

Your church is a community without division where everyone belongs

The culture when Jesus was on earth was marked by divisions along lines such as gender, social status, culture and wealth. The cultural assumption of that time was that human beings were not equal. Into that world came Jesus and his gospel which offered a radical alternate vision of personhood where every person was seen as valuable, equal and included.

So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:26-28, Holy Bible (NIV)

For the Christian community in Jesus' time, personhood and value were no longer defined by culture, social status or gender, but by inclusion in Christ. This is true for followers of Jesus today. This is to be visible in our lives too, as followers of Christ we must continue to keep to that example and show kindness, generosity, respect and belonging to all.

Our communities are not to be places where we merely share space, but they are to be places where we proactively work for the welfare of one another.

This community approach echoes the approach of Jesus described in the Bible. Jesus understood his ministry as the arrival of God's kingdom described by the Old Testament prophets. It was a time when people were liberated from exclusion, oppression and exploitation, and were welcomed into God's community of grace, love, compassion and justice. The Old Testament prophets named the gathering of the 'lame', the 'blind' and the 'mute' as part of this new inclusive community (Jeremiah 31:8-9; Micah 4:6-7; Isaiah 28:19; 35:5-6). This becomes a key dimension of how the kingdom of God became a reality on earth in Jesus (Luke 4:18-19; Matthew 11:3-5).