

# CORNERSTONE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

## A Holy Community

Pursuing holiness is about delighting and revelling in Gods great love for us. It is accepting and receiving the unconditional love of God and living our lives in response to his love. God's love is a gift. It is grace, we can't earn it or buy it. When we commit our lives to Him, when we accept Jesus as our Lord, our Saviour, our Deliverer, our King, our dearest friend, we become HIS. We belong to Him and he makes us holy and gives us a new identity.

### **Read Ezekiel 36:26 and 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)**

Our lives must change but ticking boxes doesn't cut it, being a good person doesn't cut it, neither does change motivated by fear and guilt. The motivation for true and deep change must be love. And how can it be love if we do not fall in love with the lover of our soul. Deep peace, deep joy, deep hope comes from knowing God, loving him deeply.

Can we fall in love with God? How do we fall in love with God?

### **Read Ephesians 4:14-16**

What are the signs of Christian maturity?

### **Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3**

How are you personally challenged by these verses?

### **Read John 13:34-35**

The church has always been a training ground. It wasn't long before the disciples love for one another was put to the test...

Think about Saul (Paul), he was a Christian slayer. He detested Christ followers with what he no doubt considered a righteous hatred. But then he met Jesus and was radically converted, instantaneously he became a new creation. The Christian slayer was gone and he received a new heart, a heart which was made to love and serve and forgive and lay down its life rather than take life. How wonderful and miraculous! But imagine what a quandary Sauls conversion was for the disciples.

### **Read Acts 9:26-30**

Discuss your fears and concerns about accepting and including people who are different, or perhaps those who may 'outshine' you with their gift/zeal (honesty required 😊).

How can we be a more accepting and inclusive community?

## ***Our Vision of A Holy Community***

A holy community looks like a group of ordinary folk who gather in the name of Jesus, to worship Him and lift his name high. He is at the centre all. There is no hierarchy, no favourites, no VIP's. No star of the show other than Jesus.

A holy community is a place where despite our differences we choose to be ONE. Where we would dare to be vulnerable, open and accessible and make room for questions, fear and failure. A place where we acknowledge that life is complicated, at times so hard and unfair but God is good and He is just and we are His, so let's journey through together. A holy community doesn't run from suffering but embraces it, allowing the hard things to further soften our hearts and draw us deeper into the love and goodness of God.

A holy community makes room for the Spirit of God to do his fine work in and amongst us. We allow him to be our guide, our comfort, our counsellor.

A holy community takes their place in Gods story and does all they can do in their appointed time to be a place of healing, freedom and restoration. We stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before, we are fully alert and awake in the here and now, and we build for the generations to come. Rather than turning up and saying 'what can you give me?' 'what can I get?' We say 'what can I give?' 'how can I serve?' An attitude and way of being which turns consumerism on its head.

A holy community loves beyond words. We get our hands dirty and are not afraid to go into the darkest of places to shine light. We act justly, we love mercy and we walk humbly. We engage in the battle. We stand in the gap and intercede for our families, our friends, our neighbours, our enemies, our leaders, our nation, our hurting and broken world.

A holy community breaks bread together. We start again together. We remember together. We remind each other of the glory of the cross and we choose life and forgiveness and mercy and grace and acceptance and inclusion. There is room at the table for everyone and there is more than enough to go around.

This is who we are and this is who we are becoming.

*Discuss how we can fulfil this vision...*