

Exploring the Life and Mission of the Church

2 – Fellowship and Pastoral Care

Fellowship and Pastoral Care: The hallmark of the early church was, “*see how these Christians love one another*”. Nowadays we barely take an interest in each other. If we don’t know and care properly for our own, how can we welcome the stranger in our midst? People make up their mind about a church in the first few minutes of exposure to it. What does your “*welcome*” say about you? How well do you really ‘open’ up to and consider others?

Consider this selection of scriptures and note the focus that each offers for our fellowship and pastoral care

Psalm 133:1 _____

John 15:9,12; 13:12-15 _____

Acts 2:44-47 _____

James 5:13 – 18 _____

Romans 12:3-9; 15:1, 5-7 _____

Philippians 1:27; 2:1-6 _____

Key Themes in the readings:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Live in harmony | Love one another |
| Concern for one another | Use different Gifts |
| Praying with and for each other | Accepting each other |
| Encouraging contributions | Strong helping the weak |
| United in purpose | Regularity of joining together |

Guide Questions for reflection and discussion:

- (a) NOW: How well do we ‘know’ each other, as opposed to ‘knowing about’ each other, in the church? Do we know each other well enough to discern an encourage one another’s gifts? How effective is our way of pastorally caring for one another?
- (b) In 5 – 10 years: What could be done to increase the sense of community, fellowship and belonging over the coming years? How will we know? How can we help develop our pastoral care?
- (c) What can be done? What practical steps will we take to move towards a deeper and greater feeling of fellowship? How can we encourage a greater awareness of how we care for one another and our families? How will we broaden our knowledge of each other’s 24/7 context? (support for home and work situations etc) How can our prayer life reflect all of this?

Please use the grid on the next page to record the main points of your discussion

Area of Church Life	Discussion Feedback From (b) above	Practical Suggestions towards Implementation and likely timescale (from (c) above)
2. Pastoral Care and Fellowship		

Sample Readings for area 2 – Fellowship & Pastoral Care

Psalm 133:1

How good and pleasant it is
when God's people live together in unity!

John 15: 9, 12

⁹ 'As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

¹² My command is this: love each other as I have loved you.

John 13: 12-15

¹² When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' he asked them. ¹³ 'You call me "Teacher" and "Lord", and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

Acts 2: 44-47

⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

James 5:13 – 18

The Prayer of Faith

¹³ Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. ¹⁴ Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. ¹⁷ Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. ¹⁸ Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

Romans 12: 3-9

³ For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. ⁴ For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we,

though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophecy in accordance with your faith; ⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

⁹ Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

Romans 15: 1, 5-7

¹We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.

⁵ May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, ⁶ so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷ Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

Philippians 1:27

²⁷ Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel

Philippians 2:1-6

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ who, being in very nature God,

did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;