

"Loving God Loving Others"

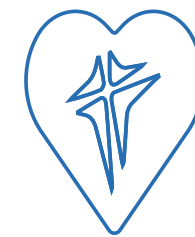
God is Love and He Loves Us

- God is Love (1 John 4:16). He is the source of love in our world (1 John 4:7-10). God loves us.
- The Cross (along with Jesus' life, death and resurrection) show God's great love for us. The cross connects God's love and our ability to love. John 15:4 and 1 John 4:19 reminds us that we can only love as a result of God's love.



We Encounter God's Love

- God's love transforms us. The more we receive and experience this love, the greater the work this love (through the Holy Spirit) does in transforming us to become more like Jesus. As we grow in our sense of belonging, acceptance, forgiveness and inclusion in God's family, the more we are changed (1 John 4:12).
- Love is the fruit that comes from a life connected to God (John 15:1-10, Galatians 5:14-26).



We Love God and Others

- Loving God describes our response to God. We love him in response to his love. This love for him connects us as a family so that we exist as a community, loving God (Philippians 2:1-2).
- We have been taught by God to love. So let us love others John 15:17, Ephesians 5:1-2, Philippians 2:1-8, Colossians 3:12-17, 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12, etc.



Understanding our Mission Statement: "Loving God Loving Others"

Two Key terms:

What is Love?

'Love' is patient, kind, humble, protective, trusting, hopeful and persevering. It hates evil and loves the truth. It is not self seeking but rather 'selfless'. As disciples of Jesus, love is the essential ingredient to everything we do (1 Corinthians 13:1-8).

The greater love is, the greater the willingness to sacrifice (John 15:13).

Love is transformative (1 John 4:17-19).

Love is best expressed through truth and action (1 John 3:18).

Who are Others?

'Others' refers to those that we are called to love (1 John 4:7).

'Others', in this context, is inclusive, as it means everyone.

Everyone bears the image of God equally and in this sense, there is oneness in humanity. This belief is held in tension with the value that every person is uniquely created. Each 'other' has distinctives in their God-bearing image that are worthy of honour and celebration. Recognising both the oneness and uniqueness of humanity is essential to Christian love. Our oneness helps us to understand one another. Our differences provide a medium to love as love is relational and requires an 'other' to love.

"We love because he first loved us."

1 John 4:19

