

Can you
tell me about
The Big Table?

**THE
BIG
TABLE**

a community church
in south perth

Sure.
Let's start with our
mission:

Our mission at The Big Table is to build a network of communities founded on Jesus and shaped by His Word, living out and sharing the Gospel in relationally-intentional ways by the power of the Holy Spirit, for the glory of God.

A community church in South Perth.

We often get asked, 'are we a church?'. It's a curly question. The short answer is yes, absolutely. The longer answer is: what did you mean when you asked the question? Some of us grew up with a very object-based definition of church. It's somewhere you went... and usually on a Sunday. Or it was 'that building on the corner'. While we understand how we've ended up referring to buildings as churches this isn't at all 'the church' that Jesus left behind in the New Testament. Church is, and always will be, unique groups of people gathering together and scattering apart on mission. **We gather together in a bunch of different contexts to worship God, to deepen our relationship with Jesus, live out our faith together, be shaped by His Word and share the good news of Jesus through living our ordinary lives together in community.** In short, church is a 'who' not a 'what'—it's not a place, it's a people. Jesus refers to His Church (the big 'C' referring to all churches across the globe) as His Bride. And while the Bride's dress has been sullied and torn over the centuries it hasn't changed the mission of Jesus to use broken people like us to build His Church through sharing the good news. Yep, we're a church. We sing, we preach, we give, we enjoy communion together, we baptise folk and we do the long journey with Jesus alongside each other. So, while we revel in the Sunday gathering of The Big Table, we place a high value on the times through the week when we share life together—meals, conversations, emails and experiences. And we seek to do all of this for the glory of God.

What do you value most at The Big Table?

The Big Table seeks to be a community that is increasingly characterised by the values articulated here. It's by no means an exhaustive list you see here but they're biggies for us. Have we arrived at any of them? No. Are we ever likely to arrive this side of heaven? No, most likely not. Should we pursue them with our heart, soul, mind and strength? Absolutely.

1. Gospel-directed

The gospel is central to everything. Not a home-owner improvement for an otherwise cozy life, but something that challenges and sustains us to the core of our being. It is the breathtaking, unexpected, transforming truth that Jesus has paid an eternal price for sinners like us. It is the story of a loving and holy Father sending the Son to take our place, forgive our sins, clean us up, make us right, adopt us as sons and daughters and give us life forever with him and begin conforming us to the image of the One by whom we were created. It's good news alright. To talk about. To sing about. To preach about. To meditate over. To wonder at. If you don't want to hear the good news of Jesus Christ, The Big Table will wear thin quickly!

2. Christ-centered

The Big Table loves Jesus. It is a community that begins with Jesus, is directed by His Word, and lives in the power and joy of His resurrection and the gift of His Holy Spirit. We anticipate His return when we will enjoy Him forever. Our desire to be centered on Jesus informs how we live, love, give, worship, talk, work and play. It's in Him we live move and have our being. It's in Him we are fully known. And it's in Him that we find the grace to live regenerated lives that bring glory to God the Father.

3. Open-handed

This cuts two ways. First, we acknowledge the source of our time, talent and treasure and seek to use it all for the glory of God. We're a giving church because we have received abundantly and because Jesus, in grace, gave everything. And so we open our lives, our houses, our wallets and our hearts to those around us and many more who are our neighbours in a local or global sense. Our giving is not an obligation or a duty, but a response to the God who initiated His giving to us from the get-go. Second, we're on an ongoing journey of becoming channels of Jesus' grace, compassion and forgiveness by seeking to live out our faith with lives that stack up with our calling. Our openhandedness is demonstrated in our 50/50 approach to financial giving (50% to sustain within, 50% to empower beyond). We consider this one tangible manner in which our stewardship of all God has given us is manifest.

We're a giving church because Jesus, in grace, gave everything...so giving is not an obligation but a response. *from Core Value 3: OPEN_HANDED*

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OUR VALUES/DISTINCTIVES:

- 1/ **Gospel-directed**
- 2/ **Christ-Centered**
- 3/ **Open-handed**
- 4/ **Missionally-faithful**
- 5/ **Justice-seekers**
- 6/ **Relationally-intentional**
- 7/ **Authenticity**
- 8/ **Gratitude**
- 9/ **We love planting churches**
- 10/ **Everyone's a minister**
- 11/ **Being shaped by the Bible**
- 12/ **Theologically considerate**

4. Missionally-faithful

We've been commanded to go and make disciples. We believe this begins in our homes, in our street and in ever-expanding circles of influence. We value the proclamation of the Word in ways that engage the culture in which we live through being Jesus' hands and feet as we seek to proclaim the Gospel through word and deed. We seek to embrace the broken and the proud with grace and mercy believing we are each broken vessels who, through our willing participation, can be restored, reformed and filled by Jesus. We are a community that is uncompromising on the value it places on the cross, on community and on using His word as our compass—not seeking to wield, nor strut, nor judge those who are on a journey towards Jesus, but to use this ministry of reconciliation we have been given.

5. Justice-seekers

We are a community that accepts that if all we are offering is kind sentiments, we're not offering anything much at all. We take seriously God's commands to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, free those who are wrongly imprisoned, give welcome to wanderers and act fairly wherever we exercise power. God gives all people good gifts – starting with personal freedom, dignity and resources of many kinds. Where these things are unjustly taken away, we will not turn away. We'll seek to act in ways that restore justice. We know that God hears the cry of the oppressed, and we are continually seeking to hear what He hears.

6. Relationally-intentional

We love because He first loved us and gave himself up for us. We are intentional beyond convenience. While we genuinely enjoy being with each other and connecting with the community around us, we acknowledge that even that enjoyment can come at a sacrifice and a cost. We gladly make that investment for the sake of living out the gospel, building our community and being part of a community seeking to live out a biblical model of community.

We recognise that church is not a place but a people. We're about building deep, authentic community responding to a life-altering message in concert with a bunch of people who are responding the same way. In many ways this is a pleasure - living out the gospel while pursuing organic expressions of deep unity. In other ways it's counter-cultural. Sometimes we compartmentalise our life and times into nice bite-size pieces that rarely touch each other. To chase after community that turns that notion on its head for the sake of open-handed intimacy isn't second nature and yet, having been created in the image of God we believe wholeheartedly that it's our first nature. As we act with relational intentionality towards each other, we recover a little more of God's intent for his people and allow His Kingdom to come to earth as it already is in heaven.

Our view of community is broad enough to encompass our next-door neighbours and our global neighbours alike.

7. Authenticity

Whether it's a big or small group, it's too easy to fake it. We don't want to - we want to pursue intimacy that is coupled with trust and love. How does this look? It rejoices with the rejoicers and weeps with the weepers. We partner in our struggles and celebrations in the knowledge that we're being continually transformed. Coupled with authenticity is the grace to accept each others weaknesses and the courage to help each other confront them. We will not let conflict remain unresolved - while it's possible when we're superficial, it makes no sense when we're committed to caring for each other, disciplining one another and carrying one another's burdens.

8. Gratitude

We're happy recipients of God's gift of salvation, by grace, through the person of Jesus Christ, His Son. We were ill-deserving of this gift but, in love, God the Father through God the Son and by God the Spirit continued to do good for us. This changes everything. Our response is deep thankfulness for His gift to us and to be continually reminded to flavour our conversation and our actions with thankfulness.

9. We love planting churches

While the first Big Table is in its infancy, we see The Big Table as a multiplying model. Not monolithic, but reproducing. We think reproducing is God's idea and was one of the hallmarks of the early church: growth through multiplication. While spiritual communities of all shapes and sizes are part of God's plan to build His Church, we believe that the Bride does some of her best work when she's out there faithfully multiplying so that new people can receive and respond to the gospel. We're not pursuing this value in a programmatic fashion but have a deep conviction that it will happen and that we should be up for the journey.

10. Everyone's on mission

We believe everyone has a role to play in bringing God's kingdom to earth as it is in heaven. That there is one mediator between God and men: Jesus Christ. We are liberated by His gift to us and his gracious invitation to work alongside Him on works that he has prepared for us to do. We believe that God has abundantly blessed each one of us with gifts to help build His body, the Church, and seek to encourage, celebrate, validate and activate those gifts within community so that the body might be built up.

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We want our lives and our life together to be formed and shaped by the story of redemption we discover in God's Word to us.

from 11_BEING SHAPED BY THE BIBLE

11. Being shaped by the Bible

We want our lives and our life together to be formed and shaped by the story of redemption we discover in God's Word to us. We believe the Bible to be the reliable, authoritative, sufficient Word of God, and are therefore committed to good bible learning knowing that His Word contains the words of life. We will not act on the basis of tradition, habit or pragmatism without reflection in the Bible. We do not see the Bible as the sole authority (solo scriptura) but we do hold it as the ultimate authority (sola scriptura). We see Bible teaching not as an end in itself but as that which must shape our thinking and action. We have a conviction that good orthodoxy results in good orthopraxy. When the living Word takes root in our hearts through the Holy Spirit right thinking is outworked through right living.

12. Theologically considerate

The Big Table holds to a Reformed understanding that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, all for the glory of God alone. The Gospel is about God, not us. His grace, first and last. He acts, we respond. And even our response is a gift of faith birthed in us by God's Spirit. Yes, good works flow from the Gospel, but they are not the cause of our salvation. God has freely chosen to show grace to us through no merit of our own. He called us, saved us, regenerated us, forgave us, justified us, adopted us, reconciled us to Himself. He did. We gladly go along for the ride. And even now, as we run after Him, it is His Spirit that enables our running: that sanctifies us, that pulls us toward holiness because He is a holy God who wills our holiness. These doctrines of God's free, undeserved grace to us eliminate any arrogance and self-righteousness from creeping into our church life, and they also overcome all despair as we realize that life really is about the God who has given it, and not us. We rest in the fact that salvation belongs to God.

What do we believe?

If you've got this far you might be wondering two things about The Big Table: 1) do you have a theological bonnet? and 2) can I take a look underneath it? Yes, and by all means!

1. The Bible

We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are God's revelation to us and the final authority for faith and life - His revealed and absolute truth. We believe the Word is God-breathed, infallible as originally given, and has ultimate authority in all matters of faith, conduct and experience.

We believe scripture is sufficient for knowing God. It is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it teaches; obeyed as God's command, in all that it requires; and trusted, as God's pledge, in all that it promises. As God's people hear, believe, and do the Word, they are equipped as disciples of Christ and witnesses to the gospel.

We believe God's revealed truth defines right and wrong, good and bad, worthwhile and worthless for us and allow it to guide, correct, inspire, convict, shape and teach us.

2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:20-21, Matthew 5:18, John 16:12-13

2. The Godhead

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - co-eternal in being, co-eternal in nature, co-eternal in power and glory, having the same attributes and perfections, and modelling perfect and ultimate community. Each person of the Godhead is equally deserving of worship and obedience.

Deuteronomy 6:4, 2 Corinthians 13:14, 1 Cor 10:31

3. God the Father

He is the first person of the Trinity and is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God is sovereign in all things: creation, revelation, redemption, judgement and the establishing of His Kingdom. As sovereign, loving creator and redeemer, he is worthy of all glory and honour and praise and our lives should be directed towards giving glory to Him alone.

We believe in one triune God, three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. *from DSB 2: THE GOD_HEAD*

4. God the Son

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin making a way back to God the Father. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission; a work which he has begun through His Bride, The Church. He is the Head of the His Body, the Church and should be adored, loved, served and obeyed by all.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:6-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

5. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is God. He possesses all the divine attributes. He was active in creation, the incarnation, regeneration, and written revelation. He has a unique role in this age since Pentecost. He is in the process of building the body of Christ.

He specifically convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and judgment. He brings glory to Jesus Christ and transforms believers into the image of Christ. He is the sovereign agent in regeneration and baptises believers into the body of Christ. He seals the believer unto the day of redemption. He also sanctifies the believer and empowers them for service. Finally, He is the giver of spiritual gifts to believers.

John 16:7-9; Acts 1:5, 2:4; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9-11; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

6. Humanity

We believe that God created humanity, man and family in his own image and likeness. We take this to mean that he has a self-conscious, rational personality, and nature that is capable of distinguishing right and wrong. Male and female were the crowning work of God's creation and gender was a gift from God. We were free from sin and had a moral responsibility to God. God's intention in creating us was to glorify Him and enjoy Him forever. We chose to sin against God, lost our innocence, and brought sin into the human race thus leaving us totally incapable of choosing that which is acceptable to God apart from God's grace. Our salvation is wholly of God's grace through the redeeming work of Jesus. It is God's plan for restoring us to Himself and His original vision of humanity.

Genesis 2:7, 15-25; James 3:9, Romans 3:9-18, 5:10-12; Genesis 3; John 3:36; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14, Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11

7. Salvation

Salvation is the redeeming work of God and His grace of the whole person. The Holy Spirit gives and brings about regeneration or the new birth. The repentant sinner responds in faith to the provision of salvation by the enabling of the Holy Spirit. The believer is justified by God, being declared righteous by faith in Christ. The righteousness given is apart from the work of man and involves the placing of a person's sin on Christ and the imputing of His righteousness to the sinner. Every believer is sanctified, or set apart, and declared holy. This position is instantaneous. Every believer is also a part of being progressively sanctified; being brought closer to the likeness of Jesus through obedience to the scriptures and the empowering of the Holy Spirit. God does not provide a way of salvation apart from Christ.

John 3:3-8; Titus 3:5, Romans 2:4, 8:30, Romans 3:20, Colossians 2:14, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, John 17:17,19; Romans 6:1; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4

8. The Church

Those who place their faith in Christ are immediately united into one spiritual body called the church and the bride of Christ of which Jesus is the head. This universal body includes all believers through history. The establishment of local autonomous congregations is taught in scripture in which members are directed to associate themselves together in a local body. These members observe the two ordinances (Baptism & Lord's Supper) given by Christ. Church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are appointed by Christ as found in the scriptures. Church officers are elders and deacons. The Bible outlines qualifications we should seek in appointing people to these leadership roles. The congregation is called to regard their leadership, the leaders are called to pastor the community as a shepherd cares for his sheep.

The purpose of the church is to glorify God by building itself up in the faith through the instruction of the word, fellowship, keeping the ordinances, and by sharing and living out the gospel to the world.

1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Ephesians 5:23-32, Ephesians 1:22, Acts 14:23, 27, 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; Titus 1:5, 1 Corinthians 11:18-20; Hebrews 10:25, Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11, 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-5, Hebrews 13:7, 17, Ephesians 3:21, Ephesians 4:13-16, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Acts 2:47, Acts 2:38-42

9. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Jesus commanded and committed these two ordinances to the church. Baptism by immersion in water is the testimony that a believer identifies with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. The believer is considered dead to sin and buries the old life while walking in the newness and power of the resurrection. It is a sign of fellowship and identification with the body of Christ. A believer's salvation is not dependent on baptism. The Lord's Supper is a memorial of His death. It was commanded by the Lord. It should be preceded by self examination. We believe the bread and the wine are not the literal body and blood of Christ.

Luke 3:21-22, Matthew 3:13-17, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 8:36-39, Acts 2:41-42, Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 Corinthians 11:23-32

10. The Future

We believe in the personal, glorious, and bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ with his holy angels, when he will exercise his role as final Judge, and his kingdom will be consummated. We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the just and the unjust—the unjust to judgment and eternal conscious punishment in hell, as our Lord himself taught, and the just to eternal blessedness in the presence of him who sits on the throne and of the Lamb, in the new heaven and the new earth, the home of righteousness. On that day the church will be presented faultless before God by the obedience, suffering and triumph of Christ, all sin purged and its wretched effects forever banished. God will be all in all and his people will be enthralled by the immediacy of his ineffable holiness, and everything will be to the praise of his glorious grace.

Salvation is the redeeming work of God and His grace of the whole person...God does not provide a way of salvation apart from Christ. *from DSB_7: SALVATION*

This document includes information from:

www.thegospelcoalition.org
www.sevenmileroad.org

THE BIG TABLE

a community church in south perth

When we get thinking and dreaming about The Big Table, we see a bunch of things:

1. ...a community that begins with Jesus, is directed by His Word, and lives in the power and joy of His resurrection and the gift of His Holy Spirit, in anticipation of His return when we will enjoy Him forever. This informs how we live, love, give, worship, talk, work and play.
2. ...a leadership with Jesus as the Senior Pastor/Shepherd and called by God to exercise biblically-faithful spiritual authority over the community with deliberate recognition of the specific spiritual gifts deposited by the Holy Spirit into each leader.
3. ...a community that embraces the broken with grace and mercy and believes each of us has have fallen short of the glory of God and are broken vessels that, by willing participa-

- tion, can be restored, reformed and filled by Jesus. We hold fast to the grace that it's never too late to become what you were created to be.
4. ...a community that grows because it is healthy (and healthy things grow). It is a community with a heart to invite people by the hand and bring them into community with Christ and His people so that they can mature, serve and be sent.
5. ...a community with a heart to multiply by raising up and growing servant leaders.
6. ...a community that values the integration of the whole self and cheers on the formation of mature followers of Christ with a clear sense of who they are in Christ, who they are called to be, and how we are to live in light of his salvation work in us.

7. ...a community that is characterised by encouragement and building one another daily—a people who keep 'open house' with their time, talent and treasure and see that they are most consistent with a biblical model of community when they are giving, serving and receiving from/to one another.
8. ...a community that understands that grace is opposed to earning but not effort and refuses to allow that opposition to descend into a satisfaction with mediocrity or an unwillingness to pursue holiness. A community that willingly says 'yes' to Jesus and to living in joyful obedience and humble repentance.
9. ...a community that prizes character and perseverance over charisma and performance.
10. ...a community that recognises that it's our lives that speak of His glory and are willing to become his hands and feet through every part of ourselves.
11. ...a community that cheers on every expression of Christ's bride, the community, and encourages, without reservation, every community gathering together to worship Him
12. ...a community that is uncompromising on the value it places on Christ, on the cross, on community and on using His Word as our compass but does not seek to wield, nor strut, nor judge those who are on a journey towards Jesus. We pursue the ministry of reconciliation we have been issued.
13. ...a community that values the proclamation of the Word in ways that engage the culture in which we live and, while recognising that we are still growing in wisdom and stature, we have faith that by faithfully walking with Jesus through the empowerment of the Spirit, and through diligent study and plain hard work, we can proclaim and point to Jesus powerfully and confidently.
14. ...a community that takes seriously the command to love our neighbour and is prepared to wrestle with 'who is my neighbour?'

- for the sake of compassion, community and action, not rhetoric.
15. ...a community with leaders who are not infallible but are Spirit-filled and called according to the biblical qualifications for leadership and seek to live and lead in faithfulness to this mandate and model lives of servant leadership that are beyond reproach.
16. ...a community with a conviction that it is blessed to be a blessing and is characterised by its generosity and 50/50 giving.
17. ...a community that will die for the sake of the cross but will not sacrifice the lives, marriages and families of its people at the altar of ministry.
18. ...a community that sees the Holy mandate to be salt and light in the world permeates through our lives day-by-day and person-by-person and should drive our form and mission.
19. ...a community that sees God's ways and God's plans for living are filled with Godly wisdom and bring us into closer relationship with Him and each other.
20. ...a community where the Kingdom of God leaks out all over the place. In running clubs, community gardens, around dinner tables, in espresso bars...wherever there's people!
21. ...a community where the spiritual gifts of its people are encouraged, celebrated, validated and activated so that the body can be built up by these Spirit-issued gifts.
22. ...an organic, dynamic structure that begins with the smallest building block of community (2-3) and finds expression through the larger, regular meeting of His people. Foundational to this structure is the recognition of each individual, the promotion of the healthy marriages and the celebration of family in all its vitality.

So, I've got a few more questions...

Why is it called The Big Table?

There's a bit of a legacy behind the table thing. A number of us who formed a core group to plant the church used to be part of a small group that met around a big table. Actually, we weren't that small - about 20-30 people met each fortnight. When it came to deciding a name for our community it just kind of stuck. There's added meaning too. Jesus invited us to join Him at His table and eat with Him. It's a BIG table and, because of His grace, we've been invited. The other thing about eating at a table is that we do it not to grow fat and lazy, but to be energised to get to work. Our times around the table equip us to leave the table and get to work spreading the good news of Jesus. Finally, much of our time together - our eating, drinking, learning and praying - takes place around the table so it is both a social, spiritual and physical metaphor for what's going on around here.

Are there other tables?

Yes. There's a couple of answers to that one. First, our gathering is, in part, based around this table metaphor. We think it's a good metaphor for the organic community we've been called to plant.

COFFEE TABLES

devotion,
encouragement
and accountability

The smallest table (we call them **COFFEE TABLES**) are where two to four people (but probably three) gather together. It's for the purpose of reading God's word together, encouraging each other and keeping each other accountable to the lives of holiness that God is calling us to. There's prayer, there's questions, there's answers...and plenty of grace and forgiveness. These groups get together weekly or fortnightly in homes/café/workplaces depending on what they've decided amongst themselves.

DINING TABLES

eating together,
sharing life,
discovering Jesus

The next-sized table (we call them **DINING TABLES**) are where eight to ten people meet together. These gatherings are at each others houses and include eating a meal together then studying God's Word together and praying for each other. These are people we do life with day-by-day. We're not a large community, so these are people we hang out with all over the shop. Along with The Big Table, we see this as one of the places where our faith muscles are exercised as we seek to love and care for those around us and bring others along for the journey.

The largest weekly gathering is our Sunday gathering of **THE BIG TABLE** at Collins Street, South Perth on a Sunday morning. This is a time for singing together, learning more about God through the teaching of His Word, taking communion together, giving together, drinking good coffee together, eating together and praying together. There's lots more that goes on at any given Sunday (baptisms and infant dedications among them) but our Sunday gathering is about building deep, authentic community responding to a life-altering message in concert with a bunch of people who are responding the same way. In many ways this is a pleasure - living out the gospel while pursuing organic expressions of deep unity.

LITTLE TABLES

playing together,
having fun,
loving Jesus

We also have **LITTLE TABLES** on a Sunday morning. This is for the kids. We place an enormous value on children and families at The Big Table and want to create a safe, nurturing environment where children can experience the love of Jesus and, in time, enjoy salvation through Him. The times with kids are age-appropriate but include drawing, learning, singing and a little multi-media action along the way.

Earlier, we said there were two answers. Here's the second. We believe we're called to multiply and plant other churches. So, as we grow, we don't see ourselves bursting at the seams until no more folk can come. Rather, we see ourselves planting more Big Tables all over the place; each consistent with the Doctrinal Statement of Belief, Mission, Vision and Values you've been reading about in this little booklet.

How do I become a part of The Big Table?

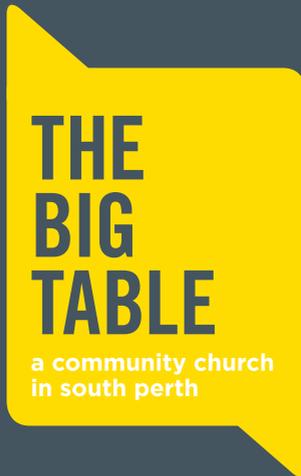
We'd love you to join us on this journey of faith in Jesus at The Big Table. The short answer is: just show up or start coming along. The only-slightly-longer answer is that if we're a community that you'd like to be part of, and you would like our mission, vision, values and beliefs to shape your own, then you could become a member of The Big Table. Becoming a member is a way of saying 'count me in, I'm ready to roll my sleeves up and get on mission with you'.

It seems a little different to what I imagined about church. Why?

When we started praying about planting a faith community, we felt the safest place to go as a model for church, church governance, church discipline and a whole lot of other 'living in community'-type stuff, was the early church we read about in the New Testament. If it seems fresh, organic, new or revolutionary, don't be fooled. It's the shape of the early church that was planted after Jesus was transfigured. There's nothing whacky about it. Our hope is that it's an integrated way of living. Not foreign from what's happening in life but entirely consistent with it. We love the diversity of expressions of Jesus' Church through the world and are seeking to be faithful to building this unique expression of community right here, right now.

More questions?

Stop reading! Talk to us. We'd love to tell you more about the community we're growing in and around South Perth.



Gathering on Sundays at 9.30am
at 9 Collins Street, South Perth and
plenty more times through any given week.



www.thebigtable.onthecity.org