Topic 2 – Trust in the Church

Welcome/Icebreaker

Describe an instance where you think your local church has let you down, and one instance where the church has done much more than you expected. Or, share round why people think the church is hypocritical and people are seen as Pharisees.

Worship

Read Ephesians 1:22, 23.
What do you think it means for the church to be the fullness of Him who fills all in all? Give thanks to God for His dream of what the church should be, and then cry out to God that our church could be a little bit more like God's dream. Remember that you and I are in that church and part of the answer and the problem.

Word

'Physician heal yourself!' This topic gives us the opportunity to get our own house in order. How can we expect to be taken seriously in the wider context if we cannot be trusted in our internal relationships as the family of God? Throughout our history, the label of hypocrite has never been far away. We have a responsibility to examine ourselves before God and to identify and address aspects of behaviour in which we fall short of even our own aspirations. Perhaps it is not so much a case of practising what we preach, but only preaching what we are confident we can practise.

The Bible study is the story of David who was chosen because of his character, because of his trustworthiness. What do you think God saw in

David that He did not see in his brothers? Jesus condemned the Pharisees. What do you think Jesus did not like about them?

Witness/Works

Break into small groups and make a list of areas where your local church shows itself trustworthy, and also draw up a list of areas where it might be perceived that you're not trustworthy. What challenges does this present? Think of something your small group could do in response to this. Think of something your church could do as a collective group. Perhaps suggest in a kind way to the church leaders how this could be done.

Call out to God that your church, and you as people, may be perceived not as hypocrites and Pharisees and ask Him for grace and power to live out something different.

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