

Rescued from
the dark...



Christ Church
Homegroups
Autumn 2008

Homegroup programme for this term

Wednesday 3rd September	Prayer meeting
w/b Mon 8th Sept	Homegroups restart - Social evening
w/b Mon 15th Sept	Study 1 - Filled to overflowing
w/b Mon 22nd Sept	Study 2 - The image of his Father
Tuesday 30th September	Prayer meeting
w/b Mon 6th October	Study 3 - A man with a mission
w/b Mon 13th October	Study 4 - I've started so I'll finish
w/b Mon 20th October	Study 5 - (Re)born free
w/b Mon 27th October	HALF TERM (free week)
Tuesday 4th November	Prayer meeting
w/b Mon 10th November	Study 6 - Leave the light on
w/b Mon 17th November	Study 7 - I love you, but...
w/b Mon 24th November	Study 8 - Pass it on.
Wednesday 3rd December	Advent Reflection

Note: Our normal monthly prayer meeting has been moved to Tuesday so as not to clash with Christianity Explored.

You shine like stars in the
universe as you hold out
the word of life.

Philippians 2:15-16

This term, we are going to work our way through Paul's letter to the Colossians. It seems from various comments that he makes in the letter that Paul was concerned that the Colossian Christians, who were Gentiles, were at risk of being taken in by other teachings. What seems to be a very real threat is that these teachings would become absorbed into the gospel. As we live in a world so desperately searching for truth wherever it appears to be found, this letter has a lot to say to us about maintaining the simple truths of the gospel and not allowing the waters to become muddy. If we are going to hold out the word of life, we need to be clear just what that word is, and be able to answer those who are confused by what the truth really is. This letter will also help us to see how to 'shine like stars' in the dark universe that is our world.

1. Filled to overflowing

Rescued from the dark into the Kingdom

WELCOME

What hobbies have you had in the past, but given up on?

WORSHIP

'For the word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all he does' (Ps 33:4)

Psalm 33 is a great psalm of praise to the God who saves his people. Use the words of this psalm to praise God for his faithfulness to us.

WORD

Read Colossians 1: 1 - 8

After his initial greetings, Paul frequently thanks God in some way for the Christians he is writing to. In the case of the Colossians, he thanks God for three things that are very dear to him.

These are three things that Paul refers to in many of his letters, and are always closely connected.

He thanks God for their : **faith** in Christ Jesus;

love for all the saints;

and the **hope** that is stored up for them in heaven.

What is the 'hope stored up for them in heaven'? (v5)

How does 'love for all the saints' spring from that hope?

How do the Colossians (and we) know about this hope?

How will those we meet hear about this hope?

Paul then encourages them to see that the gospel isn't just at work in them, but is working across the world.

'All over the world, this gospel is bearing fruit and growing'(v6).

What is the difference (if any) between the gospel bearing fruit, and it growing?

Can you see the gospel bearing fruit and growing at Christ Church? How?

After school, I spent 4 years training as an infant teacher at what is now Liverpool Hope University. I left there with a B.Ed degree, and qualified teacher status. I only taught for one year before seeing the error of my ways and giving up on the profession. However, my qualified teacher status is still valid. Despite not teaching for the last 12 years, I am still qualified to do so. I always will be a qualified teacher. However, my lack of experience in the classroom, and 12 years out of the profession means that it is very unlikely that any school would ever employ me as a class teacher, if I decided to return.

I have the qualifications, but I haven't made use of them and so, while they can not be taken from me, they no longer have any impact on my life. I haven't lived up to the qualifications I achieved.

Read Colossians 1: 9 - 14

What does Paul pray for the Colossians? (v9)

Why does he pray that? (v10)

This sounds like something Paul told another church to do (see Romans 12:1 - 2).

What 4 things does a life 'worthy of the Lord' and 'pleasing to him' show? (v10 - 12)

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Which do you find the hardest to do?

How can we encourage each other in these areas?

Endurance and patience are things we know we often lack, but it can be disheartening to know that they are things we **will** need for our Christian lives. (v11).

How do we reconcile that with Paul's instruction to 'joyfully give thanks'? (see Philippians 4:12 - 13)

Colossians 1:13 is a great promise and was our theme verse a few years ago, but how is it relevant to what Paul has just been saying about living a life that is worthy of the Lord?

In his first letter, Peter says that we have been redeemed from 'the empty way of life' (1 Peter 1:18).

A life that is worthy of the Lord is that life to the full that Jesus promised he had come to bring. (John 10:10)

The dominion of darkness can promise only empty lives in the present and a hope-less future. But we have been rescued from that and brought into Christ's kingdom, where we can have life in all its fullness in the present and the guarantee of inheriting our share of the hope which awaits us in heaven.

We have been qualified for that hope, but we need to live lives that are worthy of that qualification; lives that are worthy of the Lord and that will please him in every way.

What difference will the knowledge of your rescue make to you in practical terms this week?

WORK

In two weeks, Christ Church will be celebrating Back to Church Sunday. This is a great opportunity for us to invite friends who used to come to church, but are now not attending anywhere, to come back to church.

We will also be starting our Christianity Explored Courses in a few weeks. Those of you who have done the course will know how good it is and what an important part it can play in helping new disciples to grow in their understanding and faith.

These are both important opportunities for the gospel to grow and bear fruit. But they will only be successful if each of us is prepared to play our part.

The most important thing any of us can do is to invite friends and family along. A personal invitation is much more powerful than a leaflet through the door.

Who will you invite?

Spend some time praying together about who to invite, asking God to be preparing the ground for the conversations you will have.

2. The image of his Father

Rescued from the dark by reconciliation

WELCOME

Who are you like in your family?

WORSHIP

'Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created' (Psalm 148:5) We have the awesome privilege of having a relationship with the One who created everything in existence. Use Psalm 148 to praise God for his amazing creative power.

WORD

Have you ever 'Googled' your own name? If you Google 'Sam Upham', you are taken to numerous sites celebrating the work of one 'Honest Sam Upham'. Honest Sam Upham was, in fact, anything but. During the American Civil War, Upham was a prolific counterfeiter. In fact, he was so good, and so successful that he devalued Confederate currency to the point where even his own work was worthless and he put himself out of business.

One of the problems facing the church in Colosse was the claim that Jesus wasn't everything the apostles were making him out to be. But right at the beginning of his letter, he sets out very clearly *exactly* who Jesus is.

Read Colossians 1: 15 - 20

Which verses counter each of the following claims?

- *That Jesus wasn't fully God*
- *That Jesus wasn't really a man*
- *That Jesus was a created being*

Do you recognise any of these claims from your conversations with non-Christians?

Why is it important that we accept each of these things as true?

Paul says that Jesus is 'the image of the invisible God'. That isn't to imply that Jesus is in some way an imperfect copy of God, but that he is perfectly like God. He is exactly the same as God. The writer to the Hebrews says '*The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being...*' (Hebrews 1:3)

Read John 10: 1 - 18

What aspects of God's character can we see in Jesus' description of himself?

The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. He isn't forced to; it's something he does from his own will. But Jesus, as the good shepherd, can only lay down his life, because he has a real, physical body.

Read Colossians 1: 21 - 23

What difference would it make to the work of the cross if Jesus had only appeared to have a real body?

We like to believe that, as long as we have accepted Christ as Lord, our final redemption is assured. But actually here Paul appears to put a condition on that hope; '*...if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.*' (v23)

*In the light of what he has just been saying, who does Paul imply can no longer be so assured?
(see also Hebrews 3:14 and 1 John 2:19)*

There are times though, when we all wonder about the strength of our faith. There are times when it can seem to be slipping away from us and is certainly not 'established and firm'.

Read John 10:27 - 30

How is this an encouragement to us when we are feeling less than secure?

In the Disney film 'Finding Nemo', the character Dory has a very simple philosophy in life - *just keep swimming*. Paul's challenge to each of us is to do exactly that - just keep swimming. Keep going, 'not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.'

How can we encourage each other, within our home groups, to 'just keep swimming'?

How do we make sure that, as a church, we are 'not moved from the hope held out in the gospel'?

WORK

This Sunday is Back to Church Sunday. Knowing what Paul has just said about continuing in our faith, its really important that we are praying for the people we have, or will, invite to services this Sunday. Spend some time praying together for this important day. The following points might help you in your prayers.

- Pray for*
- *the people that have been invited*
 - *the welcome they will receive*
 - *those leading and preaching at the services*
 - *those playing music on Sunday*
 - *the Christianity Explored Courses which will follow shortly.*

3. A man with a mission

Rescued from the dark for the hope of glory

WELCOME

What's the best surprise you've even had, or ever given anyone else?

WORSHIP

'The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul'. (Psalm 19:7)

We are so blessed to have easy access to the word of God. Use the words of Psalm 19 to lead you to praise God for his word which guides and encourages us.

WORD

Paul knew, better than anyone, the sufferings that came with Christian ministry. In his second letter to the Corinthians he explains just what he has suffered for the sake of the gospel.

Read 2 Corinthians 11: 23 - 28

None of us will ever know that kind of suffering for the gospel, thankfully. But in all of that Paul never gave up, he never lost sight of what he was suffering for. And he never stopped rejoicing.

We don't suffer in the same way as Paul, but in what ways have you suffered because of knowing Jesus?

Paul knew that suffering was inevitable. In fact, he saw it as part of his work, for the sake of the church.

Read Colossians 1:24 - 2:5

When Paul says that he is filling up 'what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions', he isn't saying that Christ's work on the cross is incomplete. That suffering was finished and total. But Christ himself warned that there would be suffering and persecution for the church. And when the church suffers, Christ suffers. Paul suffers for the sake of the church. When Paul suffers, the church suffers less.

In what ways can the sufferings of our leaders reduce our suffering?

How can we help them to rejoice in that suffering?

Paul's commission from God is to present 'the word of God in all its fullness', which he says is a mystery that has now been revealed.

What is the mystery? (Ephesians 3:2 - 6 might help here)

Who has the mystery been disclosed to?

How does Paul reveal the mystery? (v28)

Why does he do it in that way? (v28)

Paul says that he struggles, with Christ's energy, for everyone in the church at Colosse, the church at Laodicea and even for those he hasn't met.

How much are we struggling for our Christian brothers and sisters we have never met?

Paul's mission is to proclaim Christ, but the purpose of his labour and struggle is explained at the beginning of chapter 2.

What is his purpose?

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-
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Where are all knowledge and wisdom found?

Where does the world look for knowledge?

Paul wasn't with the Colossian Christians, but he wanted them to know that he was supporting them. He tells them his purpose so that they aren't deceived by the fine-sounding arguments. This is clearly his main concern for the Colossian church as we have already seen, but this church is not unique in this struggle.

Read Romans 16: 17 - 18

Where do we need to look for those who will deceive us?

There are Christian teachers who are admired and trusted by many, and yet who teach what is contrary to the gospel.

What problems can these people cause within the church?

How can we guard against deception? (Col 2:3)

WORK

How can we encourage each other to be encouraged in heart and united in love?

What can you be doing as a group to encourage unity?

4. I've started, so I'll finish

Rescued from the dark into new life

WELCOME

What traditions do you have in your family?

WORSHIP

“The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy.’ (Ps 111 v7) God never changes, he is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. Use the words of Psalm 111 to praise God for his unchanging ways.

WORD

So far in this letter, Paul has encouraged the Colossian Christians to hold firmly to what they have been taught. But he is not ready to leave the subject just yet.

Read Colossians 2: 6 - 12

Where have we seen the following topics already?

- *‘continue to live in him’*
- *‘rooted and built up in him’*
- *‘strengthened in the faith as you were taught’*
- *‘overflowing with thankfulness’*

These few verses form the 'hinge' of the letter. They provide the link between what the Colossians have been taught and how that should be shown in their lives.

So Paul repeats himself somewhat as he draws all the threads together. But his main concern is obviously that these Christians understand the true gospel and appreciate how vital it is.

'See to it that no-one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy' (v8)

The word that Paul uses for 'takes you captive' literally means 'kidnap'. The Colossians are at risk of being kidnapped, stolen away from the truth of the gospel.

In what ways are we at the same risk? What could 'kidnap' us from the gospel?

What traditions are you aware that family and friends, or you, adhere to, believing them to be in some way 'religious'? (eg fish on Fridays)

Paul restates his argument against the heresies that were surrounding the Colossians, but now he explains what difference Christ's death and resurrection makes to the lives of those who believe and trust in him. He says that we have been 'circumcised' by Christ' in 'the putting off of the sinful nature'.

Read Romans 2: 17 - 29

What does Paul mean when he says 'God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you'? (v24)

*In what ways might we do this?
(Paul makes some suggestions, but I'm sure there
are more)*

What circumcision do we need?

What will this mean in practice?

So often I will hear people say things like 'well, God's still got a long way to go with me', or 'I'm not perfect, but God knows that'. And while it's true that God knows we all still fail him, because we are not capable of living his way, it's too easy for that to become our escape clause; a get out jail free card that we use to excuse our sinful behaviour.

But Paul says that we have been buried with Christ in baptism, and then raised with him through faith in the power of God.

*What does Paul believe **actually** happens to believers?
(see 2 Corinthians 5:17)*

*If that is true, how is it that we continue to fail God?
(see Romans 6:5 - 14)*

It what ways do we 'offer the parts of your body to sin'?

So how do we stop that? (Colossians 2: 6 -7)

WORK

We all acknowledge how hard it is to do all that. But the best weapon we have for the fight is prayer. Praying for each other as a church is so important. It is such an encouragement to know that you don't have to face the struggle alone, but that others are lifting you up in their prayers. We're all in this together.

That's why our prayer diary is so important. Do you have one?

Do you use it?

If not, why not make a real effort this month to pray for the people in it?

Remember, if you are in the diary, one day every month people will be praying for you.

5. (Re)born free

Rescued from the dark into freedom

WELCOME

If you were Prime Minister, what would be the first new law you would bring in?

WORSHIP

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.” (Psalm 46:1) This Psalm is a great hymn of praise. It encourages us to see that, if we trust in God, we have nothing to fear. Use this psalm to lead you into worshipping God for that amazing promise.

WORD

In 2004 a Halifax auditor arrived unannounced at the offices of Graham Price, a financial advisor working as an agent for the Halifax. When the auditor opened Price’s safe, he found nothing more than 3 empty boxes and a piece of paper.

On the piece of paper was written ‘I have borrowed £7m from the Halifax’. It was signed by Price.

Over a period of less than 4 years, Price had stolen a vast sum of money to fund his increasingly out of control gambling habit, money he would never be able to repay. And yet he had left an IOU!

Price’s IOU condemned him to 12 years in prison, but we all had a much larger IOU; one that would not condemn us to prison, but to death.

Read Colossians 2: 13 - 15

What were you?

What are you now?

What did you do to change that?

We talked last time about being a new creation. Some believe that this recreation happens when we have accepted Jesus, while others say that it has to happen first. But what is important is whether it is God or us who takes the initiative to make that change in the first place.

*Which view does Paul seem to be encouraging?
(see also Romans 5:6 - 8, Ephesians 2:1 - 9)*

What did God do to make the change?

*What do you think Paul means in verse 15?
How did God make 'a public spectacle' of the powers
and authorities?*

Which powers and authorities does Paul mean?

Read Colossians 2:16 - 23

When Paul uses the word 'therefore' he means that his next idea is a direct result of the one he has just been discussing. So he says that because God has nailed the written code (that's our IOU) to the cross and made a spectacle of the powers and authorities, we shouldn't let anyone judge us about our adherence to religious rules and regulations.

Why are these two thoughts connected?

The worship of angels that Paul mentions in verse 18 isn't us worshipping angels, it's more likely that people have been boasting about seeing angels worshipping God in divine visions.

How could someone 'who delights in false humility and the worship of angels' disqualify us for the prize?

How are they disqualifying themselves? (v18-19)

Read Galatians 4: 8 - 11

The festivals and regulations that Paul is talking about in both of these passages were given to Israel by God.

Why is Paul now saying they don't need to follow them? (Isaiah 29:13, and Col 2:17 might help)

There are rules for life that Christians should be living by, but do they affect the love that God has for us?

Keep Isaiah 29:13 in mind and look again at Colossians 2:20 - 23.

*Why don't the rules **we** lay down to stop ourselves from falling into sin actually work?*

What needs to change before we will be able to resist the temptation to return to our old ways?

But what have we seen has already happened if we have turned to Christ?

So, back to what we saw last week, how do we keep ourselves moving in the right direction? (Col 2: 6-7, 19)

WORK

What we keep coming back to is that Paul believes we should be 'overflowing with thankfulness'. And it's not without good reason as we have seen in this study. Spend some time praying together, giving thanks for the amazing gift of the cross, and everything it means for us.

6. Leave the light on

Rescued from the dark to live in the light

WELCOME

What, if anything, would you like to change about yourself?

WORSHIP

God's love for us is unconditional and his forgiveness complete. 'As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.' (Psalm 103:12) Use the words of Psalm 103 to praise God for his gift of forgiveness so undeserved.

WORD

Everybody in our house wears glasses. I have the worst eyesight out of all of us, which might explain why I'm the only one whose first action in the morning, before I've even got out of bed, is to put my glasses on. I'm not quite at the point where I can't see anything at all without them so, if necessary, I can get about without them for a bit. Everybody else in the house will quite gladly walk around, not quite seeing clearly until they're ready to come downstairs. But why bother? They've been given glasses to enable them to see without difficulty, and yet they all start the day without them.

But, in our next passage from Colossians, Paul says that we all behave in a similar way. Despite the fact that we have been rescued from the dark into a kingdom of light, we don't always leave the light on.

Read Colossians 3: 1 - 11

What will it mean to set our hearts and minds on things above?

What difference should that make to the way we act?

But Paul tells the Colossians (and they're not alone in this), to put to death, or put off, what belongs to our earthly nature. Paul obviously knows that this is not something we can all do without thinking about it; it's not like flicking a switch, but rather something we have to work at.

Read Galatians 5:16 - 26

What sort of behaviour should we have 'put off'?

What sort of behaviour should be obvious in our life as a church?

How will the latter help to combat the former?

'Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other'

Paul explains in Colossians 3: 11 why we have no reason to be conceited, or envious.

'Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.'

What does this mean for our fellowship at Christ Church?

Read Philippians 2: 1 - 8

It's obvious that Paul's concern for the churches he writes to is that their fellowship is based on unity and love for each other. But that will only be true if everyone in that fellowship has the right attitude - the same as Christ's.

What is an attitude the same as Christ's?

How will we see evidence of that in our fellowship?

Read Colossians 3: 12 - 17

We are new creations, but we need to make sure that the things we have clothed ourselves with are not 'the Emperor's new clothes'.

What should we be clothing ourselves with?

How do we go about doing that?

Which do you find the hardest to put on?

What do you think it means to 'let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts'?

And 'let the word of Christ dwell in you richly'?

WORK

In the last 3 verses of this week's passage, Paul refers to thankfulness 3 times. He says that whatever we do, whether in word or deed, we should do it all in Christ's name, giving thanks to God.

How do we do everything in Christ's name?

How do we give thanks in everything we do?

Is there something in the week ahead that you know will be hard to do 'in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God'?

Spend some time praying for each other about those difficulties.

7. I love you, but...

Rescued from the dark to love like Christ

WELCOME

Which of your relationships do you find the easiest?

WORSHIP

Psalm 23 is one of the best known, and best loved psalms. Read the psalm together and use it to praise God for the way he loves and cares for us.

WORD

We all know how difficult family relationships can be, especially as we head towards Christmas and have to start thinking about how to balance all the various relations that can't be in the same room as each other. The media would often have us believe that this is due to our changing lifestyles and social climate.

But actually, relationship difficulties are nothing new.

Paul writes over and over again about our relationships, both within the church and in our families.

Read Colossians 3: 18 - 4:1

What 3 relationships is Paul concerned with?

Do you think these rules are all still relevant today, given the changes in our society since Paul wrote this letter?

In this passage, Paul simply says, 'Wives, submit to your husbands' and 'Husbands, love your wives', but elsewhere he expands on what that actually means.

Read Ephesians 5:22 - 6:4

Here, Paul equates the relationship between husband and wife with that between Christ and his church.

What does that mean for the instruction for wives to submit to their husbands?

*How has this instruction been distorted over the years? (what **doesn't** it mean?)*

How will a husband love his wife, 'just as Christ loved the church'?

The other relationship that can be so incredibly difficult, is that between fathers and their children. I suppose this is especially true in our society today, when so many fathers are separated from their children. In Ephesians 5, Paul tells fathers not to 'exasperate' their children, and in Colossians 3, not to 'embitter' them.

What do you think Paul means by this instruction?

How might children 'become discouraged' by their father's attitude towards them? (Col 3: 21)

Why should children obey their parents ? (v20)

The next relationship that Paul turns to is that between slaves and masters. These verses were among those used by the church to defend slavery, until it was seen that they were not condoning it, merely showing how that existing system should operate.

So now we have abolished slavery (in theory as least), can we ignore these verses?

How should we use these verses as Christians?

Who do you work for?

Out of all the instructions Paul has given about relationships, which do you find the hardest?

All of the relationship advice that Paul gives is contrary to our current world view. It would have been when he wrote it, but for different reasons. For example, it would have been quite obvious that wives should obey their husbands, but not that husbands should love their wives.

Read Titus 2: 1 - 10

Why is it important that our relationships are different?

WORK

Is there a work or family situation that is making it hard for you to live by Paul's advice?

What can you do as a group to help each other through these problems?

8. Pass it on

Rescued from the dark to shine like stars

WELCOME

What is the best piece of news you have ever been given?

WORSHIP

'I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.' (Ps 146:2)
Psalm 146 is a wonderful description of just what good news the gospel is. Use this psalm together to praise our awesome God.

WORD

All the way through this letter, Paul has shown the Colossian Christians what they have been rescued from and to. He's talked about what their lives were like in the dark before God saved them and how that should translate into changed lives in the light.

But now, as is often the case, Paul draws his letter to a close with a series of quick instructions.

Read Colossians 4: 2 - 6

The last section we looked at was about relationships within the family and our work, which relationships has Paul now turned to?

Who/ what should we be praying for?

What should our attitude to that prayer be?

Why?

Read Luke 18: 1- 8

What should our response be if our prayers appear to go unanswered?

Why is it important that we are persistent in prayer?

We must keep praying for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are working to share the gospel. That doesn't just mean missionaries in far off countries, but also people working nearer to home. Nor does it only mean those with an official job title, but 'ordinary' Christians sharing the gospel with their friends and families.

Because, as Paul says, gospel ministry is not just about preaching from pulpits or big stages. Its about our actions and conversations.

In what ways should we 'be wise in the way we act towards outsiders' (that's non-Christians)?

How can we 'make the most of every opportunity'?

What opportunities do you have to share the gospel?

A conversation seasoned with salt and full of grace will be interesting and make the gospel attractive, rather than being dull and lifeless - something I'm sure we all have experience of.

What has been the best telling of the gospel you have ever heard?

Why was it so good?

Should we leave the 'bad news' out of our gospel conversations?

Should we have a ready prepared answer that we roll out when asked about our hope?

Everything we have done this year has been with our theme verse firmly in mind. 'You shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life.' (Philippians 2:15 - 16)

How will everything Paul has told us in this letter help us to 'shine like stars'?

Which part of this letter have you found the most challenging/ helpful?

Why?

WORK

Paul finishes this letter, as he often does, with greetings from and to various people. Successful churches have never, and will never work in isolation. Paul clearly wants good communication between the Colossian and Laodicean Christians. It's important that we work together with the churches in Moreton and not try to pull against them. That's why HOPE 08 has been such a great thing. The churches of Moreton have been working together all year, for the sake of the gospel. The final event of HOPE 08 will be a community carol service. This is a great way to 'hold out the word of life' to our community.

Please spend some time praying for this event and the work of all the churches in Moreton over the Christmas period. Christmas is an opportunity we must make the most of.

CHRIST CHURCH MORETON

We want to be a **W**elcoming Church
because Jesus welcomed all who came to him

an **E**vangelising Church
*because we believe that everyone has the right to
hear the Good News of Jesus*

a **L**oving Church
*because Jesus commanded his followers
to love one another*

a **L**earning Church
*because we are in the business of making disciples,
and disciples must always be learners*