



**B**less: Think about how you could bless three people a fortnight, one of them being someone who doesn't come to our church. It may be a neighbour, family, friend, or work colleague. The blessing could be a thoughtful card, a phone call, a message, or an action which serves them. Words of affirmation are the simplest way and sometimes have the most meaningful impact in blessing someone. Look for ways to perform an act of kindness in someone's life. We need to develop a rhythm of gift giving, spending time and the affirmation of others – sharing as an end in itself. It fosters a spirit of generosity; it mirrors the character of God and it alerts others to his reign. Remember our Jesus first served us.

**E**at: We have around forty-two meals a fortnight. How about the idea of having one of these meals or a coffee/tea with two or three people, one of whom who doesn't come to our church? This could be a neighbour, family member, friend, or work colleague. A table from which we eat is a level playing field for conversation. We share stories, hopes and fears. When we eat together, we discover the inherent humanity of people. When we open up, we can share many things, including our faith in Jesus. The table ought to be the primary symbol of the Christian gathering. The idea is to "Love thy neighbour" and to share and demonstrate God's love in action. It represents hospitality, inclusivity, generosity, and grace.

**L**earn: This is essentially about the devotional value of growing closer to Jesus and fostering intimacy with God; seeing the promptings of the Holy Spirit within the written Word. Mike Frost is correct when he states, in his book, *Surprise the World*, "My concern is that many Christians seem to have developed merely a passing knowledge of the Gospels [what Frost calls 'Jesus' greatest hits' -his birth, death and resurrection, and maybe some parables]. If we figure out what Jesus would want us to think, be, and do, here and now, we must know the Gospels forward and backward."

**L**isten for the Holy Spirit's voice: Bruce Demarest says, in his book, *Satisfy your Soul*, "A quieted heart is our best preparation for all this work of God. Meditation refocuses us from ourselves and from the world so that we can reflect on God's Word, His nature, His abilities, and His works." So, we prayerfully ponder, muse, and 'chew over' the words of Scripture. The goal is to permit the Holy Spirit to activate the life-giving Word of God. Having a balanced practice of generosity and hospitality should be intentionally nurtured and sustained in the spiritual discipline of silence and solitude in prayer. For you, what does it look like to set aside a designated time once a week, spending some precious time just between you and God?

**S**ent: As we are sent into community, it is a good habit, during the week, to start journaling what it is like to participate in God's salvation plan. Who are the people we blessed? ate with? or journeyed with? What were the outcomes? What are we praying for and about? We all serve the God of reconciliation, which is a core expression of God's reign and rule. In journaling, we intentionally think about God's reconciliation and describe it in our own thoughts and words. The more we journal what is going on, the more we find ourselves living it out.