



## **Belonging to Forefront Community Church**

As a church our purpose is:

**‘To glorify God, making committed followers of Jesus Christ who empowered by the Holy Spirit will impact their world for Him’**

We want this to be the basis of all we do, both as individual Christians and together as a 'community' of God's people. As we do that we trust that God will use us to impact the wider community in which we live.

It is both a privilege and responsibility to be part of the local church. We have no formal membership because we believe all who have come into a relationship with God through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ are members of God's church. As members we have a personal responsibility to grow in our love for and relationship with God, which the Holy Spirit enables. What follows is a brief summary of how we express that love and relationship in our commitment to the local church, based on God's Word, the Bible. This is the basis for our understanding of what it means to be disciples of Jesus Christ and members of his body.

### **1. Baptism**

Baptism is a specific instruction of Jesus Christ and the practice of the New Testament Church. We expect all believers to be baptised, demonstrating they have turned away from a life without God and entered into a new living relationship with Him. ( Matt 28 v18-20, Acts 2 v38-39, Rom 6 v1-4)

### **2. Worshipping, learning and praying together**

It should be a priority that we meet together regularly as a church each Sunday. This is the time when we are taught from God's word and worship Him together. We should also encourage each other to come together at other times such as for the **Lord's Supper** (which Jesus specifically asked his disciples to do – 1 Cor 11 v17-34), prayer times, business meetings etc. (Acts 2 v42-46, 2 Tim 3 v14-17, Col 3 v15-17)

### **3. Participating in a small group**

In addition to meetings for the whole church it is important that we meet in small groups. This provides the opportunity for us to learn and apply God's Word and be accountable to one another. It is the place for us to build relationships, practically support and encourage one another and where we can develop the gifts God has given us. It is expected that for most people this will be within a home group. (Acts 2 v42-47, Heb 10: 23-25, Rom 12 v13)

#### **4. Using our gifts**

God has given gifts and abilities to each of us to serve Him, and build up the body. Our aim is to encourage everyone to discover and develop their gifts and give opportunities for these to be used within the church and its various ministries. We expect each of us to make a practical commitment of time and energy to serve God and one another. (1 Cor 12 v4-11 & 27-31, Rom 12 v3-9, 1 Peter 4 v10-11)

#### **5. Giving**

We should give regularly, thoughtfully, generously and joyfully to God's work through the church. We do not specifically teach that we should give a 'tithe' (tenth), but that we are 'stewards' of all that God has given us. For some that may mean giving less and for others more. Giving can be by standing order and we encourage the use of the gift aid scheme. (2 Cor 8 v1-15, 1 Cor 16v 2, Luke 21 v1-4)

#### **6. Submitting to one another and to the church leadership**

As members of God's body we are called to love, serve and submit to one another. God also places leaders in every church to serve, lead and care for the members. It is therefore necessary for the leadership to know those who have committed themselves to Forefront and for whom they have a prime pastoral responsibility. It is the responsibility of us all to pray for, support and submit to them. (1 Thess 5 v12-15, Eph 5 v21, Heb 13 v17)

#### **7. Witnessing to others**

As a church we take Jesus' commission to 'make disciples' seriously. We want to share the good news with friends, family and anyone where we have an opportunity. We witness in the way we live as well as by what we say so we look to demonstrate our faith by the good that we do and the way we behave. (Matt 28 v18-20, Matt 5 v13-16, 1 Peter 3 v15-16)

**We would not like this to be simply a list of demands and expectations! Belonging to a church is not just a matter of keeping rules and regulations – it is a joyful, enriching, frustrating, satisfying and stretching process of learning what it means to be God's family together – as an expression of the new life of the Spirit within.**