

*"We want a church community that keeps God at the centre."*

## **KEEPING GOD AT THE CENTRE**

### **RESPOND**

Reading and discussing the manifesto commitments can be a helpful springboard into exploring how best to respond to it in your own context. Some ideas for keeping God at the centre include:

- Commit to reading the Bible together over a year or two-year period.
- Have a 'Bible reading marathon'. You might consider holding this at your church, and create a rota to divide up the biblical books among the group (or perhaps commit to read an hour at a time). To read through the whole Bible would take just over 70 hours, and to read through the whole of the New Testament would take just over 18 hours.
- Commit to praying for a 24 hour period, creating a rota for people to sign up. You might also create a prayer space within the church for this, and encourage the whole church to get involved.
- As a way of expressing love for one another, try out an 'angel' scheme for a period – either with the youth group or with the entire church. Give each person involved the name of another person for whom they will act as an 'angel'. The angel's task is to find creative ways to bless the person they've been allocated, but to do so in a hidden way. They might leave them small gifts, write them messages of encouragement, or commit to pray for them regularly.
- Encourage one another to share stories of how God is at work within your lives. Within a youth group setting, sharing such stories could feature as a regular part of your time together. Sharing testimony can also be a regular part of church services, involving both young and old.

**Continued overleaf...**

## ENGAGE

There are many different ways to engage more deeply with this manifesto commitment. As well as considering the different responses above, consider putting together an 'audit' of church meetings and groups, focussing on the degree to which they prioritised keeping God as central.

You might start by asking groups and meetings how often prayer and/or biblical engagement feature as part of their time together, but also explore other ways too in which they keep God central. Even if a church meeting is about fabric or finance, it's good to ask how such discussions include God at the centre.