

# Exploring the Life and Mission of the Church

## 4 – Outreach and Service

**Outreach/Ministry and Service:** What Jesus would do in our community if he were here in the flesh? What are our priorities in Outreach and service as the Body of Christ? Do we know the needs of our community? How are we acting to meet them?

**Consider this selection of Scriptures and note the focus that each offers for our Outreach and Service :**

Isaiah 1:11-18 AND  
Amos 5:22-24

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Matthew 6:25-34

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Matthew 25:35-45

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Mark 12:28-31 AND  
Luke 10:29-37

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### Key Themes in the readings :

Not just existing for our own worship of God	Seek justice
Help the oppressed	Seek God's Kingdom rule
See Christ in others' needs	Love your neighbour as yourself - actively

### Guide Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

- (a) NOW: In what ways does our church already serve the community as individual people and corporately? How do we use our buildings and other resources to benefit the community?
- (b) In 5- 10 years: What are the remaining needs in the area/community around Church? Are there any of these needs that the Church could address? Which do we believe we are called to offer to the Community?
- (c) What can be done? What 'Gifting' do our folk have—do we encourage gifts/talents/skills to be discovered, discerned and developed – how will we do so more? What community groups or other churches can we partner with? How will our buildings' use be expanded to meet known needs? What other help or development do we need and what is our timescale for new works?

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

<b>Area of Church Life</b>	<b>Priorities for Development (from (b) above)</b>	<b>Practical Suggestions towards Implementation and likely timescale (from (c) above)</b>
<b>4. Outreach and Service</b>		

## **Sample Readings on Outreach & Service (session 4)**

### **Isaiah 1:11-18**

<sup>11</sup>'The multitude of your sacrifices – what are they to me?' says the LORD.

'I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.

<sup>12</sup>When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts?

<sup>13</sup>Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me.

New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations – I cannot bear your worthless assemblies.

<sup>14</sup>Your New Moon feasts and your appointed festivals I hate with all my being.

They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them.

<sup>15</sup>When you spread out your hands in prayer, I hide my eyes from you; even when you offer many prayers, I am not listening.

Your hands are full of blood! Wash and make yourselves clean.

<sup>16</sup>Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop doing wrong.

<sup>17</sup>Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed.

Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.

<sup>18</sup>'Come now, let us settle the matter,' says the LORD.

'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.

### **Amos 5:22-24**

<sup>22</sup>Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them.

<sup>23</sup>Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps.

<sup>24</sup>But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!

### **Matthew 6:25-34**

<sup>25</sup>'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? <sup>26</sup>Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? <sup>27</sup>Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

<sup>28</sup>'And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. <sup>29</sup>Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. <sup>30</sup>If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you – you of little faith? <sup>31</sup>So do not worry, saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "What shall we wear?" <sup>32</sup>For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. <sup>33</sup>*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.* <sup>34</sup>Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

## **Sample Readings on Outreach & Service - continued** **(session 4)**

### **Matthew 25:35-45**

[Jesus said to those on his right] <sup>35</sup> I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, <sup>36</sup> I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was ill and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."

<sup>37</sup> "Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? <sup>38</sup> When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? <sup>39</sup> When did we see you ill or in prison and go to visit you?"

<sup>40</sup> "The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

<sup>41</sup> "Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. <sup>42</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was ill and in prison and you did not look after me."

<sup>44</sup> "They also will answer, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or ill or in prison, and did not help you?"

<sup>45</sup> "He will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me."

### **Mark 12:28-31**

<sup>28</sup> One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, 'Of all the commandments, which is the most important?'

<sup>29</sup> 'The most important one,' answered Jesus, 'is this: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>30</sup> Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." <sup>31</sup> The second is this: "Love your neighbour as yourself." There is no commandment greater than these.'

### **Luke 10:29-37**

<sup>29</sup> [The young man] asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?'

<sup>30</sup> In reply Jesus said: 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half-dead. <sup>31</sup> A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup> So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. <sup>34</sup> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two denarii<sup>(a)</sup> and gave them to the innkeeper. "Look after him," he said, "and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have."

<sup>36</sup> 'Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?'

<sup>37</sup> The expert in the law replied, 'The one who had mercy on him.'

Jesus told him, 'Go and do likewise.'