

thrive

CORE
COMMUNITY

2018

CORE COMMUNITY

The Core Community are the 'heart and soul' committed people of Thrive.

We do not currently have a membership like some churches but we do have a strong and growing community of people that identify as committed participants of Thrive.

Thrive is a local church with a mission and mandate to create relevant environments for all kinds of people no matter where they are on the journey of faith.

We are inviting people to live lives that are fully devoted to Christ. We see the need to create environments and practical steps that help people continue to connect with God and His people, contribute to the mission and celebrate Christ and his transforming power.

WHO ARE THE 'CORE COMMUNITY'?

- Those who sign up or renew their commitment each year to say we are part of the heart and soul of Thrive to see the mission and vision fulfilled as a community. We are not isolated or individual members doing our own things but rather a 'body', (1 Cor 12) and a community that are the core of Thrive.
- The Core Community are not merely attenders. The Core Community are connecting, contributing and celebrating.

WHY WE CALL PEOPLE TO BE PART OF THE CORE COMMUNITY?

- We can identify who is on board with our vision and mission.
- We can establish a basic level of discipleship commitment before allowing people to become leaders or have responsibility that would require commitment to Christ and the character that God calls us to.
- We can encourage and equip our 'Core Community' to be faithful to commitments they acknowledge are important to growing as a follower of Christ and also modelling to others. (**Matthew 28:18-20**).
- Without a standard of discipleship and core commitments we cannot identify what our leaders and core community:
 - Believe;
 - Are committed to living;
 - Agree should be modelled to new believers;
 - Represent the Christian life to the world around us.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU'RE NOT PART OF THE THRIVE CORE COMMUNITY?

- You can't serve as a leader or serve on certain teams that would require a certain commitment to Christ.
- Everyone that attends Thrive is part of our church community and we should treat everyone with the highest level of love, however not everyone that attends Thrive shares the values and commitments and carries the responsibility to see the church stay healthy and fulfil it's purpose.
- If you are not part of the Thrive Core Community you are still cared for, loved and valued as much as anyone else.
- Core Community means owning the vision, values and sharing the responsibility of the church.

WILL THIS CREATE A THEM & US SCENARIO?

- This is possible.
- Jesus did this though as he called people to leave everything and follow him. Some did. Some didn't. Jesus calls us to a radical life of love and sacrifice and faith. We believe that with God's grace and the help of the Holy Spirit we can surrender and yield to God, which will produce a life of freedom and fruitfulness.

LET'S BE CLEAR...

- The Core Community is not about status.
- The Core Community should be servant-hearted people.
- The most important people at Thrive are 'everyone'.
- The Core Community don't get special benefits other than the benefits of following Christ fully.
- We don't tolerate anyone who makes people at Thrive feel that they are 'less' because they are not part of the Core Community.
- Everyone is welcome to become part of the Core Community if they demonstrate a willingness to commit in good faith.
- If you want to feel important or have a higher status, the Core Community is not for you. Core Community means serving, sharing responsibility and sacrificing for something that blesses people beyond ourselves.
- A key passage of scripture that teaches the heart of the Core Community is **Philippians 2:1-12**.

IS THIS LEGALISTIC?

- We sure hope not. We hate legalism and so does Jesus. We love full devotion to and taking Jesus call seriously.

SHOULD I BE WEARY OF THIS?

- Yes. You should be discerning and careful with most things. **Acts 17:11** says *“Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.”*
- Be enthusiastic but don't commit unless you know what something means and you feel confident that it's wise and biblical.

WHO WILL HOLD ME ACCOUNTABLE TO THESE COMMITMENTS?

- Jesus and the Scriptures.
- You will because you believe this is important.
- A friend or a leader you're working with.
- Hopefully everyone.

WHAT DOES 'BEING ACCOUNTABLE' LOOK LIKE?

- Practically it means that if you are not living the commitments hopefully you can recognise this yourself as you bring your heart before God.
- Sometimes a friend or leader may ask how you're going.
- A lot of the time it would be hard for us to know whether you are truly fulfilling these commitments and the goal is to encourage and inspire rather than drill people. Love should be the means and motive in any conversation that is about helping people realign their lives to Jesus ways.
- The bottom line is that if someone is chatting to you about how you're going and they're doing so in love and respectfully we shouldn't be defensive but rather be open to see if there is any truth in what is being said. There's a classic story in Scripture where the Apostle Paul challenges Peter (one of the key disciples) about how he had drifted from the gospel of grace to legalism and hypocrisy (**Galatians 2:11-14**).

This would not have been fun but good came from it and people were encouraged and the Gospel advanced. *“But when Peter came to Antioch, I had to oppose him to his face, for what he did was very wrong. When he first arrived, he ate with the Gentile believers, who were not circumcised. But afterward, when some friends of James came, Peter wouldn't eat with the Gentiles anymore. He was afraid of criticism from these people who insisted on the necessity of circumcision. As a result, other Jewish believers followed Peter's hypocrisy, and even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy.”* (Gal 2:11-14)

- We would suggest that anytime someone challenges you, both sides need to be humble, loving and understanding. The way we talk to someone is as important as the challenge we may be bringing. Sometimes we as humans discern things the wrong way and we must be willing to say that we may have this wrong or be misunderstanding circumstances.

- If your heart is not to see someone do well and find love and grace and for them to hear and see humility then it's best not to confront someone at that time.
- **Galatians 6:1-3** gives great advice for how to lovingly, humbly and gently help someone get free from destructive living. If in doubt please seek wise counsel from an experienced Christian and be careful not to gossip or share information that is not appropriate. *"Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important."* (Gal 6:1-3 NLT)

WILL MY FINANCIAL GIVING BE CHECKED?

- NO. Only by you. It's an honour system. We trust you. It's about faith not regulation and legalism. We trust God.

HOW DO WE STAY COMMITTED TO THE CORE COMMITMENTS?

- We should be reminded regularly through our Bible reading, teaching, leaders, friends, and groups.
- The more you equip yourself with God's view of life and how to live his ways the more you will grow in these areas. Following Jesus is an ever-deepening adventure of obedience, trust and freedom.
- There will be an annual time to review and renew your commitments.

THE CORE COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS:

FAITH

- Confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and King.
- A commitment to be baptised in water as an outward sign of an inward change. A baptism information document is available if you would like to know more. *(Some church backgrounds have differing views on this that we are happy to chat about if you are concerned. We are not legalistic on this but rather prefer and encourage adult baptism. Some people will not be able to be baptised in the way we would normally do so based on health or other reasons and we do not in any way believe this is a salvation issue).*
- Acknowledgement of our statements of faith.
- Commitment and desire to live a Spirit led life (**Galatians 5 & Ephesians 5:18**).

MISSION & VISION

MISSION: 'Lead people to become fully devoted followers of Christ.'

VISION (3 C's): 'Create relevant environments for people to **CONNECT** to Jesus and others; **CONTRIBUTE** to God's mission & **CELEBRATE** transforming faith in Christ.'

We see a community of people increasingly...

- **CONNECTING** (To God & His People)
- **CONTRIBUTING** (God's mission and the health of the church)
- **CELEBRATING** (God's story & our story of transforming hope)

We have a big vision at Thrive. We are passionate about creating relevant environments for people to discover God's plan and destiny for their life in His Kingdom of Light. We also believe that God has called us to love and serve the world around us. So we are working diligently to dream; plan and take action on bringing good news to all people we meet and create relevant and safe environments for people to ask spiritual questions and explore faith in Jesus Christ. We hope you are blessed at Thrive.

Discipleship and mission are at the heart of our vision and calling to bless our city and beyond. We are committed to become and make disciples of Jesus who live out his mission to announce and demonstrate to the world God's good news and the way of His Kingdom and His reign. **THERE'S A BIG PLAN AND STORY UNFOLDING...**

STRATEGY

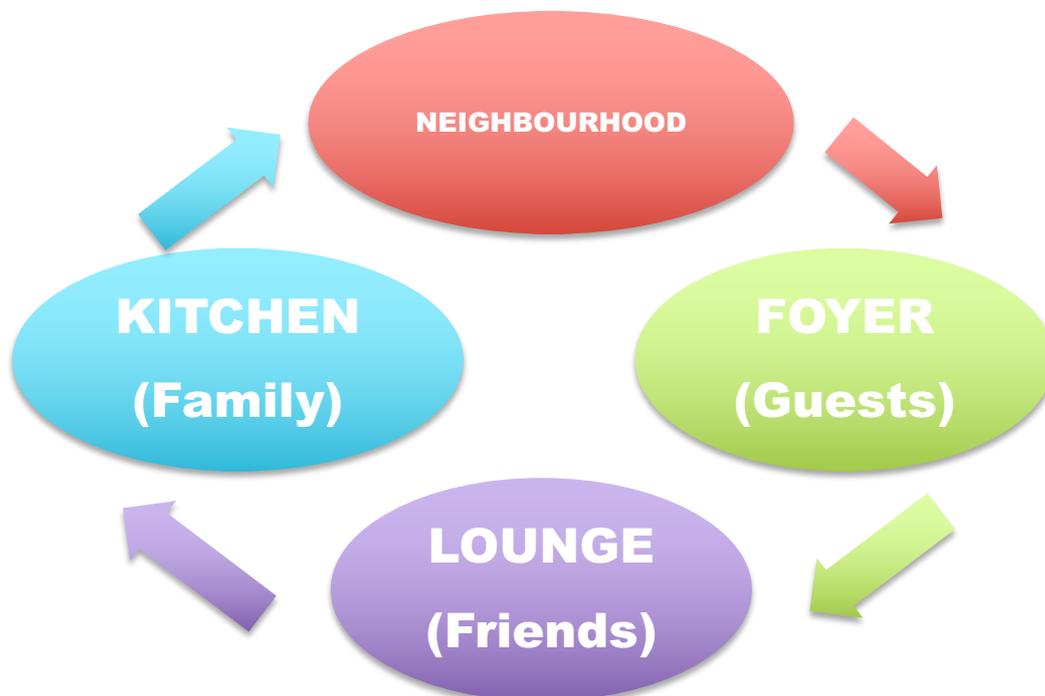
- Relevant environments that help people take steps towards full devotion to Christ.
- ‘Think steps not programs’.
- Think *‘big picture’* vision of church not just ‘church service’.

THRIVE ENVIRONMENTS

We use the metaphor of a home in a neighbourhood to explain our environments and steps to help people become devoted followers of Jesus.

1. **NEIGHBOURHOOD** (The community we are called to serve) *Demonstrate & Declare the Good News.*
2. **FOYER** (Guests) *Celebrate.*
3. **LOUNGE** (Friends) *Connect.*
4. **KITCHEN** (Family on mission) *Contribute.*

The Kitchen environment is where we do life in Connect Groups & Missional Communities living out the 3C’s - Connect, Contribute & Celebrate.



	PEOPLE FOCUS	THRIVE ENVIRONMENT	THE WIN	NEXT STEPS	CORE COMMUNITY GOALS
NEIGHBOURHOOD	Persons of Peace (P.O.P)*, non-churched seekers, people in need.	Local & Global Impact and personal mission.	We are demonstrating and declaring Good News that creates interest in Jesus and finding out more.	Come to a relevant environment i.e. EXPLORE course or foyer environment.	Invest & invite; Identify "persons of peace".
FOYER GUESTS	New guests, seekers & P.O.P, believers new to area.	Friday - Youth. Sunday 10am & 6pm celebrations.	Guests want to come back again and tell their friends about their experience. "No perfect people allowed"	Baptism (ALL IN); New To Thrive Lunch; join a missional community; begin PATHWAY TRACK.	Look for guests and help them connect to a lounge environment event.
LOUNGE FRIENDS	People not yet connected.	New to Thrive Lunch; Sub-community gatherings i.e. Men, Women, Primers.	People make new friends and want to join a team or connect group.	Join a connect group and/or missional community. Begin ENCOUNTER or EQUIP courses.	Invite friends to join a connect group and/or a team; Pathway Classes
KITCHEN FAMILY	People connecting & want to become 3C or lead.	Connect Groups & Thrive teams on mission.	People live as Family on Mission; connected, contributing and celebrating.	EQUIP, ENTRUST Become a 3C.	Encourage people to become 3C Thrivers & find their mission.

*P.O.P = People of peace (read **Luke 10:1-6**)

"A person of peace is one who is prepared to hear the message of the Kingdom and the King. He is ready to receive what God will give you to say at that moment. This should be our prayer as we venture forth each day. "Lord, bring into my path today a Person of Peace, and give me the grace to speak your words to this person." Mike Breen

CORE COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS

1. CELEBRATE

- Celebrate with the church by:
 - Attending regular weekend celebration gatherings.
 - Celebrating with communion.
 - Celebrating Jesus as resurrected King.
 - Celebrating the work of God in changed lives and changed communities (testimonies & stories of breakthrough).
- We would ask you to do your best to attend our monthly Core Community gathering (we understand there are times when you can't and with families this is not always possible).

2. CONNECT

- Connect UP with God through worship and practices that help you know God and produce fruit in your life. **(John 15)**
- Connect IN with the community of faith (local church) you are part of through fellowship.
 - This primarily looks like making sure you're not isolated and disconnected from community. So the question to ask is "Am I connecting in a ***connect group or a team or a missional community*** or a regular group of friends where you can...
 - Know and be known?
 - Serve and be served?
 - Loved and be loved?
 - Celebrate and be celebrated?
- Connect OUT with people beyond our church with grace, hope and love.

3. CONTRIBUTE

- Serving:
 - Strategically in the area of greatest need (as is possible).
 - Secondly in the area of your gifting, skill, passion and experience. (When your gifts, passions and the need aligns this is wonderful).
- Giving financially:
 - Tithing (an Old Testament practice) that use as a guide or principle or better still as we like to say, 'Spirit-led' giving is the goal.

- Generosity to the poor and needy should be a high value and commitment knowing that God gives us resources to use to help others.
- Using Spiritual gifts:
 - Appropriate and loving use of spiritual gift/s should be encouraged as God gives you faith to use a gift in a situation that would encourage people and/or strengthen the church. Love is the motive and the means.
- Welcoming and connecting:
 - Welcome new people to Thrive and new believers. Let's live out the value that 'nobody stands alone'. Be vigilant in looking for people to say hello to that you don't know.

4. PROTECT

- Protect the UNITY of the church locally by:
 - Adhering to the Thrive Safe Churches policy and renewing your commitment annually.
 - Working with children check where appropriate.
 - Be a safe person (physically, emotionally, spiritually).
 - Refusing to gossip.
 - Loving and reconciling as is possible. **(Matthew 18:15-17)**
 - Honouring and respecting leaders as they serve with godly character. **(1 Thess 5:12-13)**
(Please note this does not mean that asking questions or sharing concerns is wrong. In fact this is honourable by being godly in the way you discuss any concerns you have).
 - Being an active encourager.
- Protect the UNITY of church globally (BIG CHURCH) by:
 - Praying for churches and leaders.
 - Speaking well of others.
 - Appreciating the diversity of the body of Christ.

STATEMENT OF FAITH & BELIEFS

We believe in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

We believe that Jesus came to earth as God in human flesh to establish His Kingdom on earth and show us the way to know God and make us right with God.

We believe that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day after he was crucified on Good Friday. His resurrection means that forgiveness for all sin is possible and eternal life is available for everyone who receives Christ as Lord. His resurrection is also the beginning of new creation and the first act of our future hope as a resurrection people.

We believe the Scriptures are the authoritative and inspired Word of God written by numerous authors; prophets and leaders throughout history. These people inspired by God wrote and recorded the great unfolding story of creation and redemption and the essential truths we need to understand who God is and what He desires us to do as His people.

We believe that Jesus will return again one day to judge the living and the dead and restore all things to right.

We believe that the Holy Spirit convicts people of their need of Christ; renews and empowers believers to live a life fully devoted to Christ. The Spirit gives gifts to the church and individuals to strengthen and encourage the church community to be healthy and effective in proclaiming Jesus as LORD and living the life of faith.

We believe that spiritual gifts are used today and if used appropriately and in love will bring blessing and encouragement.

We believe that God loves every person and desires that everyone come to know him as Saviour and Lord.

We believe that church is a community of followers of Christ that join together despite differences to encourage; learn; pray; worship and work together to fulfill the mission of God on earth. We join with followers of Jesus all around the world in proclaiming the good news that Jesus Christ is LORD and KING.

THE NICENE CREED

Developed in the fourth century, the Nicene Creed is the most widely accepted statement of the Christian faith. It captures the core of historic Christianity as professed by Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant churches across the world.

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us humans and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit.

He was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father (and the Son). With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.



CORE COMMUNITY ANNUAL COMMITMENT

(ONE FORM PER PERSON)

Name: _____

Address: _____ Post Code: _____

Email Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Mobile: _____

**All personal information is held confidentially by Thrive Community Church and only used by staff or leaders for contact or follow up purposes.*

- Have you confessed Jesus Christ as Lord & are seeking to follow him? YES NOT SURE NO
- Have you been baptised in water? [This does not mean you can't be part of the Core but we would encourage you to be baptised and/or speak to a pastor about this]. YES NOT SURE NO
- Would you consider yourself a Spirit-filled Christian seeking to live a Spirit led life?
 YES NOT SURE NO
- Do you affirm the historic statements of our faith? YES NOT SURE NO
- I'm **renewing / making for the first time** a commitment to be part of the CORE COMMUNITY at Thrive to see our church fulfil its vision as I play my individual part along with many others. YES
- I am committing to be CONNECTED: YES NOT SURE NO
- I am committing to CONTRIBUTE: YES NOT SURE NO
- I am committing to CELEBRATE: YES NOT SURE NO
- I am committing to PROTECT the unity of the church: YES NOT SURE NO

Signed: _____ Date: _____

NEXT STEPS:

Please email to admin@thrivecommunity.com, mail to Thrive Community Church PO Box 2674 Taren Point NSW 2229 or drop into the offering bucket at any of our Sunday services. Thanks for stepping up to join us as we seek God's Kingdom and his mission purposes.