

Doctrine/Theology spotlight

There is very little that has been written on the Doctrine of Pastoral Care.

It is worth pondering, how does the worship in your church express the Pastoral Care offered by and to its members?

- What do the words of the hymns/song express?
- Who or what is mentioned in the prayers?
- Do sermons ever touch on the pastoral needs of the congregation or the community?
- What does your practice of sharing Holy Communion convey?

The doctrine of the incarnation, that God became a human being in Jesus, and that those who seek to follow Jesus are described as being one body (1Corinthians 12:12) helps to shape our understanding of Pastoral Care. That God became one of us and shares our humanity is both a comfort and a challenge. As Christ's body we need each other, we are all of equal status, and we are connected, this mutual dependence should shape how we approach and practice Pastoral Care. . Is this true in your church? (for more see Francis Bridger in 'New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology' IVP, (1995))

As we do the work of Pastoral Care and learn about the gifts, the needs and the care of the most vulnerable children among us, we will deepen our understanding of care for less vulnerable people and the environment in which they live. We will find new connections between caring for children and caring for families, communities and nations, the world and the earth' Pamela Courture, in 'Seeing Children, seeing God' (2000) Quoted in The New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology IVP 1995

“While scriptures identify care as a basic expression of faith in God, theologies determine what is meant by care” (James Poling in 'The New Dictionary of Pastoral Studies' Ed Wesley Carr (2002)

