INTRO

- Think about a time when simply being with other people made a difficult week better. What difference did their presence make?

Shared Life is a series exploring four communal practices through which God forms us as a church: ***Gather, Belong, Serve, Give***. Today, we begin with gathering for Sunday worship and why it matters.

READ

Hebrews 10:19-25

REFLECT & RESPOND

Because of Jesus, we can draw near to God with confidence. We do not gather on Sundays to earn God's favour or prove our faith. We gather because Jesus has opened the way for us and made us part of his people. Church is not simply an audience that attends a service, but a community that shares life together.

Q: What do you think is the difference between attending a church service as an audience and participating in the life of a church community? What does that difference look like in practice?

Hebrews reminds us that gathering is about more than receiving something for ourselves. We gather to encourage one another, hold on to hope, and spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Our presence matters because God uses ordinary people to strengthen one another in faith.

Q: Hebrews 10 encourages us to draw near to God in faith, hold on to hope, and spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Which of these three do you find most challenging at the moment? What might help you grow in that area?

Q: What are some practical ways we can encourage and build one another up when we gather? What might prevent us from doing so?

We also gather to be reoriented around the story of Jesus. In a world that pulls us towards individualism, busyness, and competing priorities, Sunday worship reminds us who God is, who we are, and how we are called to live. We gather, are formed together, and are sent back into everyday life as God's people.

Q: What makes it difficult for you or others to prioritize gathering on Sundays? How might we address these pressures and allow Jesus to reshape this rhythm in our lives?

Practical Step

This Sunday, come on time (or a little earlier), and come with someone else in mind. Take one intentional step to strengthen another person:

- welcome someone new,
- offer encouragement,
- pray with someone,
- invite someone to share life beyond the Sunday service.

PRAY

- Thank Jesus that through his death and resurrection he has opened the way for us to draw near to God and belong to his people.
- Ask God to help us become a community that encourages one another, holds on to hope, and grows in love.
- Pray that our Sunday gatherings would shape how we live throughout the week, making us a visible expression of Jesus' love in our city.