

What does it look like for Christ Church to be a real family?

Read Acts 2: 42-47 Acts 4:32- 35

The Trinity expresses God as a family: The Father, the Son and the Spirit are in a perfect relationship of love and harmony, but it's not a closed relationship: they invite you in too. (Rubylev's icon of the Trinity is a good visual representation of this.)

1. **A Filled People:** We need to maintain our own quality of relationship with God first, before we try to love others in the church, and to love outsiders. The disciples followed and spent time with Jesus and received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost before they were able to be effective in their ministry as the Church and live out the kind of fellowship we read about in these 2 passages in Acts.

Be honest with each other about how connected you feel to God at the moment. Share your joys and sorrows about this. Commit to praying for and encouraging one another that each may know God's love for them more deeply and have a deeper hunger to enjoy that love.

2. **A fulfilled People:** These 2 passages describe "koinonia" - a beautiful fellowship that mirrors the relationships in the Trinity. List the different features of fellowship in these passages and discuss which Christ Church does well, and which we don't do so well at. (Remember that when we talk about the church, **we** are the church!) Gather ideas about what might change in us as individuals and family units and in the way we act as a body. Pray for wisdom and discernment. There might be some new things: or there might be ways of doing current things differently. If there are new things, then what might we stop doing in order to make time for them?

3. **A spilled People:** At the weekend, Nick Haigh gave practical examples of how people of faith are recreating a sense of extended family ("oikos" in New Testament Greek) in order to live more like the believers in Acts 2 and 4 * He and Simon also spoke words over us as a Church, to embrace the messiness of life and to be bold in stepping forward to living a new way: opening the borders of the nuclear family unit to embrace others in and outside the church. Discuss ways you might do this, or, if your circumstances make this difficult, how you might support others who are keen to do this. How can we be both bold and practical, radical and realistic? What hinders us and what helps us?

* Link to one of the blogs he mentioned here:

<https://fityourself.club/things-ive-learned-from-2-5-years-of-opening-our-home-on-monday-evenings-6565e8adbbf9>

Pray for each other and for us all together as a community that we might reflect more and more the beauty of the Trinity so that we become a real family, seeking and welcoming others in.