Introduction

- Context of the passage in Acts:
  - Paul returning to Jerusalem (19:21), sense of gathering storm against him
  - Jewish plots, sense of the Christians he met that he was stepping into danger...
  - and he was indeed arrested and ultimately sent in chains to Rome following this trip to Jerusalem

- So with that in mind - certainly his mind! - we have records of him passing through various places
  - in the preceding verses in 20:7-12 he is in Troas, and intent on packing as much teaching in before he leaves, speaks through the night (so much that Eutychus falls asleep and out the window and dies; only for Paul to be used by God to raise him from death)
  - similar story into chapter 21, passing through churches on his way to Jerusalem

The Church in Ephesus

- Spent a long time there - two or three years (19:10)
  - didn't found but firmly established the church there
  - had got to know, love, cherish the people there - and they him
  - and so after he looped through Macedonia and Greece he wanted to stop by before heading for Jerusalem...
  - but without delaying too much (20:16)
  - and this is the record of the encounter when the leaders of the church in Ephesus came and met with Paul

- Paul's life and example designed to be for the benefit of the Ephesian Christians (v.20)
  - are we concerned with the spiritual life and growth of our brothers and sisters in Christ?

- *What did that life and example look like?*
  - humility (v.19)
  - service (v.18)
  - obedience (v.22)
  - willingness to suffer for the sake of the gospel, to expend himself (v.23)
  - *(cf Rebecca Adlington and her 5am starts?!)*
  - trusting God for the future (v.24)

Conclusion

- We give God thanks today for Edwin's time with us, and we have heard something of what he wants to say to us
  - and there will always be Christians who pass through our lives, whether leaders, or friends
  - as we perhaps today reflect on their example, on the impact that they have had on our lives, will we listen too to the example of Paul and seek to live in similar fashion?