

SMALL GROUP AND SUNDAY SERMON SERIES



JOURNEY WITH US AS WE EXPLORE THE TEACHINGS OF CHRIST IN DAILY LIFE

7 June - 26 July 2026

HOME GROUPS AND CLASSES GUIDE:

1. Open in Worship and Prayer: this is to invite God into the meeting. For example, you can light a candle, sing together, or use a YouTube Hymn or song.
2. Open your Bibles and read the Bible verses for this week (take turns?) see below.
3. Reflect on the Bible verses and the reflection written by a Minister or Lay Preacher.
4. Connect with each other and take the reflection deeper by answering the Questions.
5. Works out: What have we learned that we can apply in our lives in this session? Keep each other accountable for promises made or important steps taken. Pray for and over each other (after taking prayer requests).

Practising the Way

Week 1 — WALKING IS THE WAY

Week 2 — COMMUNAL HARMONY

Week 3 — THE WAY IS COSTLY

Week 4 — BEING AUTHENTIC

Week 5 — WALKING THE WILDERNESS ROAD

Week 6 — STRENGTH FORGED IN STRUGGLE

Week 7 — THE JOURNEY IS UNFOLDING, AND NEVER FIXED

Week 8 — ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WORLD

*Friends, according to our Christian calendar we are moving into 'Ordinary Time'. This refers to the numbered weeks outside of the major liturgical seasons, lasting about 33-34 weeks each year, and focuses on living out the teachings of Christ in daily life. It emphasizes the ongoing mission of the Church, discipleship, and growth in faith rather than commemorating a single event like Christmas or Easter. Ordinary Time in the Christian calendar is often misunderstood as "plain" or "less important", but it's **the season where discipleship is lived out in daily life**. It is about applying faith in everyday life, not just during festive seasons. Ordinary time reminds Christians that faith is not about high holy days but also about consistent practice and witness in daily life. It provides space for teaching, reflection, and mission, grounding believers in the rhythm of ordinary weeks.*

*I have titled our series "**Practising the Way**". Practising the Way means actively following Jesus' way of life, not just believing in Him. Many churches emphasize belief but neglect formation and this leads to the crisis of discipleship, "**Practising the Way**" addresses this gap. **Practising the Way is essentially about intentional discipleship – ordering life around Jesus' teachings and example, within community, to grow in faith and mission.***

*John Mark Comer wrote a book titled "**Practising the Way**" to help believers move beyond simply believing in Jesus to apprenticing under him. Comer argues that everyone is being formed by something – whether culture, media, or habits – and that Christians must intentionally choose to be formed by Jesus. The book begins by*

exploring what it means to be an apprentice to Jesus drawing on the ancient rabbinic tradition where disciples would follow their teacher closely, imitating not just their words but their way of life. Comer insists that discipleship is not passive belief but active practice, requiring rhythms that open space for God's Spirit to transform us. He frames this apprenticeship around three movements – (e, Become, Do):

- *Being with Jesus* – emphasizes cultivating presence through prayer, silence, scripture, and sabbath. This is about learning to live in constant awareness of God's presence.
- *Becoming like Jesus*: He explains that transformation of character doesn't happen overnight or through sheer willpower alone but through intentional practices – fasting, simplicity, community, and generosity – that reshape desires and habits. These practices are not ends in themselves but means of opening our lives to God's work.
- *And doing as He did*: is about living missionally in the world: serving others, pursuing justice, and sharing the good news in everyday life.

Comer's vision is that discipleship is not reserved for spiritual elites but is the ordinary calling of every believer: to apprentice under Jesus, to be transformed by him, and to live out his way in the world. The book speaks to Christians navigating distraction and hurry, offering concrete steps to integrate faith in ordinary life.

I have chosen the theme 'Practising the Way' to help us see how faith isn't just celebrated in high feasts but embodied in ordinary rhythms. It is about discipleship as a lifestyle rather than a one-time decision. So, Practising the Way is about embodying Jesus' way of life here and now – a radical apprenticeship that reshapes how you spend time, use resources, and relate to others. It is about transformation – not just believing in Jesus but allowing his Spirit to reshape our character so that we increasingly reflect his life. For us, this is a call to slow down, to be present with Jesus, and to let discipleship permeate ordinary routines. To invite believers to see everyday life – work, rest, relationships, service – as the arena where discipleship is lived out. This theme reminds us that discipleship is lived out in the everyday; in how we speak to our families, how we handle work pressures, how we respond to neighbours, and how we steward our time. It is about becoming more Christlike not just in sacred spaces but in the ordinary rhythms of life. Over time, this path produces the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control – making believers living witnesses of Jesus in ordinary settings.



Conclusion: As we journey through this series, may we discover that practising the Way is not about perfection but about persistence – not about rigid formulas but about unfolding faith – not about escape from the world but about engaging it with Christ's love. It is not a single step but a lifelong road. So, let us go forth with courage, knowing that the wilderness will not defeat us, the struggle will not break us, and the cost will not outweigh the eternal reward. Practising the Way is walking with Christ – and in Him, the journey itself becomes our joy. Enjoy the journey, for it is the Way of Christ.

God's blessings, Zamani Sikupela.

Week Two: 14 June 2026

Theme: "Communal Harmony"

Scriptures: Psalm 133:1-3; Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 4:1-8; John 17:9-23

Worship Song: The Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir: Make Us One

https://youtu.be/Ui2SYgn7GgM?si=W_IY3ACNrdrgSgwu

Communal Harmony is the Way; it is about walking together. Amos 3:3 reminds us "Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so". The path is shared we become through relationships and community. It is about communal becoming. It points to "Ubuntu" concept - "I am because we are". Communal harmony testifies to the world about Christ's love. It is not just about avoiding conflict, it is about actively cultivating love, humility, and peace so that the Church reflects the unity of Christ. It is both a spiritual discipline and a powerful witness to the world.

Reflection on the Scriptures written by: LAY PREACHER – KEAGILE MOLOABI

Reflection: Communal Harmony

As I prepared for this reflection, I looked closely at the two words that make up this theme: *Community* and *Harmony*. Community can be understood as a group of people who share something in common, while harmony describes a state of balance, peace, and unity among different parts.

Therefore, when we speak about *Communal Harmony* within the context of church life, we are talking about a community of believers who share fellowship in Christ and intentionally live together in ways that are peaceful, balanced, loving, and pleasing to God.

In John 17:9–23, Jesus prays for His disciples knowing that His earthly ministry is coming to an end. What is remarkable about this prayer is that Jesus does not only pray for protection; He prays for unity. He prays that His disciples may be one just as He and the Father are one. The relationship between God the Father and the Son becomes the model for Christian community: united in purpose, united in love, and united in mission.

Jesus also reminds us that His followers have been sent into the world with His Word. Because of this, they may experience resistance, rejection, or challenges from the world around them. Yet even knowing this, Jesus prays not only for the disciples present with Him, but also for future believers — including us today. This presents an important challenge to us as the Bryanston Methodist Church community: Are we intentionally building the kind of unity that Jesus prayed for?

In Ephesians 4:1–8, Paul encourages believers to live lives worthy of their calling by practicing humility, gentleness, patience, and love. Unity does not happen automatically. It requires effort. It requires choosing patience when frustrated, choosing grace when offended, and choosing love even when it is difficult. Paul reminds us that there is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. Though we are different people with different gifts, we belong to one body.

Acts 2:42–47 shows us what this unity looked like in practice in the early church. Believers devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, prayer, and breaking bread together. They cared for one another so deeply that they ensured nobody among them lacked what they needed. Their faith was not simply personal—it was deeply communal.

For us today, communal harmony means more than simply greeting one another on Sundays. It means intentionally building relationships, showing genuine interest in one another's lives, sharing joys and burdens, supporting those who are struggling, and creating spaces where everyone feels seen, valued, and loved.

Psalm 133 reminds us: "*How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity.*" Unity is not merely beneficial for the church—it is pleasing to God.

As we continue Practising the Way, may we remember that communal harmony requires effort from each one of us. May we become people who intentionally build community, preserve unity, and invite others into the fellowship we have found in Christ. The Good News was never intended for a privileged few; it is for everyone.

Life group Questions (taking discussions deeper):

1. When you hear the phrase "*Communal Harmony*," what does it practically look like in a church community?
2. In John 17, Jesus prays for unity among believers. What do you think are some of the biggest barriers to unity within church communities today?

3. Acts 2 describes believers sharing life together beyond Sunday worship. What practical steps can we take to build deeper relationships within our church community?
4. Paul teaches that unity requires humility, patience, gentleness, and love. Which of these do you personally find most challenging, and why?

Daily Memory Verse and Prayer:

MONDAY

Memory Verse: Psalm 133:1 — *“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!”*

Prayer: Lord, thank You for the gift of unity among Your people. Teach me to pursue peace, love, and harmony in my relationships today.

TUESDAY

Memory Verse: Acts 2:42 — *“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”*

Prayer: Father, draw me into deeper devotion to Your Word, prayer, and fellowship. Help me to value the life of the church as a place of growth, grace, and shared faith.

WEDNESDAY

Memory Verse: Acts 2:46 — *“Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts... They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.”*

Prayer: Gracious God, build in me a glad and sincere heart that delights in sharing life with others. May my home, my church, and my daily habits reflect the joy of Christian community.

THURSDAY

Memory Verse: Ephesians 4:2 — *“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.”*

Prayer: Holy Spirit, clothe me with humility, gentleness, and patience today. Help me to bear with others in love and to strengthen unity wherever I go.

FRIDAY

Memory Verse: Ephesians 4:3 — *“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”*

Prayer: Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace in my family, church, and community. Give me wisdom and grace to guard unity with love and faithfulness.

SATURDAY

Memory Verse: John 17:21 — *“That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.”*

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for praying for the unity of Your people. Shape us into one body that reflects Your love so that the world may believe in You.

Family Devotion: Communal Harmony: Compiled by: Jenny Blake

Scriptures

- Psalm 133:1–3
- Acts 2:42–47
- Ephesians 4:1–8
- John 17:9–23

Opening Question

Ask everyone: **"What makes a team work well together?"**

(Examples: helping each other, listening, sharing, encouraging one another.)

Explain that God created us to live in community. We are part of God's family, and when we live in peace and love with one another, we show the world what God's kingdom looks like.

Short Devotion

Psalm 133 tells us how wonderful it is when God's people live together in unity. Unity doesn't mean we are all the same. It means we love one another, even when we are different.

In Acts 2, the early Christians shared meals, prayed together, helped those in need, and worshipped as one family. They cared for each other so well that other people noticed.

Paul reminds us in Ephesians 4 to be humble, gentle, patient, and loving. These qualities help us get along with others and keep peace in our homes, schools, churches, and communities.

Before Jesus went to the cross, He prayed that His followers would be united. Jesus knew that when Christians love one another, people can see God's love through them.

Communal Harmony means choosing kindness, forgiveness, and love so that we can live together as God's family.

Object Lesson

The Human Knot

Have everyone stand in a circle.

- Reach across and hold two different people's hands.
- Try to untangle yourselves without letting go.

Afterward ask: **"Was it easier when everyone worked together?"**

Explain: Just like the game, life works better when we cooperate, listen, and help one another. God calls us to work together as one family. *(For smaller families, use a bundle of pencils or sticks. One pencil breaks easily, but a bundle is much stronger.)*

Discussion Time

Younger Children (Ages 4–8)

1. What does it mean to be a good friend?
2. How did the early church help each other?
3. What can you share with someone this week?
4. How can you show kindness at home?

Older Children & Teens

1. Why do you think Jesus prayed for unity among believers?
2. What causes people to argue or become divided?
3. Which quality from Ephesians 4 (humility, gentleness, patience, love) is hardest for you?
4. How can our family help create harmony in our church and community?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for making us part of Your family. Help us to live in unity, kindness, and love. Teach us to be patient, forgiving, and caring toward one another. May our family be a place of peace, and may others see Your love through us. Amen.

Family Challenge for the Week

Each day, do **one act of kindness** for someone in your family, church, school, or neighbourhood without being asked. At the end of the week, share how those small acts helped bring joy and harmony to others.