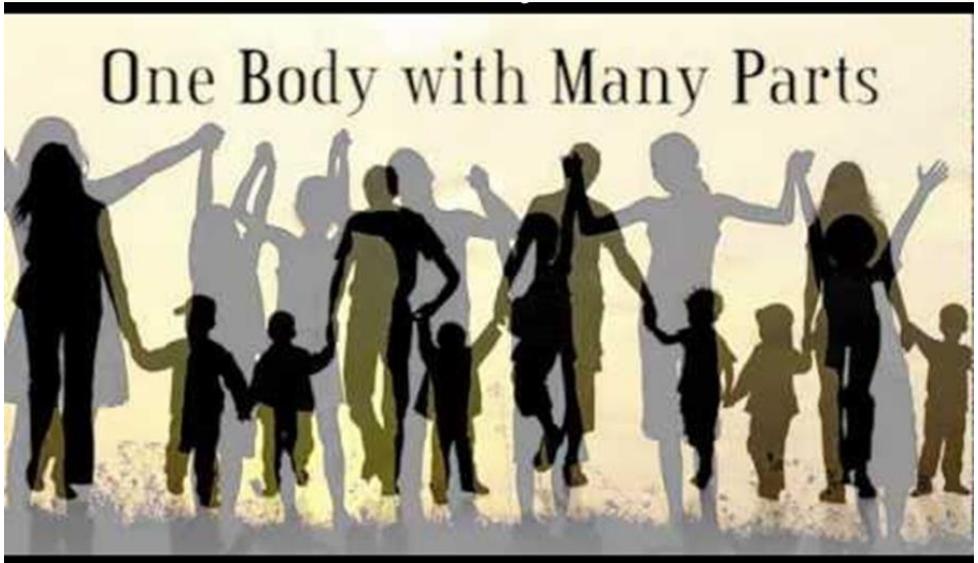


# Growing in God



## Serving together

When we come to faith in Christ, we also become a part of His body – the Church (Rom 12:1-5). With Him as our Head, we are joined together to play our special part in His ongoing ministry in the world - encouraging and building each other up until we reach maturity, becoming like Him (Eph 4:13). To help us, God equips every one of us, through his Spirit, with something specific to contribute to the well-being and growth of the whole body (Rom 12:6-8, Eph 4:11-12, 1 Cor 12). Whoever we are, we are called to fulfil our part - at home, at work, at school and in the Church itself – and to serve, together. This is for **everyone** – we **all** have a part to play in Christ's body and God's kingdom purposes.

## Serving as we *are* - not as we *aren't*

- God works with us, not against us. We are unique and complex. God created us and knows us. The person He made us to be (Ps 139:13-16) shapes what he intends us to do (1 Cor 12:18). *God won't place us where we won't fit or can't be who we are. He wants the different parts of the body to work together to support and build each other up.*
- Our part is related to our spiritual gifts as well as to who we are. There are different kinds of gifts, different kinds of service, different ways that God works in all of us (1 Cor 12:4-6). *Knowing our gifts is an important step in discovering how and where God wants us to serve. Sometimes we discover new gifts by trying out things we haven't done before.*

## How do I discover what God wants me to do?

- Pray – ask God. Ask others to pray too.
- Talk to some people who know you – what gifts do *they* see in you; what contributions do *they* see you making and where.
- Ask what you are passionate or excited about, what you are good at, where you know you make a difference.
- Ask where the *gaps* in ministry are – what isn't already happening that you'd like to see happen; perhaps God is calling you to fill this gap.
- Ask where the *opportunities* in ministry are – part of serving is responding to need. One 'opportunity' might just be 'you' shaped or one that will help to shape you for things to come.
- Try something out. Give it a go!
- Think about where you can see God at 'work'. How can you join in with what *God* is doing there? Meet with someone to reflect on this.
- Chat with Phil & Kath about where you could make the most of your gifts today.
- Enrol for the SHAPE course to help discover your ministry

## How can I help others discovery their ministry?

- Recognise their gifts and contributions and tell them.
- Signpost them to possibilities that will fit who they are or could help shape them for things to come.
- Encourage and support them as they try things out.

# Discovering how you are SHAPED

Think about the person God has **SHAPED** you to be. This may help you discover something about what you are being called to...

**S**piritual gifts – What special abilities has the Holy Spirit has given you? (e.g. gift of practical help, pastoring, wisdom, great faith, teaching, healing, evangelising, prophesying etc.). Your spiritual gift(s) can help you identify *what* your ministries might be.

**H**earth – What do you have a heart for? What are you passionate about/ interested in? What do you enjoy doing/ feel called to/ have a vision, burden, dream for? Where do you want to make a difference? Your Heart can help you identify *where* your ministries might be.

**A**ilities – What are the natural abilities/skills/ knowledge that you were born with and/ or have developed over time? Natural abilities, as well as specific Spiritual Gifts, can help you identify *what* your ministries might be.

**P**ersonal style – How do you relate to the world around you and the people in it? How do you gather and process information? How do you draw conclusions and make decisions? What kind of team player are you? Do you prefer new ventures or maintaining existing ones? Personal Style can help you identify *how you like* to minister.

**E**xperiences - What kinds of experiences have you had? Successful?, enjoyable?, painful?, disappointing? God can use the wisdom/ knowledge/ skills you have gained from your Experiences to minister to others going through what you've already encountered. Experiences can help you identify *where you are* to minister and *what you do* when you minister.

**D**evelop – Celebrate the **SHAPE** God has given you and have a go at what you think He has called you to do! Try some things out, find some training, reflect with others, ask for feedback; find a mentor. And continue to develop – grow in whatever service God is calling you into.

## *Next steps...*

- How am I going to develop or grow in my ministry?
  
- Do the SHAPE course to help me discover where my ministry might lie.
  
- Who could I ask what contributions they see me make or gifts they honestly see in me?
  
- Where are the current needs? What ministries could I contribute to?
  
- What could I try out?
  
- Where can I see God at work in my 'workplace'? How can I join in with what God is doing?
  
- What isn't already happening that I could help make happen?
  
- Who can I encourage to find their ministry or support as they try things out?