

Building Community *This is how they will know you are my disciples...*

1. Community - Challenges and Values

What is a Community?

1. a. How would you define a 'community'? (You might like to try and write a one sentence definition.)
- b. In what ways is a Christian community different from other types of community? (i.e. What are the distinctives of a Christian community?)
- c. What is the difference between a community and a clique? Why do you think so often one can become the other?

FYI the Oxford Dictionary defines community as:

- 1 A group of people living together in one place.
- 2 The people of an area or country considered collectively; society.
- 3 A group of people with a common religion, race, or profession: *the scientific community.*
- 4 The holding of certain attitudes and interests in common.
- 5 A group of interdependent plants or animals growing or living together or occupying a specified habitat.

Ideals and Reality

2. Ideally, what would a church community look like? (NB. You could draw a diagram/picture to illustrate what this might actually 'look like' - or get someone who CAN draw to illustrate what people are suggesting!) What prevents this ideal from being a reality?
3. a. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the 20th Century German theologian executed by the Nazis, made the following observations on Christian community. (Give everyone a copy of the section from 'Life Together' enclosed and read it aloud.) What particularly strikes you from his argument?

- b. What aspects of our community do you particularly appreciate? What do you find challenging about it?

How do we Build Community?

The New Testament helps to answer this question by giving practical instructions on how diverse groups of believers should behave towards each other and therefore build community.

4. *Divide the following 18 passages up amongst the group and compile a list of the 'one another' instructions the church is given:*

John 13.34-35
 Romans 2.13
 Romans 12.9-18
 Romans 14.13
 Romans 15.7
 2 Corinthians 9.11
 Galatians 5.13-15
 Ephesians 4.1-3
 Ephesians 4.32
 Ephesians 5.18-21
 Colossians 3.16
 1 Thessalonians 5.11
 1 Timothy 6.18
 Hebrews 3.13
 Hebrews 10.24-25
 James 4.11
 1 Peter 3.8-9
 1 Peter 4.9

5. Which strike you as most:
 - Significant
 - Challenging

Which, as a community, might we increase in? How might you as an individual contribute to that?