



Week beginning September 7th

We believe in the Church and Eternity

Opening Questions

- There are many times in our lives when we have to make promises, either by signing something or making a declaration in front of other people. How many can you list?
- When did you first make a commitment to join a church membership list? What prompted you to make that decision?

Getting into the text

Read Matthew 16:13-20

- Why do you think people said that Jesus was John the Baptist or a prophet?
- Who did Peter say that Jesus was? How was this revealed to him?
- What did Jesus say about Peter's future role? What do you think Jesus meant when he used the word 'church?'

- What promises does Jesus give Peter for himself and for the church?
- Why do you think Jesus told the disciples not to tell anyone he was the Messiah at this time?

Applying the Bible to your life

- When outsiders talk about the church today, they point to the many divisions (eg denominations, differences over doctrine etc). What are the things which should unite us? What do you already do as an individual or as a group to make good relationships with members of other churches? Can you suggest anything new you might try?
- As the summer series on the Nicene Creed has now finished, this is a good opportunity to reflect on what you will take away from it. Have you learned something new? Has it changed your thinking about parts of the creed? Have you been challenged in some way? Spend some time sharing your thoughts.

Something to pray about

In his letter to the Corinthians Paul wrote, '**For we are fellow workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.**' (1 Cor 3:9)

- Pray for the church family at St Philips, asking God to help you to work together to share his love with the community around you.
- Pray for the other churches across Poole and Bournemouth as they seek to share the good news of Jesus with their communities.