**Small Group notes – 13 Feb 2022**

**Welcome**

Research suggests laughter has several physical, psychological and social benefits, including decreasing stress hormones, boosting the immune system, reducing pain, improving mood   
and increasing resilience. **Laughter is good for the soul. Ask everyone to share their   
favourite joke or funny story.**

**Worship**

Read out the following verses from the Psalms and use them to lead into a time of prayer & praise. Psalm 16: 11, Psalm 28:7-9, Psalm 47:1-2,Psalm 95:1-2, Psalm 98:4-6

**Word - Psalm 126 – *‘Long Obedience in the Same Direction’* - A spirit of Joy.**

God is joy, he experiences joy and he imparts joy. Joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Joy is a by-product of life with God. Joy is not dependant on our circumstances.

* **The reason for Joy** Verse 1-2 – Delivered from captivity
* **The results of Joy** Verse 2 – A witness to the world
* **The robber of Joy** Verse 4 – Trials & Temptations
* **The restoration of Joy** Verse 5-6

Perspective – Romans 8:28  
Perseverance – James 1:2-4  
Prayer (repentance / confession) – Psalm 51  
Praise – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Questions**

* How do you recognise a joyful person?
* How does joy differ from happiness?
* Why should we be a joyful people? what has God done for us?
* How can problems and pressures effect our joy?
* How have you experienced joy in the midst of difficult circumstances?
* Why is perspective, perseverance, prayer and praise so important in restoring   
  and maintaining joy?
* Weeping while sowing seed for the future is a powerful image of persevering in tough times. What seeds can you sow even during a time of sorrow or dryness?
* How will you express your joyful trust in the Lord today?

**Prayers & reminders**

* Pray for those who are sick or recovering from operations – God’s presence and joy.
* For those working in education – God’s refreshing during the half term break.
* NMBC Easter Experience with Insight
* Administration and organisation for NMBC Church Weekend