

# Growing in love (church celebration)

## sermon discussion guide

based on **Philippians 1.1-11**

which can be accessed at [www.stjamesbythepark.org/current-sermon-series](http://www.stjamesbythepark.org/current-sermon-series)

*This is part of our series looking at Philippians ("church: family on mission")*

Intro: As you look back on our church life over the last year, what are you most thankful for?

### **Read Philippians 1.1-11**

v4 In what ways had the Philippian Christians partnered with Paul in the gospel? (see 1.19; 2.17; 2.25; 4.14-16)

What does 'partnership in the gospel' look like in Shirley? How can we encourage it more?

v6 This is a great gospel promise to learn. How have you seen God work in your own life in recent years?

In what personal situations might the assurance of this promise be particularly important?

Paul wrote this verse to a church congregation. How might the promise of this verse encourage us *as a church* at the moment?

v7-8 It's easy to praise God when things are going well; harder to do so in life's tough times. Paul is in prison, yet still aware of God's grace. What could help you to see God's grace, even in tough times?

v9-11 spend a few minutes individually trying to get the nub of this prayer into your own words. Share what you've written.

How often do you pray this sort of prayer for each other?

As you think back over recent weeks, what sort of things have you prayed for each other?

What stops us praying for each other's spiritual growth more?

How does this passage speak to our desire to be a God-dependent, grace-filled, Bible-based, mission-focused, authentic community?

**Up (love God):** Spend some time praising God for the work he's done in you so far, and for his faithfulness to us as a church over the last year.

**In (love each other):** How could you encourage each other to pray these 'big prayers' for each other more?

**Out (reach the world):** How could you speak to unbelievers about God's grace when you're going through tough times, in a way which isn't showy, but natural?