



## **Faith and culture, ethnicity and race.**

**Date:** 14<sup>th</sup> July 2019  
Harsia

**Speakers:** Andrew McNeil, Oliver Nyumbu, Cap and Jo Ramdas

**Key Verses:** Ephesians 2:13-19, Revelation 7:9

### **Talk Summary:**

What shapes our thinking in this area? Our background, the media our experiences or God's word?

The bible is clear that every person is made in God's image (Gen 9:6) and nations and diversity are an expression of God's creativity.

When we follow Christ we gain an overarching identity and are described as citizens of heaven. Philippians 3:21.

The Church is called to display the wisdom of God as an expression of the age to come in this age (Eph 3:10, Rev 7:9) by being a place where different nations and people can function as God's family.

The bible has a rich story of God working in many cultures. Whatever our cultural heritage we have examples of influential Christian leaders who can inspire us.

As a Church we are committed to praying and working in such a way that every person can reach their full potential in Christ.

## **Activities / Questions for discussion.**

We are called to be an expression of the Kingdom of God here on earth. How can we play our part? Oliver suggested three things

- 1 Curiosity** – “Stop trying to be interesting start trying to be interested”. Understand people's stories and experiences. How might I do that?
- 2 Hospitality** – If hospitality is the ability to put people at ease how can we do that with people different to us? Meals and moments, food and friendships.
- 3 Forgiveness** – Have pain or setbacks caused us to retreat from, write off or judge others? As his follower how is Jesus wanting to lead me in this area?
- 4 Engage in a light hearted cultural critique.** Positive, neutral & negative. Where possible give an example.

What aspect of your culture of origin or personal history is positive?

What is simply different? eg Traditions, ways of celebrating, what's valued, what's not OK! How have you come to know that?

What is negative about your culture? How does a call to follow Christ put you at odds with some of your background? What can be done about that?

## **To ponder or pray about this week...**

Look at your phone contacts. What percentage of your friends are people just like you? How might God want to enrich your life with other friendships?

We have many ways that our Church is serving people of many backgrounds. Why don't you consider joining a team or volunteering as a way to serve others? Eg Growbaby.