

RHYTHMS THAT BRING LIFE

One final word, friends. We ask you—urge is more like it—that you keep on doing what we told you to do to please God, not in a dogged religious plod, but in a living, spirited dance. You know the guidelines we laid out for you from the Master Jesus, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2



The **CROWN** Rhythm

The CROWN Rhythm of Life

A PASSION FOR LIVING LIFE WELL

How do we make the most of the life God has given us? Who doesn't want to answer that question well? Yet often it can feel like we're muddling along in our Christian lives, we often talk a good game, but somehow never quite translate those ideals into reality.

One of the greatest challenges of discipleship is putting theory into practice – living out our faith. Yet through church history there are examples of those who have not only lived inspirational lives, but have created kingdom movements that have sustained for long periods, even generations. Whether it's the monastic or minster churches that evangelised our nation, the Jesuit missionary movement, the Wesleyan revival and their class meetings, a common thread is that each had a consistent framework for making and growing disciples. Today, the Holy Spirit seems to be stirring renewed interest in the concept of the 'rule of life' as an expression of discipleship.

The root meaning for rule comes from the Greek word for trellis, the wooden frame that was used to train vines to enable them to grow healthily and be most fruitful. It's a helpful image – a rule itself isn't the growth, just a framework that helps us grow deeper and further in Christ. What a rule does, is bring intentionality to our walk with Jesus and it is an expression of our commitment and desire to grow. We must remember that the real growth is led and formed by the Holy Spirit; the supporting trellis is a pattern to enable his work towards greater fruitfulness!

The CROWN rhythm provides a framework based upon sound biblical principles. From it, individual disciples can develop their own personal rule of life. We offer it as a pattern to help the church live life to the full, to Jesus' glory!



The **CROWN** Rhythm

Community, Re-Create, Offering, Word, Networks.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands placing a gold crown with a red gemstone on their head. The crown is ornate, featuring a large red gemstone and several smaller gold rings. The person's hair is brown and pulled back. The background is white.

**The choice of CROWN for our framework is no accident.
It is a statement of who we really are.**

Pre-occupied with other questions, we often miss the riches of Genesis 1, which uses royal language to describe humanity.

We are vice-regents, princes & princesses with royal authority to display God's glory and make him known to the whole of creation.



We were made to extend God's rule of goodness and love throughout creation, a task re-established with the full authority of Jesus at the Great Commission. CROWN reminds us of this true identity and is intended to ensure that all we do flows from a knowledge of who we are. Its simplicity also offers us a pattern to express our faith which we can share with others. It helps us understand our areas of strength and weakness as disciples, helping us prioritise areas for growth.

CROWN is not about striving or trying harder. Instead it is a constant encouragement to position ourselves to see more of God's work in our lives. Contrast the difference between rowing and sailing. Rowing is hard work, demanding strength and effort to progress, sailing is different, effort and skill is involved to position the boat but the real power comes from the sails catching the wind.



CROWN can be interpreted uniquely for each individual or group so while two people may follow the same rhythm of life, their individual rule will likely look very different depending on their life, gifting, calling and context. This freedom enables the principle of unity in diversity to be embedded within Christian community.

Suddenly adventure and possibility awaits at every turn!

As each of us find good rhythms, we grow in faith, increasing in fruitfulness as we join God's plan to renew the whole of creation. Doing this in community means we can urge one another on to greatness for Jesus within a supportive and, hopefully, fun atmosphere. CROWN, if applied right, will shape consistent, sustainable rhythms to help us catch the wind of the Spirit as we live life with God. Suddenly adventure and possibility awaits at every turn.



Creating my rule of life

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.
Rom 8:14



TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

Step 1

Work out who you will share the journey with, who will encourage you, who can you help? (At St Mike's, CROWN can be developed in groups, triplets and 1:1 with a mentor.)

Step 2

For each aspect of the CROWN rhythm think about what you already doing... note this as a starting point.

Step 3

Take one step at a time. It is better to concentrate and establish one aspect of the rhythm sustainably than attempt all five and then crash and burn! Reflect on how might God be calling you to go deeper in one area at a time. Be honest about what blockages or challenges you may face, and seek any help and equipping you may need.

Step 4

Note your rhythm down, live it, and let it take shape. Share with those who you can pray with, discuss and review this on a regular basis. Give thanks for what you see God doing and celebrate each fruit of your growth!



The **CROWN** Rhythm



The **CROWN** Rhythm

CROWN: WHAT

COMMUNITY:

We value belonging to and worshiping with the church family.

We aspire to grow in our relationships with each other meeting for conversation, coffee or food. As God sets the lonely in families, so we aim to get to know others in our fellowship beyond our existing circle of relationships. We acknowledge the significance of gathered worship, glorifying God together and building one another up.

A Community rhythm helps us grow and encourage each other as we encounter God together.

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” Acts 2.46

RE-CREATE:

We value regular life-giving rest.

We reject the incessant demands of modern life, and seek to model something better. We recognise the importance of having regular rest each week, to “re-create” by involving God in times when we cease “productive” work.

A Re-Create rhythm shows we won’t let the world dictate our pace.

“Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating he had done.” (Genesis 2.3)

OFFERING:

We value using our gifts as we join God’s plan to renew all creation, bringing glimpses of heaven to earth.

All of our life is worship, an offering back to God of ourselves. We seek to call the treasure out of one another, to discern and use our gifts, serving in and through church but also in the wider world. We acknowledge our work can play a part in the renewal of all things, as we live justly and glorify God in creativity and work for justice.

An Offering rhythm helps us give our all to heaven’s work.

“Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy.” 1 Corinthians 14:1

& WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT TO US

WORD:

We value pursuing a living relationship with Jesus and his word.

Jesus is the word made flesh. We long to sit at his feet in worship, hearing his word to us from the Bible. We seek to set time aside for worship, prayer and praise regularly, aiming to keep growing in this area of life. We consider this a priority, even when it is hard, the ancients called this an "oblation," a sacrifice of praise. We choose to live in the truth that our life flows from him.

A Word rhythm sits us at Jesus' feet in worship and lets God's word inspire us.

"But the Lord said to her, 'My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.'"

Luke 10:41-42 (NLT)

NETWORKS:

We value sharing life and faith with those outside the church.

Jesus sends each of us out to bear witness to him. In Luke 10, he gives us his strategy - to search for People of Peace. As we do this together, we value building relationship and regular connection with others in ways appropriate to our personalities / circumstances. Open to the Holy Spirit's leading, we seek to be good news, helping POPs take a 'next step' towards Jesus, be that through an act of kindness, hospitality, invitation, conversation etc.

A Networks rhythm helps us share life, love and faith with others.

"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.... If a person peace is there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you." Luke 10:2, 6

GETTING STARTED:

Forming your own personal rule of life...

Do you know who you can connect with to develop CROWN? Please speak to the church team if you need some advice on how to progress the development of your rhythm.

As you begin to take steps to form your own rule of life then there are various resources and support available - from study materials, video teaching and mentoring support. We encourage everyone to connect with others to share the journey together because that's how God shaped the church, to bring his best out of one another. Mentoring Groups take place within the wider framework of our ministries, and 1:1 mentoring is also available where that is the best way of supporting someone.

Above all, look ahead with hope and excitement, as you begin to pursue God, you position yourself to experience more and more of his power and blessing.

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Who will I share this journey, and be accountable to?

