

Hands - application

- *We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.*

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

- Pray for Christian unity, both in the global church and within St Mark's

Further notes

- This Sunday is the last Sunday before the service times change for the summer - from the 27th there will be just one morning service at 10:30



Spring 2014

15th July

Ephesians 4: 1-6

Called to Unity

Background for leaders

This week we're continuing our series on Ephesians. Paul's letter was to the Christian church at Ephesus, in modern day Turkey.

The opening chapter and a half (from 1:1 - 2:10) is one long expression of praise and prayer at the good news of the Gospel. Paul explains what Christ has done for His people, and what the implications are before going on in the rest of the letter to encourage Christians in their response.

This Sunday, Charlie Thomson preached on the subject of calling, explaining that whatever our secondary calling may be (to be a missionary, a vet, a mother etc), our primary calling as outlined by Paul in v4-6 is to the Christian faith. In v1-3, the application of this shared calling is the unity of the church family.

Conversation starters

- Have you experienced God's call? What has he called you to?
- What has been your experience of Christians disagreeing with each other? Have you/they disagreed well, or have divisions been painful?

Head - context and culture

Read Ephesians 4:1-6 — discuss the passage

- What might have been the problem in the Ephesian church that Paul needed to address?
Are there parallels to today's church?
- What is the calling Paul refers to in v1? How does the rest of the passage help us understand the calling?
- What are the four qualities he encourages in v2? What are their opposites and how do they stifle Christian unity?
- How do v4-6 re-enforce the point Paul makes in the opening verses?
- How do the different parts of the verse relate to the different persons of the Trinity?

Heart - what does this mean for us?

- Why is Christian unity important? What are the practical implications of disunity for our fellowship and our mission?
- The Nicene Creed (text on the back page) was written in 325 AD as a united declaration of faith to counter divisions in the church. What is its relation to Ephesians 4, and how is it relevant for us today?
- Is St Mark's just one church, or do we sometimes become different bodies within the body? What does that look like?
- Does our behaviour align with Paul's encouragements in v2? Are there relationships that need to be reconciled, or resolutions we need to make?