



## You are so valuable

I've found myself thinking quite a bit over the past few days about what makes us valuable. Although there is often a kick-back against it, it is true that we still live with a very strong celebrity culture, and they are viewed as being valuable. So-called 'influencers' online might be seen to be valuable as so many people watch their videos and adapt their lifestyles a bit as a result. We might say that those who work for the NHS or in the education system are valuable people - and for good reasons. Those who own businesses, those who entertain... the list goes on.

But, in all of these cases what gives somebody value is what they do. Are their actions perceived to be important in some way by other people? If so, they are valuable.

Now, I don't sign up to the old saying, "I'm a human being, not a human do-ing", as I don't think we can so easily separate the things that we do from who we are. But, it does seem to me that valuing people simply because of what they do is a really unbalanced way of thinking. Does that mean that some people are more valuable than others because of what they do? Even if people would say, "no" to that question, much of society acts as if that is indeed the case.

The prophet Isaiah, in the Bible, prophesied these words from God:

*"Since you are precious and honoured in my sight, and because I love you, I will give men in exchange for you, and people in exchange for your life." [Isaiah 43:4]*

Where does our ultimate value come from? Knowing that we are God's. We are precious to him and honoured in his sight. He has created each of us in his own image, and has left something of his own fingerprints in us. He loves us, unreservedly and without limit.

And, even after all of that, he would give other people in exchange for us. Now that might sound a bit odd, but the truth is that he has already done so. He came into the world himself, pulling on human skin (in the person of Jesus) and offered himself as an exchange for us. He took himself to the cross in order to take our sin upon himself.

But notice, this is all about God's will and intention, and has absolutely nothing to do with what our job is, whether or not we are a leader or what we do with our lives. As we see in the New Testament, the only thing that we need to do is to turn to Jesus. But, God has done this for us— for you! Because in his eyes you are more valuable than you could ever imagine.

God bless,

*Paul*

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# 4 Tips for Nurturing Your Relationship

christians  
against  
poverty

CAP

With Valentine's season upon us, many couples may be asking how they can invest into their relationship without putting a strain on their finances. Here are four top tips for budget-conscious couples to show each other that they care:

## 1. Schedule quality time together

With busy work schedules and family commitments, life's demands often make quality time together for couples a challenge. Why not plan out some weekly, monthly and annual activities with your partner? Planning ahead ensures you can protect the time you've set aside to spend together, and anticipate any potential costs.

## 2. Budget consciously

Openly talk about your desired budget and what you can afford, as going over budget can strain relationships. Agree how much each activity can be, and stick to it! If you're not sure how to set up a budget, consider going on a free budgeting course in your area. CAP runs money coaching and life skills groups all over the UK – why not visit [capuk.org/help](https://capuk.org/help) to see what free services are available in your area?

## 3. Plan meaningful activities

You could either plan your dates together, or alternate surprising each other. Whatever you decide, with the date in the diary and the budget set, think about what you can do as a couple. Having a romantic meal at home can be just as special but cheaper than eating out. Taking a picnic and visiting a nice area, or going for a long walk are nice activities that can be achieved on a budget. Search the internet for free and cheap things to do in your area. Planning ahead can be fun and gives you both something to look forward to.

## 4. Give thoughtful gifts

Giving a gift to your partner is a great way of showing them how much you love them, but there can be a pressure to overspend. Discuss how much you want to budget for gifts, and if money is tight, get creative. Consider making your own presents, homemade gift vouchers which give away your time, or if you're a bit of a wordsmith, perhaps write them a poem or song. Such gestures can mean more to someone than any amount of money spent.

Money worries can put a strain on relationships, so if you're experiencing financial difficulties, do seek help. Visit [capuk.org/help](https://capuk.org/help) to see what free services are available in your area. There's also information and support at [moneyhelper.org.uk](https://moneyhelper.org.uk).

Consider going on a course to invest in your relationship. There are lots of free courses for people who are engaged or married and can include topics such as money management. Check out [themarriagecourse.org](https://themarriagecourse.org) for a marriage course near to you, or contact your local church to see what support they offer couples.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) is a UK charity working with over 800 affiliated churches to deliver debt help, budgeting guidance, support to find work, life skills education and more. Visit [capuk.org](https://capuk.org) to find out more.

## The Green Zone



This month's suggestion of something that many households can do to be more environmentally friendly is something that (yet again) could also save you money, and save you time as well. The suggestion is to batch cook as much as possible.

Doing so means that food can be cheaper (if bought in bulk), is less likely to be wasted (e.g. use the whole squash for a few different meals), is likely to be healthier to eat, is likely to save more time overall, requires less packaging; oh and there are less pans to clean afterwards (with all that goes with the washing up).

So, if you are able to do it, there are so many benefits to batch cooking, including very real environmental benefits.

# Our Strategy for Growth

It is good and sensible for a church to have a strategy for growth. God has given us intellects to be able to plan and decide how and what we should be doing. However, it is always important to remember that it is God's purposes that are ultimately what matters and that we need to 'go' where he leads and do the things that he call us to do.

At All Hallows we have a strategy for growth, but this is not primarily about growing in numbers (although the hope is that will happen too). Our strategy for growth is mostly about growing to be more like Jesus; and growing in our love for God, our love for each other and our love for people in the wider community (**Up, In & Out**). These areas for growth come from the commandments of Jesus to do those exact things (Matthew 22:37-40 & John 13:34).

In the diagram to the right the **green triangle** represents the church, and our desire to be growing in these different ways. But, it is also our belief that when we obediently do these things then Jesus is at work in and through us, and so we become more effective in our outreach to the wider community and some people will come to faith in Jesus too. He will bring that 'new life' growth.

The diagram also has other coloured shapes and they represent all of the different people in our whole area. So, the '**Community**' square represents everybody who lives in the streets and closes and roads, and everybody who works in this area. It is a large group of people, well into the thousands.

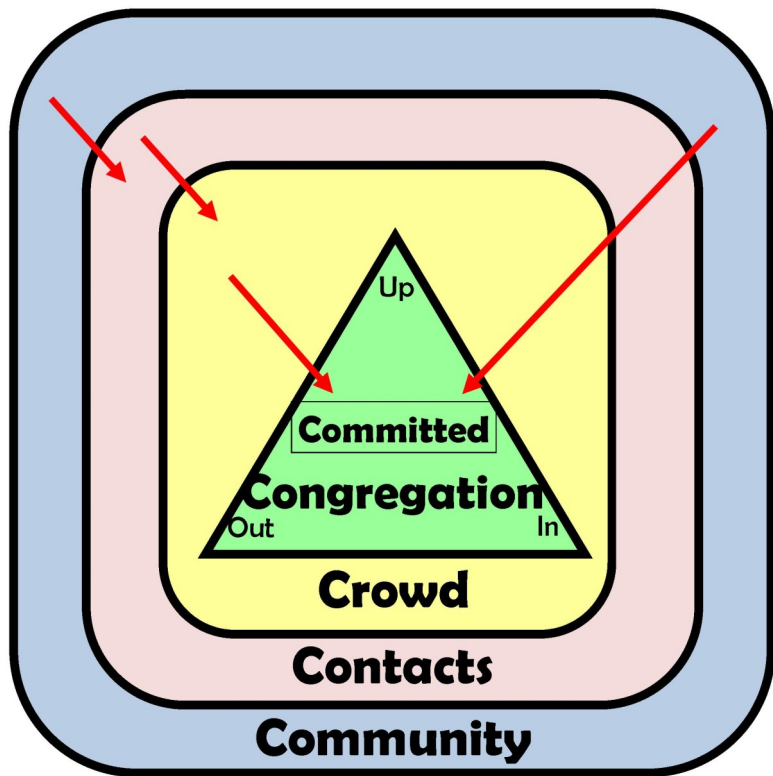
Within the 'Community' there is a group of people who in this diagram are called the '**Contacts**'. This group of people are still part of the Community of course, but they have some kind of a contact with All Hallows Church. That will be because they personally know somebody who comes here, or because they 'follow' All Hallows on social media. This group of people don't really come along to anything in person at the church, but they do have some idea of who we are and of the things that go on here.

With the 'Contacts' group of people there is another group who are called the '**Crowd**'. Again, the Crowd are still very much a part of the Community, as we are all a part of the wider Community together. The Crowd are those people who come along to All Hallows Church on a reasonably regular basis ('regular' means different things for different people). That might include church services, or seasonal church services, it could include the Light Café or the Youth Club, or any other activity that the church runs throughout the year.

Within the 'Crowd' group there is then a smaller group called the '**Congregation**'. The Congregation are those people who come along to church services on a very regular basis (so, not just for seasonal specials), or those who used to come along to church services but are now unable to do so because of ill health or mobility issues.

Then, finally, within the 'Congregation' there is the '**Committed**' group. Again, this group are also still part of the Congregation, Crowd, Contacts and Community groups. This group are called 'Committed' but their first commitment is to Jesus and to developing good habits in following him in their lives. A part of that will mean that they are committed to serving at All Hallows Church, but that is because they are first of all committed to following Jesus. They are committed to growing in their love for God, love for other members of the church and love for those in the wider community; and they are committed to acting in loving ways to all of those people.

It is our hope and belief that as All Hallows Church looks to grow in these different ways then we will make Contact with people from the wider Community, that some of those people will start to come to something at the church and become part of the Crowd, and that in turn more will become part of the Congregation and ultimately Committed to following Jesus. It doesn't always work like that and people come to church through a variety of paths, hence the different arrows. But, even if people don't come to church we will continue to love and serve them, as Jesus calls us to do.



# New or Visiting?

## First Time Here?

If it's your first time here then welcome! It's great to have you with us. Here are a few short notes that you might find helpful.

**Relax** - You're our guest, so make yourself at home. If there is anything that you would like to know then ask one of the Welcome Team by the front door.

**We don't expect guests to give** - For those who are members or regular attenders there is an offering plate at the back, but we don't ask our guests for any money.

**We have a Loop System** - Switch your hearing aid to T-coil.

You might find it useful to sit towards the middle.

**Hang around afterwards** - Come and join us for a cup of tea or fresh coffee, and for a chat—drinks are served in the hall and we usually gather in the lounge to chat.

**Prayer** - If you would like someone to pray with you — either prayer for you or for someone you know — there are people who would love to do so after the service. Please make yourself known to the service leader.

**Children & Youth** - Once a month, the whole church worships together. On other weeks, there is a Sunday School for primary aged children. One of the Welcome Team can show you where Sunday School meets. For pre-school age children, there are green tables at the side of church with activities. Please don't be embarrassed if your children make any noise—they are welcome here and are part of the service, too! All our children and youth leaders have DBS checks and have undergone safeguarding training.

## Next Steps

We are all on a journey through life, and our faith is no different. Depending upon where you are on your journey with God here are some 'Next Steps' you could take:

### COMMIT YOUR LIFE TO CHRIST

Commit to follow Jesus today!

### RE-COMMIT TO CHRIST

It's never too late for a fresh start with faith.

### DECLARE YOUR FAITH THROUGH BAPTISM

If you feel you've made a commitment to God but have never been baptised, then this could be a great step for you.

### JOIN A LIFE GROUP

If you're not in one, there are a number of groups that meet in homes throughout the week to get to know each other better, look at the Bible and pray together.

### BE PART OF THE MISSION

There are lots of ways you can use your gifts to serve God, his Church and the wider community. Speak to one of the church team to find out more.

## FEBRUARY 2025

### Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup>

10:00 Family Service

6:30 Evening Communion Service

### Monday 3<sup>rd</sup>

10:00 Zoom Prayers

### Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup>

9:00-1:30 Light Café

1:00-1:15 Pause for Thought

7:00-8:30 Youth Club

### Friday 7<sup>th</sup>

9:30-10:00 Prayer Meeting

### Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Morning Service & Sunday School

6:30 Evening Service

### Monday 10<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Zoom Prayers

### Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup>

9:00-1:30 Light Café

9:30-11:00 Messy Toddlers

1:00-1:15 Pause for Thought

7:00-8:30 Youth Club

### Friday 14<sup>th</sup>

9:30-10:00 Prayer Meeting

### Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Morning Communion Service &

Sunday School

6:30 Evening Service

### Monday 17<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Zoom Prayers

### Friday 21<sup>st</sup>

9:30-10:00 Prayer Meeting

### Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup>

10:00 Morning Service & Sunday School

6:30 Evening Service

### Monday 24<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Zoom Prayers

### Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup>

9:00-1:30 Light Café

1:00-1:30 BCP Holy Communion

7:00-8:30 Youth Club

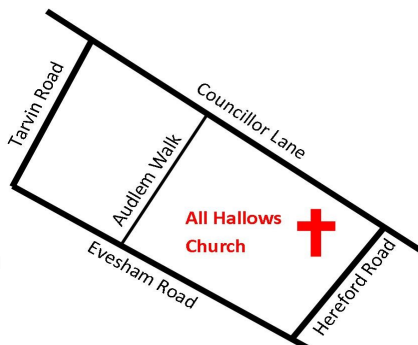
### Thursday 27<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Social Night

## Contact Details

All Hallows Church Office  
222 Councillor Lane  
Cheadle, SK8 2JG

0161 428 9121  
allhallows.cheadle@gmail.com  
allhallows-church.org.uk



If you would like to make a one-off donation to the work of All Hallows Church you can do so by using the QR Code.