, it is not a big enough deal to say from up the front) so they know where they stand.
- Of course, people could still be missed, even with this smaller list of public announcements. But if we let people know that they can have it announced, and that all they need to do is let the office know in advance, rather than wait for the service leader to find out, that solves the problem, as if it doesn't get announced, they only have themselves to blame.

Policy

1. Personal announcements in Sunday services be limited to:
 - a. births,
 - b. engagements,
 - c. deaths,
 - d. significant wedding anniversaries (e.g. 25th, 50th, 60th),
 - e. significant birthdays, and
 - f. permanent farewells.
2. This policy is to be publicized in writing to the church so people can submit announcements to the office in advance if they want to.