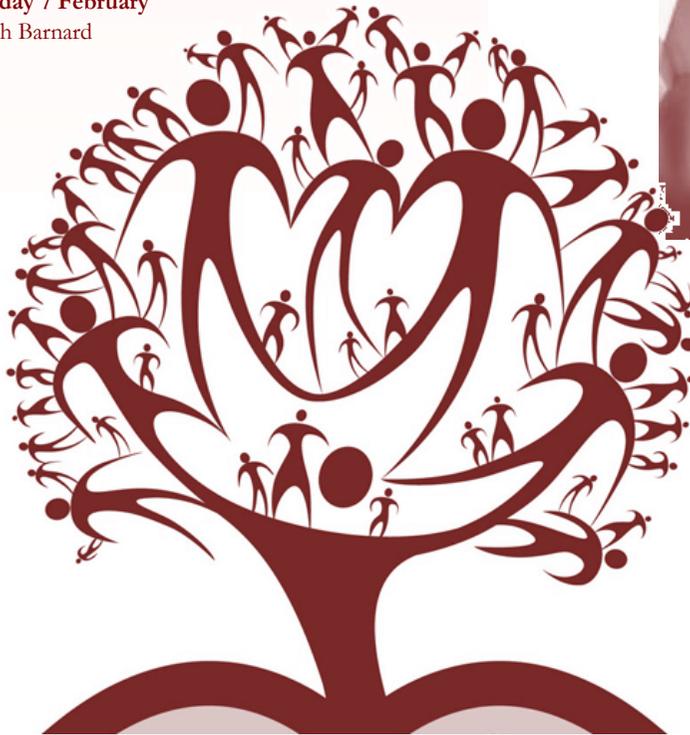


Breaking bread and prayer

Acts 2:42, 46. See also Matthew 6:5-15; 1Corinthians 10:14-22; 11:17-34; Ephesians 6:18-19; 1Timothy 2:1-6

Why did these early Christians break bread together? What is the real point of what we call 'communion'? What does it have to say? How should we break bread together today? Does it make any difference how it is done? How do we understand the different traditions? How can we learn to pray together? To be a prayerful community? What should we pray when we are together? Is it different from individual prayer?

Sunday 7 February
Keith Barnard



Danger: God at work

Acts 2:43, 47. See also Matthew 5:13-16; Acts 4:23-31, 5:12-16

Do we expect God to be at work among us? How? What are 'wonders and signs'? What is the link between miracles and evangelism – is it still the same today? How do we reach out to our neighbours in 21C Chard? How can evangelism be a community church activity? What should we be doing to 'enjoy the favour of people'?

Sunday 14 February
David Burfield



You may have been coming to Forefront for years. Or maybe you just popped in for one Sunday. Either way, if you feel moved to act on the things mentioned in the talks, we would be pleased to pray with you. Ask someone in the service to point you in the right direction, or call in during the week at Forefront Community Centre (next to Chard Post Office sorting centre).



Being Church

10 January to 14 February 2015

A caring community with every member equipped to demonstrate Christ, working with others to advance God's Kingdom in Chard and the world

Forefront's Vision speaks of community, working with others and God's kingdom. These ideas are depicted in Acts 2:43-47, a description of the earliest Christian church in Jerusalem. Each theme is expanded in other New Testament passages which challenge us and inform our lives today. This short series aims to encourage us to value what we do as a community of believers, encouraging personal growth and blessing the community we live in. How can we be strong enough to contribute meaningfully to one another, and to the town?



Fellowship

Acts 2:42. See also John 13:34,35; Romans 12:3-13; Philippians 2:1-4; 1John 1:1-7

Why spend time with other Christians? What's the point of being together? You could be a Christian on your own, with the Bible in hand, couldn't you? And if we do meet, how can we actually encourage one another? What do we gain from each other? And is fellowship just being with other Christians? How does God fit in? What does it mean to be the body of Christ, together? What about outsiders? Are we an exclusive club, or should we try to include others?

Sunday 10 January
Keith Barnard



Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven (Acts 1). He gave his followers the task of extending his Kingdom throughout the world. They were promised supernatural ability to take that message out. After the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) they became a community of more than 3000 people from all over the Roman Empire, baptised as a mark of allegiance to their new Lord. They were all committed to be the eyes, ears, hands and feet of Christ, his body, "the fullness of him who fills everything in every way" (Eph 1:23).

They began, as Jesus told them to, in Jerusalem. They were a people with one purpose: to be his disciples, to obey everything he had commanded. The book of Acts shows how being his followers affected not only their personal beliefs but their whole lifestyle. This brought them into conflict with others around them and with the authorities, who were not always keen on such a committed, revolutionary group whose members were willing to pay the price of opposition to them.

This early community of Christians has much to teach us. In this series we look at different parts of their life together, seeking to learn from them as we live for Christ in our own time.



Teaching and learning

Acts 2:42. See also Matthew 11:28-30; Romans 12:2; Ephesians 1:17-21; 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Why do we need to learn? What is learning for? How do we use it well? How should we listen and learn, and what are the best means of learning?

What is the place of reading, life groups, sermons, etc. in the Christian life today? What is our aim in learning, for ourselves and others?

Sunday 24 January
Jo Kerr

Everything in common

Acts 2:44-46. See also Matthew 5:41-48, Acts 4:32-36, Romans 12:9-13, 1Timothy 6:17-19, 1John 3:16-18

In John's gospel, Jesus is recorded as saying: 'All men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.' (John 13:35). Many years later, John wrote in a letter, 'If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.' (1John 3:17,18).

What does it mean for us, in 2016, to love one another in practical ways? How can we apply New Testament teaching on sharing, generosity and hospitality?

Sunday 17 January
Tom Smith

Why do we 'do church' the way we do? Are we following a pattern laid down for us by our 19th and 20th century forebears? Should we consider other Christian traditions, the liturgy of the Middle Ages or the preaching styles of the Reformation?

As a community of Jesus's followers today, we desire to fulfil his purposes in our 21st Century setting. To do so means looking at the first principles and applying them to our own times, adapting so that we truly live out his kingdom priorities. The principles are found in the New Testament record of the activities of the earliest Christians. Putting them into practice requires discernment and sometimes leads to change!

In a mixed community like Forefront, we each bring rich traditions, preferences and—sometimes—baggage. If we are to avoid stagnation and explosion, we must be willing to reform what we do on the basis of Scripture.