



CHRISTIAN UNITY IN
HEBBURN

**One in Christ: engaging in
God's mission:
empowered by the spirit**

A report of the outcome
of a number of workshops
involving churches in
Hebburn to consider
issues around Christian
unity.

October 2024 to January 2025

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As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to one hope when you were called-one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Ephesians 4:1-6 NIV

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14

The whole is greater (more effective) than the sum of the parts

Aristotle

*“The basis of unity is in one spirit. If we meet someone who has been baptised in the same spirit we were baptised in, we have fellowship with them. We may not have yet achieved full unity of faith, that will come with maturity. The goal is to believe the same thing, but the beginning of this is the **unity of the Spirit**”.*

Quote David Pawson.

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1) Introduction

This report covers a number of meetings and workshops held between October 2024 and January 2025.

The issue was to consider what Jesus meant and what the implications are for churches in Hebburn of his prayer in **John 17:20-23**

²⁰ “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ **that all of them may be one**, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— ²³ I in them and you in me—**so that they may be brought to complete unity**. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

So why unity?

- That they may be one, as we are one
- So that they may be brought to complete unity
- Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me

The question then is, does the world know that the Father sent the Son and has love them even as he loved the son?

What does the world see?

I would suggest that it sees different denominations, in different buildings, generally separated from one another. This may not be wholly true, but it may be their perception. Indeed, It is not uncommon for someone to ask what ‘religion’ a person is rather than their denomination.

In a world that is divided socially, racially, politically, economically, class and religion what example can the church give? If our house is divided, we cannot stand.

The world, and in deed our country, is subject to fault lines that will, as with geographical fault lines, shift when there is enough pressure and cause devastation. Hence our history of social disturbance and riot.

Church history has not always been pleasant or harmonious. There has been much in-fighting, intolerance, misunderstanding, cruelty, pain and suffering. Yet this is not what Christ prayed for.

How can we make a difference?

A lesson from history

In 1732, the Moravians (Unitas Fratrum or unity of believers) left their native Bohemia because of oppression from the church

They settled in Saxony where they were given permission to stay by Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf in Saxony near the present-day border with Poland. The settlement was named Herrnhut - 'under the watch of the Lord'.

There were divisions within the community but they came together in church to seek the Lord and resolve their issues. They had a Pentecost experience that changed the community.

They committed to unity and prayer and to mission, They started a 24/7 prayer meeting that last 100 yrs.

From this community missionaries were sent throughout the world and they set an example to other denominations, particularly John Wesley and the Methodists.

For them, the blessings of Ps 133 were a reality

¹ How good and pleasant it is
when God's people live together in unity!

It is like precious oil poured on the head,
running down on the beard,
running down on Aaron's beard,
down on the collar of his robe.

³It is as if the dew of Hermon
were falling on Mount Zion.
For there the LORD bestows his blessing,
even life forevermore.

The blessing of living together in unity is, I believe, an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the church and therefore on the community we serve and witness to.

Aristotle said that the whole is more (effective) than the sum of the parts.

The Apostle Paul spoke of the church being Christ's body and therefore made up of many parts. An arm, a leg, an eye, an ear etc, It is only when those parts come together as one body can they function as the body of Christ.

In Hebburn, we may have various parts of the body in various buildings and locations but is it only when we can be truly united in spirit that we can be effective to serve and witness to our community.

The strap line of Churches Together England is;

One in Christ: engaging in God's mission: empowered by the spirit.

And they also say:

'The real challenge of unity is to share a common life; that is, to do together whatever we do not need to do apart'.

I believe this is the start of a grass roots movement that will empower the churches in Hebburn to become one in spirit and in truth. It is, I believe, a move of the Holy Spirit.

The question is, how do we move to being 'one' on a day today basis. Not just once a month?

The subsequent workshops, detailed in this report, are a starting point to realising this. We have only scratched the surface but it is a starting point.

I sincerely hope, that others will catch the vision and move with us.

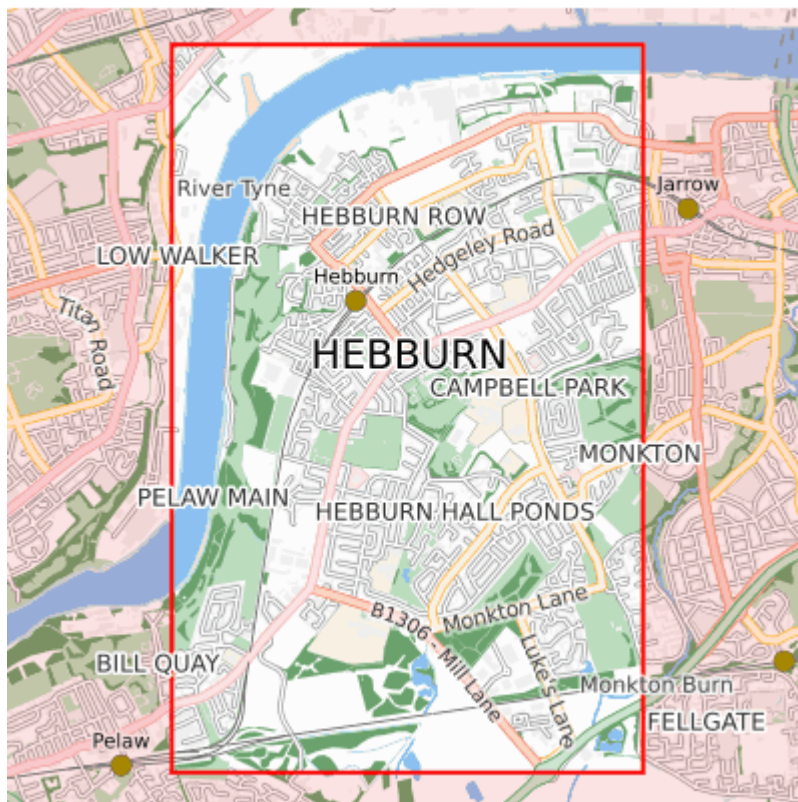
Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.

Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)

2) Hebburn area profile: the town we serve

Hebburn is on the south bank of the River Tyne. One mile south-west of the town of Jarrow, four miles east of the major town of Gateshead, 94 miles south-east of Edinburgh, and 246 miles north of London. Hebburn lies five miles south-east of the Northumberland border

Map showing the extent of
Hebburn



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Early history

Early spellings of the name Hebburn suggest the name is Anglo-Saxon and means 'high tumulus' though where that tumulus was located is uncertain. Later, Hebburn was part of the land belonging to the Norman monastery at Jarrow and later still it belonged to the Willys and Baxter families and thereafter other families.

There was a fortified manor house at Hebburn in the 14th century, located at the site of Hebburn Hall, by the present Car Ellison Park. Coal mining in Hebburn can be traced back to the 17th century, and Hebburn colliery was established in 1792, and operated up to 1932. In the mid 19th century the ship building industry grew rapidly, including shipyards of Hawthorn Leslie and Palmers. Sadly, these are no more.

Along with Jarrow, Hebburn was home to a very significant Irish community and it seems that the Hibernian influence came from all corners of Ireland. The Irish Catholic Community are represented by the stark red-brick Catholic church of St Aloysius designed by Charles Walker (1888).

Hebburn was formerly in County Durham and was an urban district council from 1894 until 1974.

From 1974 to 1986 it was part of the administrative authority of Tyne & Wear. In 1986 this authority was abolished and Hebburn is now part of the Metropolitan Borough of South Tyneside.

Population (2021 census)

Age range	Percentage
Up to 15yrs	19.3
16-24	7.53
25-64	54.5
65-74	10.56
75+	8.05
Total	26309

Religion

Hebburn has seven churches and one Buddhist meditation centre

There are two Roman Catholic churches, one Methodist, three Anglican and one Independent Methodist Church.

These churches serve a population of 26309

However, the vast majority of Hebburn resident do not attend any of the above on a regular basis.

Regular church attendance is approximately 1.2 % of the population.

Education

Hebburn has two secondary schools. St. Joseph's Catholic Academy (formerly St Joseph's Comprehensive School) and Hebburn Comprehensive School.

Crime

The overall crime rate in Hebburn in 2023 was 132 crimes per 1,000 people. This compares poorly to Tyne & Wear's overall crime rate, coming in 20% higher than the Tyne & Wear rate of 110 per 1,000 daytime population.

Crimes in Hebburn October 2024

Crime Category	Incidents	
Violent Crime	92	40.7%
Anti-Social Behaviour	42	18.6%
Criminal Damage Arson	35	15.5
Public Order	15	6.7%
Other Theft	11	4.9%
Shoplifting	7	3.1%
Other Crime	6	2.7%
Burglary	6	2.7%
Vehicle Crime	5	2.2%
Bicycle Theft	3	1.3%
Drugs	2	0.9%
Robbery	1	0.04%
Theft From The Person	1	0.04%
All Crime	226	

Health

A lower percentage of people described their health as very good in Hebburn than in the national average. Also

Area	Very good	Good	Fair	Bad	Very bad
Hebburn	46.47%	32.76%	13.9%	5.16%	1.7%
South Tyneside	43.75%	33.07%	15.52%	5.89%	1.77%
North East	44.58%	33.46%	14.95%	5.41%	1.61%
England	48.49%	33.71%	12.65%	3.98%	1.17%

Immigration

Hebburn has a lower rate of immigration than South Tyneside, North East England and England as a whole.

Born in UK	97.11%
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Born outside UK	2.89%
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Occupation

Professional/technical	32.63%
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Administration	11.6
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Skilled trade	11.2
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Care and leisure	9.9
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Manager/senior officials	8.45
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Plant machine operatives	8.36
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Political

Hebburn has traditionally been a labour stronghold . Of its current 9 ward members, all are Labour. The sitting MP is also Labour.

Home ownership

There are approx. 12 282. dwellings in Hebburn.(estimate only based on percentage of all dwellings in South Tyneside as precise data is difficult to access)

65.26% are owner occupied while 34.74% are rented properties.

House prices in Hebburn have an overall average of £176,177 over the last year.

The majority of properties sold in Hebburn during the last year (2024) were semi-detached properties, selling for an average price of £174,741. Terraced properties sold for an average of £136,149, with detached properties fetching £306,332.

Overall, the historical sold prices in Hebburn over the last year were 3% up on the previous year and 2% down on the 2022 peak of £180,038.

3) Church profile

There are seven churches in Hebburn, serving a population of 26309

These are :

- St John's C of E
- St Aloysius and St James RC
- St Luke's Methodist
- St Cuthbert's C of E
- St Oswald's C of E
- Hebburn Independent Methodist

St John's C of E Church

Canning St. Hebburn. NE31 2UP

St John's was converted from part of Ellison Hall and includes the remains of the 14th century Pele Tower and was consecrated in 1887.

The wealthy Ellison family acquired the land in the early 1600's. Part was developed as a park and given over to the people of Hebburn.

Membership is currently 120 over 16 yr olds on the electoral roll.

Average attendance is 60+.

Worship services are held on Sunday mornings at 10:30 and in the evening at 6:00 pm in the vicarage. Age range birth to 90+.

Other activities include:

Carrisa coffee for the community on Tuesdays am

There are eight bible study groups meeting fortnightly

There are a number of refugee families attending who do not speak English as their first language. Service sheets are printed in Farsi.



Parish of St Aloysius and St James RC Churches.



St Aloysius Prince Consort Rd. Hebburn NE31 1BE

A large red brick Gothic Revival church and early work by Charles Walker of Newcastle, replacing an earlier school-chapel. The church was reordered for its consecration in 1999.

Hebburn expanded considerably during the mid-nineteenth century due to the growth of the local colliery, the shipbuilding industries, and chemical works. The mission was established in the 1860s from St Bede, Jarrow. Mass was initially said in the Ellison Buildings, and the first resident priest arrived in December 1871. The following year, a school-chapel opened on part of the present site. The present church was opened beside it by Bishop Wilkinson on 3 June 1888.

The church hosts a number of weekly events including:

Senior Citizens

The Friendship group

Brownies and Guides

Living with Dementia

St. Vincent de Paul meetings

Rosary group

St James RC Church. Mill Lane, Hebburn. NE31 2ET

A large church conceived before and built after the Second Vatican Council, conventional in plan and design. It has a tall southwest bell tower and a projecting baptistery. The original sanctuary has been divided off to form a small hall.

Weekly prayer meetings

Parish of St. Cuthbert's and St. Oswald's C of E



Church of England Parish of St Cuthbert and St Oswald, Hebburn.

Two church buildings - one parish!

Spreading the Gospel and serving the local community of Hebburn, South Tyneside.

St. Oswald's.

St Oswald's St. Hebburn. NE31 1HR

St. Oswald's church is one of two churches which form the Parish of St Cuthbert and St Oswald, Hebburn, formed in 2006 after many years as two separate parishes. The churches are one and a half miles apart.

St Oswald's was completed in 1883 and was formerly the hub of a mining community, namely Hebburn Colliery. It is a brick building with stone dressings, in the Gothic style with two aisles.

St. Cuthberts, Argyle Street, Hebburn. NE31 1BP

Our vision is to make an impact for God, here in Hebburn, Tyne and Wear by helping people understand the enriching messages of eternal hope given to us by Jesus Christ through His words and deeds.

Everyone is welcome, no matter your age, beliefs, or background. Come just as you are - we'd love to get to know you better.

St Luke's Methodist Church. Burn Heads Rd. Hebburn. NE31 2TA



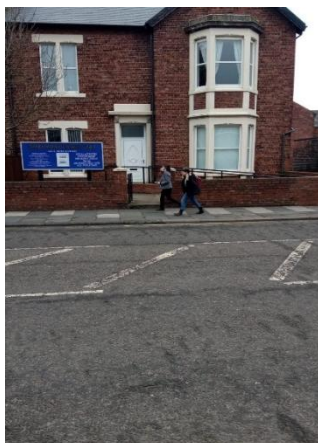
Located just off the main road between Heworth and Hebburn Town Centre, St. Luke's Methodist Church is a comfortably appointed church with adjacent hall and meeting rooms.

This small, friendly church has much to offer the surrounding community with groups using the premises every day.

The vision of **St Lukes Methodist Church** is to make an impact for God, here in Hebburn, Tyne and Wear by helping people understand the enriching messages of eternal hope given to us by Jesus Christ through His words and deeds. Come just as you are - we'd love to get to know you better.

Hebburn Independent Methodist Church.

80 Victoria Rd. West. Hebburn NE32 1LR



Originally met in Chapman House next door to its current location. In 1968 it moved into its current location at 80 Victoria Rd West, Hebburn, This was purchased with the help of Independent Methodist Churches in Sunderland.

The church meets for worship on Sunday evenings at 6.00pm. There are on average about 12 people attending.

Through the week there is a coffee shop each morning between 10.00 am and 1.00 pm.

The first Saturday of every month the worship band meets in the town centre for Worship on the Street.

There is a Bible study each Thursday between 1.00pm and 2.00 pm

4) Setting the scene

Prior to meeting, flyers were distributed to all churches in Hebburn, physically and electronically. For the first session 17 people attended.

In our second session (agreeing remit) we felt that we needed to adopt Chatham House rules so that participants could be free to express their opinions honestly without any comeback.

This report therefore will not include the names of any participants apart from the authors.

In all there have been nine sessions of approximately one hour each. Numbers attending ranged between 10 and 17. On average there were 12 attending. All five churches in Hebburn were represented.

The first session set the scene in as much as the facilitator gave a presentation giving an overview of issues including:

Why unity?

- What did Jesus mean by being one and in complete unity
- The need to understand each other despite differences.
- If each of us is 'in Christ' then we are all in Christ together.
- We are therefore 'family' (children of God through Christ)

Fault lines

- Are there fault lines in the church. Historically, yes. What about now?
- What are the fault lines? Are there any 'red lines' that cannot be crossed?

In the beginning

- The disciples were joined together – Greek *homothymadon* – united in togetherness. (Acts 1:14)
- Is this a model for us now or something that is not realistically attainable?

What went wrong?

- Separation of Roman empire between east and west. State religion.
- Divisions within the church. Separation between 'priests' and laity.
- Heretical influences. Gnostics, pantheism, another gospel.
- Reformation: sola scriptura v church authority

What about today?

- Churches Together. How together are we?
- Grass roots level-are we one? Do we consider that we are one?
- Are we family?

Can we make a difference?

- If united/one, would it be noticed?
- Can we lead by example in a divided society.

The growing threat, a house divided

- Christianity has always been under threat from without and within. However, there is growing intolerance now in our society towards Christians. We need to be united/one.
- A house divided cannot stand
- Although we might be different parts of the body, we all need each other. How can we facilitate that?

Philippians 2:1-5- a starting point

- Being like minded
- Having the same love
- One in spirit
- Of one mind

Other pertinent questions were:

- What do we agree upon?
- What do we disagree on?
- What unites us, what divides us? (What's primary what's secondary)
- How can we attain unity in mission?
- How do we do this practically.
- What is our mission?
- How does unity of mission and faith work in practice?
- Is it more than just doing stuff?
- How important is meeting together in prayer? Where does the Holy Spirit fit in?
- How do we recognise each other in the community?
- How does this link in to CTST?
- **Is there a desire to be in 'complete unity', to work together.**

With this in mind, in session 2, we discussed our remit for the workshops.

5) Agreeing the remit

We agreed upon five workshops, a Q&A re South Tyneside Churches Together, an informal time of prayer and worship and a final meeting to discuss the draft report. Ten meetings in all.

Workshop 1)

Unity in practice-how?

Is it doing stuff or being. How can we be in agreement?

Matt 18:19

Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth **agree** about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.

Agree-Greek: symphonio. This is also musical term- to be in harmony. How do we achieve harmony of heart/spirit rather than head? Accept each other despite any differences.

Is there a place for shared mission and prayer?

Workshop 2)

Being inclusive

This is more than not excluding people on grounds of race, sexuality or disabilities etc. But do we exclude because of the 'language' we use? Terminology that is not understood by non-Christians? Our rituals and practices may seem strange to those who do not understand them.

Does this also apply between different denominations? Does it prevent unity?

Why do we do things the way we do them?

Workshop 3

Living faith not dead faith.

- What is living faith on a day-to-day basis-how does this unify us practically?
- Is it confined to a building where we meet once or twice a week?
- How do we break free from the concept of church as 'the building'?
- Is there a place for doing church **together** away from a designated building.
- What does 'doing church' mean? Is it mission, outreach or something else?

Workshop 4)

Fault lines

- Where are the tensions between denominations?
- How can we understand each other.
- What are our shared values and beliefs. What are our differences (do they matter?)
What unites what divides?
- Can we agree to disagree without it harming unity?

Workshop 5)

- Returning to the question 'what did Jesus mean by 'being one' and being in 'complete unity'?
- Reflection on previous sessions.

Workshop 6

Q&A with Bernadette Askins (South Tyneside Churches Together Trustee)

How do local churches interface with South Tyneside Churches Together?

- What is the role of local churches. Is there a role? Should there be local representation within STCT? How would that work?

Final session

Informal prayer and worship time. Let the Holy Spirit lead.

Post project meeting

Consideration of draft report. Some future date to be arranged.

We adopted a more visual aid to keep us on track, the 'dart bard'! (See appendix i)

6) Workshops

Workshop 1: Christian unity in practice

The workshop was split into three groups and each were asked to consider the following;

Unity in practice-how?

- Is it doing stuff or being?
- How can we be in agreement?
- Can we accept each other despite any differences?
- Is there a place for shared mission and prayer?

Considering if unity is about doing stuff or being, reference was made to James 2:14-20. James clearly states that faith is important but the outworking of faith is deeds (but not 'works')

Mary and Martha were cited as one who 'was' and the other who 'did'. Martha's faith was no less than Mary's but was expressed differently.

For us there has to be a balance between doing things in unity and being one in Christ.

Agreement can only come through Christ. But there is a necessity for us to be 'doing' eg meeting together at different times in different places. The group felt that these meetings were proving positive as people from different denominations and backgrounds were able to see each other as family in Christ.

It was suggested that there could be potential for increased harmony through joint worship, prayer and fellowship (groups). But it was also noted that sometimes people can feel alienated visiting other churches with different practices and procedures.

Moving on to how we could move to a place of agreement it was noted that there was disagreement in the early church but this was dealt with: see Acts 15. And also, in such places as Corinth. It was noted that some of the division came from outside influences eg circumcision group, Gnostics etc. We do need, therefore to be on guard against worldly practices and values that can infiltrate our fellowship.

It was also noted that there are many facets to Christianity. This can be a positive and something to be embraced. However, we may need to move outside of rules and regulations in order to move forward. Note: Christ did not follow man-made rules or traditions.

But can we accept each other despite difference?

Putting ourselves in the other persons shoes was felt relevant and the need to come to understanding by discussion. From this position we may be able to accept each other but not agreeing with them.

Differences with regard to the meaning of and practice of sacraments was raised eg communion. Is this a 'red line' or just another way of being 'in Christ'? This clearly requires further discussion and understanding.

Also, how do we deal with people holding clearly unbiblical views, as we see it?

Finally, is there a place for shared mission and prayer?

Do we have to meet in a church building was asked. Would there be scope to unite in joint worship in more of a community setting where it would be more neutral and perhaps less threatening?

It was suggested that may be a more effective way of reaching the community and displaying our joint mission to save the lost?

Workshop 2

Being inclusive in action and language

This workshop considered two aspects: inclusion and language:

The main theme was not so much about not being inclusive but how we might exclude them unconsciously by our structures and language.

Barriers

The first issue was to do with barriers to unity within our own churches. To fellow Christians as well as visitors who may be seekers.

Question: Thinking about people who are visiting our church(s) for the first time, what barriers might there be to them feeling accepted and welcomed to our fellowship. Would they sense unity and love within our churches?

Where to sit was identified. People do tend to sit in the same place week on week, often with friends. There is nothing inherently wrong with this but newcomers might very well be anxious about sitting 'in someone's seat', even if this is not an issue within the church.

They may also feel self-conscious. A welcome team would be beneficial. They would greet and guide them to a place to sit and perhaps introduce them to a member of the congregation who would 'look after' them.

Hymns, although good for worship and teaching theology can use archaic language that might not be understood, with tunes that are less than helpful. Modern songs can lack good theology in some cases but generally have melodies that are easier to pick up. So, can our worship actually cause disunity within our own churches and how would this reflect on visitors?

Would visitors feel invisible or isolated was discussed. Do we have a hi and bye culture. Does unity within the fellowship unconsciously exclude visitors which could lead them to see us as being exclusive?

Visitors who have not been exposed to the church environment may wonder what is expected of them. Do our traditions and the way we do worship suggest that this is a club where only the initiated know the 'rules'. It is not being suggested that important elements of worship are abandoned but we need to be aware of how a visitor might perceive this.

Lastly, the issue of money. Offerings are taken in different ways in different churches. Some leave an offering plate by the front door whilst others may pass a plate or bag around. Those not au fait with church procedures may be threatened by this act of worship. Should they give, do they feel obliged to give and how much? Should it be made clear that it is a free will offering and it is ok not to give?

Language (see also appendix ii)

We discussed the use of key words and terms within our denominations and asked the question, could there be a barrier to unity because we have different understandings about the words we use?

Within the group discussion there was clearly agreement on some terms and some difference of understanding with others.

There clearly was not enough time to do this subject justice and it may be profitable to have a series of meetings in the future to develop our understanding (doing theology together)

There was clearly mutual understanding on repentance and the cross but not about sacraments, saints, presence of Christ (in the eucharist) and the role of Mary.

To further develop this issue an exercise was carried out, outside of this workshop, which asked participants to define what they understood by specific words and terms (**See appendix ii**)

Only five people took part in this exercise, which does limit its effectiveness, but it does serve to highlight how different people express theological and ecclesiastical terms in different ways.

What was also evident was that in some cases there was a lack of depth in understanding of some terms and there were clearly different ways of understanding and therefore expressing in different ways.

Overall, however, there was much more agreement than disagreement.

Workshop 3

Living faith not dead faith. Do buildings matter

This workshop was split into two groups tasked with considering the following:

Through the lens of unity:

- i) What is living faith and how does this impact us individually and communally
And what role do buildings play in this
- ii) Do buildings separate us. What would church be like without a permanent building?

i)

A question was raised about what is living faith. And how can we know the difference between living faith and dead faith?

In short, the group suggested that living faith impacts the whole of life and it is about intimacy with Jesus.

Note: one definition of living faith is:

Living faith is an essential aspect of the Christian life, marked by trust in God, obedience to His Word, and the manifestation of good works. It is a faith that is alive, active, and continually growing, reflecting the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life.

https://biblehub.com/topical/l/living_faith.htm

Dead faith therefore, by definition, is the opposite. A faith that does not grow or produce fruit or transform the person.

The question then was, do buildings matter for the church to function and to enable people to have living faith?

It was agreed that church buildings act as a focal point for the community, are meeting places for worshipers and can also be a place of safety.

The second group discussion broadened this out and considered if buildings actually separate us and therefore act against unity.

Firstly, church buildings could be a barrier to non-church goers. But would a shared building promote unity and give a signal to the community that the 'church' is one?

It was also pointed out that although Jesus did preach in synagogues he more generally preached outside, in isolated places, in boats and on mountains!

John Wesley also started his ministry by preaching outside.

Would worshiping in different settings change our concept and practice of worship? However, church buildings do have a purpose.

It was also questioned as to what degree clergy/leaders influence worship style and content and would clergy get on board with one place of worship for all churches?

It would appear that buildings are important but to what degree. Are we holding on to an outdated model. One that does, to some degree, separate us. Is our faith determined by our buildings?

This is a subject that requires more discussion but the concept of joint use of a building is one worth considering in terms of unity. Our faith cannot be dependent upon a particular building although it was acknowledged that people do have special memories associated with church buildings.

Workshop 4

To be aware of, and to try to understand, why/how we have different traditions, structures and doctrinal emphasis (fault lines)

This was a wide-ranging discussion that did not always stick to the brief but the main points were as follows:

- **Sacrament, communion the lord's supper**
What are the differences? The group felt that the differences should not matter significantly. Whatever we call it we are remembering Jesus and the meaning behind what we are celebrating.
- **Different times for holding this service** (communion) Some churches will hold this celebration every week, some once a month. Individual traditions should be respected.
- **Family members** can play a large part in determining the religion their offspring will opt for. People are often 'born' into a religion or a particular denomination. We should respect this. They will hold onto what they have been taught.
- **Do people take communion seriously** or prefer to chatter? This was an issue with some churches where after taking communion they go back to their seats and 'chatter'. Felt that it was up to the leaders to ensure people understood and respected the sanctity of this event.
- **Lord's prayer – often spoken to fast.** General agreement. Discussed the need to 'pause' to 'be still and know that I am God'. Lord's prayer was intended to be a model not a recitation.
- **Society has changed over the years** – are churches structured around families? Often the profile of the congregation does not match the profile of the surrounding community. What can we do?
- **Same problems arising in each of our churches?** Discussed various issues that we all seem to be experiencing. Attendance, buildings (cost), lack of clergy (some have a number of churches)
- **Seven churches in Hebburn. how many people come/in attendance?** Population in Hebburn according to the last census is 21,337. Why so few attending our churches (probably only in the 100's)
(co-incidence- seven letters to seven churches Rev2-3)
- **Any major differences/teachings?** This might be the subject of another discussion but the group felt that in general we agree on the basic tenets of the faith.

- **Is it necessary to have a priest deliver the sacrament?** Discussion as to why. Only the Independent Methodist church allows laity to administer if no ordained minister present.
- **Priests can be very lonely people.** It was noted that RC priests are generally unmarried and this could be a difficulty if they feel they are on their own.
- **Unity in having same problems within our churches, same burdens?** We all have issues and burdens within our own churches. Felt that what was important was to be able to share each other's burdens. This overcomes division and fosters unity.
- **Divisions should not matter-if we are 'one in Christ'.**
- **Disunity in society?** There is disunity and major fault lines in society (race, religion, social differences, political, ideological) The church needs to set an example in unity no matter what our background
(There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. **Galatians 3:28**)
- **If the churches do not show unity, society will think we are divided?**
- **Shared missions** – is there room to have shared burdens?
- **Are buildings important?** Shared mission, shared premises. Being one. Can we use community facilities?

Workshop 5

What did Christ mean by being one and being in complete unity?

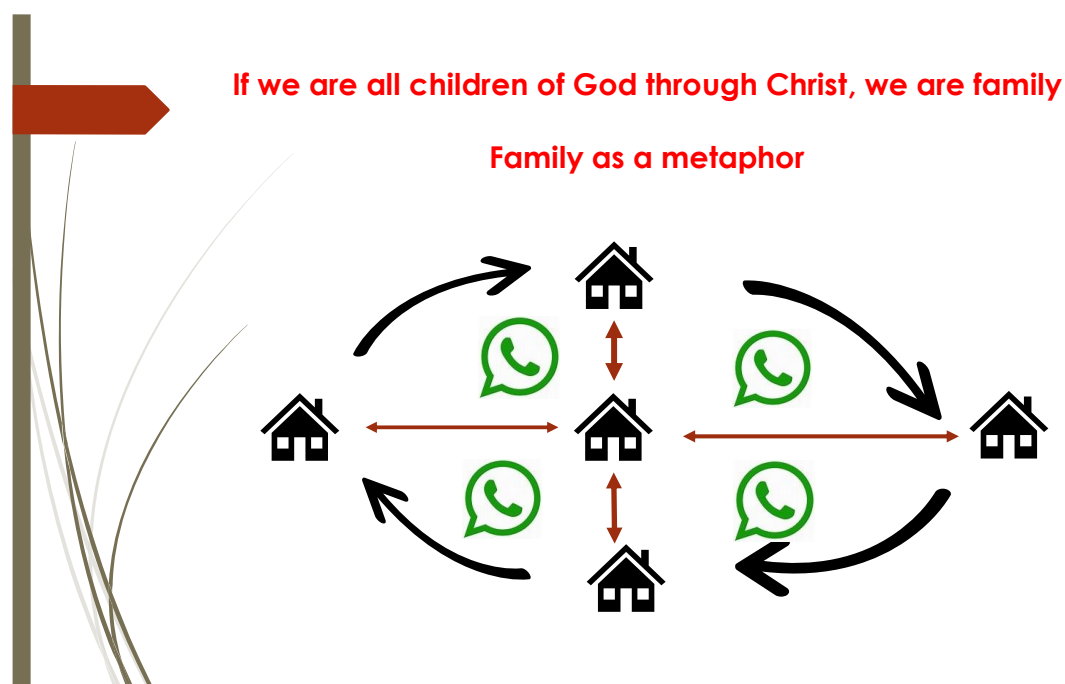
This session brought us back to our original purpose of the group. It was a reflection upon all our past discussions. The discussion however became wider ranging and looked more at issues within the church that need to be corrected or reviewed.

The facilitator started by reviewing the past discussions and then using 'family'; as a metaphor . If we are 'in Christ' and not separated from God's love, how can we be separated from each other?

Romans 8:38-39

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to **separate us** from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In a well-functioning family, even though they may live in different houses (church buildings) they still function as one (family)



- Visiting each other
- Meeting up, shared time together
- Loving each other
- Keeping in touch: WhatsApp, Facebook, messenger

Initially the group discussed how we could be this way but the discussion then developed into other issues, many of them shared.

- Canon law- is it biblical?

- Has the church become corrupted by the world?

Have we allowed worldly attitudes, beliefs and practices to infiltrate the church. Are we acting more worldly than Godly?

- Should/are our 'leaders' good shepherds or just managers.

This has been a recurring theme and one that needs to be addressed. Whilst it was generally acknowledged that clergy are busy, often having more than one church to serve, there needs to be more active involvement in Churches Together in Hebburn. Unity is an important issue and one that Christ prayed for. There is a danger that this grass roots movement could develop away from the clergy.

- Does the church allow sin eg lying, gossip, slander, etc?

This matter developed from the issue of same sex marriage and couples who decide not to marry. It was pointed out that sex (fornication) is not the only sin, and has become a red herring as it ignores the fact that sin includes some 'common' behaviours: gossip, lying, stealing, malicious talk, slander, being judgemental.

- Assisted dying- divided opinion on this.
- Can we agree unity without us all agreeing on all issues?

This issue was flagged up in an earlier session and it was still held to be a good principle to follow.

Recommendations

- Encourage clergy to be more involved and understand the potential in grass roots unity
- Develop ways in which we can all get to know each other eg.
Events (social),
Shared worship and prayer (groups)
Shared buildings for shared mission
- Addressing negative attitudes to unity within our own churches
- Encourage/develop understanding between denominations
- Staying in touch- development of a web site and Facebook page
- Sharing news/bulletins
- Develop a culture of acceptance (without having to agree)

The process of 'being one' and in 'complete unity' is indeed just that, a process. These workshops have been the start of a process, a journey that we all need to take. We have only scratched the surface of what Christ meant but it is a vision that we need to keep alive if we are to stand together in Christ in a world that is becoming more intolerant of Christians.

Q&A with Bernadette Askins

(vice Chair of Churches Together South Tyneside)

How do local churches interface with South Tyneside Churches Together

The following is an edited version of the meeting in order to record specific questions and responses only. There was a considerable amount of discussion within the group which has not been reflected for the sake of brevity. A transcript is available but extends to 18 pages!

Question

How do South Tyneside Churches Together relate to other churches in South Tyneside ?

BA

I'll have to go back a bit in history to explain.

In the 1970's when Christian unity first began to raise its head, people started forming groups in local areas.

At that time there were plenty of clergy and the local groups were flourishing, right through to the 1980's and 90's.

In 1997 a big national event - March for Jesus – took place. We contacted all the South Tyneside churches and everyone came together and it was a big event.

Following that people asked 'do we need a South Tyneside Churches Together?' There was a consultation and it was agreed that we did need such an organisation. The Free Church Federal Council voted to discontinue and joined South Tyneside Churches Together.

The local groups and CT South Tyneside continued until Covid, when local groups ceased to meet. Some have restarted now, as in Hebburn

Currently, there are three local groups meeting (Hebburn, Jarrow and Harton) and South Tyneside Churches Together (Trustees) meets once per month.

Question

If there are these various groups, how do they connect, How does South Tyneside Churches Together connect with Churches Together in England. How does that work?

BA

South Tyneside Churches Together is a member of North East Churches Acting Together. (NECAT). Their regional officer links with local Churches Together groups to share what they

were doing. NECAT also keeps in touch with the denominations and regional organisations such as the new regional mayor and regional government. The regional officer attends meetings of CT in England.

Question

Do you get a lot of response from South Tyneside churches?

BA

Some churches are responsive, some are not.

A recent example was the Reflecting Together Project researching loneliness and isolation. We wrote to all the clergy inviting church members to take part but no one responded. We recruited people by personally inviting people to take part.

Question

One of the questions at the recent Hebburn Churches Together meeting was, how do we become more involved with Churches Together South Tyneside?

BA

We're talking about communications here. Churches Together South Tyneside sends out information and regular newsletters to all sixty churches to the clergy and people who have asked to be on the mailing list. We also have a Facebook page where we share information from local churches.

Question (follow up)

Is the website a problem here and could Hebburn Churches Together set up their own website?

AB

At the moment Churches Together South Tyneside's website is down. We are planning to develop a new one. There are two options: Hebburn can set up their own website or you could have a page on a combined website, which would be maintained and accessed by Churches Together South Tyneside

We hope to employ a communications worker and that is one reason why we have not made a move on the website.

I think we need to rethink the whole thing.

Question

Obviously, we are talking about churches together, but I am wondering, is everything you do coming from a Biblical Christian focus or is purely a social thing?

BA

Well, we're all practising church members. Those involved include Methodists, Catholics, Baptists and Independent. We would welcome Anglican and URC involvement.

The local groups decide what they want to do, and from the beginning they met together to pray, to do Bible study, to organise carol services etc. South Tyneside was set up to carry out mission work across South Tyneside from a Christian outreach perspective. It's mission - orientated reaching out into the community, with a particular emphasis on people who were in need. So that's why we're supporting frail old people, people with dementia, food banks, and looking after people in distress out on a Saturday night.

Our Charity Commission registration is for the Advancement of the Christian Religion.

Question

How would you like to see the local churches feed in? You've talked about local churches whether in prayer groups or something else. Certainly, in our group there is a desire to do more. But how would you see the ideal structure between yourselves and the local groups?

BA

Pre -Covid, about every two years, we had an in -person coming together to look at a topic from a Christian perspective. Usually around 30 people came. There were speakers, and we prayed, and people told their stories. We held events on mental health, End of Life Care, Maing Ends Meet - topics of interest to Christians and the wider community. We invited everybody to come along. Since COVID, we've had one event on Zoom, Care for Creation (a Christian approach to the environment and looking after God's creation). We were disappointed because only about half a dozen people joined the event.

Question

Have you got in your head somewhere about what the ideal structure would be, so there's South Tyneside Church Together, and there's Hebburn, and there's Jarrow, and there's all the rest doing various things, would there be a structure there that would feed into you guys, because you'd learn from what we're bringing in, and then would that mean that there's a meeting beyond the trustees where we're feeding into each other?

BA

Church Together South Tyneside is a charity, so it has trustees and ideally the trustees would include a representative from each area who could feed in suggestions. Also, could a small group arrange an annual event when everyone comes together to discuss a topic of interest? But keep in mind we're all getting on a bit , and our people resources are limited.

Comment

We could do a shared table event.

BA

Yes, that's a great suggestion.

The questions ended here but there was a relevant discussion about mission, pastoral opportunities , clergy involvement and communications.

Pertinent points from the Q&A

- I. Background to how STCT was established
- II. How STCT operates
- III. Interface between local groups and STCT
- IV. Opportunities for local people to become involved in projects
- V. Communications -issues with emails and information being passed on
- VI. Website. Not satisfactory. Local group website or area based?
- VII. Perception of STCT. Social or Christian?
- VIII. Ideal structure. Incorporation of local groups.

7) Clergy involvement

A recurring concern of the group was the level of clergy involvement in Hebburn Churches Together.

Quarterly meetings are generally not attended by the clergy/ministers. There has also been virtually no involvement in the unity workshops.

However, it was generally accepted that clergy are now very busy with most of them having oversight of more than one church.

Having recognised this, there was still disappointment that the current situation has resulted in less active involvement in Churches Together.

This was not intended as a criticism but an acknowledgement of the current situation.

With this in mind, we have reached out to clergy and ministers by asking them to complete a short questionnaire in regard to church/Christian unity.

At the point of writing this report we have received three responses from six.

In keeping with our overall aim to maintain confidentiality the names of those responding and not responding are not recorded.

All responses were positive and a composite response is shown below.

Clergy Questionnaire and responses

1)

What is your understanding of Jesus prayer in John17:20-23?

²⁰ “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ **that all of them may be one**, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— ²³ I in them and you in me—**so that they may be brought to complete unity**. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

- That all of them may be one
- So that they may be brought to complete unity
- Yes, the prayer of Jesus has been answered, we are not divided as we once were, there is room for improvement, on a global level with our Orthodox Brother and Sisters and some extreme Christian sects, but here in Hebburn we work well together, there is no more them and us, we are one Christian Church in the Town and we come together when necessary.
- I think this passage needs to be read in the context of the whole gospel which offers a variety of models for the church, including vine (15.1-5), door (10.9), bread of life (6.35), light of the world (8.12), good shepherd (10.11-14). Here I think that John is emphasising that the disciples are united in Him and I believe that all who follow Christ are united in his death and resurrection and that is the source of that unity of all Christian people
- It is clear from the wider context that the “them” and “their” of v20 is the apostles, and so when Jesus says in v21 “**that all of them may be one**” he is referring to those who believe in the message of his apostles, i.e. the apostolic message that we find in the Scriptures we call the New Testament. This means true Christian Unity is found by agreeing to the teaching of the New Testament in common faith. Moreover, we **find in the apostolic writings teaching about unity and separation, most notably** Romans 16, Galatians, 2 John, 3 John and Jude. Here we find warnings to “keep distant” from leaders/teachers who deviate from the apostolic gospel message. The false teachings that are particularly highlighted in the New Testament include a message of salvation by works, religious or good, (Galatians), and a message that promotes immorality (Jude, Revelation 2).
Where division exists on such essential gospel matters, true unity will not be possible. However, where there is unity in the gospel truth, unity is very possible, even if there are differences of understanding on secondary matters (such as baptism, church governance, how exactly Christ returns).

- What do you mean by complete Unity? We Christians are as complex as we human beings are, there are different ways in which we worship, different ways in which we work together, we all have something different to offer.

2)

Thinking of churches in Hebburn, has this prayer been answered on a day-to-day basis?

- In a sense we are united as Christians by meeting together as “Christians Together in Hebburn”, by praying together regularly.
We could be doing more together in showing the love of God in areas which are poorly served currently in Hebburn for example Refugees and those suffering with addiction to alcohol/drugs etc.
- I don’t think there is true unity across all the churches in Hebburn, simply because it is unclear that every church is committed to the same apostolic gospel. But there may well be unity between individual Christian believers across different churches who are united in the one gospel. Church unity could only be achieved if the leadership of the churches (which is not just clergy necessarily) was united under the apostolic gospel. At present, it is far from clear to me that this is the case.
- In the Town there are different types of Anglicans, High Church and Low Church, different types of Methodists, the ordinary methodist and the Independent Methodist. They are not at odds with each other but each has something different. Should we become one big Christian Church, all the same? No, we have a variety of ways to worship the Lord, depending on our traditions, this is not a sign of weakness but of strength. We already come together to worship once a month and we can work together to help those in need here in our Town, we can always improve, but let's not forget how far we have come.

3)

What are the current barriers to unity in Hebburn?

- If you are talking about ecclesiastical unity then this is not possible for the historic denominations because of the structures of our churches. For me the best way of showing our unity is to act together to make God’s love known in the world.
I think it’s helpful to think about degrees of unity:
- I think it is helpful to talk about degrees of unity
 - a) friendship – where Christians/churches are divided over key matters that cannot be reconciled (such as same-sex marriage/blessings), but can remain friendly towards each other, willing to talk about matters in the town, and pray for each other

- b) surface-level partnering – where churches can work together to support a local foodbank or engage with the local authority together on matters such as vandalism of the park or town centre
- c) *gospel partnership – where churches have a shared understanding of the gospel and so can work together on running an evangelistic course, or home groups, training for leaders etc.*

Matters such as baptism, women's ministry and church polity are not barriers to wider church unity, but merely act the boundaries for a particular church fellowship as part of that individual church's identity.

a) and b) are already happening or are quite possible now. The main barrier to c), I think, is that leadership in the churches is not united in gospel understanding.

4)

What part can the clergy play in facilitating unity?

- I suspect that most good Christian unity projects come from the ground up, from Christians meeting together to pray and discerning what God is calling them to do and acting upon it. Clergy can sometimes get in the way of this wanting to keep all the energy of their faithful to keep their church show on the road. I would hope that the best clergy would acknowledge that the Christians working together were doing so in God's service and encourage them to continue.
- As with any church, leadership is key (whether that means clergy or not). Those not in leadership can have influence, but it will be severely limited without leaders being involved. As for clergy, it would help if they met and had a shared gospel unity. Something like this has been happening in Jarrow Town Centre over recent months. However, in Hebburn, most of the clergy seem too far stretched across different places to have time to meet, a symptom of church decline and thinning of resources.

5)

Is unity important? And who care?

- I would love for the church to be reunited as one body but I doubt I will see it in my lifetime, from the national church point of view such decisions are taken well above my head. Practically we can work together on good social action in Hebburn but ecclesiastical unity will not happen
- Gospel unity is important, but unity without gospel unity is less so (see above re degrees of unity). In my church, we participate in gospel unity in the wider region, through the North East Gospel Partnership (churches of varying denominations working together in training, youth ministry, pastoral care) and some particular networks within Anglicanism. These expressions of unity have served our church well over recent years

8) Conclusions

Overall, the shared experience was positive and enabled participants to speak freely about their own church and faith. Although there was a distinct possibility that there could have been some difficult conversations that was not the case, although some conversations were challenging. But, as to quote Churches Together England, 'the real challenge to unity is to share a common life; that is, to do together whatever we do not need to do apart'.

We covered a wide range of issues and achieved a lot in the limited time available. However, this exercise only scratched the surface of the initial question posed: What did Christ mean by being one and in complete unity? And equally important, how do we live in unity on a day-to-day basis?

The emphasis of our discussions was always from a 'grass roots' level. Bottom up rather than top down. This, I believe, kept the discussions grounded and meaningful.

There was a sense of fellowship, of being one and united in common issues and a desire to truly move forward to becoming in complete unity in Christ. Differences were acknowledged and accepted. We were able to agree to disagree and still remain in fellowship.

This is only the start of a process and this report will give a number of recommendations for moving forward.

The group was a very small sample of church goers but of sufficient size for a workshop to function effectively.

I firmly believe that what has been achieved is a move of the Holy Spirit in Hebburn, and possibly beyond. This is just the beginning and a time of blessing will occur if we can overcome our differences and understand and accept each other, so that we can move together in ministry and mission to advance the gospel and heal a divided and troubled society.

There was an openness to consider other models such as sharing buildings, not just for worship but also for joint ministry and mission. Indeed, It was recognised that buildings could be a barrier to those who are not accustomed to or knowledgeable about 'church rules!' There was an openness to the concept of worshipping together away from our buildings but in a community setting.

It was recognised that Christianity is many faceted but this should be seen as a positive thing and embraced.

One key issue was our use of words and terms. They can mean different things to different people and therefore lead to misunderstandings in our conversations. Although there was a great deal of agreement, there were still areas where more work could be done.

How we live out our faith was discussed in terms of having a living faith that produces fruit. This has to be key in terms of unity and perhaps something that needs addressing within our own churches.

It was acknowledged that different denominations have different traditions, structures and doctrinal emphasis. However, this should not be a barrier to unity or a red line that cannot be crossed or moved. It was recognised that we all have similar problems/issues within our respective churches. It would seem fair to say that in sharing our issues we can help and enable each other to resolve them.

Overall, and most importantly, it was acknowledged that in Christ we are one family. All a bit different but having the same Father. Cleansed and forgiven by the blood of Christ.

We are one body, but different parts. The aim is to ensure all those parts are joined up and operating as one body. To move together as one body, act as one body, live as one body

One recurring theme however, was the lack of clergy/minister involvement. This has been addressed elsewhere in this report but I mention it here as it was a relevant concern for the group.

The task now is how to communicate 'unity' to others in our churches? How do we enable them to catch the vision of what is possible if we are truly united in Christ on a day-to-day basis?

It was noted that there are already a number of shared events such as coffee mornings, monthly 'songs of praise' and a choir. The question is however, how do we build on what is already in place?

However, unless all members of all the churches are able to think 'outside' of their own church and denomination, realistic day to day unity may be hindered.

*"The basis of unity is in one spirit. If we meet someone who has been baptised in the same spirit we were baptised in, we have fellowship with them. We may not have yet achieved full unity of faith, that will come with maturity. The goal is to believe the same thing, but the beginning of this is the **unity of the Spirit**".*

Quote David Pawson.

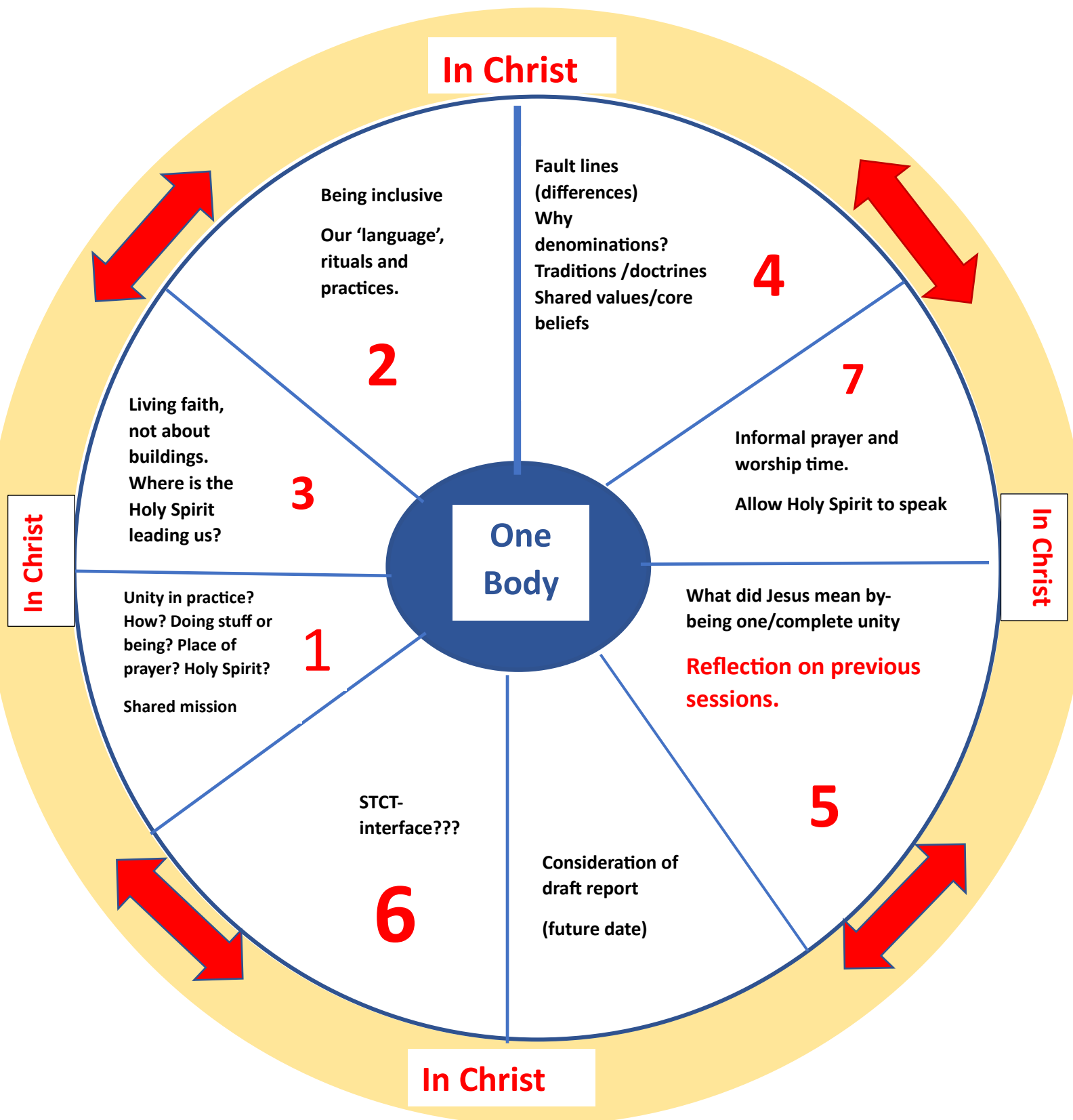
9) Recommendations

- I. Develop a unity sub-group to take forward these recommendations and to keep the issue of unity 'live' One representative from each church.
- II. Appoint a liaison person(s) to regularly liaise with South Tyneside Churches Together and to establish an effective working model between the groups
- III. Arrange a meeting with clergy to discuss their involvement in this movement and how we might facilitate this.
- IV. Arrange regular social events for all churches to attend. Eg. Quiz nights, summer garden party, buskers night etc.
- V. Consider (and encourage) joint fellowship/prayer groups .
- VI. Consider and develop joint worship in a community setting.
- VII. Discuss with all churches how we might share buildings for joint mission and ministry.
- VIII. Discuss the issues of a joint website with South Tyneside Churches Together
- IX. Consider setting up a Facebook page for Hebburn Churches Together.
- X. Discuss and consider how we may address any negative attitudes to unity within our own churches.
- XI. Consider how we might share bulletins/news.
- XII. Consider how we might develop greater understanding between our denominations.
- XIII. Develop a Hebburn Churches Together constitution, vision statement and objectives.

Appendices

- i) The 'dart' board'
- ii) Language -words and meaning

Appendix (i) The dart board



Appendix (ii) Words and meanings

Term/word	Meaning/understanding	Similarities and differences
Sacrament Acts 2:38. Matt 26:26-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A holy act • Baptism/holy communion/confirmation/marriage • Sacraments can be different in different churches • Breaking of bread and drinking the wine in remembrance of Jesus • Seven sacraments in mainline churches including communion, marriage etc. But no scriptural warranty for this. 	Generally, in agreement in principle but room for further discussion.
Resurrection John 6:40. Ps 49:15. John 11:25. 1 Thes 4:16 Acts 24:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The physical act of Jesus rising from the dead • Jesus rose from the dead • The Lord's resurrection • Through faith in Jesus, we will be resurrected from physical death to eternal life • Resurrection of Jesus and the saints to eternal life with new bodies. 	General agreement
Saints Mal 3:16. Eph 4:11-12. Acts 9:32 Acts 26:10. Rom 1:7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually associated with 'holy' people but in Christ we are all called to be holy and therefore all in Christ are saints. • A person acknowledged as holy and regarded as Christian • In Christ we are all saints (see Eph 4:11-12) • All who are children of God through faith in Christ • All who are born again. 	General agreement
Atonement Lev 4:20. Heb 9:14. Rom 3:25. Heb 7:27.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making amends for sins. Reconciliation with God through Christ's death/sacrifice. • Being sorry for sins • A state of love and harmony between God and human beings through the sacrifice of Jesus 	Need for further discussion

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through Christ we can be pardoned, delivered from sin and have freedom. • Made one with God through Christ's atoning sacrifice. At-one-ment. 	
Born again John 3:5. John 1:12-13. 1 Peter 1:23. 2 Cor 5:17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All true Christians are born again by God's spirit. To all who repent and follow Jesus. • No response • Born again spiritually, not from corruptible seed but by the word of God • Spiritual re-birth into God's family. • Born of God. A new spirit. A child of God. 	General agreement but not all responded.
Communion 1 Cor 11:17-33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Togetherness. A way of celebrating and remembering the death of Jesus for our sins. • The body and blood of Christ shared together • An act of reverently remembering the Lord's death. • A physical representation symbolising the death of Christ for our sins. A sacrament given by Christ. • Remembering the last supper and doing likewise in remembrance of him. 	Some difference in understanding between remembrance and a physical representation of Christ. Room for further discussion
Lord's supper 1 Cor 11:17-33 Matt 26: 26-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing of bread and wine in remembrance of the last supper and in remembrance of Him. • Jesus and his disciples sharing the last supper before his crucifixion • Remembrance of Jesus. His blood and body for us. • Commemoration of the last Passover meal Christ had with his disciples 	General agreement

	<p>and how we can commune with God through it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Passover seder Christ had with his disciples. An instruction to do this in remembrance of Him. 	
<p>Baptism Matt 29:19. Acts 2:38-39</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedication to God-usually done as a baby but followed by full immersion as an adult showing a personal commitment to Christ. • Being brought into the catholic faith. • A public declaration declaring a person as a follower of Christ. • Symbolises submission to Christ. It identifies us with Christ and other believers. • In scripture- adult baptism only. A sign and profession of new birth, cleansing of sins and accepting Christ as Lord of our lives. 	General agreement
<p>Baptism in the Holy Spirit 2 Cor 1:21-22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The power of the Holy Spirit within us when we have accepted Christ as Lord and saviour. • No response • The Holy Spirit fills the believers mind with an understanding of truth. • Receiving the Holy Spirit as a guarantee that we belong to God and that salvation is ours. • Not the same as born again. Not a baptism of water but being immersed in the Holy Spirit. It empowers believers for ministry. 	General agreement with those who responded to this question.
<p>Sin Rom 3:23. Is 59:2 Exodus 20:1-17</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrongdoings. Not just the ten commandments but anything that is not loving. • Doing things against the teachings in the Bible. • The deliberate and purposeful violation of the will of God. • Sin makes us sinners and cuts us off from God (separates us) • Anything that falls short of God's glory 	General agreement

Sinner 1 Cor 6:9-11. Rom 3:23. Isaiah 53:6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of mankind if we do not repent of our wrongdoings. • The unrighteous. They shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. • All of us • We are all sinners and fall short of the glory of God. • A pre-saved person. When we are saved, we are saints who sin but this does not make us sinners. 	General agreement
Salvation Eph 2:8-9. Romans 10:9 Romans 10:3 Acts 4:12 1 The 5:9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only comes through repentance and believe in the death and resurrection of Christ. • Being saved or rescued from the penalty of sin. • Through the grace of God and not by our good works. • Being forgiven and cleansed through Christ into a new and eternal life . Set free from the penalty of sin, the power of sin and the presence of sin. • No response 	General agreement with those who responded to this question
Forgiveness Matt 6:14, Ps 103:3. 1 John 1:91Cor 6:11 Mark 11:29. Romans 5:8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God's grace to us, cleanse us from all unrighteousness. • If God forgives us, we also need to forgive others. • Asking Jesus to forgive us our sins. • In repenting and accepting Christ as our Lord and Saviour we are forgiven(let go) all that is past. We also need to forgive others. • No response 	General agreement with those who responded to this question
Apostle/apostle 1 Cor 9:1. 2 Cor 12:12. Acts 12:2 1. Cor 21-28 Romans 17:7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are all called to be apostles in the meaning we are commissioned to speak for and represent God. • To have Christ's authority to do his work. • We are all apostles 'in Christ'. • No response 	General agreement

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two meanings. The 12 (+1) apostles directly commissioned by Christ, and followers who are 'sent' to do a specific work. 	
Disciple Mat 16:24, Luke 14:33 Matt 28:16-20. John 15:8 Matt 11:28-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All followers of Christ are disciples. To learn from Jesus and preach is truth about salvation. To love God above everything else. Follow God's will, suffer for God. Someone who spreads the gospel A follower of Jesus A follower of Jesus. Denies self, picks up their cross, and follows Jesus. 	General agreement
Repentance Isaiah 22:12. Acts 2:38 Ezekiel 18:31. Matt 3:2 Luke 13:3. 1 John 1:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saying sorry and turning away from doing/saying/thinking wrong. People who sincerely love the Lord will repent and be saved. Asking to be forgiven for sins To turn to Jesus, depend on him for forgiveness and follow him. Turning away from old life of sin and following Jesus not the world. Confession of sins 	General agreement but may lack depth of understanding
Body of Christ 1 Cor 12:27- Romans 12:4-5. Matt 26:26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The church is the body of Christ, Jesus the head. Also uses in the communion service to remember his body broken for us. The church as one body but different parts. Bread blessed at communion All believers are part of the body of Christ and we belong to each other. The whole church of born-again believers. 	Difference between seeing the church as the body of Christ and the bread blessed at communion.
Blood of Christ Matt 26:27-29. Hebrews 9:22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The blood of the covenant poured out for the forgiveness of sins. When we confess our sins, we are cleansed by the blood of Christ shed for us. 	Difference between the physical blood shed by Christ and the wine blessed at communion.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine blessed at the communion during mass. • Before Christ people could only approach God through the blood of an animal. Through Jesus blood we have direct access to God. • Jesus shed blood for forgiveness of sins. There is power in the blood which saves us. 	
The cross Gal 6:14. Phil 2:8 Matt 16:24-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way Jesus died for us to bring us back into a relationship with God. • How Jesus died for us-on the cross. • Our Christian faith • To follow Jesus is to take up our cross, give up our old ways • The only way to salvation through the cross of Christ. We also are crucified with Christ. Our sins nailed to his cross. 	General agreement
Condemnation Romans 5:18-19 Romans 8:1-4 John 3:16-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A guilty verdict or punishment for breaking God's laws. • There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ. • No response • Adam's sin brought condemnation but Christ's one act of righteousness brings us new life and a right relationship with God. • There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ. The Devil condemns, the Holy Spirit convicts (of sin) 	General agreement with those who responded to this question.
Church 1 Col 1:24. Romans 16:5 Acts 14:27. 1 Cor 1:2 Ephesians 3:10-11 Matt 16:18	A body of people who belong to Christ. One faith, unite through the cross. Church is not a building. Not a building but a body of believers. United in Christ A place where we come as a congregation to worship Christ. All believers are the church. The eklesia (Greek NT) A meeting of people-God's people in Christ.	General agreement.