

EVANGELISE | PART 2 OF 2 | HOPE CHAPEL

THE CAUSE WE CANNOT ABANDON

The Church as Engine Room of the Harvest
Pastor Andrew Cole | Sunday 26 July 2026 | 9AM Gawler

Big Idea: *The gathered church is not a waiting room before the real work starts somewhere else. It is the engine room - the beating heart that generates the pulse reaching every street in the community. The strength of what happens in here is the very source of what goes out there.*

Introduction - The Heart

Your heart has never seen the ground you walk on. It has never touched a hand, felt sunlight, or left the dark enclosed space it was built for. Yet nothing you have ever done - no step, no word, no act of love - happened without it beating. It does its greatest work completely out of sight, holding still so that everything else can move.

That is exactly what the gathered church is. Not a building to leave behind on the way to real ministry out there - but the engine room. The place where the pulse is generated that reaches every street in the community.

John 4:34–35 *Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.*

Jesus never told his disciples to abandon the upper room, the boat, the table, or the gathered life they shared with him. He strengthened it - and then he sent it outward. That is the pattern: not church versus harvest, but church as the very reason the harvest can be reached at all.

The strength of what happens in this room is not competing with mission. It is the source of it. A weak heart reaches nowhere. A strong one reaches everywhere.

1 | The Church Is the Engine Room

Luke gives us a window into the earliest church, verse by verse showing cause and effect. What happens on the inside produces what happens on the outside.

Acts 2:46–47 *They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

Devotion on the inside produced favour on the outside. The gathering didn't compete with growth - the gathering produced it. Their devotion to one another, the meals, the prayers, the teaching, was not a detour from mission. It was the engine running at full strength. And the whole town could feel it. Something had changed. There had been a seismic shift on the face of the earth, and the people in the marketplace could sense it.

Ephesians 4:11–12 *So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.*

Every sermon preached, every prayer meeting, every LifeGroup, every discipleship conversation in this building - this is a forge where ordinary people are strengthened into the ones who carry Jesus into streets, communities, workplaces, families, and worlds. Take this room away and there is no equipping. Take the equipping away and there is no harvest. This church is not incidental to the mission. It is essential to it.

Matthew 5:14 *You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Let your light shine before others.*

A town on a hill does not wander down into the valley to be seen. It stands built up, visible from a distance, precisely because it stayed together in one strong, gathered place. Our strength as a gathered family is not the opposite of reaching our community. It is the very thing that makes us visible to it.

Reflect: *What is your honest view of the local church right now - is it the engine room of something bigger, or more of a habit? What would change in how you show up here if you truly believed the gathered life was producing the harvest?*

2 | Carrying the Charge

It is easy to quietly leave evangelism to pastors, leaders, or the people who are naturally good at talking to strangers. But God's word doesn't let us off that easily. It insists that the whole church carries this identity together.

1 Peter 2:9 *You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*

A priesthood is never a collection of solo operators. It serves together, out of a shared house, a shared altar, a shared family. Every believer is already an ambassador - and an ambassador is never freelance. They are sent, credentialed, and backed by the nation they represent.

2 Corinthians 5:20 *We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.*

Meet Timothy

If you are still telling yourself you are the wrong person for this, meet Timothy - young, anxious by nature, pastoring one of the hardest churches on Paul's list. But look at where he came from. A home shaped by his mother and grandmother's faith, and a local church that laid hands on him and released him into ministry.

1 Timothy 4:14 *Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.*

Timothy didn't become an effective minister by leaving the church behind. He became one because a church formed him, believed in him, and sent him out with its hands still on his shoulders. That is exactly what the church is for.

Romans 10:14 *How then can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?*

Somebody has to be the someone. And this church is a place where the someone gets built, strengthened, and sent. Maybe this week, in your own ordinary way, that someone is you.

Reflect: *Out of all the somebodies in this room, could you be the someone this week? Not a polished evangelist - just an ordinary person carrying the charge they've been equipped with. What is one step you could take?*

3 | Urgency Fuelled by Love

Every harvest has a clock running on it, whether we acknowledge it or not. But notice what actually drives the urgency in Scripture. Never shame. Never a fear of missing a quota. Always love first, and always love last.

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

Birthing in love. And notice what the shepherd does the moment he finds the one lost sheep. He doesn't leave it in the field to fend for itself. He carries it home - and gathers the people around him to celebrate.

Luke 15:5-6 *When he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbours together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.'*

This is the whole point of the harvest - not to leave people scattered once they're found, but to bring them home into a family, into this room, into a church that will keep loving them long after the day they first believed.

Luke 15:7 *There will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.*

That celebration is waiting on the other side of one conversation. That is the motivation. That is the urgency. Not shame, not obligation, not a program. A party in heaven over one name. Your one name.

2 Peter 3:9 *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

God's patience is not passivity. It is a door held open at cost, so that one more name can still walk through it. And the question for us is: are we ready and waiting for that name to arrive?

***When your one name walks through that door, heaven throws a party.
Are we ready and waiting to be the family they walk into?***

Reflect: *What does your one name need to find when they walk through the door? A family that is kind, generous, warm, and normal - people who are proud to say, come to my place, you're in for a treat. Is that what Hope Chapel is right now? What can you do to help it be that?*

What the Marketplace Heard

Andrew shared a picture of imagining the early church from the perspective of someone in the marketplace. The market square in the ancient world was actually called the Ecclesia - the gathering place. It had the name before the church did.

And in that square, imagine what ordinary people were saying: What is going on? What are these meetings popping up everywhere? Why are they so kind? Why are they sharing food and belongings? Why are they talking to each other like this? What is happening to our town?

That is what Andrew wants for Gawler. People talking at football on a Saturday: what is going on with that church? Why are they so kind? I might have to check it out. A church so strong that its pulse reaches every street, every home, every name still waiting to be brought in.

The Cause We Cannot Abandon

This church is not a waiting room before the real work starts somewhere else.

It is the engine room. The beating heart.

Every strong prayer meeting, every faithful Sunday, every discipleship conversation is pumping life toward a community that desperately needs it.

This is not a department, a season, or a program that quietly ends when the next series begins. This has to be the reason Hope Chapel exists at all - to be strong enough together that our reach extends further than we could ever imagine alone.

We are better together. Let this church become the strongest heartbeat this town has ever felt.

Reflection & Discussion Questions

Use these on your own during the week, or with your LifeGroup.

1. Andrew described the church as the heart - doing its greatest work completely out of sight, so that everything else can move. How does that picture change the way you see your ordinary week of showing up, praying, and being part of the gathered life here?
2. Acts 2:46–47 shows devotion on the inside producing favour on the outside. Is there a direct connection for you between how engaged you are in the gathered life and how much you find yourself sharing your faith naturally?
3. Timothy was formed, believed in, and sent out by a local church. Who has played that role for you? And is there someone you could play that role for - forming, believing in, and sending out?
4. Andrew said every believer is already an ambassador - credentialed and backed by the one who sent them. How does it feel to carry that title? What would it change about your week if you truly owned it?
5. Luke 15 says heaven throws a party over one sinner who repents. That party is waiting on the other side of one conversation. How does that picture change your motivation for sharing your faith from obligation to celebration?
6. Andrew asked: when your one name walks through the door, are we ready and waiting? What can you personally do to help Hope Chapel be a family that is warm, kind, and generous to a stranger who wanders in?

Key Scriptures This Week

- John 4:34–35 - Open your eyes and look at the fields; they are ripe for harvest
- Acts 2:46–47 - Devotion on the inside; favour on the outside; daily growth
- Ephesians 4:11–12 - Equip his people for works of service
- Matthew 5:14 - A town built on a hill cannot be hidden
- 1 Peter 2:9 - A royal priesthood; declare the praises of him who called you
- 2 Corinthians 5:20 - We are Christ's ambassadors
- 1 Timothy 4:14 - Do not neglect your gift; hands of the elders
- Romans 10:14 - How can they hear without someone preaching?
- John 3:16 - For God so loved the world
- Luke 15:5–7 - One lost sheep found; rejoicing in heaven
- 2 Peter 3:9 - Patient; not wanting anyone to perish

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