

# Cultivating Gospel-Hearted Care



People don't usually join churches  
because of the pastoral care  
but they often leave because of the lack of it

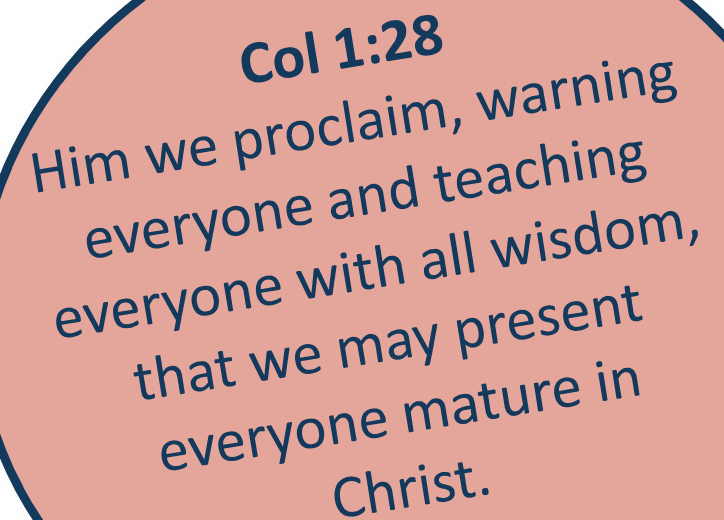
# Principles

## 1. Pastoral care is spiritual care

The goal is not

- getting through our list of visits
- checking up on people
- merely socialising with them

The goal is to see people grow in Christ



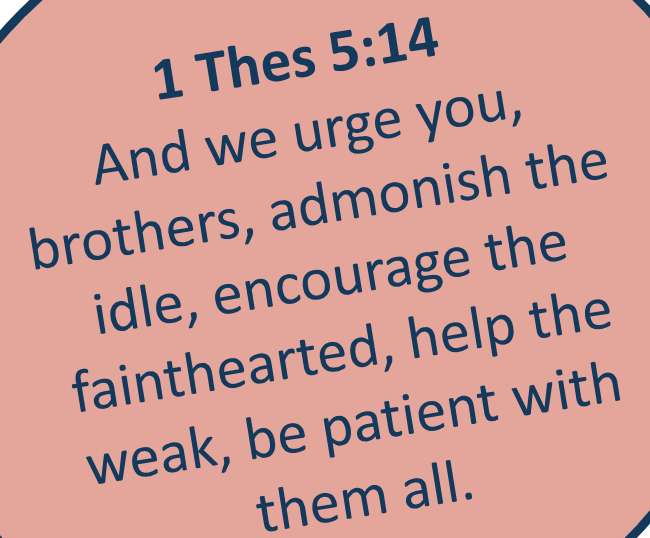
**Col 1:28**  
Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

# Principles

Helping people in all the ups and downs  
of life to grow in Christ

For all kinds of people

Proactive not just reactive



**1 Thes 5:14**  
And we urge you,  
brothers, admonish the  
idle, encourage the  
fainthearted, help the  
weak, be patient with  
them all.

# Principles

## 2. Pastoral care takes many forms

Home visits

Formal and informal care

Preaching

Small groups

Phone, message, email

After church chat

Hospitality

Mentoring and Discipleship

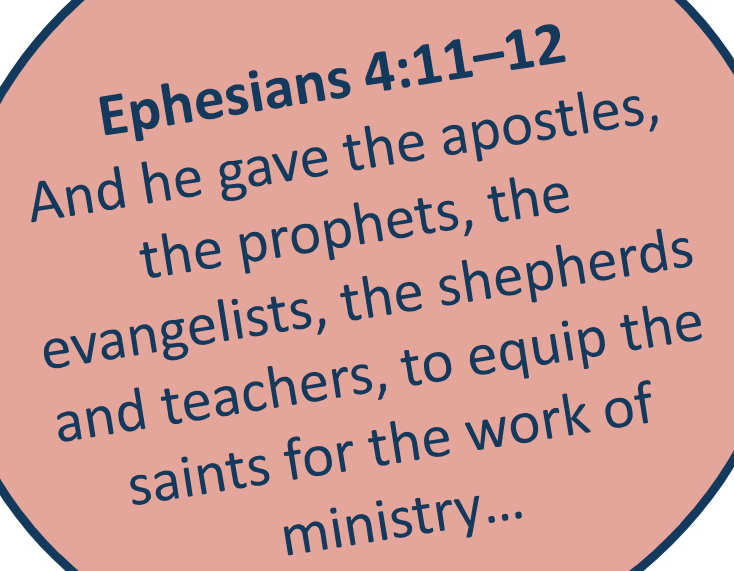
In other ministries

# Principles

## 3. Pastoral care requires the gifts of many

The elders are shepherds who equip the flock for ministry

Equip for one-anothering



**Ephesians 4:11–12**  
And he gave the apostles,  
the prophets, the  
evangelists, the shepherds  
and teachers, to equip the  
saints for the work of  
ministry...

# One-anothering

- love one another – John 13:34
- be devoted to one another – Rom 12:10
- honour one another – Rom 12:10
- live in harmony with one another – Rom 12:16
- accept one another – Rom 15:7
- serve one another – Gal 5:13
- carry one another's burdens – Gal 6:2
- be patient, bearing with one another in love – Eph 4:2
- be kind and compassionate to one another – Eph 4:32
- forgive each other – Eph 4:32

# One-anothering

- speak to one another with psalms, hymns & spiritual songs – Eph 5:19
- submit to one another – Eph 5:21
- teach and admonish one another – Col 3:16
- encourage one another – 1 Thes 4:18
- build one another up – 1 Thes 5:11
- spur one another on toward love and good deeds – Heb 10:24
- do not slander one another – James 4:11
- do not grumble against each other – James 5:9
- confess your sins to one another – James 5:16
- pray for one another – James 5:16



# Principles

## A one-anothering community

- A strong diaconate
- Small groups
- Women engaged in care ministries
- Older men and women
- Ministry leaders
- Gifts of particular members

# Principles

Pastoral care is spiritual care  
Pastoral care takes many forms  
Pastoral care requires the gifts of many

# How do we care for others?

## One anothering...

Makes a huge difference in people's lives

Family often doesn't provide this

Major on what other professionals can't do

Major on what many church members struggle to do

## Five ways to care...

# Love

The root of care is a heart of love

- 1 John 4:13-21 – we love because he first loved us
- 2 Cor 1:4-9 – we show the comfort we have received from God
- Matt 9:36 – harassed and helpless sheep without a shepherd

# Love

People will detect cold professionalism, superiority and judgmentalism

A key part of love is empathy

# Love

## Empathy is:

“The ability to identify with and experience another person’s experiences. This is accomplished by (as much as possible) suspending one’s own frame of reference in order to enter the perceptual and emotional world of the other.” *Dictionary Of Pastoral Care and Counseling* (ed. Rodney J. Hunter), 354.

“You never really understand a person until you climb into their skin and walk around in it.” Atticus, in Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

## Rescuing

- Everything will be just fine
- I understand. I have gone through the same thing
- Be assured that God is in control
- Tomorrow will be a brighter day

## Empathising

- It must be unsettling not to know
- I can't imagine how much you hurt
- It must seem like God has turned his back on you
- The world must look very grey

# Listen

Listening is itself a ministry to people

As people talk they process their situation, order their thoughts and unburden their hearts

Listening is key to every pastoral context: mentoring, small groups, meetings, visits, counselling...

Good listening is hard work – it is a skill to be learnt



# Listen

What are the skills of good listening?

- Undivided attention
- Explore what they are saying
- Value their opinions

Practice in  
everyday life!

# Converse

Spiritual conversation

Avoid sermons

Sometimes don't say much

Avoid clichés

## Good conversation

- Interacting together – listening and sharing
- Encouraging them and building them up
- Moving conversation toward God and the gospel
- Using relevant Scriptures
- Encouraging gospel response

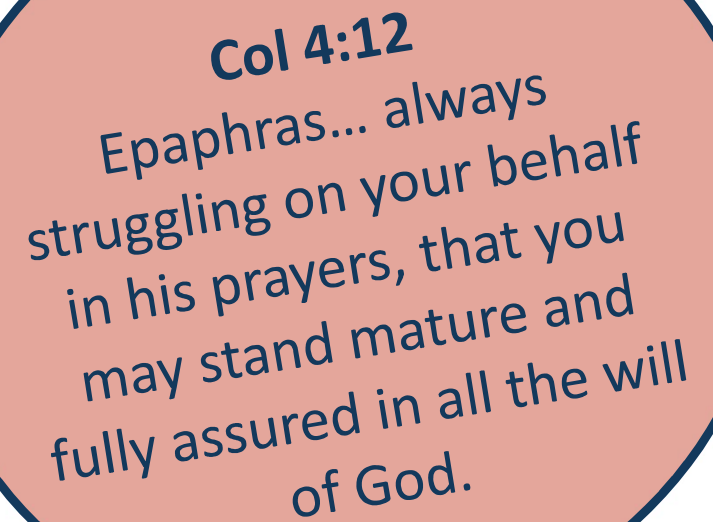
# Pray

For and/or with

A ministry of prayer

Think and talk about how to pray

Pray briefly and personally



**Col 4:12**  
Epaphras... always  
struggling on your behalf  
in his prayers, that you  
may stand mature and  
fully assured in all the will  
of God.

# Journey

“Just being there”

Being there when it matters

Ways of being there

Following up later

Real care can be a  
long, slow journey

# Five ways to care...

Love – Listen – Converse – Pray – Journey

Not that hard, but it takes effort and skill

Basic, but it really makes a difference

If we all do it, we'll have a caring church community